

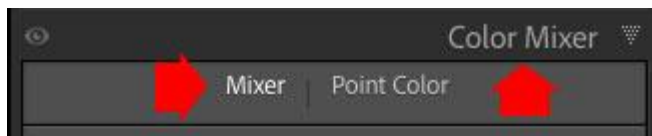
The Colour Mixer Panel in Adobe Lightroom Classic

A Presentation by Ian Logan

Introduction

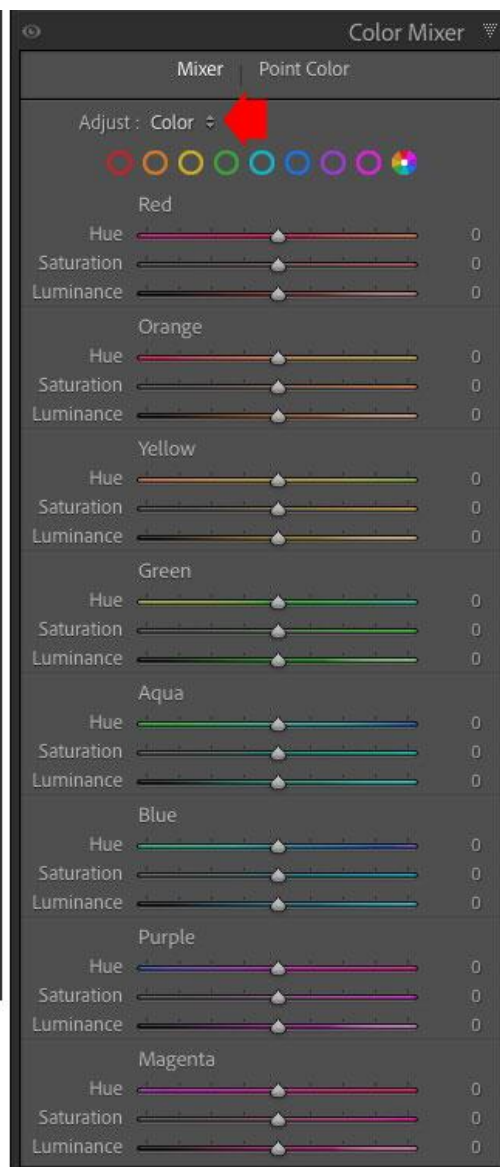
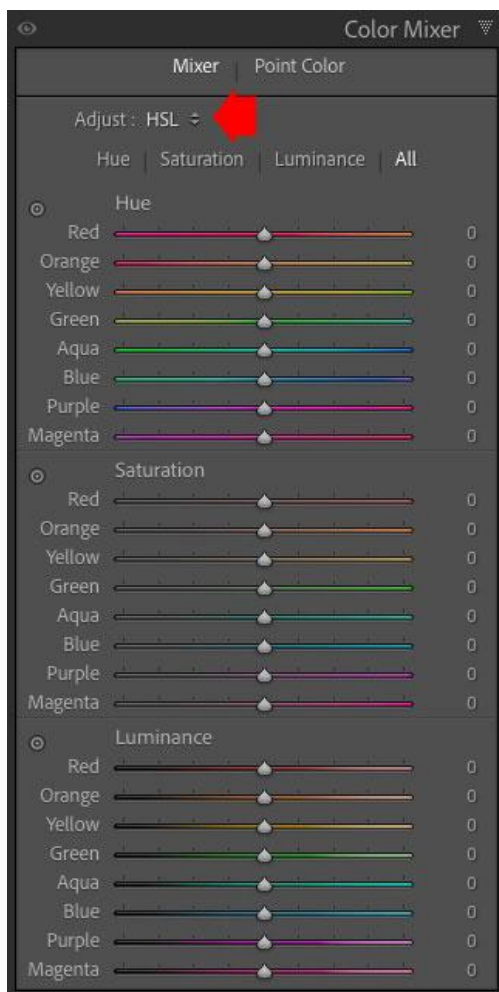
In photo editing, precise colour control is essential. The colour tools available in the Lightroom ecosystem and the Adobe Camera Raw plugin for Photoshop allow for both global and local adjustments within your image.

The Colour Mixer panel has two functions for the adjustment and editing of colours within your image. They are Mixer and Point Colour



Click on Mixer to see the sliders for the HSL/Colour panel

Set to HSL to see the Hue, Saturation and Luminance slider controls or set to Colour to see the colour sliders



It should be noted that these two panels are adjusting the same sliders for Hue, Saturation and Luminance, they are arranged in different order. In the HSL view you can select the Hue, Saturation or Luminance to simplify the view to eight sliders and in the Colour view you can select a colour circle to simplify the view to three sliders for that colour.

The Mixer Panel is used as a broad brush tool to adjust the hue, saturation, and luminance of colours within the image and only really works with fixed colour groups

- Red
- Orange
- Yellow
- Green
- Aqua
- Blue
- Purple
- Magenta

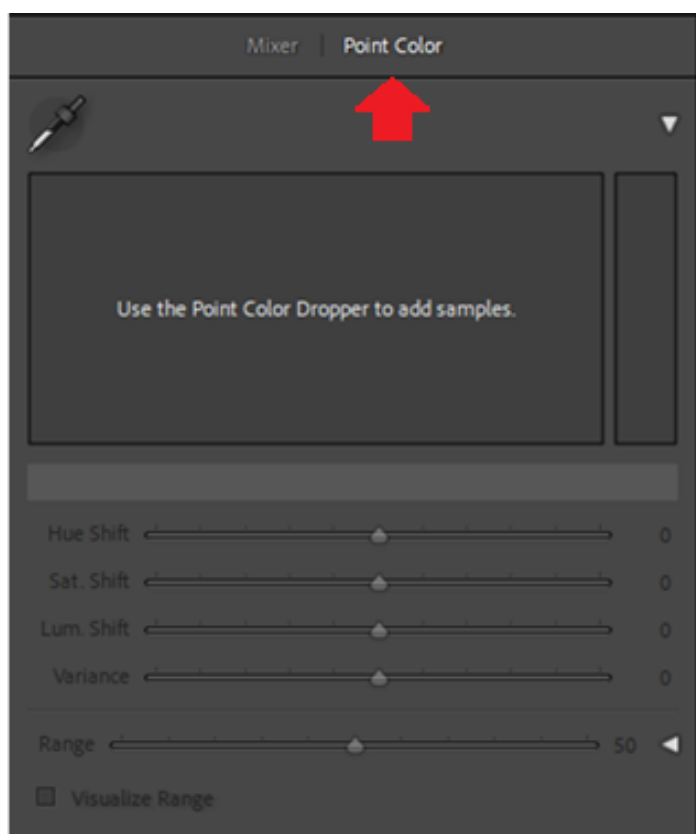
But real world colours often fall between these colour groups.

For example, skin tones can be a mixture of orange, red and yellow so therefore by adjusting the orange for the skin tone will also alter any other parts within the image that contains orange (e.g., Sand, wood, etc.).

Point Colour function overview

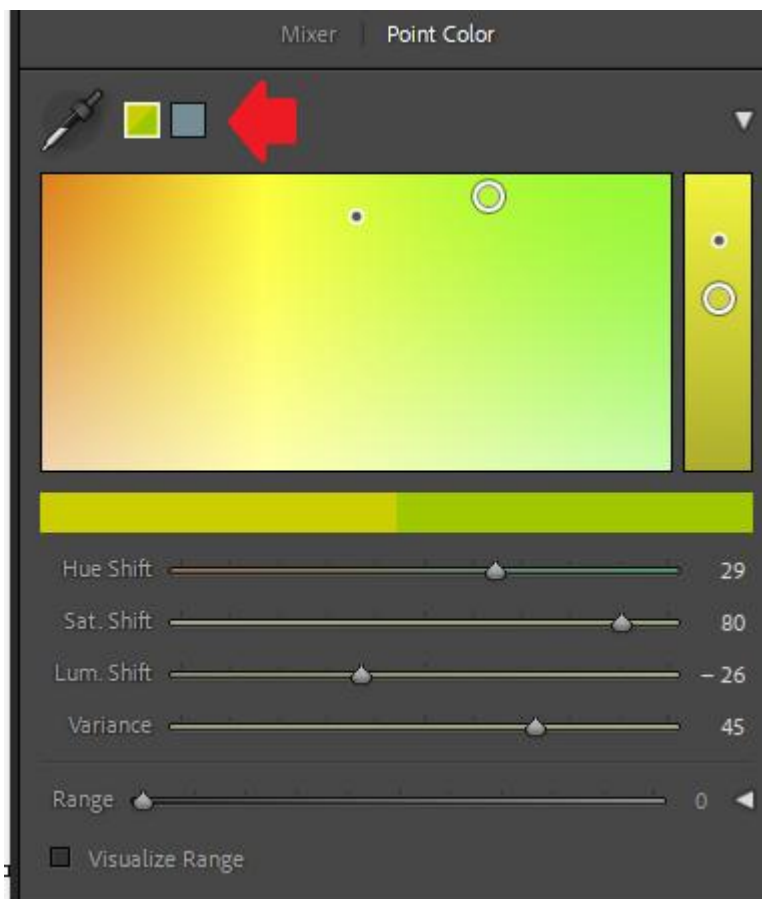
The Point Colour function allows you to isolate and adjust a very specific colour or range of colours within your image down to subtle tonal variations at a global level or as targeted adjustments while using masks.

The Point Colour tool is found in the **Colour Mixer panel** under the **Develop module**.



To start using the tool select the colour picker (eyedropper) and select a precise colour directly from the image. A colour swatch of the selected colour will appear next to the colour picker. You may select up to eight colours if you need, and additional colour swatches will appear in the row. The active colour is the one with the highlighted white border. Two colour fields will be shown below the swatch with indicator of where the selected colour falls within the colour field.

The colour bar under the colour fields and above the sliders shows the selected colour and the colour after adjustments. This is also shown in the colour swatch.



Now that the colour has been selected there are several additional functions to assist in refining the colour.

- **Hue Shift**
This slider is for adjusting the hue of the selected colour. The change in hue is shown in the large colour field. The circle in the colour field will move left or right indicating the change in hue.
- **Saturation Shift**
This slider is for adjusting the saturation of the selected colour. The change in saturation is shown in the large colour field. The circle in the colour field will move up or down indicating the change in saturation.
- **Luminance Shift**
This slider is for adjusting the luminance of the selected colour. The change in luminance is shown in the right side colour field. The circle in the colour field will move up or down indicating the change in luminance.

- **Variance**

This slider affects the colour contrast.

When you move the Variance slider left, Lightroom moves colours that are like the sampled colour closer *to* the sampled colour. It reduces colour contrast.

When you move the Variance slider right, Lightroom moves colours that are like the sampled colour further from the sampled colour. It increases colour contrast.

The variance slider is particularly useful when editing skin tones in portraits and skies.

- **Colour Range Controls**

- **Range Slider**

Use this slider to make basic adjustments to the colours affected by the above editing features. Setting it to **0** will restrict the range of affected colours as much as possible and setting it to **100** will increase the range of affected colours as much as possible. If a more precise colour range adjustment is required, then use the **Colour Range** sliders. These sliders work independently of the **Range Slider** and will not affect its value

- **Hue Range**

This colour bar/slider is used to adjust the colour hue range of the selected colour.

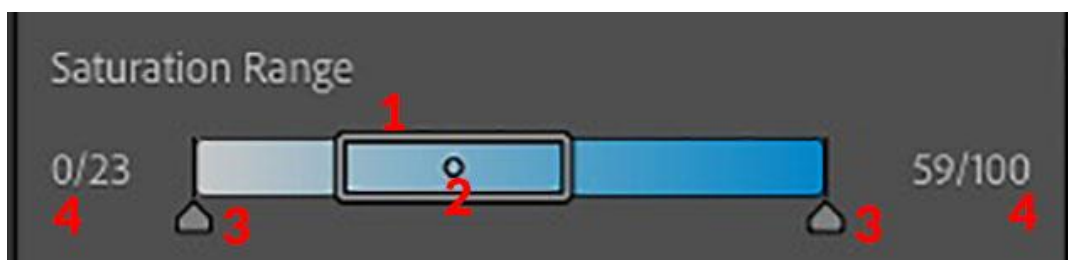
- **Saturation Range**

This colour bar/slider is used to adjust the colour saturation range of the selected colour.

- **Luminance Range**

This colour bar/slider is used to adjust the colour luminance range of the selected colour

The colour range controls all act in a similar manner for Hue, Saturation and Luminance. Here is a guide, using the Saturation Range scale, which shows the full range of possible colour saturation for your sampled colour from zero (no colour) to 100 (fully saturated).



1. The slider box (white rectangle) shows the range of colours affected by the adjustment. You can click and drag to move the slider box from side to side. Or click and drag the edges to make it larger or smaller.
2. The circle shows where your sample colour falls in the Saturation range.
3. The grey triangles show how much feathering there is of the affected colour range. The closer the triangles are to the edges of the slider box, the less feathering you get.
4. These two figures show the values of the associated grey triangle and the edge of the slider box, in the range from zero to 100.

Repeating for both Hue Range and Luminance Range adds to the complexity of the edit, which is why many photographers will be happy with only using the Range slider. But these precise controls are there if you need them.

- **Visualize Range**

The very last item in the Point Colour panel is the Visualise Range checkbox. This is a check box that will show you the area within the image that contains the selected colour

Comparison of HSL Sliders to Point Colour

Feature	HSL	Point Colour
Broad colour ranges	Yes	No
Precise colour targeting	Limited	Yes
Range refinement	No	Yes
Multiple selective points	No	Yes
Professional colour grading	Moderate	Advanced

Workflow Recommendations

Basic Corrections First

- Exposure
- White balance
- Contrast

Global Colour Adjustments

- Basic colour balance using global saturation and/or HSL sliders
- Overall vibrance

Point Colour Refinement

- Skin tones
- Key colour accents
- Background separation

Final Fine-Tuning

- Subtle luminance tweaks
- Check for colour spill
- Zoom to 100% for accuracy

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Over-shifting Hue. This can create unnatural colours
- Too wide of a range for colour selection. This may affect unintended areas
- Over-saturation. This can cause clipping and banding in the image
- Ignoring luminance. This is a missed opportunity for depth control in the image

Advanced Tips

Combine with Masks

The point colour function can be used within masks to provide local colour adjustments. Once the mask has been created you then refine specific colours within that mask. The workflow for the use of point colour in a mask is the same as using the function for global adjustments.

Colour Grading

Refine base colours first, either with HSL and/or Point Colour before applying creative colour grading.

Zoom In

Precision work requires checking details at 100% view.

Why Point Colour Is Powerful

Point Colour bridges the gap between basic HSL adjustments and complex Photoshop colour grading

It allows for:

- High precision
- Non-destructive editing
- Faster workflow
- Cleaner results

For portrait, landscape, fashion, and commercial photographers, it offers professional-level colour refinement inside Lightroom.

Conclusion

The Point Colour function in **Adobe Lightroom Classic** is a precision tool designed for photographers who want detailed colour control without complexity.

By understanding its subfunctions:

- Eyedropper selection
- Range refinement
- Hue control
- Saturation control
- Luminance adjustment
- Multiple colour points

You gain the ability to fine-tune colour with a fine accuracy while maintaining natural results.

Mastering Point Colour elevates your editing from general correction to intentional colour design.