

White Balance Assignment

You have control of the way you record color in your photographs and you can set the mood of your images through color.

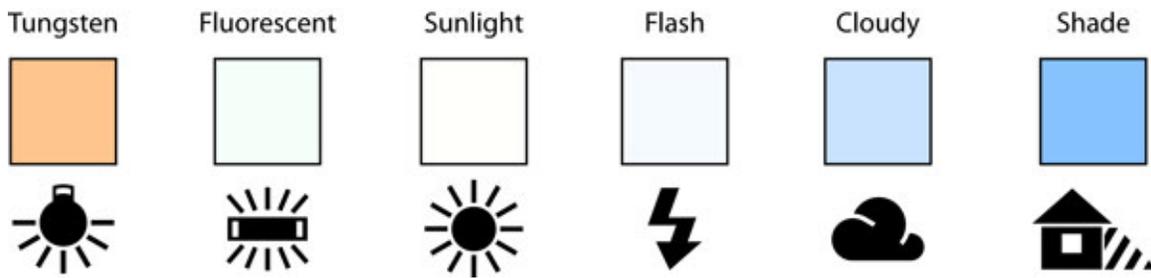
You know how in warm incandescent light, the lighting seems warm, and warmer still in candlelight? Use flash, and the color cast seems cool - even cold. Photography under cloudy skies can make your subjects look slate gray, while in fluorescent light you may detect a slight green cast. The White balance setting on your camera is designed to compensate for shifts in color.

While our vision adjusts quickly to different temperature lighting, your digital sensor (in the analog days, film) records a color cast. You will find you have control of the way the color cast looks in your images – and can change the mood of your images.

Presets - White Balance Settings

White Balance settings on most cameras:

- **Auto** – this is where the camera makes a best guess on a shot by shot basis.
- **Tungsten/Incandescent** – this mode is usually symbolized with a little bulb and is for shooting indoors, under tungsten (incandescent) lighting (such as bulb lighting). It generally cools down the colors in photos.
- **Fluorescent** – this compensates for the ‘cool’ light of fluorescent light and will warm up your shots. Your camera might offer multiple fluorescent settings
- **Daylight/Sunny** – signified with a sun for average sun-lit images
- **Cloudy** – this setting generally warms things up a touch more than ‘daylight’ mode, but can look cool and gray.
- **Flash** – the flash of a camera blasts a cold light; using Flash WB warms up your images lightly.
- **Shade** – the light in shade is generally cooler (bluer), reflecting the blue of a clear sky, using this mode will add warmth; often can add an obvious orange color shift to images to compensate for the blue color of shade



This image shows how the settings above change the color balance and mood.

Reading for this week: Beginner's Photography Guide, Pages 124-127

Assignment (upload to class gallery):

Photograph the same scene, photographing a set of 5 images – ideally using a tripod, comparing the following White Balance (WB) using the following settings (pre-sets) in camera:

1. Auto WB (White Balance)
2. Daylight
3. Shade
4. Fluorescent (see page 125 for example)
5. Incandescent/Tungsten

You will be spinning the white balance wheel on your camera!

Photograph as a high quality jpeg (.jpg) images. If you shoot images in RAW, you would set the white balance using your image editor, e.g. : Lightroom.

Method: When you create the set of images, set your white balance in the same order and make a note. When you upload your images, **label** accordingly:

- Firstname_Lastname_WB_Auto
- Firstname_Lastname_WB_Daylight
- Firstname_Lastname_WB_Shade
- Firstname_Lastname_WB_Flouresecent
- Firstname_Lastname_WB_Tungsten

Alternatively, you can label your images using **Kelvin** measurements. Color temperature is measured in degrees Kelvin (K); the cooler (more blue the light, the higher its temperature.

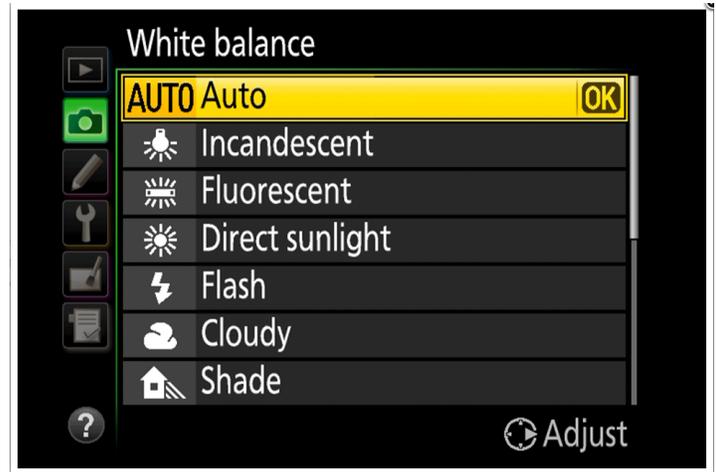
- Daylight is typically 5,000K.
 - Candlelight, which records very warm will typically be as low as 2,000K.
 - Bright blue skies or open shade in the snow can measure 10,000K +
- You can adjust the actual Kelvin (K) on many cameras to change white balance.

Notice the difference, which could be subtle.

Upload your series to the class gallery. **Comment** on your favorite of the series and **compare** how the favored pre-set performs as opposed to “Auto WB” White balance.

Considerations:

Does auto white balance work for you? How do cloudy overcast days affect colors, how do colors look at sunset? How does the colorcast change the mood of your scene? Does the change in white balance reflect how you pre-visualized your photograph?



Follow the links on Canvas & Takeaclasswithlaura.com
Find out how to control white balance on your camera
Display your findings!