

## Emergency: Exposure Adjustment

One of the greatest advantages of shooting in RAW format is that you can go into Canon's Digital Professional Pro or Photoshop's Camera Raw and adjust your Exposure setting after the fact. But what if you were shooting JPEGs? You won't have access to all of the Exposure options and will have to try to fix exposure problems using Curves or Levels in Photoshop. However, there is a dedicated Exposure control that you can use on JPEGs, but it works a little differently than the one in Camera Raw (since it was actually designed for use on High Dynamic Range images).

### Preliminaries

Download the photo *Exposure\_Control\_minus\_1.jpg* or *Exposure\_Control\_minus\_2.jpg*. Then download the photo *Exposure\_Control\_zero.jpg*.

### Steps

#### Step One:

Open *Exposure\_control\_zero.jpg* (you will not be changing this photo, just using it as a guide to what changes are necessary). Next, open either *Exposure\_Control\_minus\_1.jpg* or *Exposure\_Control\_minus\_2.jpg*. This is the photo you will try to "rescue".



From left to right: *Exposure\_control\_zero.jpg*, *Exposure\_Control\_minus\_1.jpg*, and *Exposure\_Control\_minus\_2.jpg*.

#### Step Two:

Duplicate the background layer of the underexposed photo by pressing Control-J. Then click on Image, then choose Adjustments and then choose Exposure.

#### Step Three:

The Exposure slider acts like the exposure adjustment on your camera. Dragging the Exposure slider to the right brightens the photo's highlights, but also lightens some of the midtones as well. Dragging the Offset slider to the right lightens the overall image. However, dragging the Offset slider to the left, increases the shadow areas without really affecting the highlights. The Gamma Correction slider mostly affects the midtones and some highlights. Dragging to the right brightens up the midtone areas, while dragging to the left darkens the midtones.

**TIP:** Moving these sliders just a little can create a big adjustment, so adjust slowly and carefully.

#### Step Four:

You can use the Opacity setting to adjust how much effect the adjustment layer has on the photo (reduce the effect by reducing the Opacity). When you have as close a match as you can get to the more correctly exposed photo, go to Layer and choose Flatten Layers.