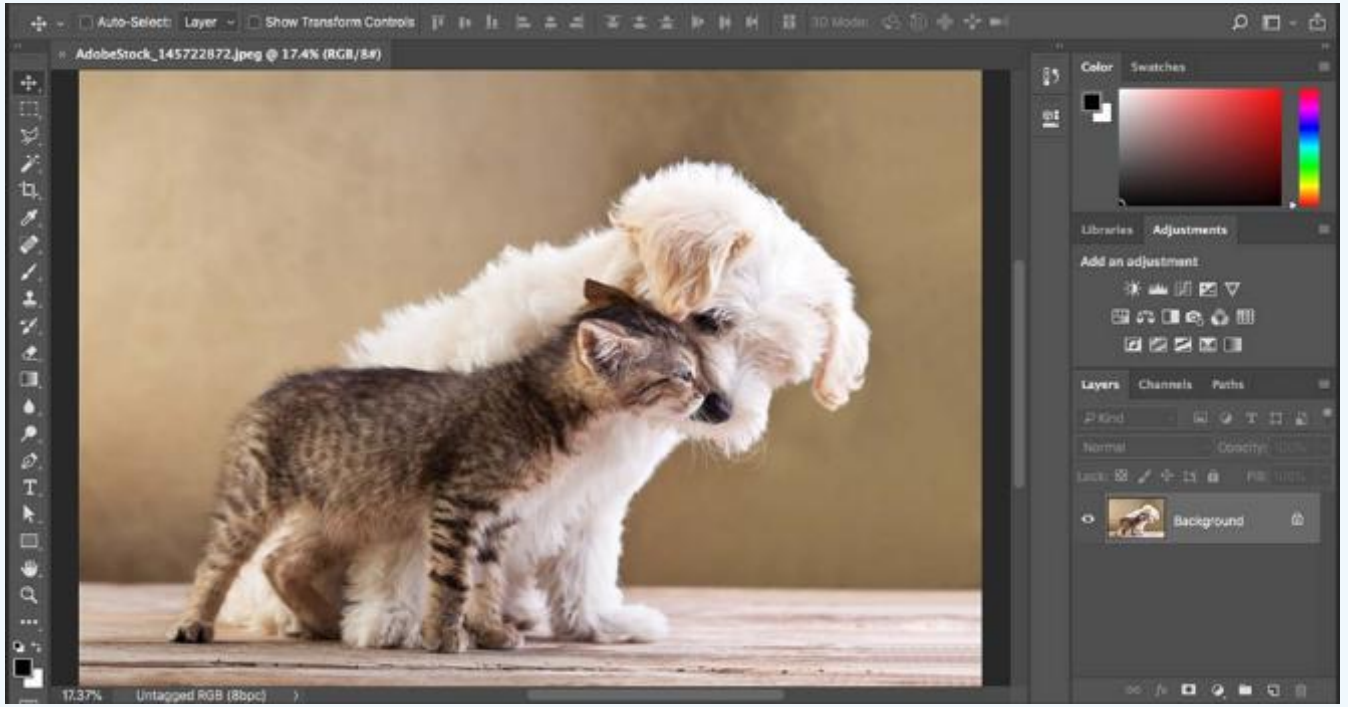


Photo Editing – An Overview

Editing photos can be controversial…

This subject is probably the most divisive topic within the group !

Some members never edit their photos, or very rarely do so.

However, this is the *Digital* Photography Group and so we should embrace and encourage the entire digital imaging process, which includes using your phone, computer/Mac or tablet.

Unless it is specifically not allowed by competition rules, it’s up to individual members to decide how much editing they want to do.

Photo editing has a long history

Photo editing has been around since the very beginning.....

When photo plates were used, artists were employed to paint areas in/out, directly on to the plate.

They were very skilful !

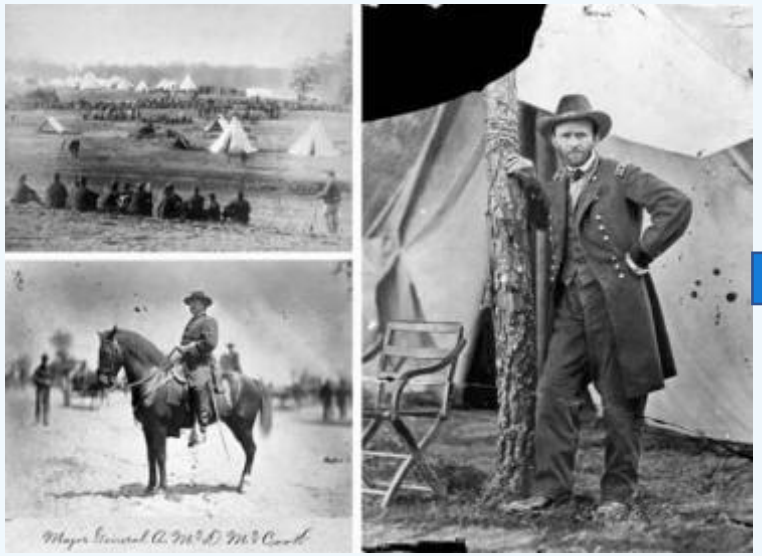




Early Photo Editing has also been controversial !

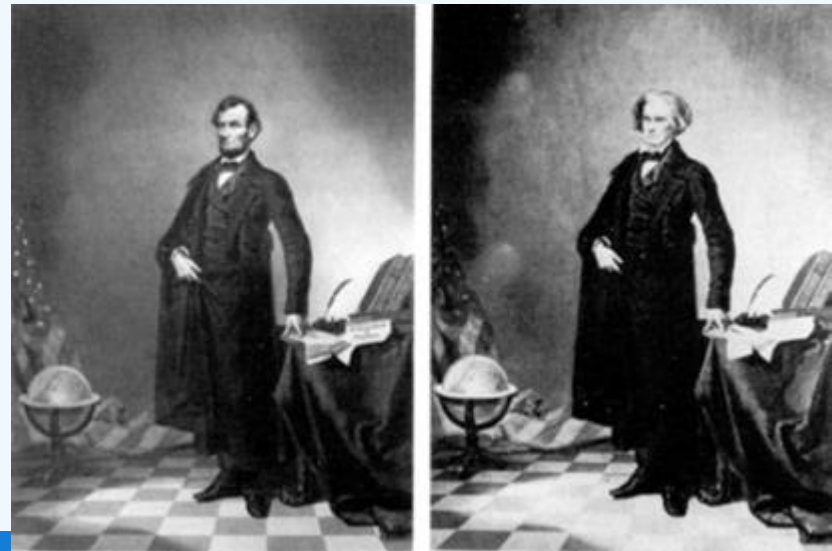
Photographers also became adept at cutting and combining images….

General Grant on a horse (1864)





Fake image of Abraham Lincoln on John Calhoun's body used during 1860 presidential campaign



JPG files are “in camera” edits

Raw image files are unprocessed by the camera.

JPG files are processed by the camera’s internal software.

So even if you refuse to edit your images yourself, if you shoot JPGs, you’re allowing the camera (phone) software to do this for you.

For example, iPhones automatically “enhance” your images if you use “HEIC/HEIF” files.

If we were to ban all human edits, those with with better (more expensive) in-camera software would have an advantage.





Editing – So why do it ?

Broadly speaking, editing is done for one or more of these reasons :-



1) To correct an error

E.g. To straighten the horizon, correct exposure, adjust White Balance etc.

2) To improve the appearance or composition

E.g. Cropping the image, increasing contrast or saturation.

3) To apply an artistic interpretation

E.g. To add or remove elements in the image, dramatically alter colours etc

How much editing do we allow ? – my thoughts

For competitions and exhibitions, I believe the group is happy for individuals to apply **slight** edits/adjustments to their photos. This includes.....

- Cropping
- Minor changes to contrast, detail, tone or colour – aim for a tweak, not a radical change !
- Minor correction of objects – e.g. litter, leaf, branch from non-subject areas etc
- Changing from colour to Black & White or Sepia
- Using Spot Colour
- Adding a vignette
- Removing dust spots, blemishes

How much editing do we allow ? - my thoughts

I believe we are happy to allow more flexibility in the challenges…

If you make radical changes, try to be upfront about it !

We'd all like to learn from what you did. I'm also happy to put it to the group to allow your entry into competitions and the exhibition.

In my view, radical changes should be obvious

E.g. cutting and pasting different images together

Changing the colour of someone's eyes, hair etc

Blurring the background

Replacing the sky, sea or large parts of the image



If you're not sure ask me - **but please do not use someone else's work !**

Before You start editing...



When you start to edit your image, try to have an idea what you want to achieve !

Just like taking photos, editing photos is a skill, which improves with practice.

It is better to make small, subtle, changes to your image and build up.

Over-editing can make your image look odd.

Remember, you can always revert to the original and start again !



Work on a copy !

Photo editors are usually “non-destructive”.

They work on a copy of your image, so you can always revert to the original file.

However, if you save the changes with the same name and in the same directory, your original file can be overwritten.

It is a good idea therefore to save your changes to a new file and/or a new directory.



Finally, editing is your choice…

As Photography is Art, your decisions about what to change, how much to edit and even the final look of the image are all your personal preference.

There is no right or wrong answer.



I teach that your images should be in focus and correctly exposed.

There will always be exceptions, where you have deliberately blurred the image to suggest movement or over/under-exposed the image for a “look”.



In these cases, it should be obvious that you have deliberately done this, to avoid any confusion later !