PHOTOSHOP: 2.4 WHITE BALANCE

As stated in the 2.1 BASIC PHOTO RETOUCH tutorial, White Balance refers to the accuracy of colors in a photo. When taking a photo, your camera is either set to Auto White Balance, a preset White Balance, or Custom White Balance. Sometimes, especially in indoor lighting, your photo may come out with a color cast on it, making the photo have a certain color tint to it.

In order to do this, you will need to use the Levels adjustment. This can be found in the adjustments panel. Use the black eyedropper to identify the blackest part of the image, and the white eyedropper to identify the whitest part of the image. In some photos, this is obvious, but in most, it is difficult to find this. In this tutorial, you will learn how to white balance a photo using Threshold and Levels adjustment layers.

1. Create a Threshold adjustment layer, either by clicking the Threshold icon in the Adjustments panel, or by clicking on the icon for “Create a new fill or adjustment layer” located at the very bottom of the layers panel, and select Threshold.

2. Go to the properties of the Threshold layer. If you accidently get rid of the properties, you can reopen it by clicking on the half white circle next to the Threshold layer in the Layers panel.

First, drag the Threshold pointer all the way to the left, then slowly drag it back to the right until only a little bit of black is visible. Zoom into the photo where the black is.

3. Right click the Eyedropper tool in the toolbox across the left side of the program, and select Color Sampler Tool. Use this tool to sample the black area in your photo.
4. Repeat but for white: Zoom out of the photo. Go back to the Threshold properties and drag the pointer all the way to the right, then slowly left until only a little bit of white is visible. Zoom into the white area, and use the Color Sampler Tool to sample the white area. Zoom out.

5. Delete the Threshold layer since it has served its purpose.

6. Select the Levels adjustment in the Adjustments panel. In the properties panel, select the black eyedropper, then zoom in to the black sample in the photo. Use the eyedropper to select the same spot. Do the same with the white eyedropper on the white sampled area.

7. Zoom out and you will find that your photo’s White Balance has automatically adjusted.