

Making Magic with Tone Mapping

Tone mapping is a new function in Zoner Photo Studio 14 that lets you do some quite fantastic things with a picture's contrast and tinting. With the help of tone mapping, you can easily "pull out" and emphasize otherwise hidden details in an image.

To create an HDR image using Tone Mapping, visit the Manager, go to the Create menu, and use "HDR via Tone Mapping...". Like Zoner Photo Studio's classical HDR, Tone Mapping can be used to bring out details hidden from sight. But unlike classical HDR, Tone Mapping can start from even just a single source picture. Its output can either be a realistic photo or an enchanted scene that even a painter could be proud of.



*„Thanks Tone Mapping
my photos will finally
have the perfect
atmosphere.“*



The window's controls are simple; just adjust the sliders. The first three of them have the strongest influence on Tone Mapping's output. Use the Intensity setting to pull suppressed structures out of a photograph. This is most noticeable when working with pictures containing clouds or trees. Use the Compression setting to determine the amount of light dynamics that should be in the final result.

Use Light to adjust the contrast in the picture's "lights" and "shadows" regions. Use Saturation and Gamma Correction to adjust the overall tinting in the final result. To fine-tune exposure, adjust the Black Color and White Color and the shadows/lights intensity levels.



Each photograph is different, so there are no universal settings appropriate for all pictures. But on a general level, we can note that for most real-world pictures, raising Compression requires you to lower Intensity... though there are a few exceptions where the opposite applies. Meanwhile, for some scenes, raising Intensity will require you to lower Lights.

Note that it's definitely not a good idea to move all the sliders all the way to the right—unless you want something that looks more like graphics than a photo, in which case it's just fine. If after reading this Tone Mapping has caught your interest and you want to make magic with photographs, then we hope you'll go on to buy Zoner Photo Studio 14 as a permanent part of your photo toolkit!