



Retouch & Start-to-Finish Example

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In this lesson, we're going to walk through the workflow for two images. The first will focus on a somewhat complex retouching job and the second will be a start-to-finish example of an image put together using Lightroom.

Image Retouch

The Spot Healing Brush Let's walk through the retouching work that will be required to remove the child carrier on the right side of this example image. When it comes to a retouch job like this, I will generally begin with either the Spot Healing Brush or the Content-Aware Fill command. We'll start with the Spot Healing Brush. When using the Spot Healing Brush, it's important to paint with a hard-edged brush. If you don't, the tool won't have control all the way out to the edge of the brush. We'll use the tool to completely paint over the child carrier. When we release the mouse button, the tool attempts to fill in the area with content based on its surroundings. Depending on the image and the area you're trying to retouch, the Spot Healing Brush may do a great job or it may not. It messed up a bit in our example, but I'm going to use this as a



In this image, we are going to retouch out the baby carrier on the right.



The Spot Healing Brush is being used to completely paint over the object we want to remove.



The screen shot at left shows the initial result from the Spot Healing Brush. There were areas where it messed up, and areas where it resulted in repeated shapes. At right, we are eliminating some of the repeating shapes by using the same tool, set to a smaller brush.

starting point. I will continue to use the Spot Healing Brush, set to a smaller brush, to paint over some of the smaller problem areas within the retouch location. It's also a good idea to zoom in on a retouched area and look for repeated shapes, as this can be an issue that results from using the Spot Healing Brush. We have repeated shapes in this image, so I will use a very small Spot Healing Brush and paint over the individual shapes to try and eliminate them.

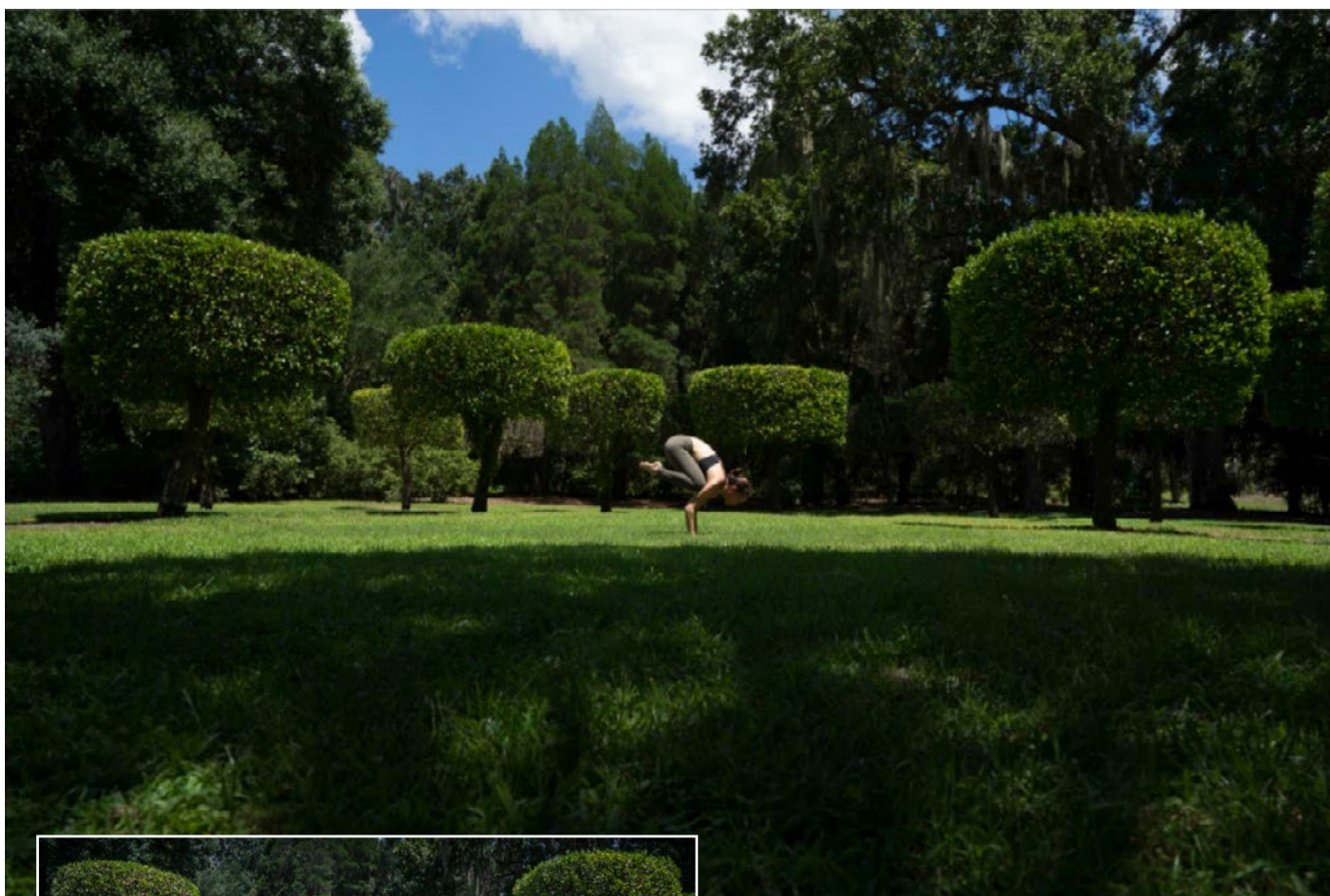
The Spot Healing Brush may not be successful at filling in certain areas of your image. The tool tends to have trouble when you're trying to connect two ends of an object that had an obstruction in the middle. In the video example, there is an area that looks like a pathway leading to a rocky platform. Part of the child carrier was obstructing this and the Spot Removal Tool didn't know how to connect the two parts of the path. In an instance like this, we'll turn to the Clone Stamp Tool. To use the Clone Stamp Tool, hold down the Option key (Alt on Win) and click on the area you'd like to copy from. Then release the Option key and click again in the area you'd like to copy to. In our example, we copied from an area where the pathway was intact. The problem with pasting the content onto the obstructed part of the path is that the copied content is not at the right angle. Know that when using the Clone Stamp Tool, you can change the angle of what you're pasting by holding down Shift+Option (Shift+Alt on Win) and then using the "greater than" and "less than" keys (> <) on your keyboard.

After Option+clicking (Alt+clicking on Win) to define a clone source area, it can be a good idea to make the brush tip for the Clone Stamp Tool very large and hover your cursor over the retouch area, just so that you can get a preview of what you will be painting in when you actually click your mouse button. Then, make the brush tip very small again so that you have a good amount of precision when you actually click and “paint.”



At left, we previewed the Clone Stamp Tool at a very large brush size to get a better view of what we’d be painting in. Above, we’re using a much smaller brush to paint with the Clone Stamp Tool with more precision.

Color matching Part of a retouching job may require you to match the color of one area to the color of another area. An example of this scenario would be matching skin tones to remove tan lines. In the video example, we want to match the color of the pathway/rock that we’re retouching to the pathway/rock in the nearby area. One way of doing this would be to write down the RGB values for one area and use them to match the other area. We covered this technique in a different Masters Academy lesson. In this video example, we’re going to activate the Brush Tool and then hold down the Option key (Alt on Win) to temporarily access the Eyedropper Tool. We’ll use the Eyedropper to sample a color (by clicking on it) that we want to use in our retouching area. Then we’ll change the blending mode of the Brush Tool to Color. (The Blending Mode menu can be found in the Options Bar above the main image window.) This will allow the texture of the pathway to remain intact, as the brush will only be able to affect color and not tone. We’ll use the Brush to paint over the area we’re retouching. Note: If we were applying this retouching on an empty layer, we would not change the blending mode of the Brush Tool. We would instead change the blending mode of the layer.



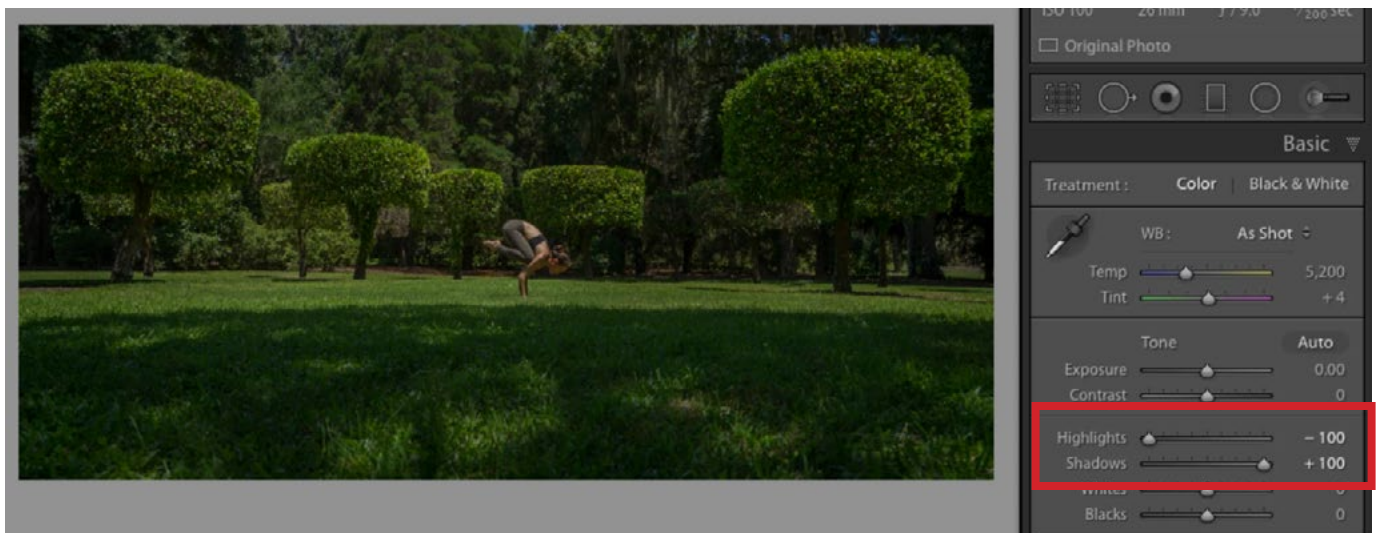
Above is the original image. At left, you can see the final result. The following pages will detail the steps taken to achieve this look.

Start-to-finish image process in Lightroom

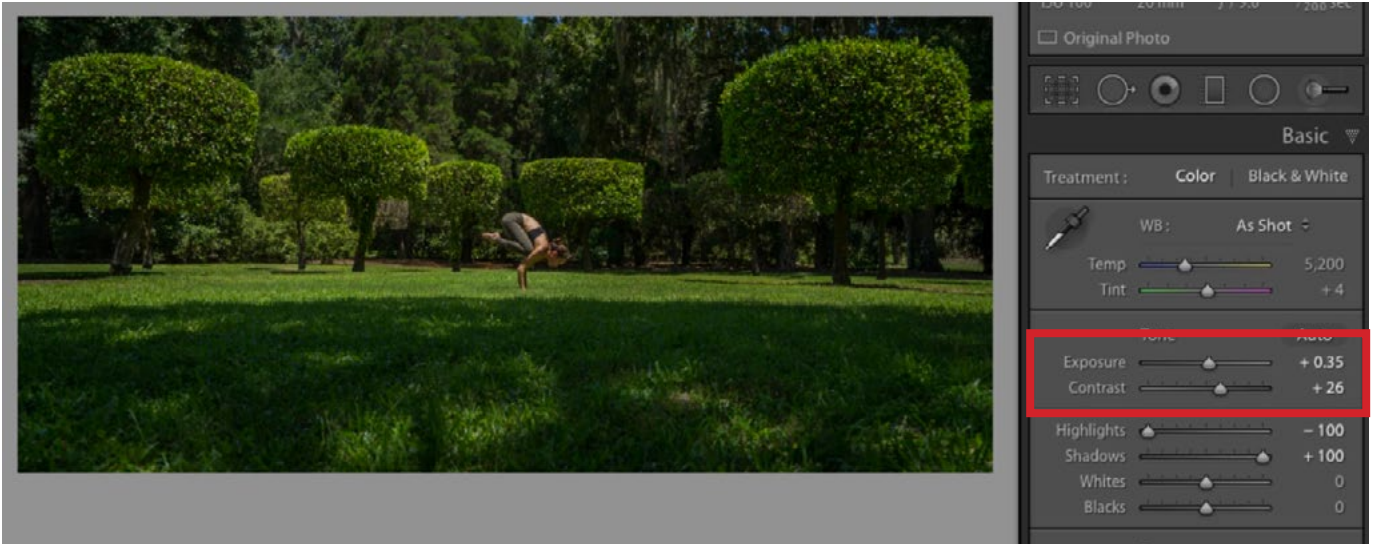
In the next example, we're going to take an image from start to finish using only Lightroom. When we only use Lightroom, the file size will be dramatically smaller than if we used Photoshop.

Crop The first thing I did was crop the image to minimize how much the sky was contributing to the overall composition.

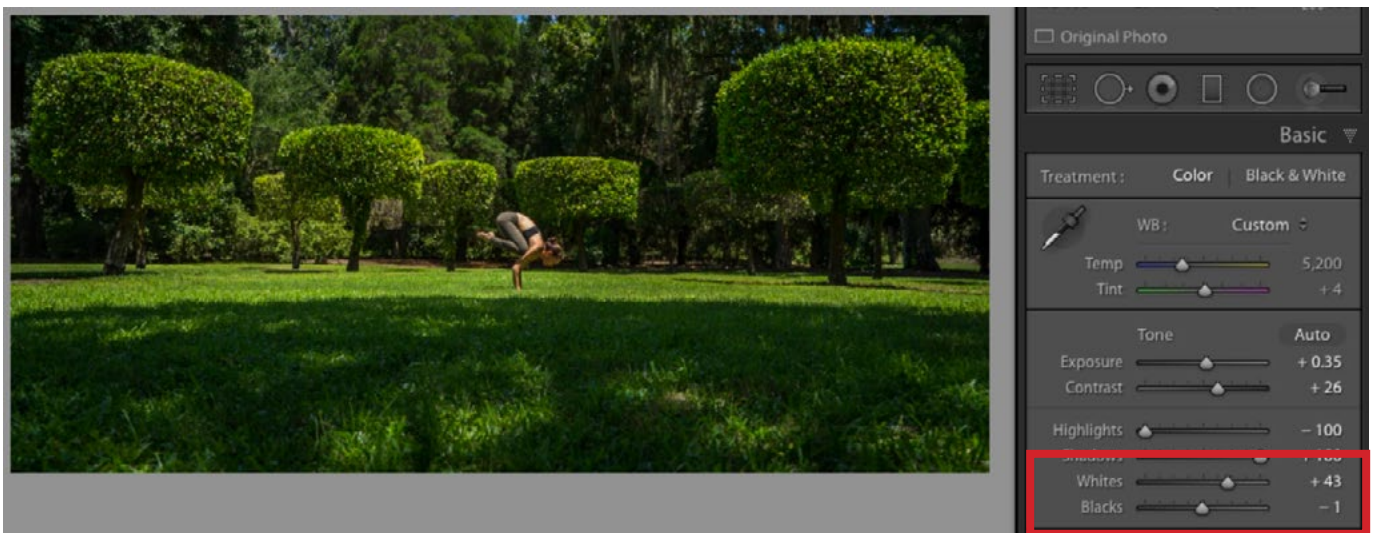
Adjust tonality When working on an image in Lightroom, I generally use the adjustments found under the Basic panel first. With this image, I started by working with the Highlights and Shadows sliders. The Highlights slider controls how bright the brightest areas of your image should be. The Shadows slider controls how dark the darkest areas of the image should be. I made a dramatic change to the image by dragging the Highlights slider all the way to the left and dragging the Shadows slider all the way to the right. Whenever I move the Highlights and Shadows slider to their extremes like this, the image can start to look a little dull. To compensate, I will adjust the Exposure slider and the Contrast slider to control the overall brightness of the image. The last step I'll take in toning my image will be to adjust the Whites and the Blacks sliders. I'll use the Blacks slider to make sure I have a black point in the image, as an image can tend to look dull if it doesn't have a black point. Then I will look at my histogram to see if there is a large gap between the bars of the histogram and the right side of the chart. If there is a gap, I will experiment with the Whites slider to see if the image would benefit from brighter highlights.



The first step in adjusting the tonality was to move the Highlights and Shadows sliders. In this case, these sliders were set to their extremes. (Highlights at -100, Shadows at +100.)

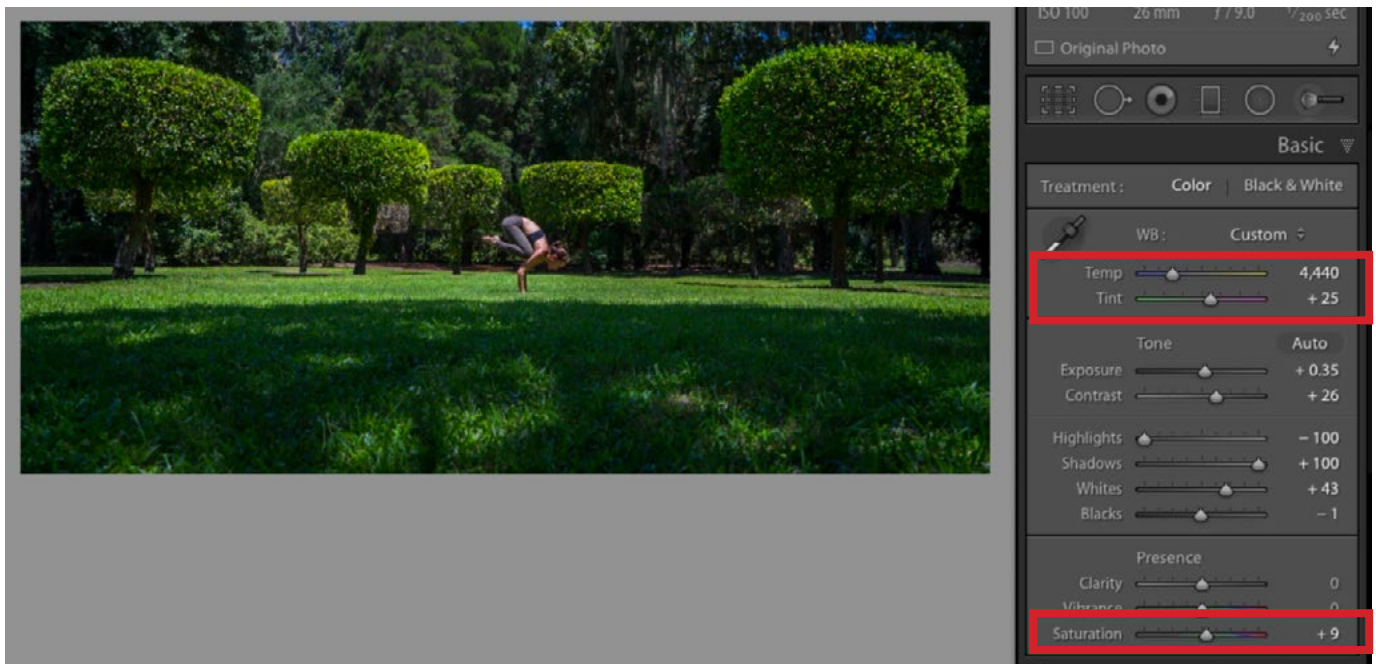


After setting the Highlights and Shadows sliders to their extremes, we used the Exposure and Contrast sliders to control the overall brightness.



The final step in adjusting the tonality was to set the Blacks and Whites sliders to their optimal positions. I like to make sure there is a black point. If there's not, the image can tend to look dull.

Adjust color After adjusting the tonality of an image, I will then begin to adjust the color. The four sliders in the Basic panel that control color are Temperature, Tint, Vibrance and Saturation. At this point, the colors in the image are starting to look rather exaggerated. It was mainly the greens that were a little too much so I adjusted the Temperature and Tint sliders to make the greens a little less yellow and a little more pure green. I also moved the Saturation slider to the right by a small amount in order to give the entire image a color boost.



In adjusting the color, the Temperature and Tint sliders were used to make the image look a little less yellow and the Saturation slider was moved up by a small amount.

I have now worked my way through the Basic panel and will next move on to adjust color using the HSL panel. HSL stands for Hue, Saturation and Luminance. The sliders in this panel are designed to affect each color individually, so they allow you to target a very specific color range in your image. The Hue sliders will affect the basic color. The Saturation sliders will affect how colorful things are and the Luminance sliders will affect how light or dark a color is. Each of these sets of sliders has a little donut-shaped icon to the left. If you click to activate this tool, you can

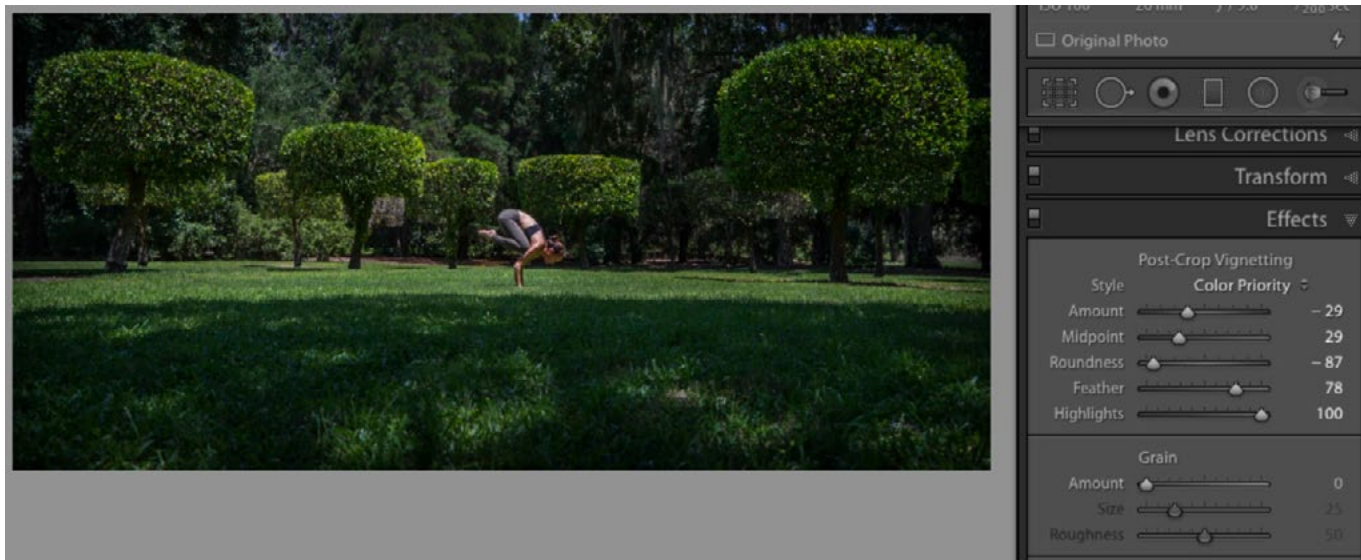
click on an area of your image and drag up or down to affect the hue, saturation or lightness of the color range targeted beneath your cursor. If the area you click on is made up of more than one color, then more than one of the coordinating sliders will move when you drag up or down. In the example image, I activated the Saturation sliders (by clicking on the word “Saturation” at the top of the HSL panel) and then dragged the Green slider to the left, toning down the greens and making the greenery in the image look more realistic. I also moved the Blue slider to the left, desaturating the sky to make it less prominent. Karen’s skin was a little too colorful, so I corrected this by dragging down the Red and Magenta sliders just a small amount. I then clicked on the word Luminance to access the Luminance sliders. I moved both the Green and Blue Luminance sliders to the left, darkening those two colors to further tone down the greenery and the sky.



The colors were also adjusting using the sliders in the HSL panel. In the screen shot above, the Saturation sliders were used to tone down the green, blue, red and magenta. In the screen shot at left, the Luminance sliders were used to make the greens and blues a little darker.

Add vignette A vignette can be used to draw the viewer's attention toward the center of the image (by darkening the edges) and that's the next step I took with this image. The vignette settings can be found within the Effects panel. I used the Post-Crop Vignetting sliders to create a vignette that only affected the edges of the image and did not extend into the center very much. I achieved this by moving the Amount slider to the left and then moving the Midpoint and the Roundness sliders more to the left than I usually would. The Midpoint setting determines how far the vignette should extend into the image. The Roundness slider will determine whether the corners of the vignette will be more rounded or more rectangular. I also moved the Feather slider up to make the transition much softer. The Feather slider determines how soft or abrupt the vignette is.

Tip: After you adjust the Amount slider, you can hold down the Option key (Alt on Win) while adjusting any of the other sliders and it will act as if the Amount slider is set to 100. When you release the Option key, the view will switch back to reflect the *actual* amount setting. Seeing this preview allows you to get a better view of how the slider you're working with is affecting the image.



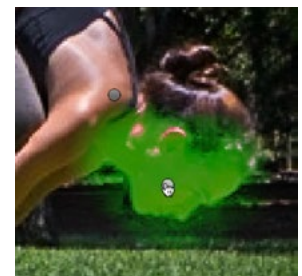
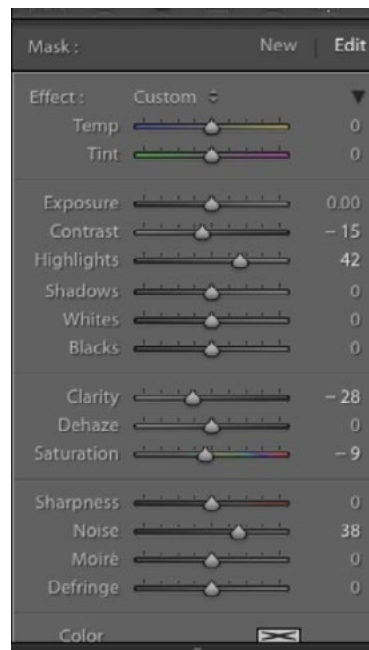
A vignette was created by using the Post-Crop Vignetting sliders within the Effects panel.

The Adjustment Brush At this point, I have made all of the adjustments I needed to make on the image as a whole. Now, I will target specific areas using the Adjustment Brush, which can be found in the Toolbar just beneath the Histogram in the Develop Module. When you activate the Adjustment Brush, all of the sliders that go along with the brush will appear in the panel on the right side of the interface. When you adjust one or many of the sliders, the resulting adjustment is what you will paint in using the brush. You can make multiple different adjustments (targeting different areas) by clicking the word “New” at the top of the adjustment panel. In the example image, I made several different sets of adjustments that targeted different areas of the image. Let’s look at those:

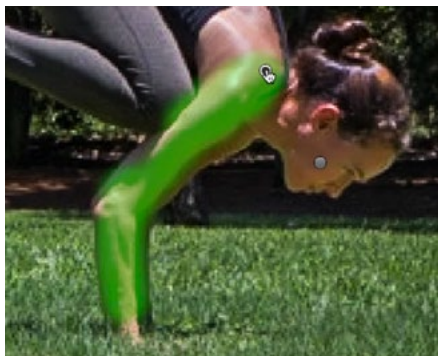


We used several instances of the Adjustment Brush to enhance the skin areas in this image.

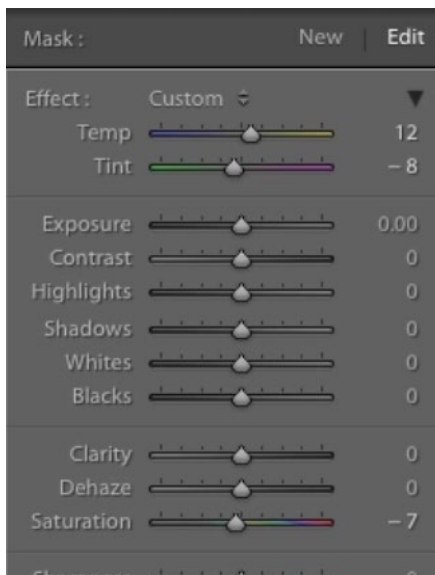
Skin on face In the first local adjustment, I wanted to only affect the skin on her face. I used the brush to paint over the face area and then worked with some of the sliders. I wanted her face brighter and a little less colorful, so I moved the Highlights slider up and the Saturation slider down. To soften her face, I moved the Clarity slider and the Contrast slider down a bit. Because I lightened the area, I also moved the Noise slider up in order to compensate for any noise that was added by the lightening effect.



The Adjustment Brush settings on the left were used to enhance the face area. The colored overlay is viewable by hovering your cursor over the adjustment pin.



The arm was targeted and the Temperature and Tint sliders were used to make it more yellow. The Saturation slider was used to make the area a bit less colorful.

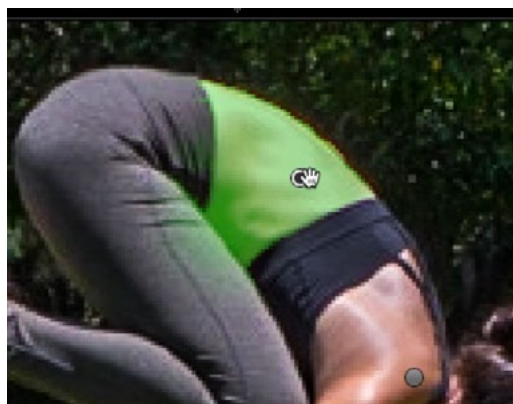


Color adjustment to arm

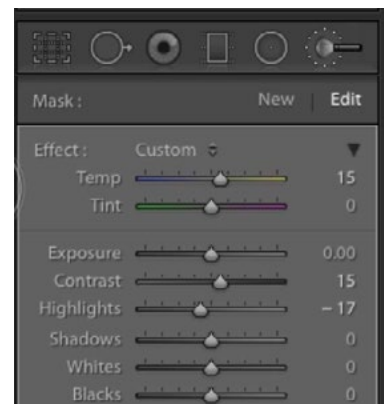
I wasn't completely happy with the color on her arm so I made another adjustment to affect this area only. I used the Temperature and Tint sliders to shift the color a little towards yellow and away from magenta. I also used the Saturation slider to make the area slightly less colorful.

Light adjustment on back

The next adjustment I made was designed to target her back. I felt the lighting was a little too harsh so I moved the Highlights slider down and the Contrast slider up. I also shifted the color a little more towards yellow by using the Temperature slider.

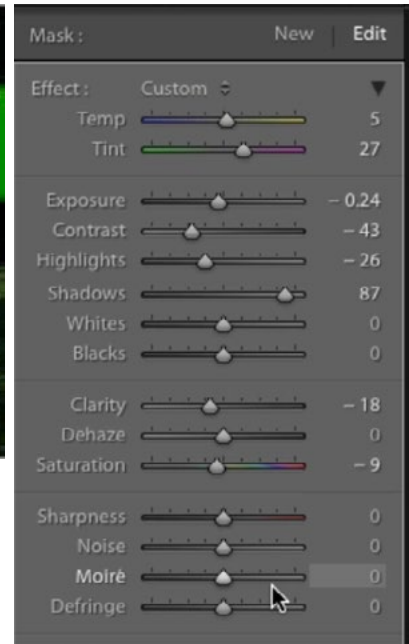


The back was targeted and then we moved the Highlights slider down, the Contrast slider up and the Temperature slider towards yellow.



Light adjustment on foot Targeting her foot, I made a similar adjustment to the one for her back, toning down the harsh light a bit.

Enhance tone of the bushes The next set of Adjustment Brush changes I made were designed to affect the rounded bushes. I used the brush to paint over the bushes and then worked with the sliders on the right. The main change I made was to lighten the shadows by dragging the Shadows slider far to the right. I also lowered the Contrast, Highlights and Clarity sliders.



The rounded bushes were targeted with the Adjustment Brush and then the sliders were used to brighten the shadows and lower the exposure, contrast, highlights clarity and saturation.

Tone down the sky At this point, the sky still caught my attention too much. I want the viewer's attention to be on the subject, not the sky, so I used the Adjustment Brush to desaturate and darken the small areas of sky. I also moved the Temperature slider a little toward the right in order to make the color of the sky more similar to the color of the surroundings. All of these adjustments helped to make the sky less noticeable in the scene.

Minimize light patches in foreground Looking at the image, the patches of light on the grass in the foreground bothered me, so I used the Adjustment Brush to make them less noticeable. I did this by lowering the Highlights and the Saturation. I also tweaked the Temperature and Tint sliders to make the color of the light patches match the surrounding grass that's in the shadows.



The light patches on the grass were minimized and here you can see the before view (above) and after view (below).

There are just a few more small changes I made with the Adjustment Brush to fine-tune the image. They are as follows:

1. Darken shrubbery in the background.
2. Darken light area near right edge of the image.
3. Darken light area near left edge of the image.
4. Darken patch of dirt on left side of the frame.

