



Basic IR Image Adjustments I

Color Channel Adjustment Guide



We are often asked for tips to adjust IR images in order to achieve certain effects. The most frequently asked question is “How do I change the colors from the original reddish tone to that ‘Blue Sky’ tone?” The following is one simple way to achieve this effect.



Want to create great Black & White IR Images? Our B&W IR Adjustment Guide provides instructions for converting your color IR images to black & white along with additional adjustment tips for better results.

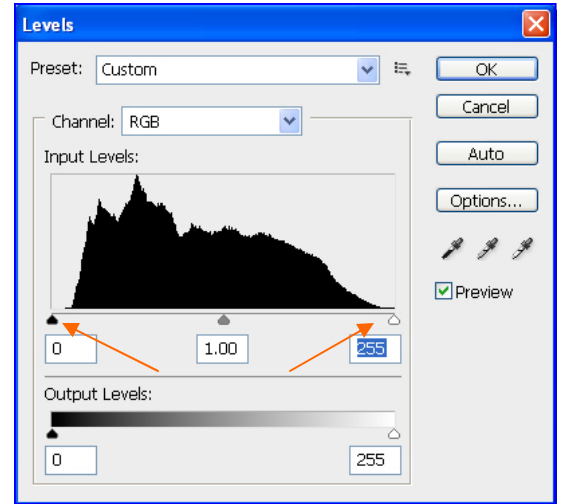


Levels:

The first adjustment we recommend making to most IR images is the levels. This will eliminate a lot of the washed out look that some images have straight out of the camera. Start by opening your image in Photoshop and click Image>Adjustments>Levels or simply press Ctrl+L. (For this tip we are using Adobe Photoshop CS4®) The levels adjustment window will open and display a graph resembling the image to the right. Immediately below the graph there is a slide adjustment bar with 3 arrows. Locate the dark and light arrows at the ends of the graph adjustment bar.



Original Image - Amplified Filter (665nm)

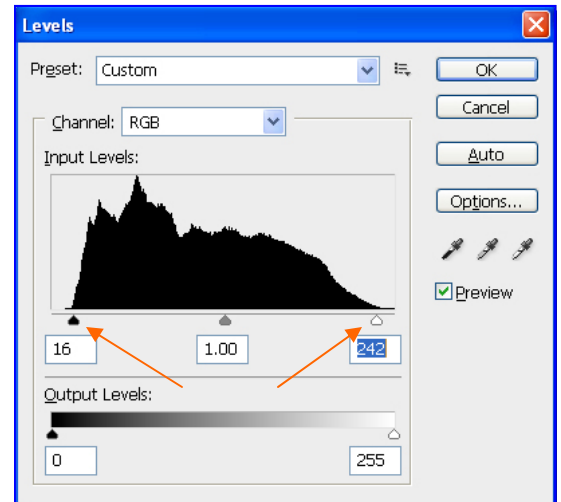


Levels Adjustment Window

Drag the dark and light arrows at the bottom of the graph inward until they are at the edge of the incline on both edges of the graph. This will cut off some of the unwanted data from the image file leaving you with more accurate color, deeper darks and cleaner highlights. Overall the image will be cleaner and more pleasing to the eye. The difference is subtle but very important and beneficial when making other adjustments down the road.



After Levels adjustments.

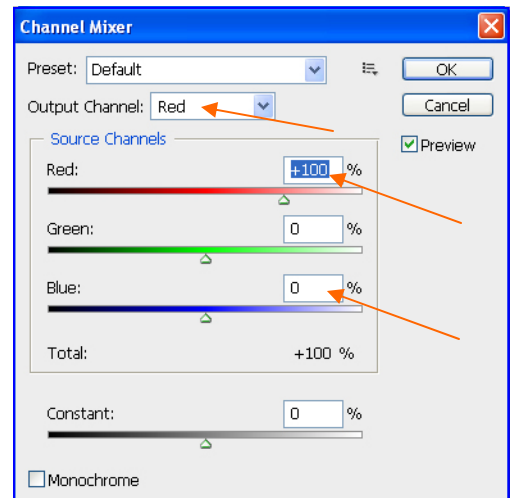


Levels Adjustment Window



Channel Mixer:

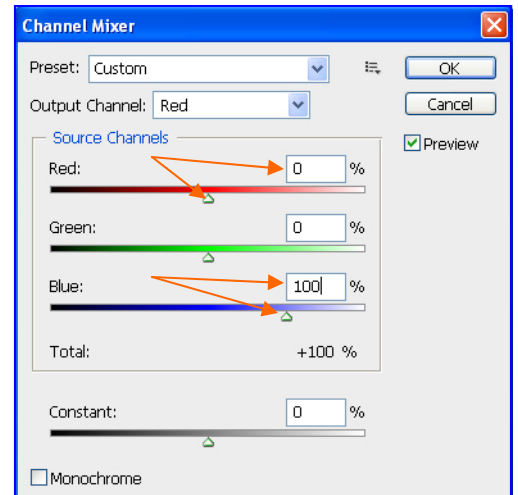
Next, adjusting the channels will give you the “Blue Sky” effect that we are asked about frequently. This is the first step of a two part process. Click Image>Adjustments>Channel Mixer. The channel mixer window will open similar to the image to the right. Make sure the Output Channel at the top of the window is set to “Red”. In the Source Channels area adjust the Red percentage to 0.0% by either moving the adjustment slide to the center or simply changing the +100 to 0 by typing it in. Next, within the Source Channels area, adjust the Blue percentage to 100% by either moving the adjustment slide to the right until the % reads +100 or simply type 100 in the percentage window. Don’t click OK just yet!



Channel Mixer Window—Before Adjustments.

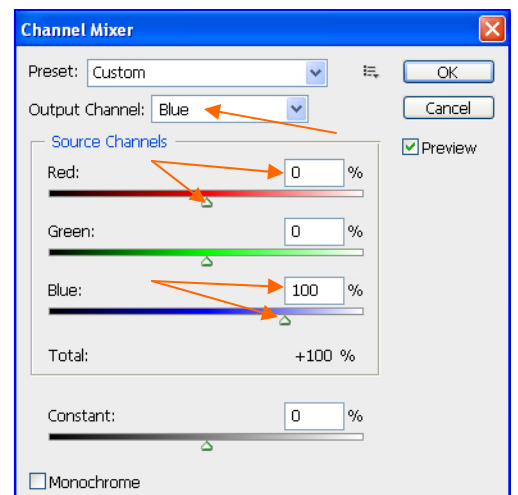


After Red Channel Adjustments.



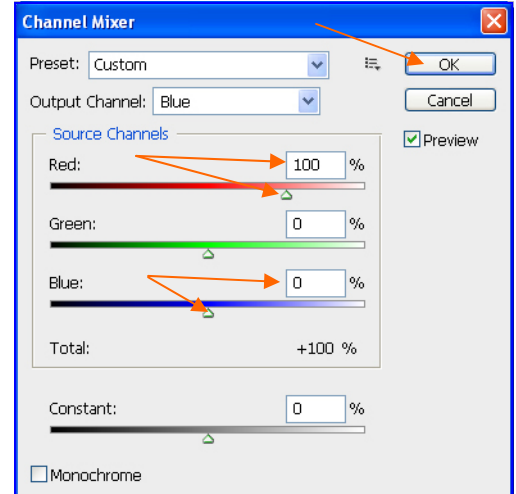
Channel Mixer Window-
After Red Output Channel Adjustments.

Step two of the channel mixer adjustment is changing the Blue Output Channel. Click on the Output Channel dropdown and select “Blue”. Notice the Source Channel information will show the Red channel as 0% and the Blue channel as +100%, just like the image to the right.

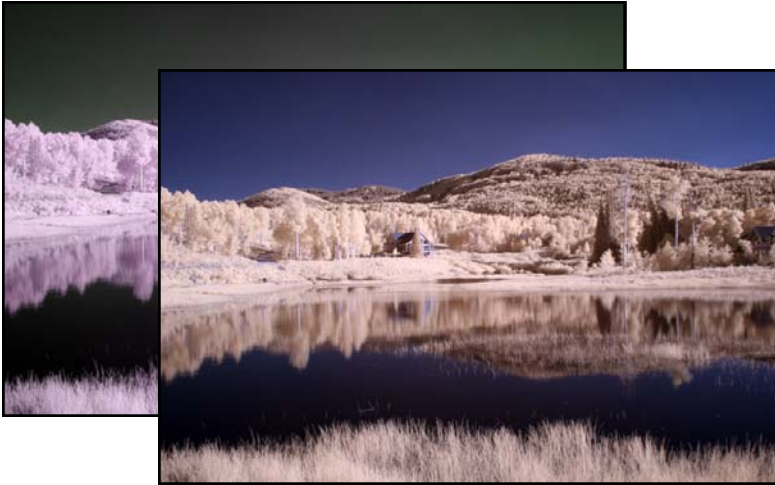


Levels Adjustment Window-
Blue Output Channel selected.

Next, adjust the Red Source Channel to 100% and the Blue Source Channel to 0% using either the slider or by typing in the information. Click OK in the upper right corner of the Channel Mixer window.



Channel Mixer Window-
After Blue Output Channel Adjustments.



After Red and Blue Channel Adjustments.

Of course, there are many other adjustments that can be made to “Fine Tune” your color IR image, but this is the basic method most choose to create the “Blue Sky” effect. We hope this has been informative and helps you achieve the IR results you are looking for.



Original Image-Before Adjustments.



Final Image-Color Channels Adjusted.

