



Camera Raw 10.3

April 2018 Update

Welcome to the latest Camera Raw update. This is provided free to ensure everyone can be kept up-to-date with the latest changes that have taken place in Photoshop.

This bulletin includes basic information about Camera Raw. The features described here will be accessible to all Creative Cloud subscribers and those who have purchased the current version of Photoshop CC. For a complete description of how to use these new Photoshop tools, with diagrams and step-by-step tools, I recommend you buy the Adobe Photoshop CC for Photographers: 2018 Edition book.

Profiles update

Camera Profiles have long been hidden away in the Camera Calibration panel. However, the latest releases of Camera Raw and Lightroom sees the Profiles menu repositioned up front at the top of the Basic panel. This now makes profiles more obvious and encourages you to explore the available profile options first before you start adjusting the tone and color settings. In the past, Camera Raw profiles were for adjusting raw photos only. But the new Creative profiles can now be applied to any image. To access the Profile Browser, click Browse... from the Basic panel Profile menu, or click on the Browser icon highlighted in red in Figure 1 below. As you roll the cursor over the list in the Profiles section the preview will update and you can select the desired profile.

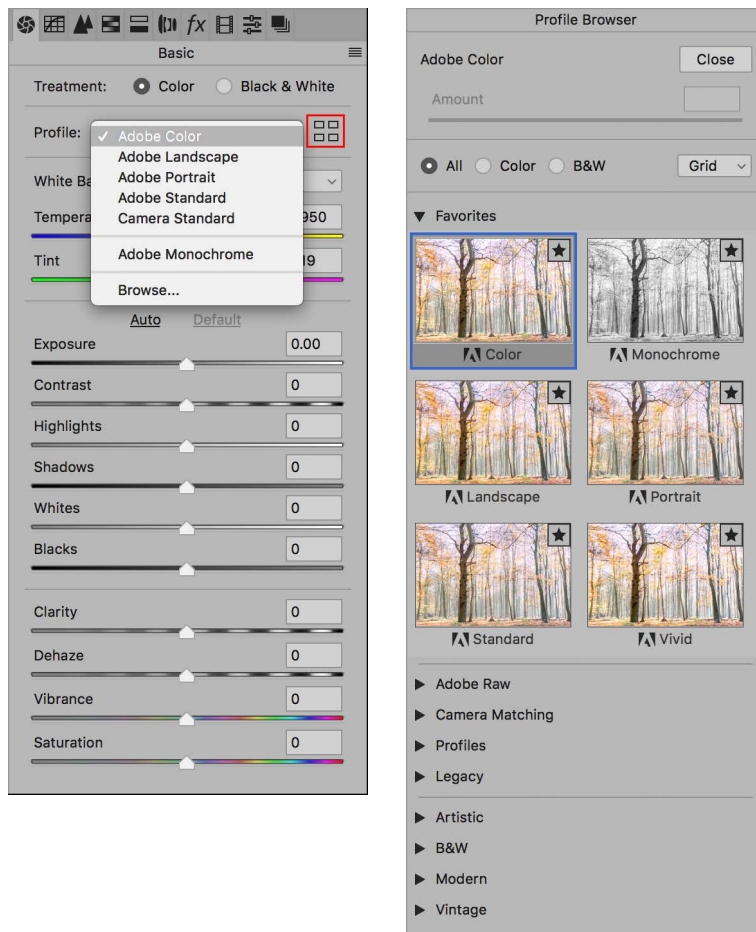


Figure 1 The Basic panel profile menu (left) and Profile Browser (right).

Adobe raw profiles

The top section of the Profile Browser contains all the profiles you would want to apply prior to making any adjustments. Starting with the Adobe Raw profiles, these aim to apply a standardized profile look regardless of the raw camera file type. Therefore, if you were to photograph an event using say, both Canon and Fuji cameras, whenever you apply an Adobe raw profile such as Adobe Color, Adobe Landscape or Adobe Neutral, these should result in similar looks, despite being shot on different cameras. At the same time these Adobe profile looks have all been updated to provide improved tone and color rendering. To explain in more detail how such consistency is achieved, behind the scenes Camera Raw applies first an Adobe Standard tone and colour profile correction (according to the camera file type) and then adds a further profile correction on top (such as Adobe Color or Adobe Vivid).

The biggest change to note here is that the new Adobe Color profile is now applied by default in place of Adobe Standard. The difference between the two is fairly subtle, but Adobe Color applies a slightly stronger tone contrast and adds more warmth to the reds. Crucially, applying Adobe Color to newly-opened raw images affects the sharpening settings too (see Default sharpening). Advanced users may happen to have custom profiles they created using the free Adobe DNG Profile Editor program. These will appear listed in a separate 'Profiles' category and, below that you'll see a Legacy profiles group to maintain backward compatibility with older versions of the Adobe raw profiles.

Creative profiles

The bottom section contains creative profiles. You will most likely want to apply these after having first optimised the tone and color. Essentially, these profiles can be used to add special effects. There are organised into the following groups Artistic, Modern and Vintage plus there is a B&W collection of profiles with different black and white conversions.

In a way, selecting one of these profiles is a bit like choosing a preset. i.e. you select an option and the image changes. However, under the hood, Creative Profiles now take advantage of 3D Look Up Tables (LUTs) and can also apply nearly any of the effects that are possible within Camera Raw. You can always use presets to include a specific profile so that selecting a preset applies a profile rather than alters the Develop settings (or, you can have it do both). Unlike presets though, profiles apply relative rather than absolute adjustments.

You see, the problem when using some Camera Raw presets is that the preset settings apply fixed settings. These may work well with some images, but can't be guaranteed to work for all. The creative profiles, on the other hand, effectively apply a filter adjustment on top of the settings you have applied already rather than substituting existing settings with new values, which might ruin the image. Selecting a creative profile however, does not affect any slider values. Plus, you can use the Amount slider to vary the effect intensity.

How to match your camera 'looks'

The Camera Matching profiles apply a profile that aims to match the color look settings in your camera and this will vary depending on the type of raw file you have opened in Camera Raw. If you select the Standard profile, this applies a profile correction that matches the standard camera look (as opposed to what Adobe believe the best standard look should be). This can also be referred to as the 'JPEG look'. For example, if you capture both raw and JPEG and review the raw and JPEG photos alongside each other in Bridge, the initial (camera embedded) raw preview will appear identical to the JPEG, but after a few seconds change appearance as the Camera Raw rendering kicks in behind the scenes and applies the default Camera Raw profile. This used to be Adobe Standard, but is now Adobe Color. However, if you choose to apply the Camera Matching Standard profile the raw look should near enough match the JPEG. And, if you happened to shoot with the camera in say, Velvia/Vivid mode on a Fuji X camera, applying the same Camera Matching profile to the raw file will give you a close match.

Figure 2 shows (top) a Camera JPEG, and below, a raw capture with the Camera Standard profile applied. Notice how the raw image processed image appears near enough the same as the JPEG when the Camera Standard profile is applied.



Figure 2 A comparison between a JPEG capture (top) and a raw capture (below) using the Camera Standard profile.

Black and white profiles

The black and white profiles can be a useful place to start when converting a photo to black and white. You can roll the mouse over the B&W profile options to see which you like best. Having done that, the Black & White Mix panel sliders remain active, which means you can continue to adjust the sliders to refine the adjustment to achieve the desired look (see Figure 3).

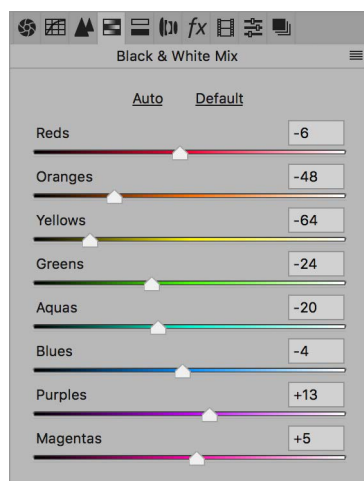
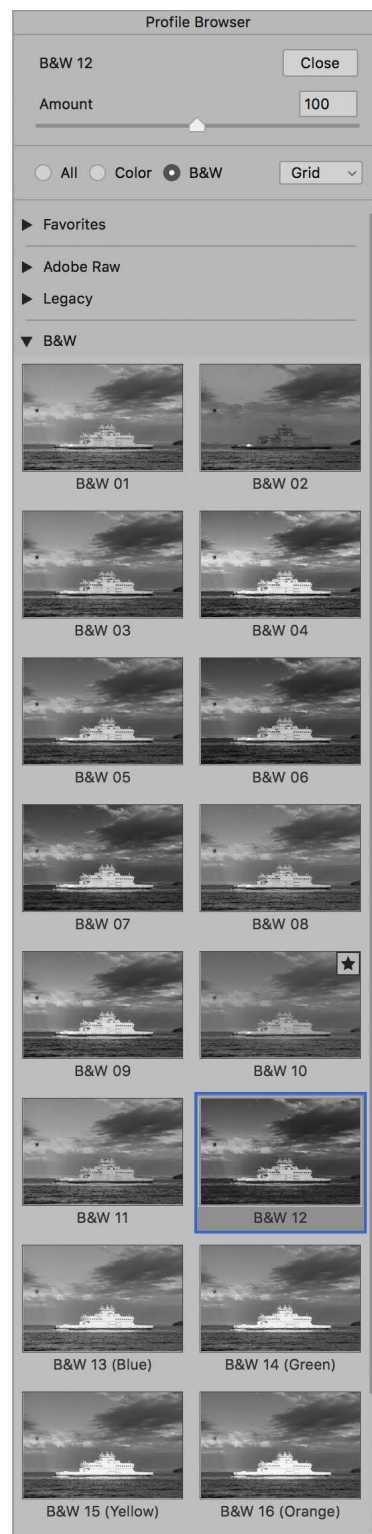


Figure 3 A photo converted to black and white using the B&W 12 profile.

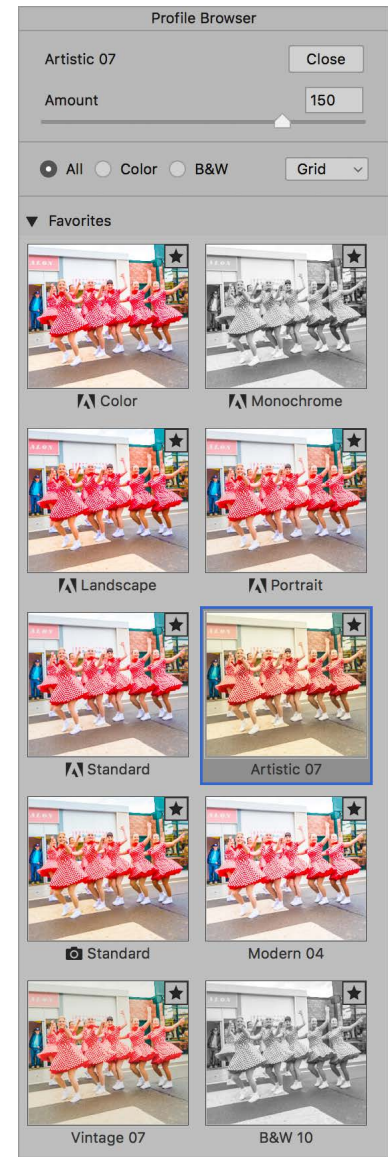


Adjusting the profile intensity

Whenever you have one of the creative profiles selected, the Amount slider, which appears at the top of the Profile Browser becomes active. You can drag this slider to adjust the intensity of a particular profile effect. To give you an example, if you have a black and white profile selected (such as in Figure 3) you can use this to subdue or increase the strength of the black and white adjustment. In Figure 4 below, I increased the Amount setting to 150 to intensify the color profile effect.



Figure 4 A photograph processed using the Artistic 07 profile.

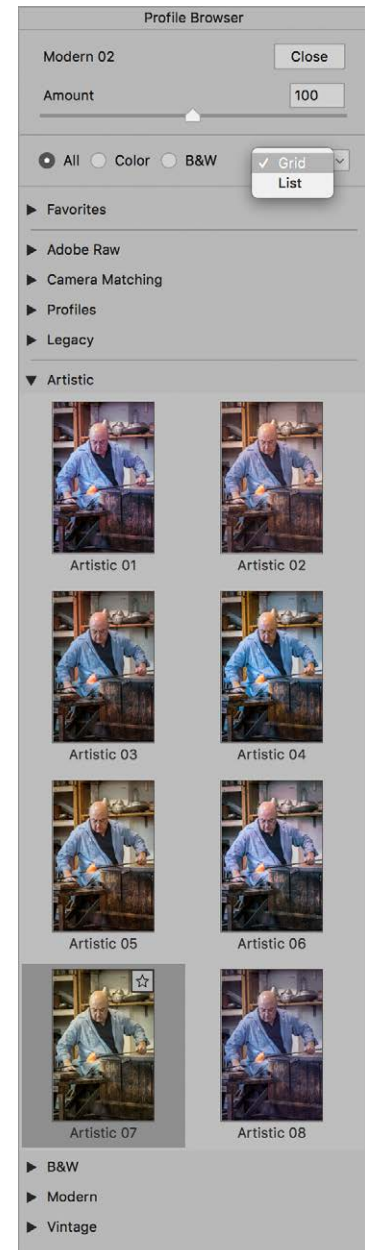


Profile browser management

With the Profile Browser open you can simply hover the cursor over a profile to preview the effect. Then you can double-click to apply a profile and dismiss the browser. The profiles can be displayed in either a Grid or List view and you can use the radio button filters to show the colour or black and white profiles only (see Figure 5).



Figure 5 The preview updates as you roll the cursor over the profile list.



Marking Favourites

With so many profiles to choose from now it can be hard to know which to choose. To make things easier you can click in the top right corner of a profile browser thumbnail to toggle on or off as a favourite. Profiles that have been marked as favourites will then appear listed in the Favorites profiles section (Figure 7).

Improved Adobe Raw profiles

All of the Adobe Raw profiles have been tweaked and improved. For example, the previous Camera Portrait profile tended to apply too warm a colour to skin tones. The new Adobe Portrait profile has been designed to improve the appearance of portrait images. This new version of the profile expands the color resolution for skin tones and helps ensure better color and tonality of portraits of people for all types of skin tones (as shown in Figure 8).



Figure 8 The Adobe Portrait profile offers better skin tone rendering for portrait subjects.

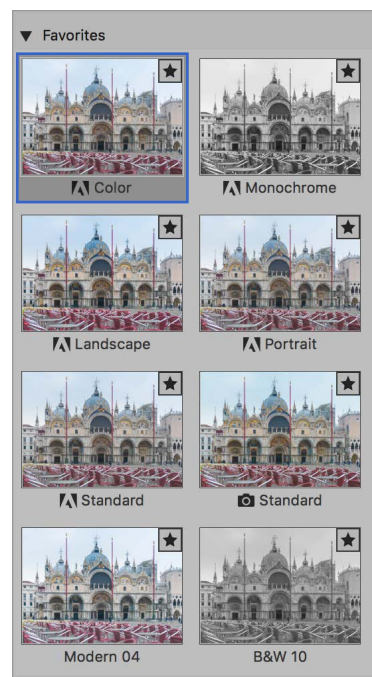


Figure 7 The Favorites section.

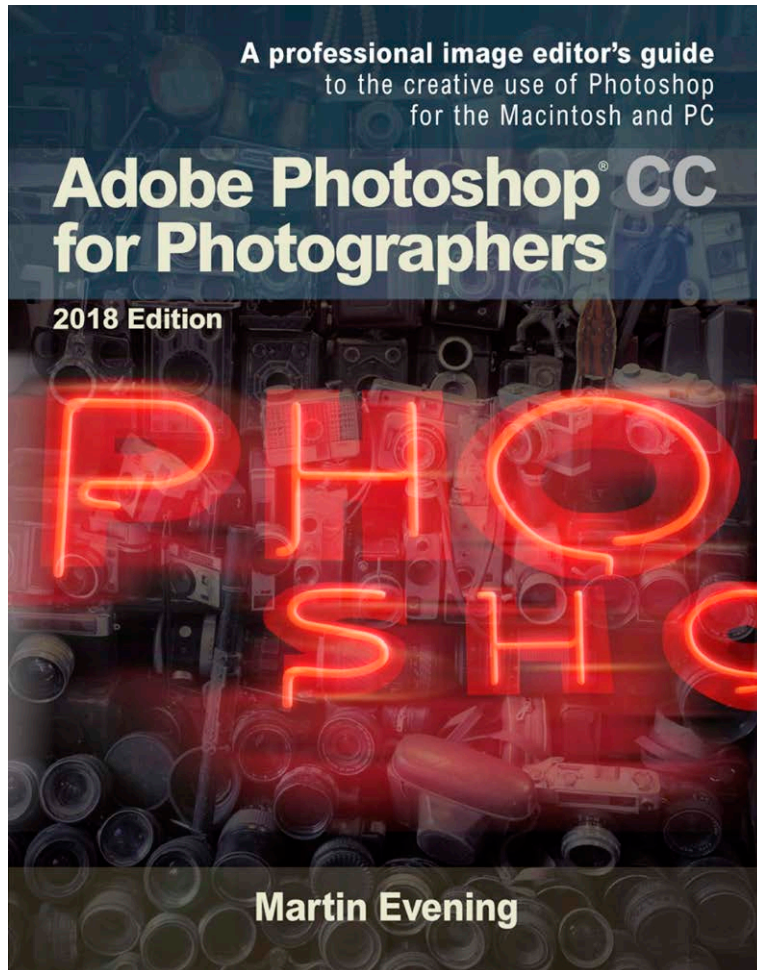
Default sharpening

From now on the new profiles also apply a sharpening amount of 40 in the Detail panel instead of 25. It seems that the reason for this may be to address assertions that Capture One raw processing is sharper than Camera Raw. While Capture One can certainly produce nice sharp results, the perception it is sharper than Camera Raw is mainly down to the fact that the default settings in Capture One happen to apply a more aggressive sharpening. The full story is a little more complex than that and if you want to read how I reached these conclusions there is an article I wrote for [Photoshop User](#) where you can read in more detail my research and findings.

Essentially, Adobe have traditionally tended to apply standardized settings for the tone color and sharpness and therefore been more conservative. The new Adobe Color profile now applies slightly more tone contrast, enhanced colour and stronger default sharpening. These are just default settings of course. If you prefer to use the previous Adobe Standard profile you can do so. If you wish to keep the original defaults open an image in Camera Raw that has had no other adjustments applied to it. Set the Detail panel Amount sharpening to 25. Then go to the Camera Raw dialog fly-out menu and select 'Save new Camera Raw Defaults'. This will apply the chosen profile selection and sharpening settings by default to all new images (which can be further refined via the Camera Raw preferences). Similarly, if you are opening new images expecting to see the Adobe Color profile applied, but aren't, it is most likely because you have existing Camera Raw defaults applied. To apply the new behavior, select "Reset Camera Raw Defaults".

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