

Beckham Digital

June 2015 Newsletter

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Welcome to our June newsletter - Suddenly here we are halfway through the year already. It only seems last week we were sitting down to Christmas dinner. For our UK readers, I guess you are beginning to enjoy some warmer weather too. Only last week I read that everyone was getting excited because it was expected to reach 22c. All that high contrast light you will have to battle in your image editor :-)

Us poor souls in Australia are just starting our winter. Do you know at night the temperature can plummet down as low as 12c. Sometimes during the day the sunshine only takes the temperature to 22c. Anything under 24 and we start to put on a fleece :-)

Photoshop Creative Cloud – Cropping Tip - The modern way the crop tool works is that as we select it from the tool bar the outer crop boundaries are displayed automatically. If you click the image, the crop bounding box (rule of thirds here) will be displayed on the image. Remember, that you can scroll round the overlays like the rule of thirds by tapping the “O” key.

If we wanted to crop tightly on the lone tree below, we naturally click on the toggles, left, right, top and bottom and drag them in to where we want them.



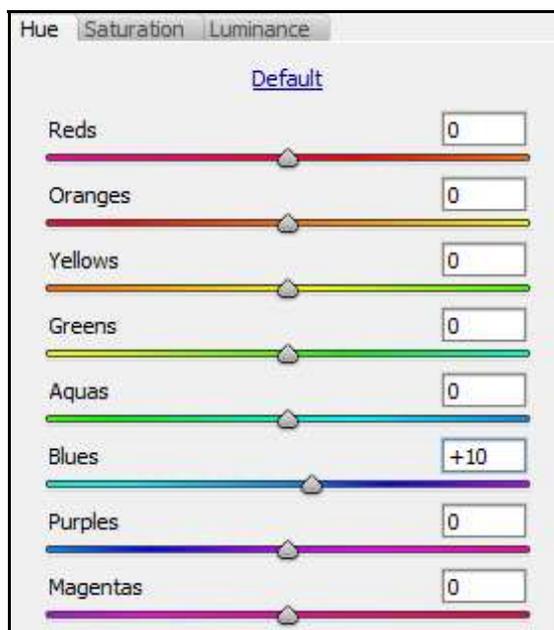
However, the crop tool will still work fine as a click and drag starting from anywhere on our picture, which on occasions can be far more convenient. So, you can effectively ignore the outer bounding box that appears when you select the crop tool and go straight to the tree and draw out a crop shape just as you would have in older versions of Photoshop. Give it a try and you will see what we mean.

[Our Video this month – The Problems of Blue](#)

Recording blue on film and now the digital sensor, has always had issues. It's something to do with

the wavelength of blue light that prevents it from recording as well as we would like. Even in our Back and White film days we had to use yellow, orange or red filters on our lens to make blue sky record better. Every month in our club competitions there are a handful of images that show this problem. If we try to increase colour saturation and/or vibrance in our image, the blue sky can often be way too saturated and the blue looks unnatural.

Another problem is that the blue of the sky is just not quite the right hue. Sometimes, it can even look a little green or turquoise. It's not easy to show what we mean as this is best seen on your own monitor, but below we have an example. The right is the blue straight from the camera and it doesn't look quite right. On the left is with +10 added from the hue tab in ACR or Lightroom via the blue slider and the appearance is better, more natural.



In Lightroom and Photoshop we have quick and simple remedies for the problem of blue via the Hue Saturation and Luminance sliders.

So, don't accept second best, when it's so easy to fix. All you need to correct those blues can be found in the group of sliders to the left, which can be found in Adobe Camera Raw and Lightroom

Take a look at our [short video](#) where we explain all.

Raw or Jpeg ? – Here is a subject I didn't expect to be writing about any time soon. I had assumed that as time had moved on, most photographers understood and accepted the difference between a Jpeg image and one shot in Raw. The facts are that this difference is so great, I would say to serious photographers [Raw is too good to ignore](#).

Not in every single instance, that's true, 99.9%. There are times when we are fortunate enough to be out in near perfect lighting conditions. (or in studio conditions) In that situation and if our exposure skills are spot on, the gap between what we shot and what we saw will be minimal. It could be argued that in that scenario Raw doesn't offer such a massive advantage. However, I would still not give it up.

How often do you find yourself in perfect lighting conditions with a perfect exposure? Not that often if my experience is anything to go by. So, it came as a surprise recently to meet an experienced photographer who teaches Photoshop with CS-4 who says that Jpegs are no different to Raw. Their view is what you can do in Raw, you can do in Photoshop with Jpeg's. That is clearly wrong, just look at a small before and after example below. I would like to see that monochrome quality brought back from a Jpeg that looked like ours on the left.



While trying to be at my diplomatic best, I suggested to my friend that perhaps Photoshop, Lightroom and Raw had now moved on to a level where it might be worth evaluating that view again. The person was clearly not interested in anything I had to say and it soon became clear to me that I was talking to someone who was unwilling to leave their Photoshop CS-4 comfort zone.

At that point I lost interest as it was clear no amount of encouragement would have helped. However, it reminded me of the very many people who say to me. I have Photoshop CS-2 or some other old software and "It meets my Needs" Well, toilets down the bottom of the garden with newspaper hanging on a nail meets our needs, but not many of us would be impressed with that now. We move on don't we?. We could walk down to the shops or take the horse, but years of evolution gave us Henry Ford.

It's not often I nail my colours so strongly to the mast, but if you're a keen photographer, keen enough to be reading this newsletter then you really must be shooting Raw. If you're not, then I will ask you if you are like my friend and just a little bit scared of taking the plunge? Let me try one other image to convince you. Below you can see a picture exposed for the shadows and it has a number of issues.



It has left the highlights badly blown out and it's not possible to bring those back as a Jpeg image. In the example below left, this is the best we can do as a Jpeg. Large areas are still completely without detail, yet below right is **exactly** the same image manipulated in Raw.



I can't think of a better example than the above to demonstrate the potential differences between shooting jpg and Raw images. If Raw can be so powerful when we have a badly exposed image, just think of the creativity you have when the exposure is better..

Download and play our [Introduction video](#) to our Raw Tutorial videos. If you're not convinced, take a look at this presentation. Its called an introduction, but its a great advert for why Raw is the only way to go.

Go to our [Raw Category of Videos](#) and see what we cover

We have tutorial disks on the subject of shooting raw for all versions of Photoshop [HERE](#)

[New Slide Show – Scotland - A Brief Moment in Time](#)

Our UK trip in 2014 included a week in Scotland, but we were eventually chased back south of the border a few days earlier than we wished, by continual rain.



However, it certainly made the rivers exciting and the lighting probably helped our photography rather than hinder it. It's not easy with your camera on a tripod, holding an umbrella and trying to keep yourself and your gear dry while capturing images.

I think this sequence indicates how well PicturesToExe slide show software helps us to present the images we shoot. We all shoot and create far more images than we could ever use. This medium allows me to share images of probably our last ever visit to Scotland.

[Check out the slide show for PC – Mac and iPad](#)

[PSCC Masterclass – Saving the Cormorant](#)

Some while ago, I made a series of tutorials under the title of making a Silk Purse from a Sow's Ear and here is another example and one which demonstrates the worth of Photoshop to Photographers. During the tail end of some heavy weather the surf was extremely high and rough and some surfers were looking for a safe way into the sea.

Then I caught sight of a Cormorant feeding in the wild breaking surf and for once I was holding my Canon SLR with a 100-400mm lens attached. As I framed up the bird decided to take off and I got just 4 shots of it, the one on the right being the best.



As you can see it has that classic problem of poor composition, but then how can you compose a shot that is all over in a second or two? You don't, you fire and hope for a bit of luck. If the bird hangs around, then of course we would all have another go, but it didn't this time. Poor composition and the bird flying out of the shot, rather than into it. Cue Photoshop.....

I had 3 other shots, where the sea was slightly different, so using layers, I added canvas to the right of this bird to bring back good composition, then blended in more sea from the other shots. It's just layers and layer masks, nothing fiddly or difficult at all.



The purists will be spitting feathers, but in fact this is a more faithful rendering of the animal in its natural conditions than I have have seen with others entered into Natural History competitions. All we have done here is adjust composition and well worth doing, even if it does place it outside of natural history.

Your Comment :



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