Lightroom System April 2018 Updates

This April Adobe updated Lightroom Classic CC. This included a major update to profiles, making profile looks more prominent. Some essential interface tweaks and also featured an update to the face tagging engine.

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 (**Figure 1**). 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 designed 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 below in red.

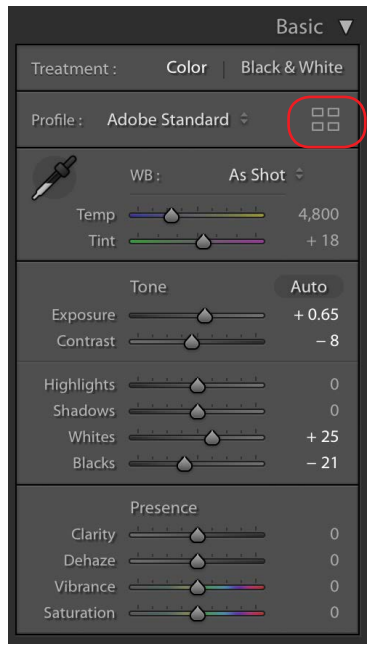


Figure 1 *The Profile Browser can be accessed by clicking on the four rectangles highlighted here in the Basic panel.*

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 colour 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 profiled adjustment 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 any of the new profiles to newly-opened raw images affects the sharpening settings too (see Default sharpening on page 10). 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.

NOTE

The new profiles are XMP based. This means their settings are applied to the image's Develop settings. Even if you don't hapen to have the XMP profile on another computer, shared files will render the same regardless of whether the other user has the same profile on their system or not. However, if the person sharing the file changes the profile to a different profile and overwrites the develop settings, the original profile setting gets wiped out.

Creative profiles

The bottom section contains the creative profiles. You will most likely want to apply these after having first optimised the tone and colour. Essentially, these profiles can be used to add special effects. They are organised into the following groups: Artistic, Modern and Vintage, plus there is a B&W collection of profiles offering different black and white conversions. In a way selecting a creative profile is a bit like selecting 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 or Lightroom. You can always create presets that 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, profiles apply relative rather than absolute adjustments. You see, the problem when using some Lightroom 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 already applied rather than substituting existing settings with new values, which might ruin the image. Selecting a creative profile does not affect any slider values. Plus, you can use the Amount slider to further 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. For example, 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. For example, **Figure 2** shows on the left, a Camera JPEG and on the right a raw capture using the Camera Matching Standard profile. Notice how the raw image processed image appears near enough the same as the JPEG when the Camera Matching Standard profile is applied. 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 *This shows the camera JPEG version (left) and the raw version (right) with the Camera matching Standard profile applied.*

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 (**Figure 3**). Having done that, the B&W panel sliders remain active, which means you can continue to adjust the sliders to refine the adjustment and achieve the desired look.

Figure 3 *The B&W profile options and (above), a photo with the B&W profile applied with some extra tweaks applied via the B&W panel.*

Adjust 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 (see **Figure 4**). You can drag this slider to adjust the intensity of a particular profile effect. For example, if you have a black and white profile selected you can use this to subdue or intensify the strength of the black and white adjustment.

Figure 4 *This shows the Adobe Color profile version (top) and the Vintage 02 profile (below) applied using an Amount setting of 130.*

Profile browser management

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

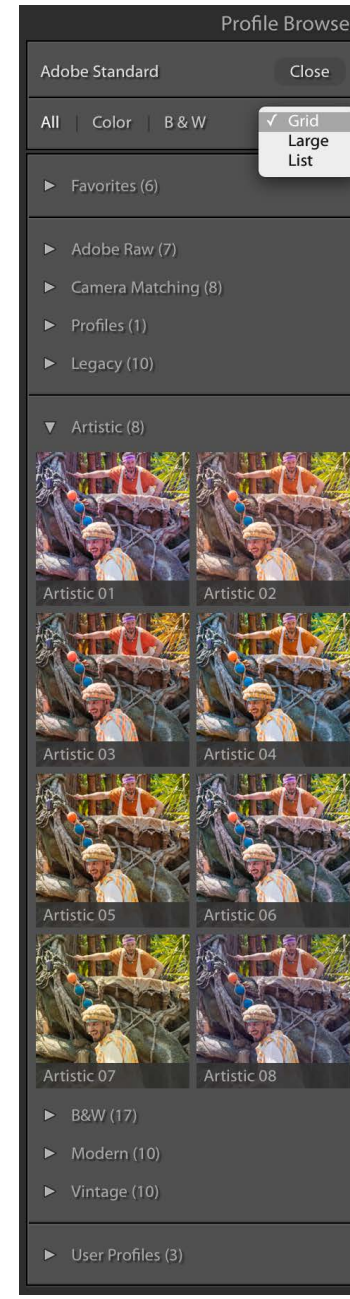


Figure 5 *The Profile Browser panel view options are shown on the right.*

Marking Favourites

With so many profiles to choose from it can be hard to know which to pick. To make things easier you can click in the top right corner of a Profile Browser thumbnail to toggle on or off as a favorite (**Figure 6**). Profiles that have been marked as favourites will then appear listed in the Favorites section.

Figure 6 *The profile Browser Favorites section.*

Adobe Portrait profile

The previous Camera Portrait profile tended to make skin tones appear too warm in color. The new Adobe Portrait profile has been designed to improve the appearance of portrait images (**Figure 7**). This new version of the Adobe Portrait profile expands the color resolution for skin tones and helps ensure better color and tonality in portraits of people with all types of skin tones.

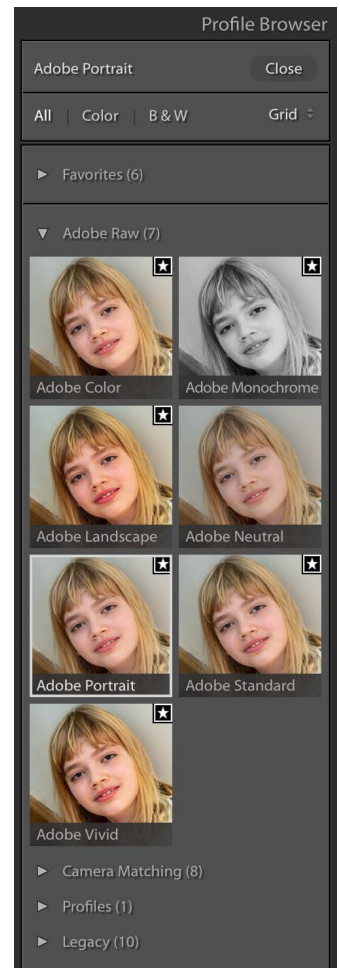


Figure 7 *The Profile Browser with the Adobe Portrait profile selected.*

Profiles in Lightroom CC and mobile apps

To coincide with the launch of Camera Raw 10.3 and Lightroom 7.3, the Lightroom CC for desktop program, as well as all the Lightroom CC apps now also let you apply profiles. Therefore, if editing using say, Lightroom CC for iPhone, you can select a profile via the Edit mode before or after applying other edits (see **Figure 8**).

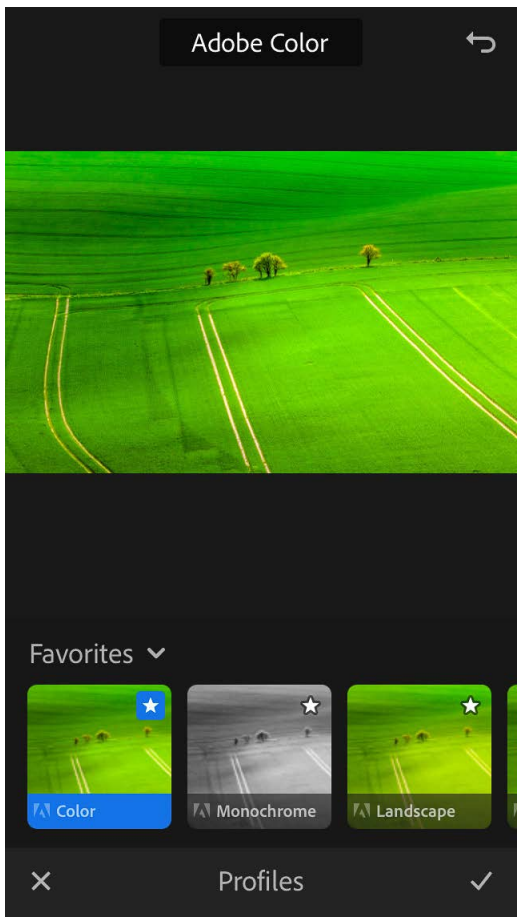


Figure 8 *The Lightroom CC for iPhone interface showing the Profiles options.*

Default sharpening

From now on, whenever you open new raw photos in Camera Raw (or import to Lightroom) the Adobe Color profile is applied by default. At the same time any of the new profiles apply a sharpening amount of 40 in the Detail panel instead of 25 (see **Figure 9**). Maybe the reason for this is 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. 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 color 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 restore, select "Reset Camera Raw Defaults".

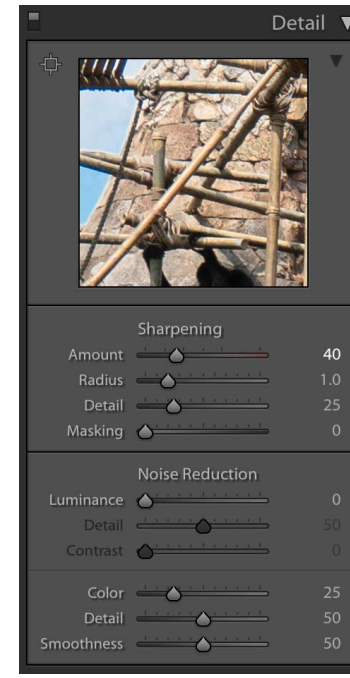


Figure 9 *The Detail panel.*

Develop Presets

In this latest version of Lightroom all thepresets you have loaded in Lightroom will get updated from lua to the xmp format. Consequently, after the conversion to xmp, the original lua based *.lrtemplate* presets are renamed with a ~ prefix. This is so the *.lrtemplate* presets can remain visible to earlier versions of Lightroom that might be running on the same machine. The only thing you are likely to notice is that when first updating Lightroom, you'll see a dialog indicating an update is in progress. After that your presets will appear listed as normal in the Lightroom Develop module Presets panel. At the system folder level the older lua presets will remain in the Lightroom Develop Presets folder (prefixed with a ~). Meanwhile, the new XMP preset versions will be stored in a folder shared with the Camera Raw plug-in. This means that custom Lightroom presets are now shared between Lightroom and Camera Raw and any presets you had created in Camera Raw will now also appear in Lightroom. Also, as you roll the mouse over your presets list the main preview now updates here as well as in the Navigator panel. Lastly, Lightroom will keep checking the system on every launch in case there are presets that have recently been added in the old format that need to be updated.

Presence section in the Basic panel

The Presence section of the Basic panel has been updated to include the Dehaze slider (**Figure 10**), which has been moved here from the Effects panel. This change has been much requested and Adobe have now responded. However, although this can make swapping between the Clarity and Dehaze sliders easier, the Dehaze is still essentially an Effects type adjustment and should therefore be used with some caution when making Basic panel adjustments. Personally, I do Dehaze adjustments to be useful, but more so when applied as a localized adjustment such as when applying the Adjustment brush, Graduated Filter or Radial Filter adjustments.

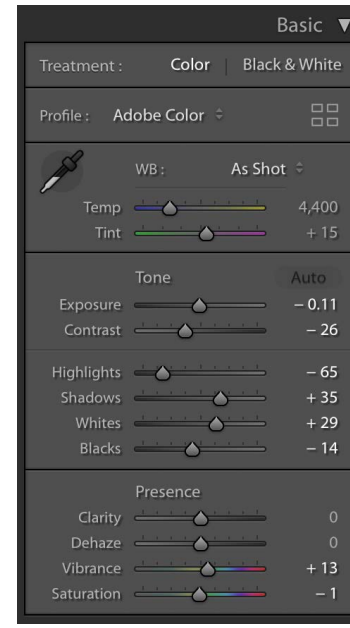


Figure 10 *The Basic panel.*

Larger Tone Curve panel

The Tone Curve panel now features a larger graph (**Figure 11**). And, you will notice the histogram display is more prominent. Don't forget, you can also make the Develop panels wider by clicking and dragging the sidebar to the left. This can give you greater, granular control when adjusting the paramteric sliders.

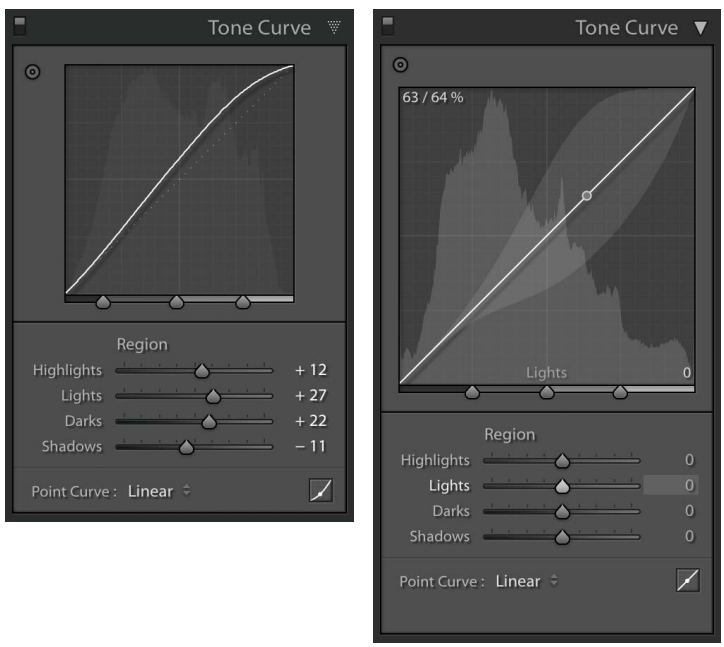


Figure 11 *The previous Tone Curve panel view (left) and new version (right).*

Face Tagging

The underlying face tagging engine in Lightroom has been updated. The new face engine does a better job of picking up faces that the old engine might have missed and improves a little bit on detecting faces in profile.

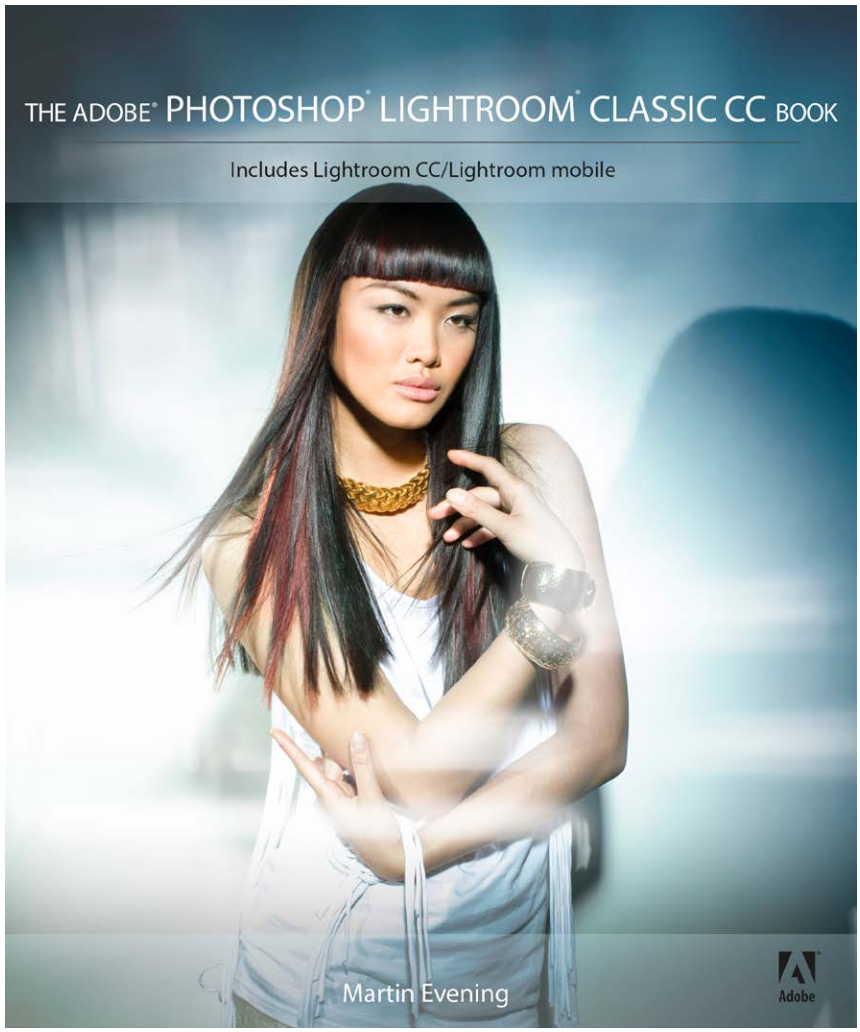
If you are working with a catalog that has already been face-indexed, Lightroom is able to re-index photographs that have existing face regions. These are the square overlays that appear in the Loupe view when the Draw Face Region button is activated in the Toolbar. The Face Regions are preserved while Lightroom re-computes the underlying face descripctor files that are used in face recognition. To initiate this see the section below.

Find Faces Again

To re-index everything, first go to the Library module Catalog panel and click on "All Photographs". Next, select Edit ⇨ Select All to select all the photos in the Grid view or the Filmstrip. Having done that, choose Library ⇨ Find Faces Again. This pops the Find Faces Again dialog (**Figure 12**). Here, you can choose to "Skip photos that have not run face-detection previously". In this case the re-indexing process should not take too long as Lightroom is only computing the face descriptors for already-indexed files, rather than analyzing the catalog all over again. However, until that process has been completed you will only see those photos that have been re-indexed using the new Face engine when carrying out a faces search. The other option is to "Skip photos that include manually confirmed faces". This preserves all manually confirmed faces and does not re-index such photos all over again.

Newly imported photos are analyzed for both the face detection and face recognition stages (providing face indexing is turned on for the catalog and the face regions have not simply been imported from the XMP).

Figure 12 *The Find Faces Again dialog.*



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