*The Adobe® Photoshop®*

# Lightroom Classic

### Book

**Scott Kelby**

The world's #1 best-selling
Lightroom book author

New Riders

**VOICES THAT MATTER™**

*The Adobe® Photoshop®*

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## Setting the White Balance Using Presets

After I've set my RAW profile, I start my editing process by first setting the white balance. I do this for two reasons: (1) Changing the white balance affects the overall exposure of your image big time (take a look at the histogram while you drag the Temp slider back and fourth a few times, and you'll see what a huge effect white balance has on your exposure). And, (2) I find it hard to make reasonable decisions about my exposure if the color is so off it's distracting. I find that when the color looks right, my exposure decisions are better. But hey, that's just me. Or is it?
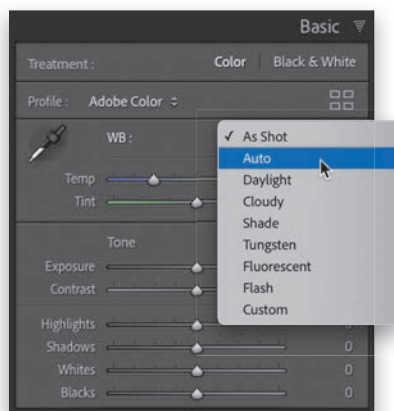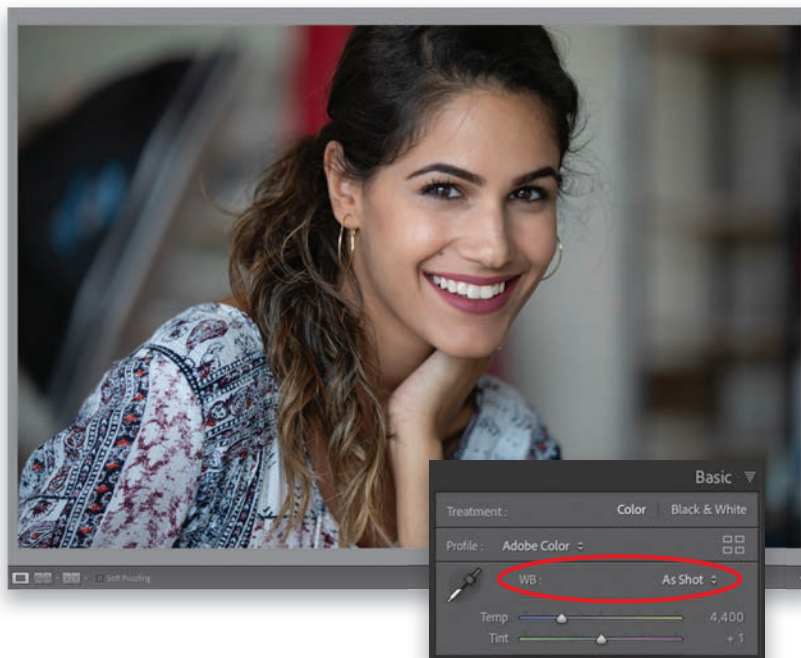
### Step One:

The White Balance controls are found near the top of the Develop module's Basic panel. Your photo reflects whichever white balance you had selected in your camera, so that's why the **WB pop-up menu** is set to "As Shot"—you're seeing the white balance "as it was shot," which in this case, is way too blue (I had been shooting under fluorescent lights earlier, then wound up shooting in this natural light setting and forgot to change my white balance to match the lighting conditions). There are three ways to adjust the white balance in Lightroom, and I'm going to show you two here, but I use the third way (coming up) most of the time because it's just so fast and easy. Still, it's important to know these two methods because you might prefer them for certain types of photos.

### Step Two:

First, you can try the built-in White Balance presets. If you shot in RAW, click-and-hold on As Shot and a pop-up menu of **White Balance presets** appears. Here, you can choose the same white balance presets (seen here, on the left) you could have chosen in your camera. If you shot in JPEG mode, you only get one preset, Auto (seen here, on the right), because your white balance choice was already embedded in the file by your camera. You can still change the white balance for JPEG images, but you'll have to use the next two methods instead. *Note:* If your list looks different than mine here on the left, it's because you're using a different make/model of camera. The WB pop-up menu is based on which camera brand you shot with.





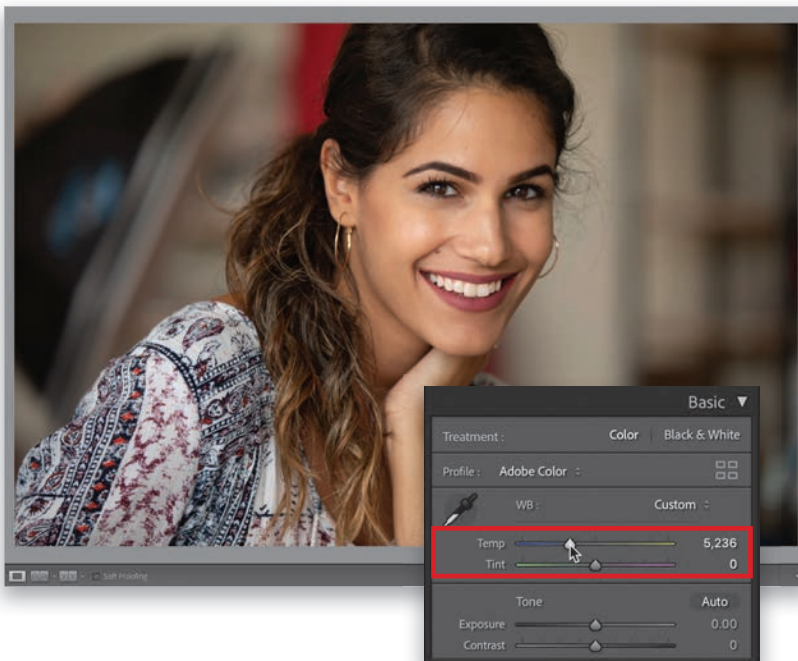*WB presets if you shot in RAW*          *WB presets if you shot in JPEG*

## Step Three:

In our photo in Step One, the overall tone is really blue, so it definitely needs a white balance adjustment. (*Note:* To follow along using this same image, you're welcome to download it from the book's companion webpage, mentioned in the book's introduction.) I usually start by choosing Auto from the **White Balance pop-up menu** to see how that looks (as you can see here, it's much better all around. In person, her skin has a warmer tone, but the Auto preset is actually not warm enough). Go ahead and try out the next three presets, but spoiler alert: Daylight will be a bit warmer, with Cloudy and Shade being progressively even warmer. So, I'd choose Cloudy or Shade (just so you can see how much warmer that will make her skin tone, as well as the whole photo for that matter). You can skip Tungsten and Fluorescent— they're going to be way crazy blue (in fact, it was Fluorescent that we accidentally had our white balance set to from the beginning). By the way, the last preset isn't really a preset at all—Custom just means you're going to set the white balance manually instead of using a preset.

## Step Four:

If you go through the WB presets and none look right to you (or if you shot in JPEG, so your only choice was Auto, and it didn't look right), then we move on to Method #2, which is to choose the WB preset that is the closest to being right (in this case, for me, it was Auto), then drag the Temp and Tint sliders (found right below the pop-up menu) to tweak the color more to your liking. Take a look at those two sliders. Without me even explaining how they work, if I wanted more blue in this photo, which way would I drag the Temp slider? That's right—those color bars behind the sliders are a huge help. In this case, I think her skin is too blue, so I dragged the **Temp slider** away from the blue side and more toward yellow, looking at the image while I dragged.

## Step Five:

Let's stop and evaluate what we've done with our white balance. I think it looks a tiny bit too yellow now (it's a balancing act, right?), so to finish things off, let's drag the **Temp slider** back just a little bit toward blue (as shown here), and then let's also drag the **Tint slider** a little toward magenta. It looks pretty good overall now. A before/after is shown below, using the Auto WB preset and then tweaking the Temp and Tint sliders.
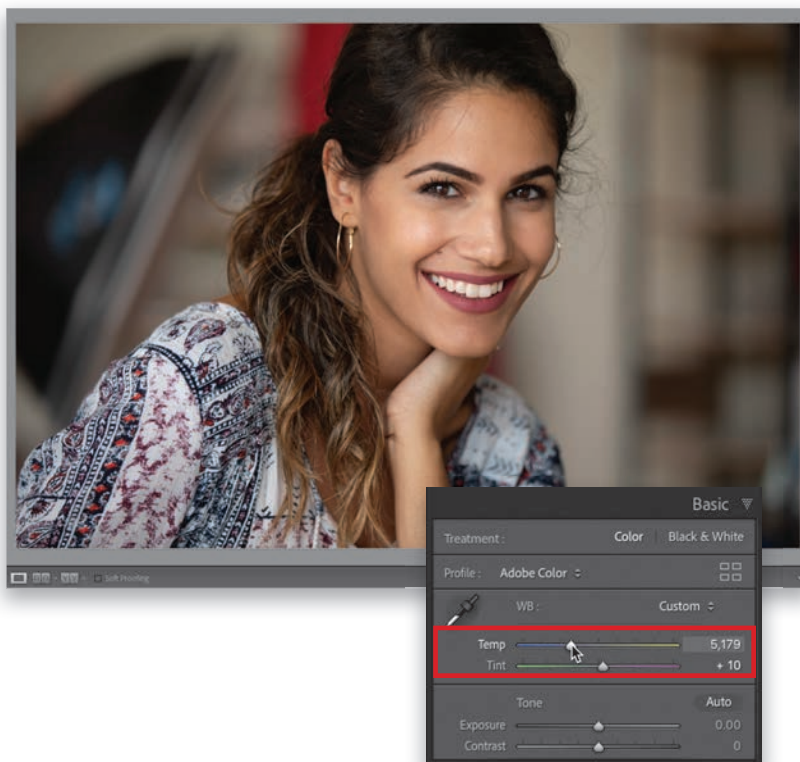
On the previous page, I showed a before and after, but I didn't get a chance to show you how I did that. I love the way Lightroom handles the whole before and after process because it gives you a lot of flexibility to see these the way you want to see them. Here's how:
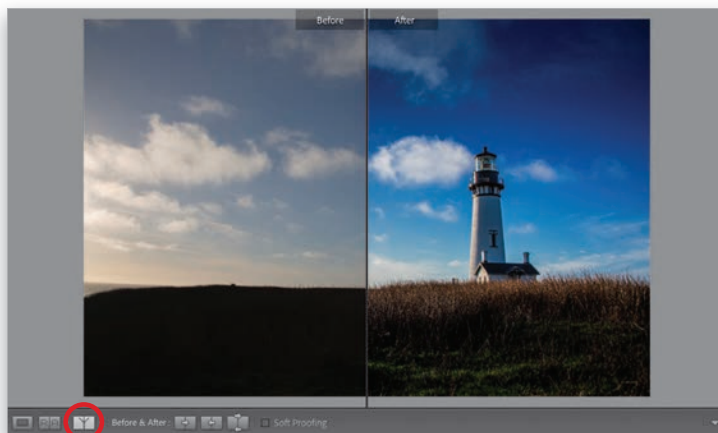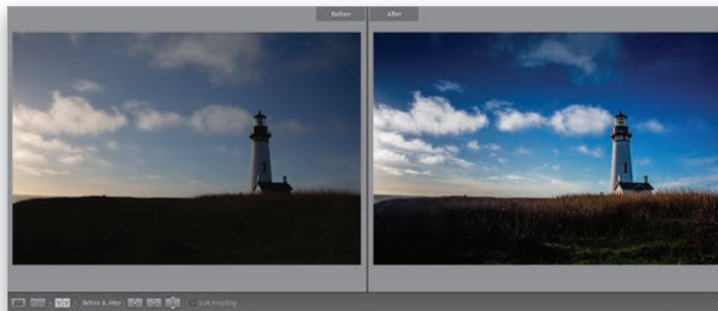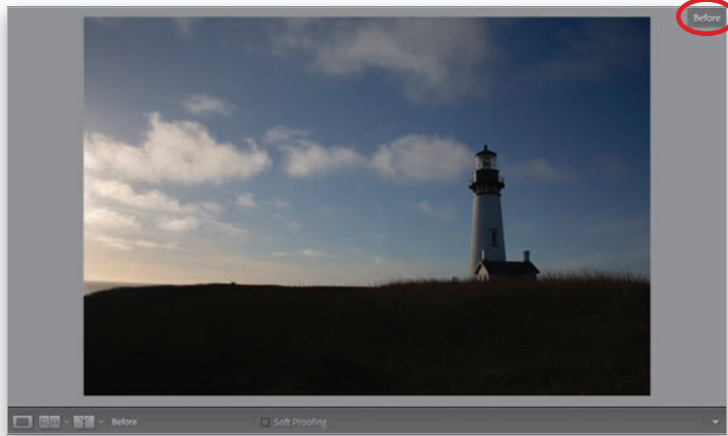
# Seeing a Before and After



### Step One:
If you're working in the Develop module and want to see your image before you started tweaking it (the "before" image), just press the \ **(backslash) key** on your keyboard. You'll see the word "Before" appear in the upper-right corner of your image (as seen here). This is probably the **Before view** I use the most in my own workflow. To return to your After image, press the \ key again (it doesn't say "After;" the Before just goes away).

### Step Two:
To see a **side-by-side Before and After view**, with the before on the left and the after on the right (as seen here), press the letter **Y** on your keyboard. Press Y again to return to the normal view. There are some other before/after options, but to access those, you'll need to make sure the toolbar beneath the Preview area is visible (as seen here). If it's not, press the letter **T**.

### Step Three:
If you prefer a different before/after layout, like a split-screen view, where your image is split down the center with the left half in the Before view and the right half in the After, click the **Before and After Views button** (circled here in red) once in the toolbar. Click it again for a top/bottom split-screen before and after. The three buttons to the right of Before & After do this: the first one copies the Before image's settings to the After image, the second one copies the After's settings to the Before, and the third just swaps the Before/After settings. To return to normal view, press the letter **D** on your keyboard.

## My Favorite Way to Set White Balance

While the White Balance presets often work pretty well, and being able to use them as a starting place and then tweaking the white balance using the Temp and Tint sliders is handy, it's not the way I usually set my white balance. In fact, I rarely use either one of those options because I love the White Balance Selector tool so much. It's easy, flexible, and it works wonders with just a click or two.
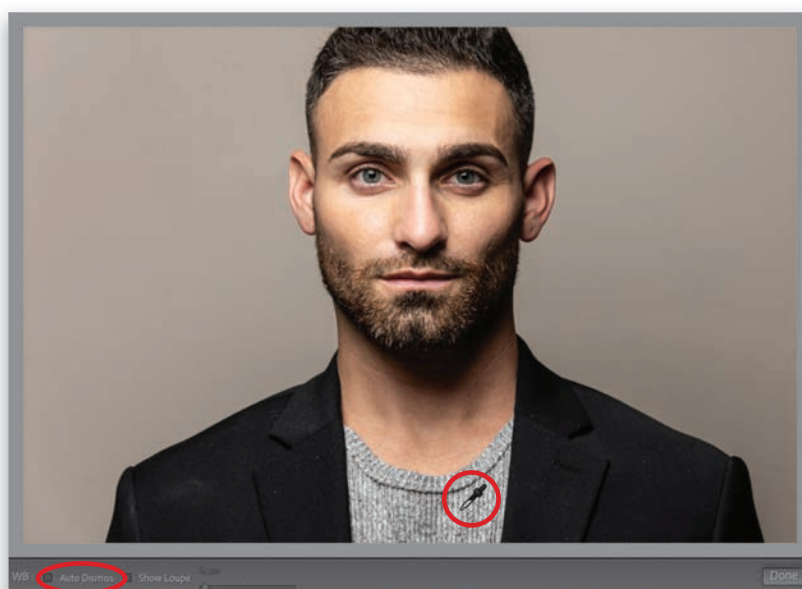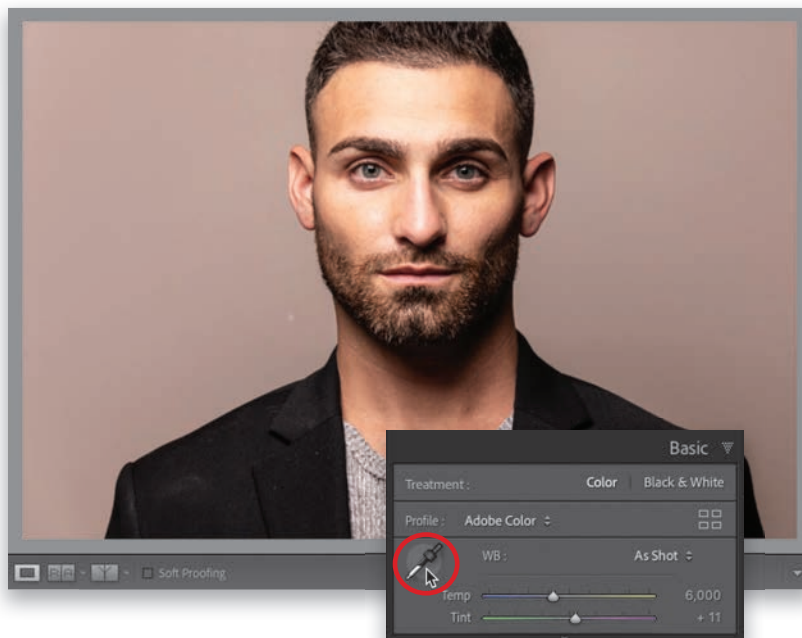
### Step One:

In our shot here, the whole image has kind of a reddish tint to it, and his skin tone doesn't look right, so let's fix it. Click on the **White Balance Selector tool** (the big ol' eyedropper) in the top left of the white balance section in the Basic panel (or press **W** on your keyboard to get it). This tool couldn't be easier to use—you simply click it on a neutral area in your image (ideally, something light gray). If there's no gray in the photo, look for an area that's kind of a neutral color, like tan, ivory, taupe, or beige. Okay, now that you have the White Balance Selector tool, let's put it to work.

### Step Two:

Our subject is wearing a gray shirt here, so we can just take the tool, click it once on his shirt (as shown here, where I circled the tool in red), and it sets the white balance based on that neutral color (as seen here where the image is now much less red). Click. Boom. Done. Well, it's certainly less red, and this is a better white balance choice, but I'm not sure his skin tone is spot on, so let's try clicking somewhere else to see if we can get a better result. That's the great thing about this tool—if you don't like the result from the first place you clicked, just click it somewhere else. Now, if you click on his shirt and the tool is suddenly gone (you see it back in the Basic panel where you first clicked on it), it's because a really annoying feature called **"Auto Dismiss"** is turned on. You can turn this off (and I suggest you do) by turning off its checkbox down in the toolbar (it's also circled in red here).

### Step Three:

Okay, let's keep clicking around until it looks better (one thing that will let you know you have your color right will be that the gray background will actually look gray). Here, I clicked on the background behind him, and I think his fleshtone (and the overall color) looks much better. That's the great thing about properly setting your white balance. It's not like their fleshtone is going to look natural and their hair is going to look bright green. Once you get the overall white balance looking right, the overall color looks right. That doesn't mean you won't have to tweak some particular color once in a while (you'll learn how shortly), but once you get your white balance looking good, the rest of the color falls into place.

### Step Four:

Now, what happens if you click the eyedropper in a totally wrong spot? Trust me, you'll know (see how the whole image turned blue here when I clicked on his cheek?). When this happens and you get some crazy color (and it will happen), don't sweat it—just click somewhere else, including trying a place you wouldn't think would give you an accurate white balance. One more thing: If you're using the White Balance Selector tool and you see a floating grid following your eyedropper around, that's just what we call "the useless annoying grid." Theoretically, it's supposed to help you find a neutral color by showing you the pixels under the location of the eyedropper, along with the RGB values, and if you get all three of those numbers to match up (it happened once, in a sci-fi movie), that would be a truly neutral color. I only recommend using this grid to people I don't really like. It kind of evens the score. Anyway, to turn it off, turn off the **Show Loupe check-box** (shown circled here in red) down in the toolbar. When you're done with the eyedropper, just click it back in its "home" in the Basic panel or click the Done button in the toolbar.