SpyderCUBE®

User Guide

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Introduction

Thank you for purchasing your new SpyderCUBE®. This document will provide a step by step guide to getting the most out of using your SpyderCUBE to achieve proper color balanced photographs.

Why use the SpyderCUBE?

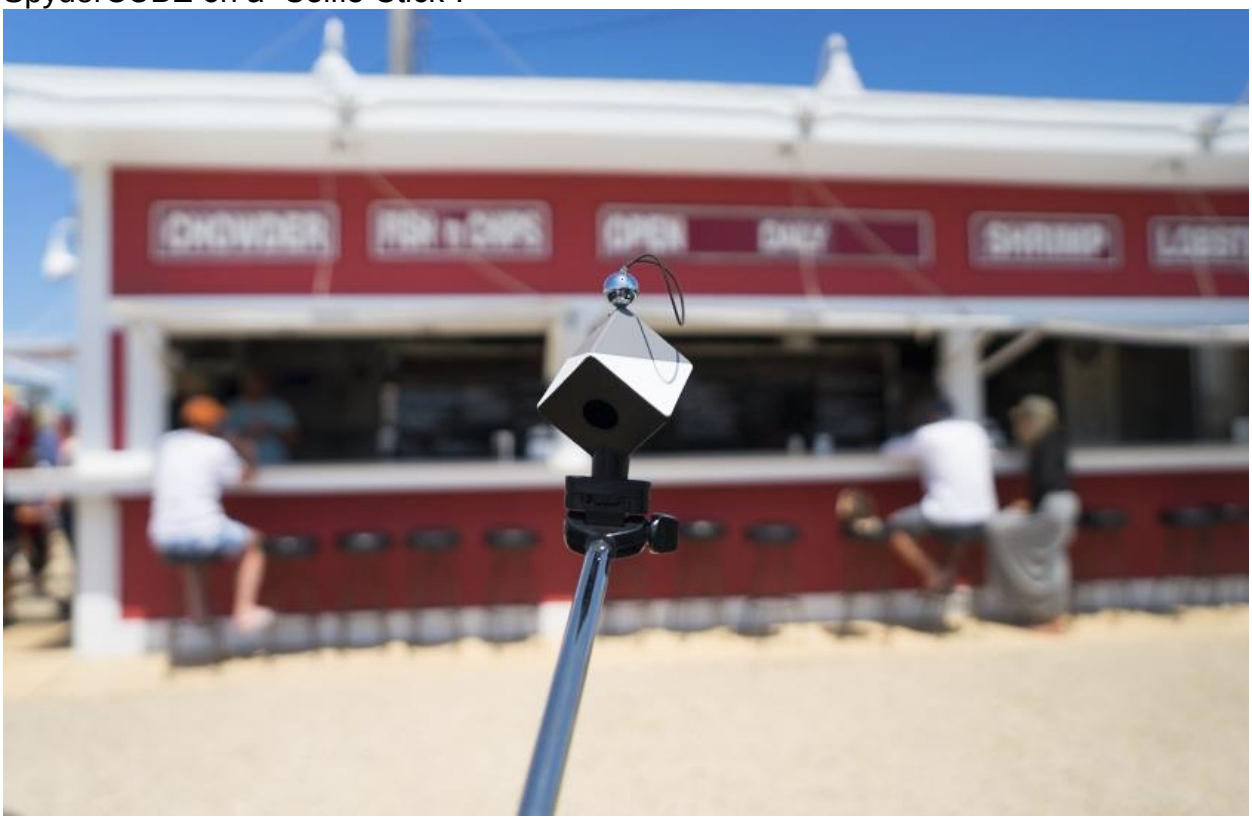
When creating digital photographs, you need to tell the software what the color temperature of the image is, measured in Kelvin. Every light source has a different Kelvin value, for example, the sun typically has a value of 5500-6500K while a fluorescent light can be anywhere from 3200-7500K and your typical household tungsten bulb can range from 2500-2900K and strobes are about 5200K. With such a wide range of color temperatures in your everyday photographic environments, you need a constant to show the software what neutral is.

The SpyderCUBE is also very useful in post processing to help set your contrast range properly.

Photographing the SpyderCUBE

The SpyderCUBE can either be handheld by the subject or an assistant, placed on a light stand or tripod, or placed on or hung from an object in the scene. Orient the SpyderCUBE with the chrome ball on top when taking a picture of it.

SpyderCUBE on a “Selfie-Stick”:



We recommend shooting the SpyderCUBE at the start of every new lighting scene as this will make your post production work easier.

If you are shooting with sunlight, shoot a new picture of the SpyderCUBE periodically as the color temperature of the sun can change as the day progresses.

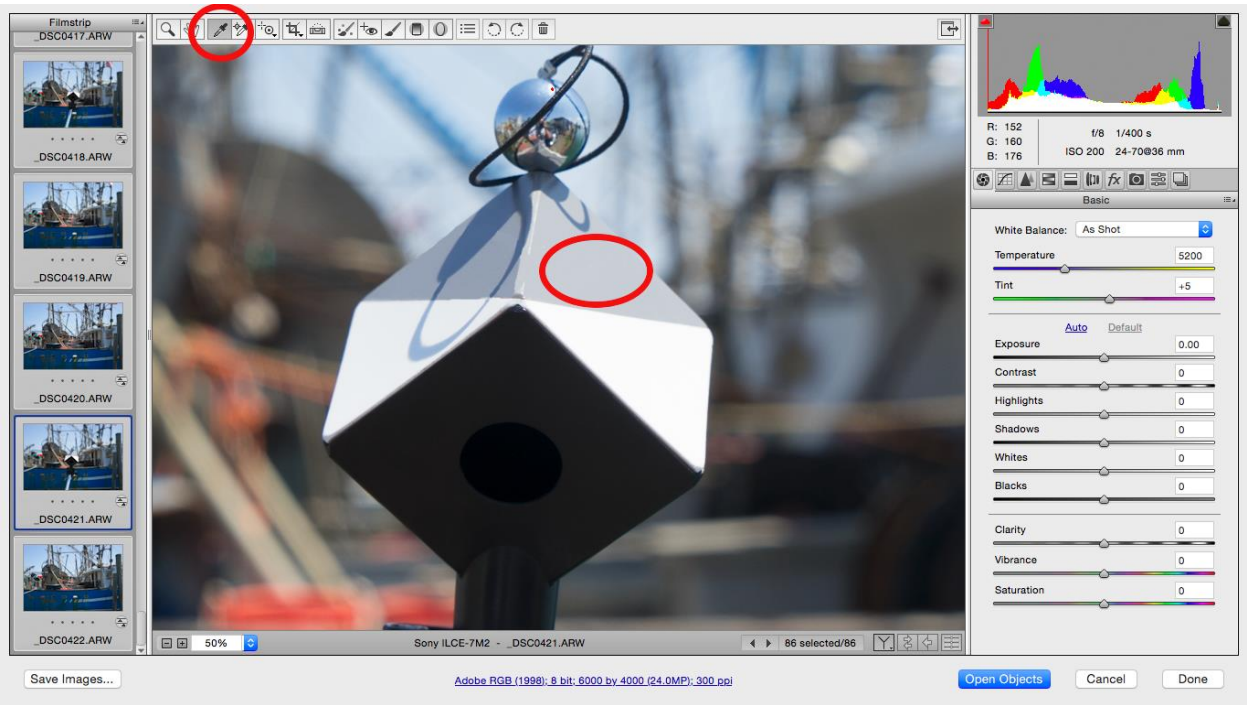
Selecting the White Point in your Software

Every processing software you are likely to be using like Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Lightroom, Capture One, etc. will have a tool for adjusting the White Balance of a picture, though they may have different names.

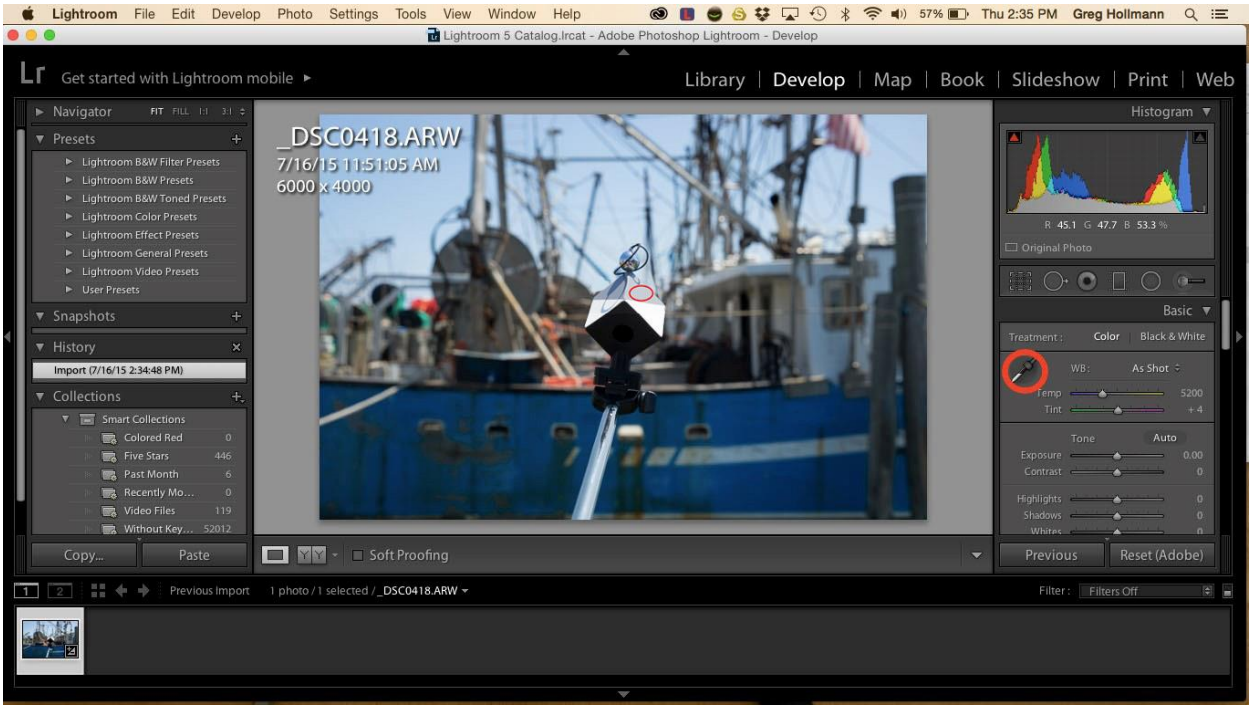
- Adobe Lightroom: White Balance Selector
- Adobe Photoshop Camera Raw: White Balance Tool
- Capture One: Pick White Balance

All of these tools have the same function, and that is to tell the software what is a neutral color in the scene, and this is where your SpyderCUBE comes in.

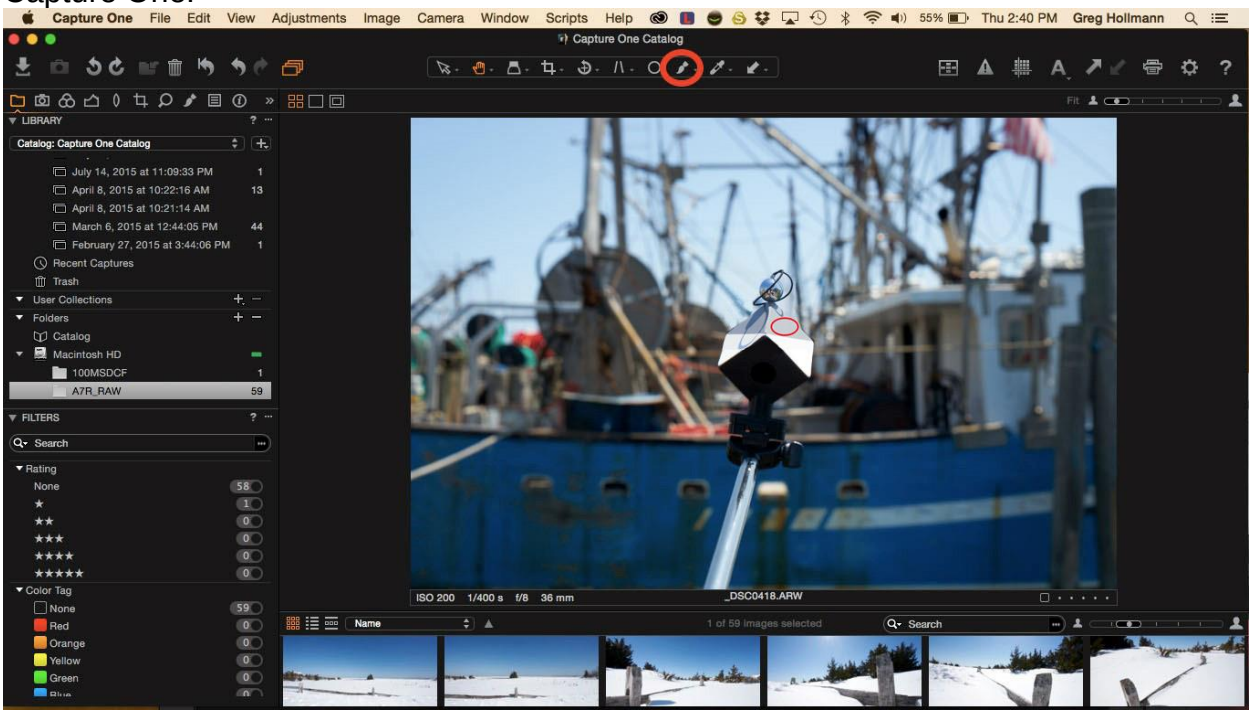
Adobe Camera Raw:



Lightroom



Capture One:



When you are doing your processing, bring up the image that you captured with the SpyderCUBE in it. Using the white balance tool in your software, use the eye dropper to select the visually lightest grey face on the cube, the side facing the primary light source.

Setting the contrast range in your image

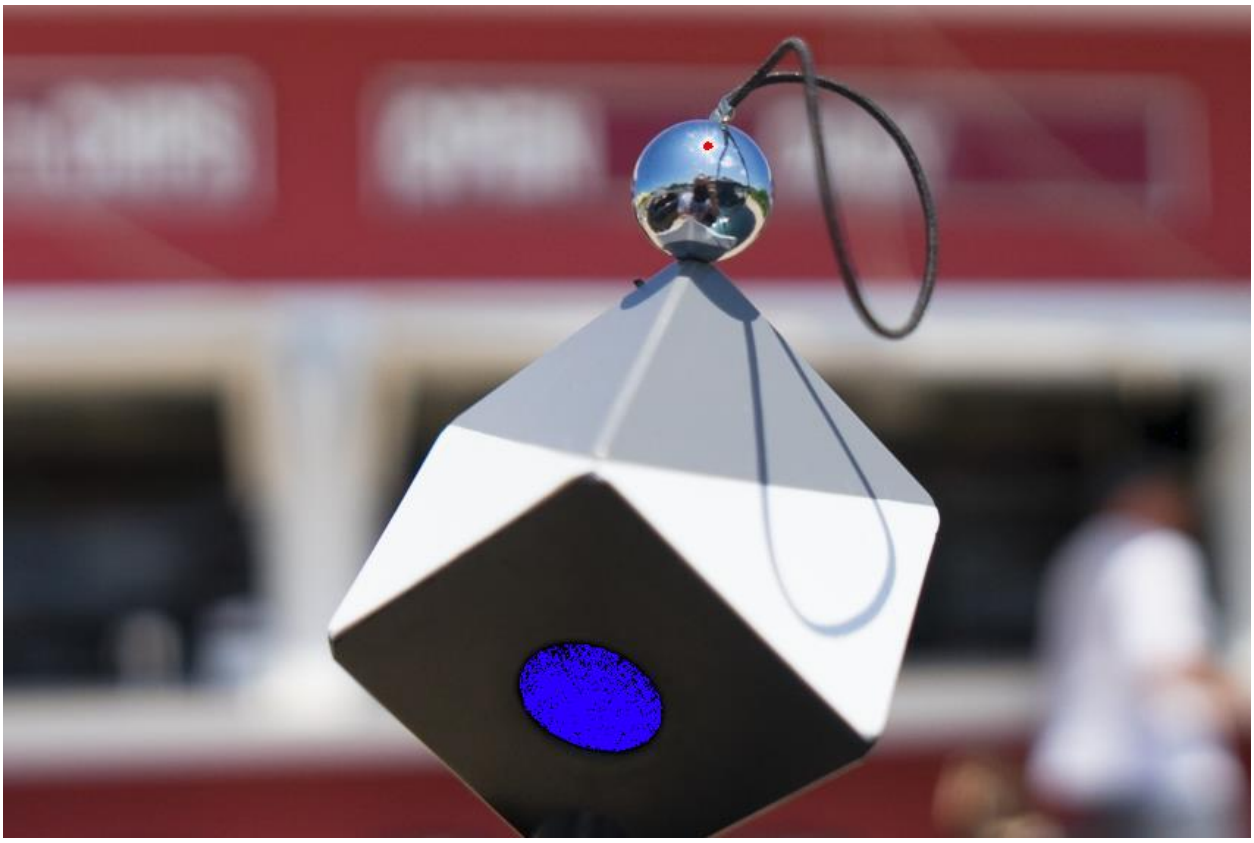
In addition to the grey faces on your SpyderCUBE, there are 4 other useful tools; the chrome ball, the white faces, the black face, and the black trap.

When processing your images, you can use all of these tools to ensure you have the correct range of detail in your image. Turn on the over and under exposure warnings in your software. This will show you if any portion of your image is out of gamut, meaning if there is detail in the highlights and/or shadows that are too bright or too dark to be reproduced properly.

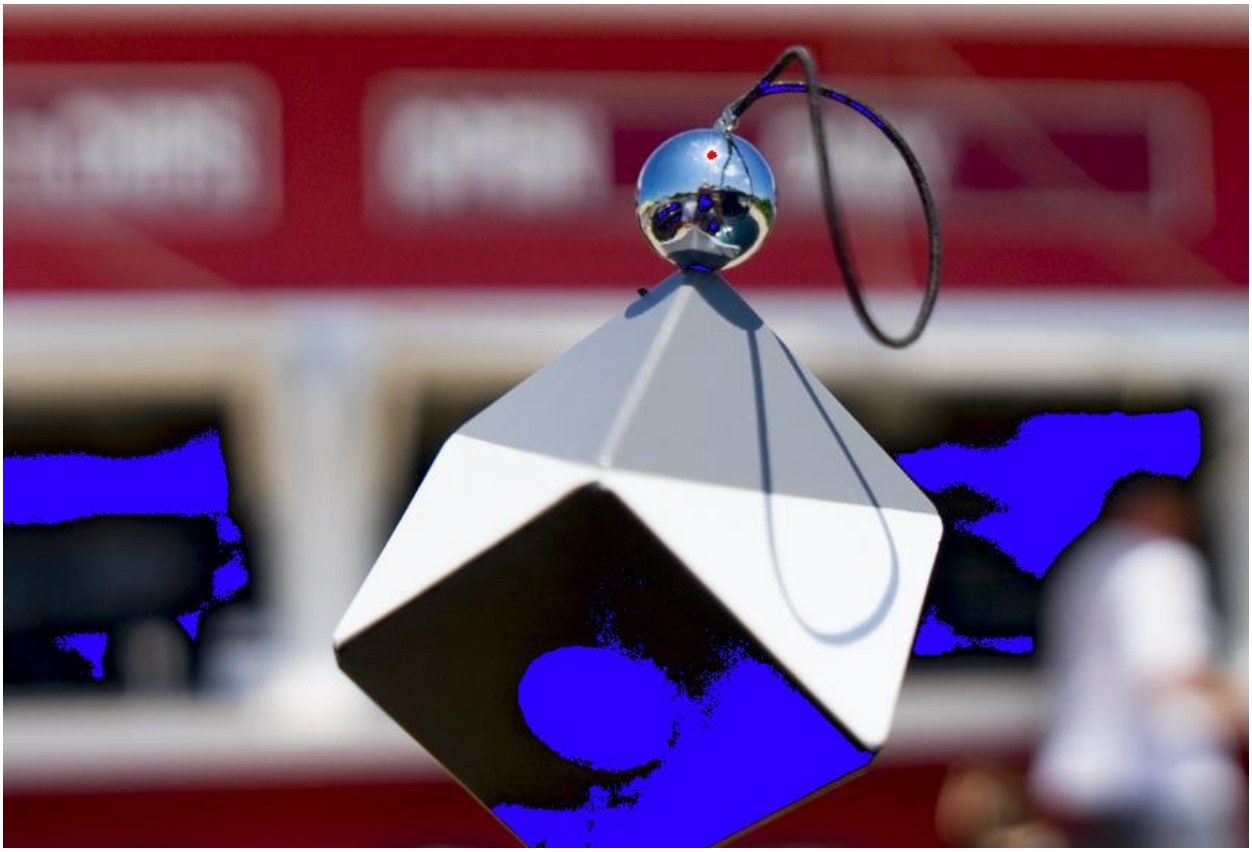
Notice the slight overexposure warning on this image in the chrome ball:

While it is okay to have a highlight warning on the chrome ball, you do not want to have the warning appear on the white faces:

Next, keep an eye on the black faces and the black trap. It is okay to have a shadow warning on your black trap:



You do not want to have the warning appear on the black faces:



Once you have a properly exposed image, you can proceed to batch apply these settings to the rest of the images in this sequence.

Apply Settings to multiple images

Once you have completed all image adjustments, you can proceed to batch apply these settings to the rest of the images in this sequence.

In most programs, you can select this as the image to use to sync other images with.

In some other programs, you will have to save the settings from the SpyderCUBE image as a preset to apply to your other images from the same lighting.

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