

Do I *have* to edit my
photos?

Short answer: **YES!**

Bellwork

1. What makes a good photograph?
2. What do you know about photo editing?
3. Should you edit your photos?

Discuss with your neighbors what you think of each, and be prepared to share.

Objective

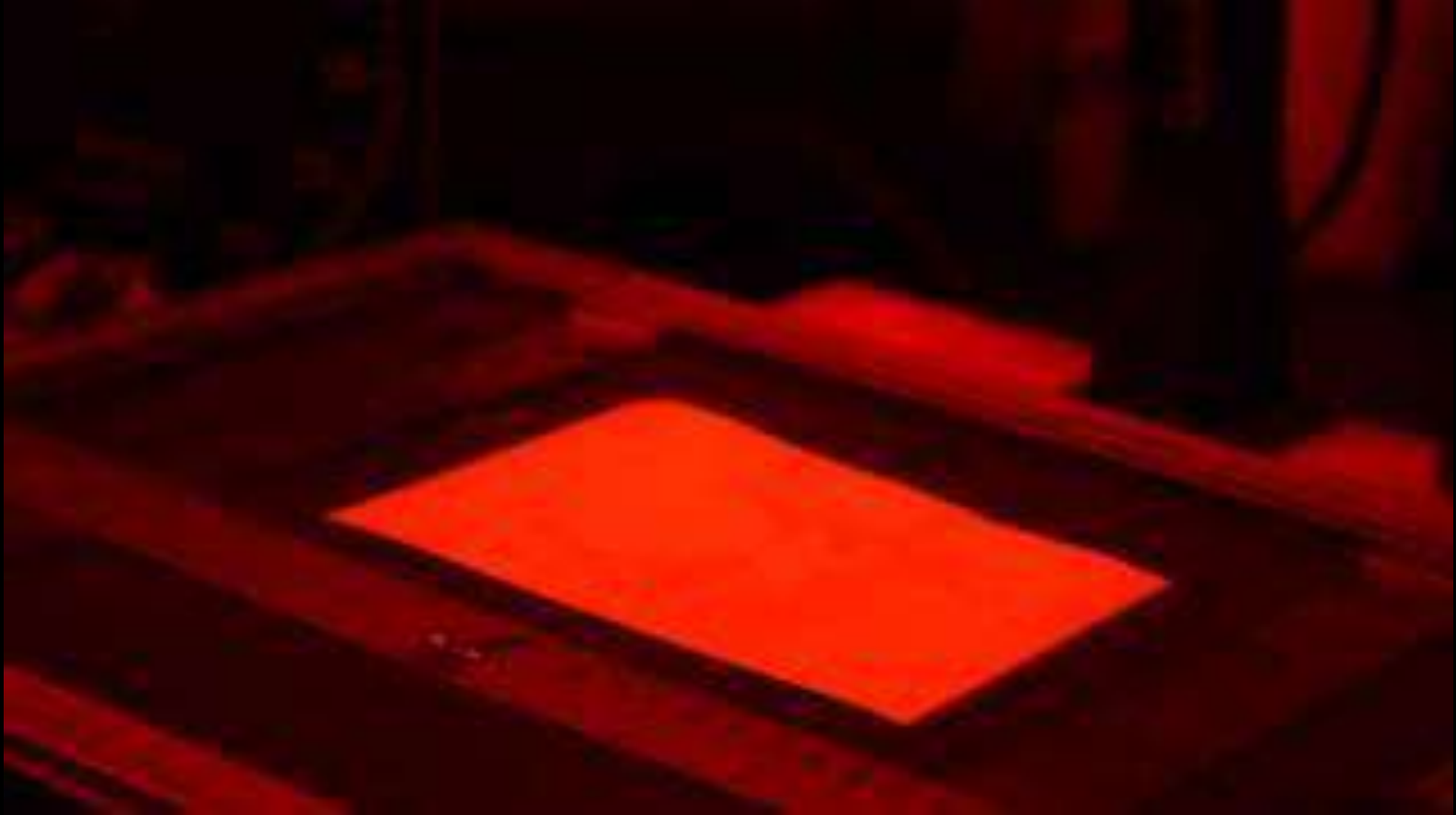
Students will be able to:

- Understand why we edit photos
- Think of the workflow when they finish taking photos and begin editing photos
- Why we save the images the way we do





How They Use To Edit Photos Before Digital



Editing = DEVELOPING

In the darkroom, we take negatives and turn them into positive images(*photos*).

Think of the digital photo that comes **S**traight **O**ut **O**f your **C**amera ("**SOOC**") as the "*negative*" you must still develop.



“But the picture looks fine already...”

There's a whole slew of photographers who say you shouldn't *have* to edit your photos if you “*get it right in camera*” first(*Meaning, if you have correct exposure*). This is only partially true.

Of course, we want to ensure we are taking photos with good exposure and composition in camera(*Why we learn Shutter Speed/Aperture/ISO and how to photograph in manual mode!*).



But that's only half the story

Photography is **ART**, and your vision may sometimes differ from what the camera actually records for you.

THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH THIS.

You are allowed to alter the image until **YOU** are happy with what it looks like.

Remember: **YOU** are the “*director*” who is showing the viewer what you want them to see.



Have a Vision, Photograph Towards It, Edit It

That said, we also want to ensure we ***are*** getting as close to the image we want when we're shooting.

The opposite of the “**SOOC**” club are the “**Fix it in Post**” photographers who take sloppy photos with the belief they can “**fix**” errors in post-processing.

*(You can do a fair amount of correcting, but should **ALWAYS** check your settings before you press the shutter!)*



Ansel Adams, world-famous landscape photographer, was known to spend up to 8 hours **on a single print** in the darkroom, making it look exactly the way he wanted before releasing it to the public.

Moonrise over Hernandez

Ansel Adams



Without Darkroom Manipulation



With Darkroom Manipulation

But he didn't stop there. Over the years available chemicals changed, his skills improved, and he reprocessed some of his famous images over and over again:





Edits don't have to be drastic

You want your viewer to say:
"What a great photo!"

You don't want your viewer to
say: ***"What a great edit you
did!"***

(This is an iPhone photo!)



But You Can Bring the Drama if You Want to

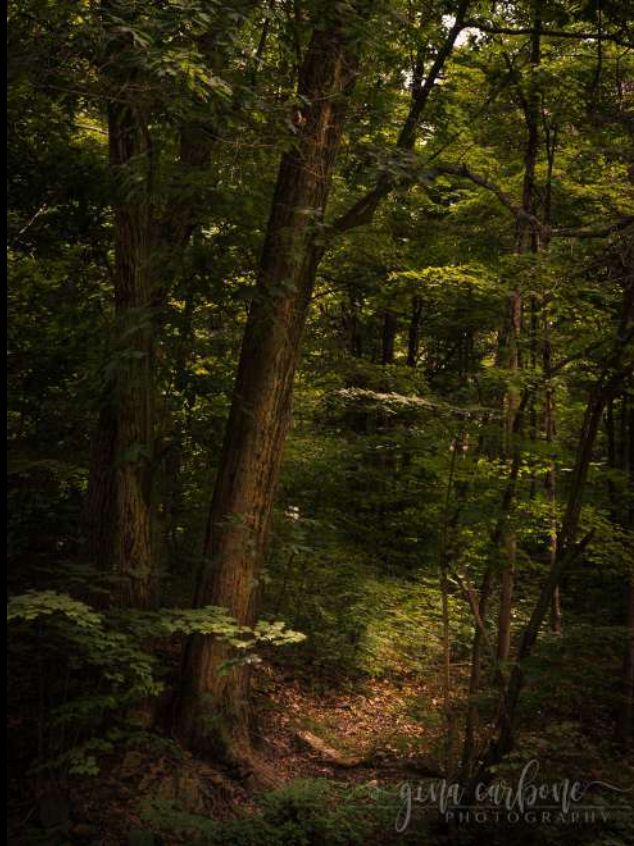


It will take time, experimentation and practice for you to find your “**style**” and even then, it can still evolve over time.

Some might prefer the photo on the left, and that’s OK, too!

BUT - there is a difference between a style choice, and not wanting to do the work to correct or enhance your image.

How Do you Want the Viewer to Feel When They Look at Your Photo?



Emotion is important in photography, too.

You are not just conveying what you saw, but how you *felt* when you took the photo.

How do you convey this feeling to your viewer?

The Basic Editing Workflow

Crop

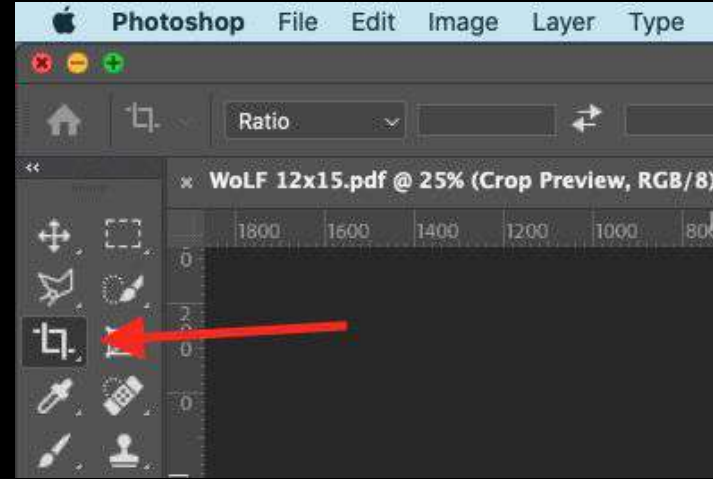
Check your **COMPOSITION**.

- Is your subject clear?

Can it be improved by removing anything?

- Is there “dead space” around it?

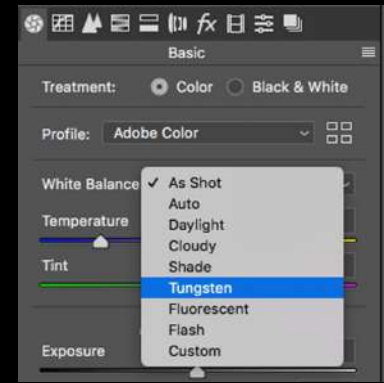
Are there any distractions on the edges of your frame?
(“*Edge Patrol*”)



White Balance

Are the whites actually white?

- *Do you want them to be?*

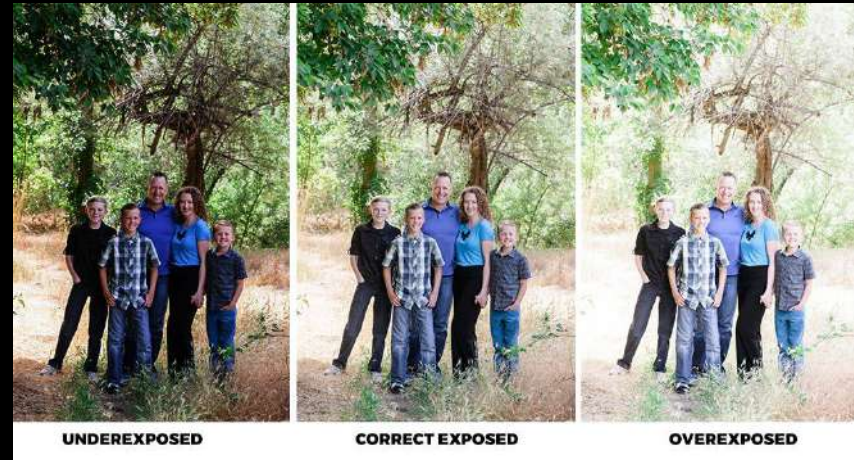


Exposure

Is your photo too bright? Too dark?

What is your main focus? Are they too bright or too dark?

- Sometimes your main subject can be properly exposed and the rest of the photo can be darker or brighter, depending on what **YOU** want.
- Correct any issues, increase/decrease highlights, shadows, etc.



Color

Is the **Vibrance/Saturation** the way you want it to be in your photos?

Do you want to emphasize or change individual colors?

Do you want to enhance or reduce the colors in your photos?

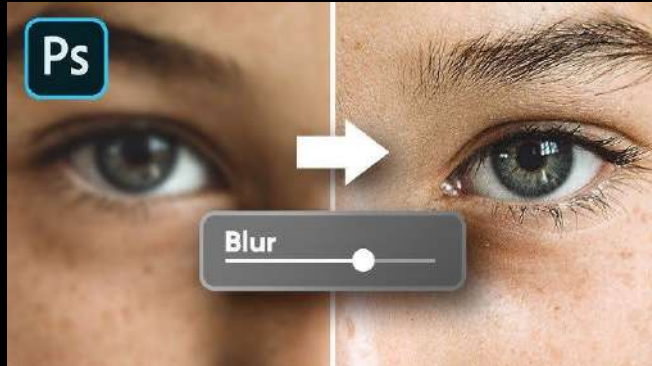
Maybe change the photo to **Black & White** or Emphasize one color?



Details & Effects

- Sharpening, Clarity, Dehazing, Texture

Use these sparingly!



The Folders We Make

Whenever we come in from a photoshoot we always make a Shoot Folder that has the date of the shoot plus what the shoot was about. For this example, we'll just use our first shoot on **August 6, 2024** to capture something **BLUE**. So we named our shoot folder **240806 Blue**. The reason for this is because when you've been photographing for awhile, using the year first will help keep everything well organized, and looking for an easy phrase or keyword of your shoot will help when you're looking for the folder.

We then make three separate folders in this folder.

- The first folder is **RAW**, which is where we put our unedited photos in (*They're also RAW image files when we start using DSLR's, but more on that later*).
- The second folder is **EDITS**, which is where we save all of our **Photoshop Document** (PSD) files. These file types are great since they let us save our adjustment layers, which allows us to revisit work if we need to change anything or save our work at the end of class to start the next day.
- The third and final folder we create is **JPEGs**, and this is where you export your final versions of your edited photos as JPEGs to turn in for assignments.

That was a lot...

Why We Save The Way We Do

Simply put, we put all of our unedited/**RAW** photos in the **RAW** folder so we can go back to them at any time to have our original photos if we need to edit them in a new way.

We save them as **PSDs** in the **EDITS** folder so we can save the adjustment layers so we can pause/resume our work, or return to a file to readjust something later.

JPEGs are the condensed down versions of our images that don't have access to the adjustment layers, so if we wanted to change anything after we exported the images to JPEGs, we'd have to do it on the final versions(Which is hard to do if you want to remove black and white edits and make them color, etc). This is why we keep our **RAW** images and save our **Edits** as PSDs.

Conclusion

Think back to some of the photos you've taken before that you've posted to social media. Did you edit them? Did you keep them unedited? If you didn't edit them, why? Do you think you would change that after this lesson?

Talk to your neighbors and be prepared to share with the class.