# Monochrome in Lightroom and Photoshop

LIGHTROOM:

There are several ways to change an image from colour to monochrome in Lightroom, presets, profiles, and b+w treatment. The order you use these various methods affects the image. Much like when we shot b+w film and applied a colour filter to the front of our lens Lightroom adjusts images in the same way using b+w treatments and then using the colour sliders to adjust.

1- PRESETS- Usually the first step in any image I process in Lightroom is in the preset section of the develop tab, presets over ride any adjustments you make in the basic adjustment panel so it is important to do these first. If I want to add an HDR or similar effect or have a b+w preset that I like as a starting point you want to apply this first before moving to the right side of the panel.  Remember that once you apply a preset you can adjust it's effects by moving the various sliders on the right side. Don't forget about the colour sliders and the other sections which may be minimized if you don't use them regularly. Not only can you adjust free or purchased presets and save them as your own you can also create presets and save them for use on other images. Just be careful not to save over your initial preset if you are saving an adjustment to it.

2- PROFILES - unlike presets profiles change the entire image and the changes cannot be adjusted by individual sliders. There are some great free and pay profiles out there but they are not as adaptive as presets. Once a profile is applied the sliders in the basic adjustment panel will change the image as a whole not just individual portions as presets do.

3- TREATMENT-  your Lightroom is most likely in the default of "colour" in the treatment section in the right adjustment panel. You can change this to b+w and your image will immediately default to a basic monochrome image. From this point you can manipulate the sliders on the adjustment panel to change the monochrome image. The colour sliders also work as with presets to adjust like a filter over the lens would. In the upper left corner of the B+W panel is a little target… this is the targeted adjustment tool. Click it the hover over sections of your image and you can click and drag to adjust anything within that targeted area and colour range.

In Lightroom, don't forget to use your masking tools, you can select specific areas to create a single highlighted item, leave that masked area in colour while making the rest of the image monochrome, target adjustments to specific areas, smooth out noise in skies or backgrounds, and so much more.

PHOTOSHOP:

Photoshop is a labour intensive program, you can accomplish all the above and more but you really need to know the ins and outs of the program. This is one basic way to convert to b+w in Photoshop.

1- Open your image in photoshop.
2- ALWAYS work on a new layer, every adjustment should be on it's own layer this way you can easily delete things that don't work without having to start all over again because you have applied everything to the main image.
3- You can add new adjustment layers many ways but I like going to the top menu bar and selecting LAYER-New Adjustment layer- B+W. Ensure this layer is " active" and this will take you to the same place as selecting treatment B+W in Lightroom. In this layer you can adjust the same way as you did all your colours in Lightroom and some basic exposure etc
4- Add another adjustment layer - LAYER-New Adjustment layer - LEVELS . Within the levels panel you should see a histogram and some sliders underneath. These sliders are your input and output. The small triangle sliders immediately under the histogram are the black point on the left, white point on the right, and mid tones in the middle. All three of these can be moved. If your histogram is flat and then spikes from one end or the other, move the slider to the start of the rise of the line this will tighten your range. The output slider underneath adjusts the brightness of your image, again dark on the left and light on the right. Adjust the black and white points FIRST then adjust the brightness.
5- Many makers want to add a bit of vignette to their images, this can be overdone but the best way to add a subtle one is to add a new layer- adjustment layer. Select the Marquee selection tool and drag a circle (or whatever shape) around you main subject that you want to remain the focus. Once this is done in your layer tab you will see 2 icons ensure that you click and select the selection tool ( should be the icon on the right). This will activate it and now press CTRL + I to Invert. You should now see in that icon a dark area over your selection. Now you are working on the background of the image. Press CTRL + D to deselect and then go to FILTER - BLUR - GAUSSIAN BLUR. I usually use about 600 pixels in the amount box and then hit okay. This will blur everything OUTSIDE of your selection area focusing the eye on where you want it to go. This way you don't have the dark vignette areas in the corners but it accomplishes the same thing.
6- You can also selectively make things B+W in an image by selecting them with the appropriate tool and adjusting the "colour"

In Photoshop one of the best new tools is the replace sky option. Not only can this fix some skies but you can add any image to this area and I use it to make animals on a white background have a different background by " changing the sky" ( See WOLF PICTURE)

TOPAZ:

We went over the basics of Topaz to reduce noise as well in the video, Topaz suggests you do this first however I find that if you are adding presets and doing alot of adjustments it is sometimes best left to last. Some adjustments will make the image go " wonky" in Topaz so like all programs it is a try it and get a good workflow for you.
In Topaz one small thing to remember is that you can Mask and only adjust specific areas the section is difficult to find but if you open Topaz and see at the bottom mid-right there is a trash bin,  right beside that is a small icon and this is the selectively denoise icon. You can also get this easily by pressing M once in the program. Apply the mask then it will take you back to the main screen.
If you are shooting at high ISO's be sure to shoot RAW as denoise works best with those images when doing severe noise reduction.