

Optimizing photos

In the **EFFECTS** tab the first options in the **IMAGE OPTIMIZATION** section are meant for correcting the classic problems that occur when taking photos, but can also be used to creatively alter your images.

Brightness

One of the most common problems with photos taken indoors is the lighting. One way to avoid this problem is to use a flash, but this very often leads to cold, artificial looking photos that don't capture the true atmosphere of the situation. A good example is a cozy, candlelight setting. If flash is used, the candlelight atmosphere is ruined. However, most cameras simply don't capture enough of the natural light which leads to photos that are too dark if no flash is used.

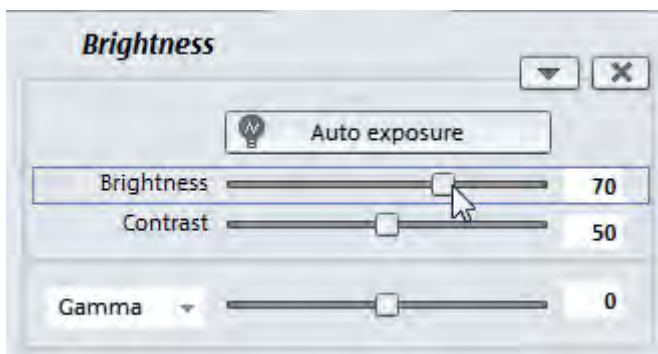
In contrast, photos taken outside can often be "overexposed" (too bright), e.g. photos taken in direct sunlight. All of these problems can be solved with the **BRIGHTNESS** option.

Underexposure

Here is a typical example. The lighting is actually quite good but the photos were taken in the shade. The photo ends up looking like this:



In this case the brightness has to be increased.



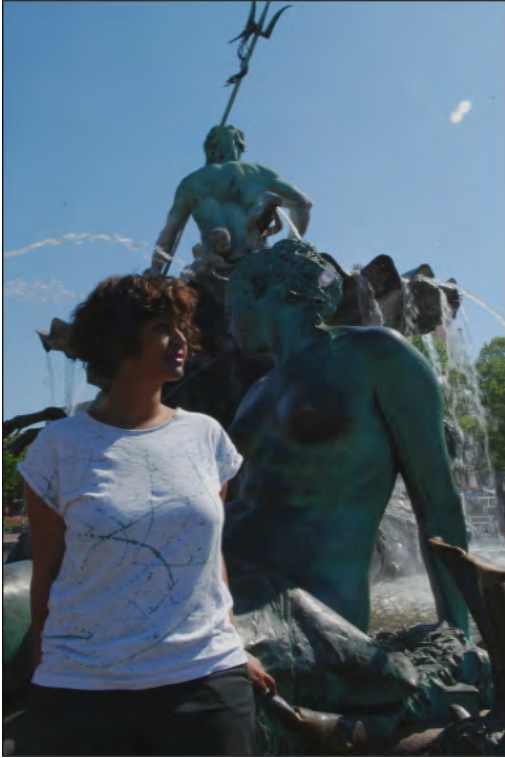
You can also get good results with the **AUTO EXPOSURE** button. Give it a try and see what happens.



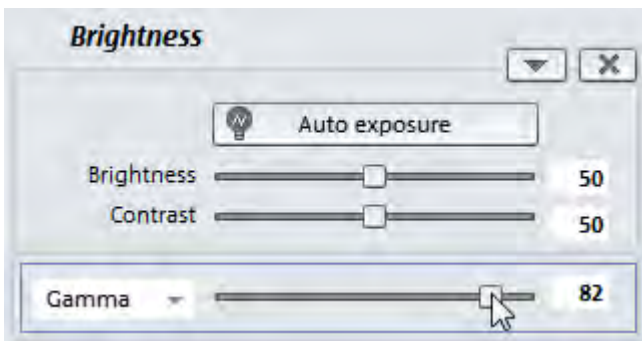
Our photo looks better already.

Removing partial underexposure

Even photos taken outdoors can sometimes suffer from underexposure. Take a look at this example:



The woman's face is badly underexposed. In this situation simply increasing the **BRIGHTNESS** is not recommended. This would only leave the entire image looking very pale. A much better option is to adjust the **GAMMA** value.



At a value between 80 and 90 the image retains a natural look and as you can see, the face is instantly more recognizable.

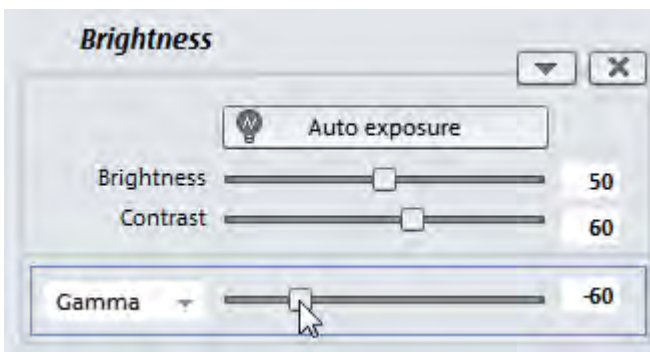


Overexposure

Sometimes photos can end up too bright, e.g. when the sun is shining strongly. Take this photo for example:



It's actually a very nice photo, the only problem is that it's overexposed. Unfortunately overexposed photos cannot be corrected as well as underexposed photos, but it is still possible to improve the image quality slightly. In this case we can move the **BRIGHTNESS** slider left to a value of 35. Because this will only make the image darker we have to adjust the **CONTRAST** as well by raising it to around 60. In addition we'll set the **GAMMA** value to 60.



The result is not perfect, but at least the image is now good enough to use:



Color

In the **COLOR** section there are tools for optimizing the color and other options for creative color design. In addition to simple corrections of typical photo problems such as the infamous "red eye" effect caused by flash, you can also remove specific tints or add them to create an "Andy Warhol" effect.

For example, we can take a photo print that has been stored too long and has a green tint...



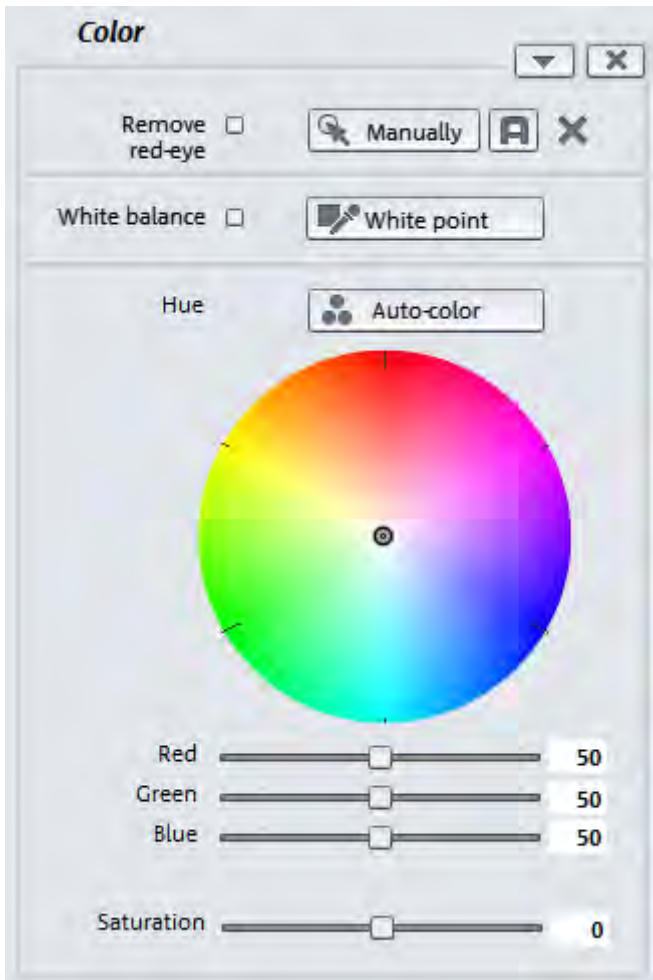
...and correct the color by increasing the red value (by 12 in the example) and slightly increasing the contrast (by 10):



If we increase the red value even more (by 27) and reduce the green value (by 25), the image now appears as if seen through "rose colored glasses":



Here is a detailed list of all the options in the color effect dialog:



REMOVE RED-EYE: This option provides you with a square tool that can be used to select the area with the red eye problem.

WHITE BALANCE enables you to enhance unnatural colors in photos taken in poor lighting conditions. First click on the **WHITE POINT** button to select a point on the video monitor image that is naturally white. **MAGIX PhotoStory on DVD Deluxe** then automatically corrects the color values for the rest of the image.

Tip: If you're in the mood for having some fun, try selecting a point in the photo that isn't white. You'll be amazed by the wild color effects you can create!

AUTO-COLOR: This is an automatic color optimization feature that can be very helpful in many situations.

Tip: These types of color corrections can also be done with the included MAGIX Photo Manager or MAGIX Photo Designer. These programs offer a vast selection of detailed correction options.

HUE: Use the palette to select a hue for coloring the picture.

SATURATION: This slider can be used to increase or decrease the color portions of the image. This feature automatically adjusts the colors in combination with other parameters (e.g. contrast) to make the colorization look as natural as possible. With some experimenting you can achieve amazing results such as giving summer pictures an autumn feeling or creating funky pop art.

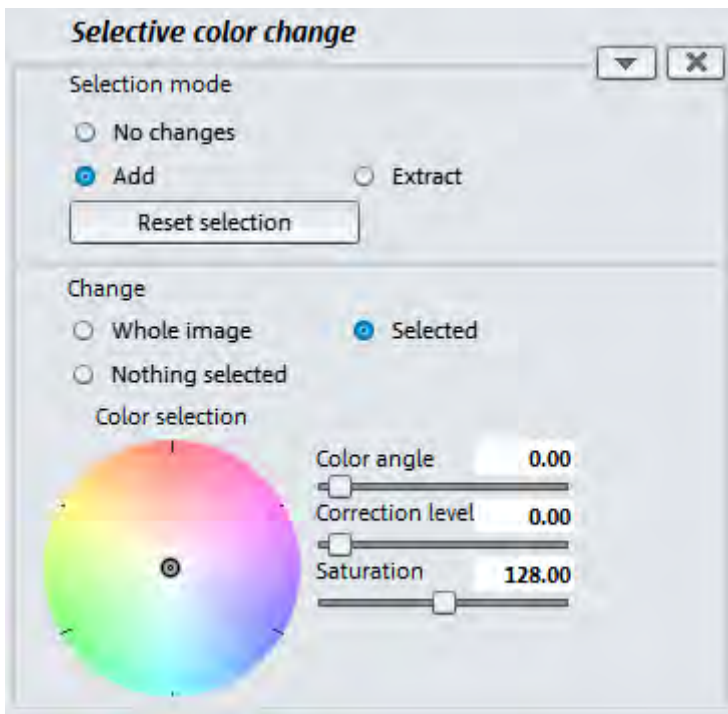
Color changes

The **SELECTIVE COLOR CHANGE** helps you to adjust specific colors or color ranges. This can be useful for making a gray sky blue or to accentuate the green of the leaves on a tree. Take a look at this example:

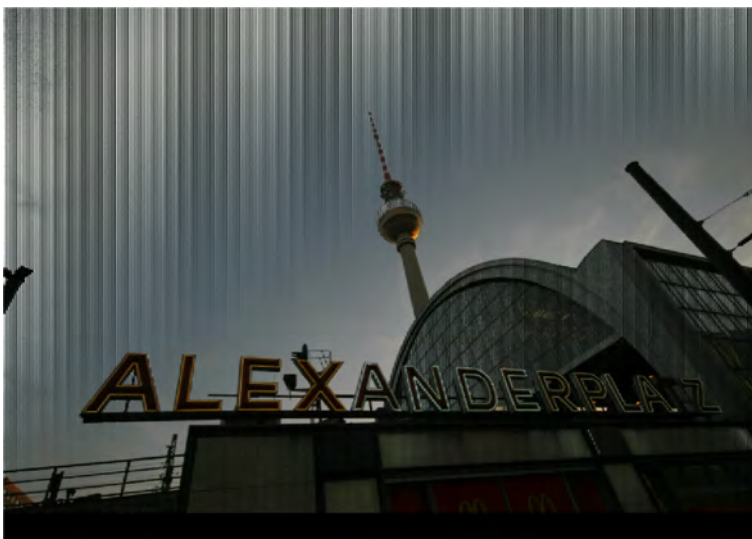


The sky colors are too dark and pale. But the photo is generally quite good.

- First go to the COLOR CHANGES area of the Media Pool.



- Now click on the color hue in the preview monitor that you want to change. This will select all of the areas that have a similar color hue.



- ▶ If you want to edit several color hues, simply click on each one until all of the affected areas are selected. If you end up selecting too many colors, you can go to **SELECTION MODE** and activate the option **EXTRACT** to remove the color.
- ▶ The **COLOR SELECTION** wheel can be used to set the new color for the selected areas.



The upper left area of our photo will be colored with a strong blue which will make it look a lot friendlier.