

## WHITE BALANCE: The temperature of light

In non-technical terms, white balance is how warm or cool the overall colors in your photograph look.

Most cameras have a white balance control, and will have all or some of the following settings:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyZ2Ai4toUc>

### AWB

Your camera will call this either A or AWB."

**Automatic white balance.** The icon for this is either "AWB" or "A". The camera will analyse the image and set the white balance automatically.



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**Daylight.** This is for shooting in direct sunlight.



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**Cloudy light.** The light on an overcast day is somewhat cooler (bluer) than it is in direct sunlight, so this setting

compensates by warming the photograph.



◦ **Shade.** Subjects in shady areas will be slightly bluer than daylight (and bluer than with overcast weather, too), so this setting compensates by warming the colours even more. You can also use this setting to get warm colours even in daylight. (The photograph at the top of the page compares Auto" with the Shade setting.)



◦ **Flash.** Flash light is slightly cooler than daylight, using this setting will warm the picture a tiny bit compared to the "Daylight" setting. This only applies for situations in which the flash is the *sole* source of lighting. If you're balancing ambient light and flash, and the ambient lighting also needs correction, then you might need to use coloured filters on your flash to match the ambient lighting and then use a white balance setting appropriate for the ambient lighting.



**Tungsten.** Light from tungsten bulbs is substantially more orange than daylight, so the camera compensates by adding blue to the picture.



**Fluorescent light.** Fluorescent lamps are somewhat redder than daylight (less so than tungsten bulbs, however), so this setting will compensate by cooling the picture somewhat.



**Preset white balance.** You take a photograph of something of a neutral colour under the lighting, then your camera effectively subtracts the colour of said image from your subsequent photographs.

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Setting this differs from camera to camera, so read your manual.