



Color Page Basics

25

Color Page Basics

This chapter focuses on the core color adjustments that you'll be making to create "primary" corrections that alter the overall color and contrast of the image. These include clip-specific Camera Raw adjustments and the Lift/Gamma/Gain/Offset adjustments available in the Color Wheels palette, as well as more esoteric adjustments such as mixing colors between channels using the RGB Mixer. This chapter also covers the more automated grading controls that are available, including the Color Match palette that lets you sample colors from a color chart to create an automatic balance for the scene, and a section at the end of this chapter discussing Auto Color and Shot Match, which are tools for analyzing one or more shots and generating an automatic correction to either improve a single shot, or make multiple selected shots match one another.

| | |
|--|------------|
| Color Controls Covered in This Chapter | 607 |
| Camera Raw | 607 |
| Copying, Versioning, and Protecting Camera Raw Settings | 608 |
| Making Changes to Clip Camera Raw Settings | 608 |
| Clip Decoder Settings | 609 |
| Resetting Camera Raw Settings | 610 |
| Color Match Palette | 611 |
| Tips for Properly Shooting a Color Chart | 612 |
| How to Use Color Match | 614 |
| Configuration Controls | 615 |
| Reset Controls | 615 |
| Color Wheels Palette | 616 |
| Opening the Color Wheels Palette Using the DaVinci Control Panel | 616 |
| HDR Grading Using Color Wheels Palette Controls | 616 |
| How to Use Color Balance Controls and Master Wheels | 617 |
| Understanding the Primaries Wheels Controls | 618 |
| Shared Adjustment Controls | 621 |
| The Log Mode of the Color Wheels Palette | 623 |
| The Primaries Bars Mode of the Color Wheels Palette | 628 |
| RGB Lift/Gamma/Gain Sliders | 628 |
| Offset Sliders and Wheel | 629 |
| RGB Mixer Palette | 631 |
| Preserve Luminance | 631 |
| Resetting the RGB Mixer | 632 |
| Swap Channels Buttons | 632 |
| Using the RGB Mixer in Monochrome Mode | 632 |
| RGB Mixer Controls on the DaVinci Control Panel | 633 |
| Automated Grading Commands | 634 |
| Auto Color | 634 |
| Color Match | 635 |
| Shot Match | 635 |
| Using CDL Grades and ARRI Looks | 638 |

Color Controls Covered in This Chapter

The Left Palette panel contains four palettes that relate to color and contrast adjustments in different ways. The controls found within these palettes provide the foundation for any grade, and this chapter covers how you use the Camera Raw, Color Match, Color Wheels, and RGB Mixer palettes. For more information on the Motion Effects palette, see Chapter 29, “Color Page Effects.”



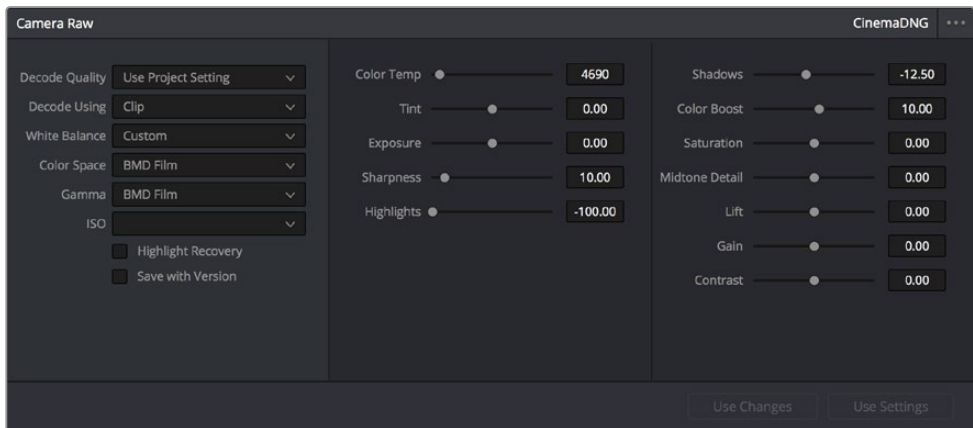
Primary color adjustment palettes in the Left Palette panel

NOTE: If you’re using DaVinci Resolve with a computer monitor that’s smaller than 1920x1080, then the Left and Center Palette panels are consolidated into a single panel, and all the buttons in the Palette toolbar appear together.

Camera Raw

When a timeline uses clips that are linked to camera raw source media recorded from cameras from Blackmagic Design, RED, ARRI, Sony, and Vision Research, all clips in raw media formats are initially debayered using the settings found in the Camera Raw panel of the Project Settings.

However, if there are individual clips that you want to apply different raw settings to, for example altering the ISO to pull more detail out of the highlights or shadows, then you can use the controls found in the Camera Raw palette to individually alter the parameters found within.



The Camera Raw palette showing the available parameters for CinemaDNG media.

The Camera Raw palette is automatically set to the mode (seen within the Mode pop-up menu) that is appropriate to the clip that’s currently selected. If the current clip is not in a raw format, then the parameters within the Camera Raw palette are disabled.

All settings that currently populate the Camera Raw palette are also accessible from the DaVinci control panel.

To access camera raw settings on the DaVinci control panel:

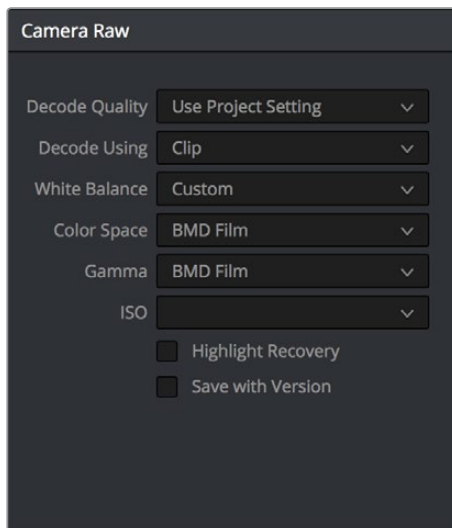
- 1 Press the CAMERA RAW soft key on the Center panel.
- 2 Use the Center panel knobs to make camera raw parameter adjustments.
- 3 When you're finished, press the MAIN soft key to return to the main page of controls.

This section covers general use of the Camera Raw palette. For in-depth documentation about specific Camera Raw parameters, see Chapter 4, "Camera Raw Settings."

Copying, Versioning, and Protecting Camera Raw Settings

Ordinarily, a clip's camera raw settings are copied along with its grade, or saved inside stills grabbed from that clip, when you use the various grade management techniques covered in Chapter 28, "The Gallery and Grade Management."

When you create new versions, you have the option to save individual camera raw settings for each version, so long as the Save with Version checkbox is turned on in the Camera Raw palette.



Camera Raw master settings

This means that you can have different versions with different camera raw settings, if, for example, you wanted to compare the results of two different camera raw adjustments on the same clip.

If you're copying and rippling grades among multiple clips, you can also protect each clip's camera raw settings from being overwritten using the "Copy Grade: Preserve Source Settings" option found in the contextual menu of the Gallery. For more information on the Copy Grade settings, see Chapter 28, "The Gallery and Grade Management."

Making Changes to Clip Camera Raw Settings

If you want to make individual adjustments to a particular clip's camera raw settings, choose "Clip" from the Decode Using pop-up menu in the Camera Raw palette. This makes all the parameters in the Camera Raw palette editable, and changes you make override the project-wide camera raw settings.

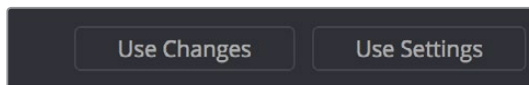
Changes to the parameters in the Camera Raw palette can also be rippled across multiple clips at once.

To ripple camera raw adjustments across multiple clips:

- 1 First, you must select a range of clips in the Color page timeline.
- 2 Open the Camera Raw palette, and make whatever adjustments are necessary to the current clip. The name of each parameter you adjust changes to amber, showing you which parameters have been modified, and which have not.
- 3 To ripple your changes, do one of the following:

Click the Use Changes button to ripple only the altered parameters (in amber) to the other clips you've selected in the Timeline. This preserves differences between clips in the parameters you haven't adjusted (in gray).

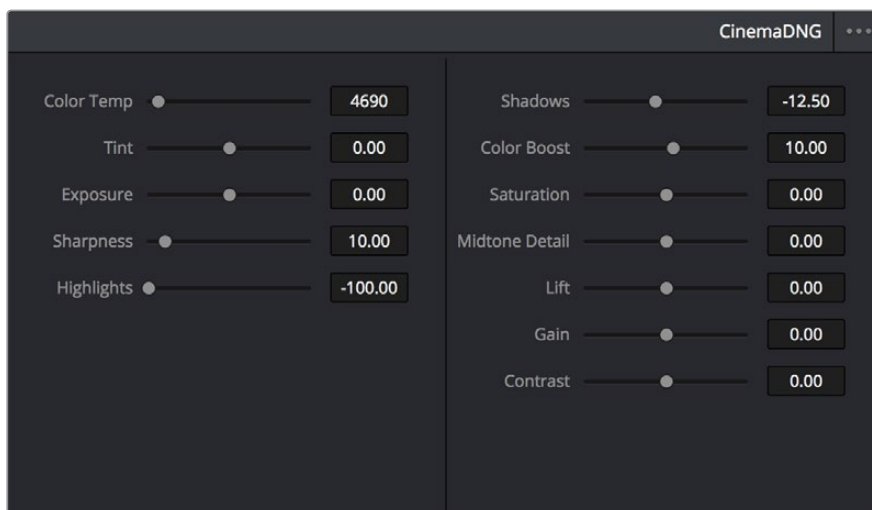
Click the Use Settings button to ripple every parameter of the current clip to the other clips you've selected, overwriting all the camera raw settings at once.



The Use Changes and Use Settings buttons in the Camera Raw palette

Clip Decoder Settings

There's much more information on the various format-specific Master settings, as well as the occasionally format-specific Clip Decoder settings, in Chapter 4, "Camera Raw Settings." However, with the exception of the RED Clip Decoder settings that appear for R3D clips, most other formats share a set of Resolve-specific controls that provide wide-latitude access to the raw image data for purposes of making different kinds of adjustments.



Camera Raw Clip Decoder settings

These controls include:

- **Color Temp:** Designed to alter the "warmth" of the image. Adjustable in degrees Kelvin. Lower values correct for "warmer" lighting, while higher values correct for "cool" lighting. +6500 is unity. The range is +2000 to +50,000.
- **Tint:** Color balance correction for images with a green or magenta color cast, such as fluorescent or sodium vapor bulbs. 0 is unity. The range is -150 to +150.

- **Exposure:** Increases or lowers image lightness in units relative to *f*-stops. If your intended exposure adjustment lifts image data above the maximum white level, don't worry; all image data is preserved and can be retrieved in subsequent adjustments. 0 is unity. The range is -4 to +4.
- **Sharpness:** A debayer-specific sharpness filter applied to provide the appearance of enhanced image detail. 20 is unity. The range is 0 to 100.
- **Highlights:** Makes it easy to selectively retrieve blown-out highlight detail in high-dynamic-range media by lowering this parameter, and achieves a smooth blend between the retrieved highlights and the unadjusted mid tones for a naturalistic result. 0 is unity. The range is -100 through +100.
- **Shadows:** Lets you selectively lighten or darken shadow detail. Raising this value retrieves shadow detail recorded below 0 percent, while leaving the midtones alone. 0 is unity. The range is -100 through +100.
- **Color Boost:** Lets you naturalistically raise the saturation of regions of low saturation, sometimes referred to as a vibrance operation. Can be used also to lower the saturation of regions of low saturation. 0 is unity. The range is -100 through +100.
- **Saturation:** Adjusts the color intensity of the image. 0 is unity. The range is -100 through +100.
- **Midtone Detail:** When this parameter is raised, the contrast of regions of the image with high edge detail is raised to increase the perception of image sharpness, sometimes referred to as definition. When this parameter is lowered to a negative value, regions of the image with low amounts of detail are softened while areas of high-detail are left alone. 0 is unity. The range is -100 through +100.
- **Lift:** Adjusts the black point of the media, raising it or lowering it while scaling all midtone values between it and the white point. Regardless of how you adjust this control, all image data is preserved and can be retrieved in subsequent adjustments. The range is -100 to +100
- **Gain:** Adjusts the white point of the media, raising or lowering it while scaling all midtone values between it and the black point. Regardless of how you adjust this control, all image data is preserved and can be retrieved in subsequent adjustments. 0 is unity. The range is -100 to +100.
- **Contrast:** Raising contrast reduces shadows and raises highlights, while leaving midtones at 50 percent unaffected. Regardless of how you adjust this control, all image data is preserved and can be retrieved in subsequent adjustments. 0 is unity. The range is -100 to +100.

Resetting Camera Raw Settings

If you've made changes to the parameters of the Camera Raw palette and you decide you need to reset them, there are two options, found in the Options menu.

- **Reset:** Resets all parameters in the Camera Raw palette to their default settings.
- **Revert:** Similar to the "Original Memory" command, Revert changes all camera raw parameters back to the state they were at when you first selected the current clip.

Color Match Palette

If the camera and lighting departments had the foresight to shoot a color test chart for each of the major lighting setups in the project you're grading, DaVinci Resolve lets you superimpose a sampling grid over a chart in a clip and mathematically analyze the sampled colors to generate an automatic correction. Using controls in the Color Match palette, you can specify the Source Gamma, Target Gamma, and Target Color Space to make sure that the resulting correction is correct for the camera you used, and the project you've set up.

The Color Match palette works with a number of standardized color charts including the X-Rite ColorChecker, Datacolor SpyderCheckr, DSC Labs SMPTE OneShot, and DSC Labs ChromaDumonde 4+4 charts.



The X-Rite ColorChecker, Datacolor SpyderCheckr, and DSC Labs SMPTE OneShot charts compared, of which are supported by the Color Match palette

The result is analyzed to generate an automatic color correction to use to create a neutral grade for the image, to use as a starting point for the rest of your grade.

Tips for Properly Shooting a Color Chart

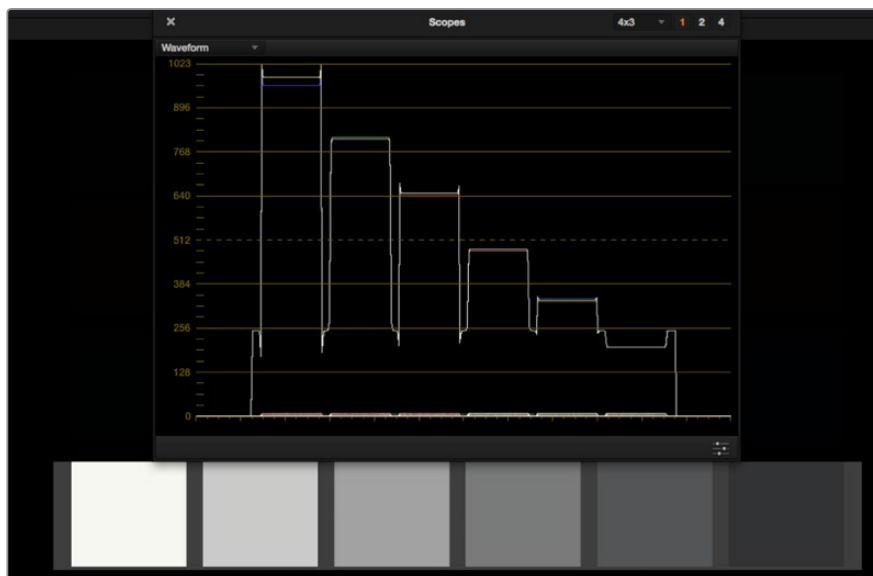
The results you get using Color Match are completely dependent on how the charts were shot in the field. If the charts were properly shot, you'll get great results. If the charts were improperly shot, the results will be unpredictable.

To get the best results using Color Match, adhere to the following guidelines:

- The chart must be lit evenly such that the lighting on each patch is the same intensity (level) and color. Any shadows or changes in lighting color across the chart will result in Color Match trying to compensate for these changes, and an inaccurate match will result. When viewing a chart being lit prior to a shoot shooting via a waveform monitor, the top of each individual patch as seen on the scope should appear as a rectangle with a "flat top."



Poorly lit chart with irregular waveforms,



Well lit chart with flat-topped waveform

No patches on the chart should be clipped in any of the RGB color channels. A clipped channel will force Color Match to use incorrect RGB values, and the resulting match will be inaccurate.

The white patch on the recorded chart should be captured between 70-95 IRE. Correct exposure is essential to getting a good result, and while Color Match does allow for some adjustment via the White Level option, this will only give accurate results if the original chart is shot so that the white patch sits within the 70 – 95 IRE range when viewed on a waveform monitor. It is not recommended that a white patch be shot with a signal level above 95 IRE, since this usually means that one of the RGB channels is close to or actually clipping which will cause an inaccurate match.

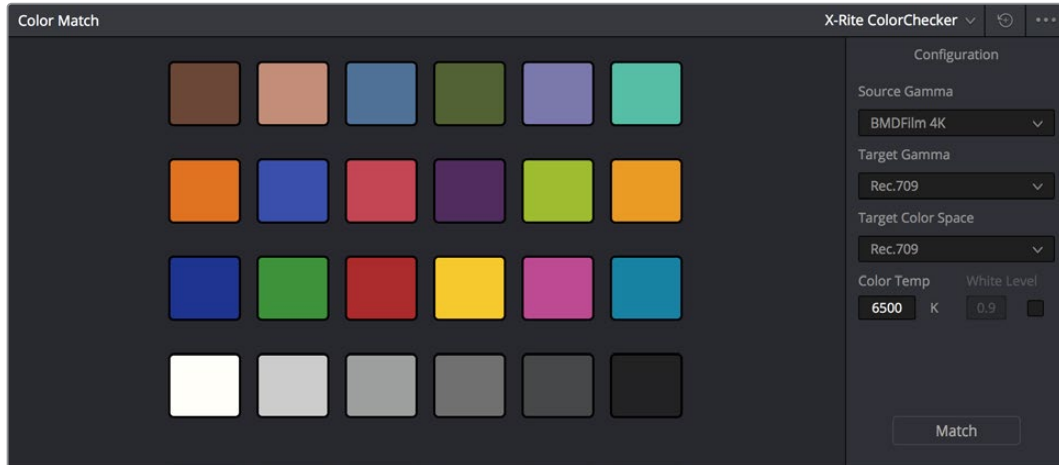
The Source Gamma setting must be set to match the encoded OETF (opto-electrical transfer function, or gamma) of the recorded image. To be able to create an accurate adjustment, the Color Match function requires image data that is scene linear (linear to light). Most captured or recorded image data is encoded with a tone curve (gamma curve) to maximize the efficiency of the bit depth being used, and different cameras use different gamma curves to maximize the image data from different sensors. Since the Color Match algorithm converts image data into a scene linear space before creating an adjustment, it needs to undo the gamma curve created by the camera or debayering process. If the wrong Source Gamma setting is selected in the Match Color palette, then the data will not be linearized correctly and the resulting match will be inaccurate.

Lighting in the scene with an unusual spectral response or a strong color cast can cause an inaccurate match. Scenes lit with lights that have an unusual spectral response (such as cheap fluorescent bulbs, or mercury vapor fixtures that exhibit a very narrow or spiky spectral power distribution) can cause metameric errors in both the camera's response and the Color Match function, resulting in the creation of an inaccurate adjustment. The most accurate results are obtained when the scene uses lighting with a chromaticity that is close to the black body locus (with a highly correlated color temperature) and a relatively smooth spectral power distribution. In other words, use high-quality lighting that doesn't have spikes in specific parts of the spectrum.

Large differences between the color temperature of the lighting shining directly on the chart and ambient lighting elsewhere in the scene can cause perceptual errors. Often the problem is one of perception and not an incorrect color adjustment. For example, outdoor scenes being artificially lit with instruments shining extremely warm light (low color temperatures of 3200K or less) but that have cooler ambient lighting may appear overly blue if matched with a Target Color Temp of 6500K. This happens because the chart under direct lighting is lit at the lower (yellowish) color temperature, but areas of the scene in shadow are much cooler because of the ambient "blue" light from the sky; the result is an automatic color adjustment that's correct for the chart, but exaggerated in the background.

How to Use Color Match

The following procedure shows how to use the Color Match palette and overlay to create a color correction.



The Color Match palette

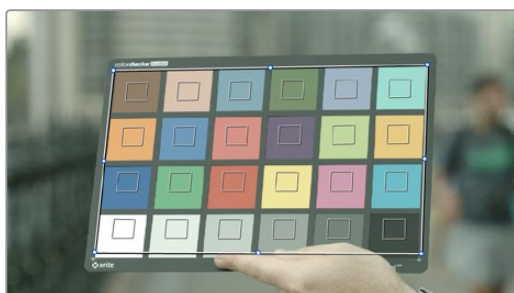
To sample a color chart to make an automatic correction:

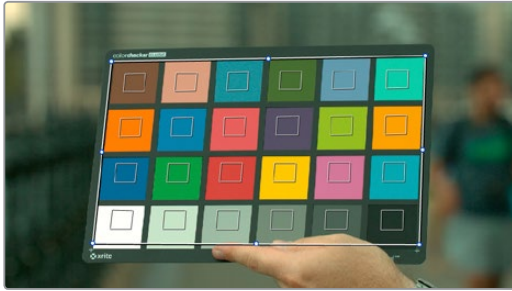
- 1 Select the clip with a chart you want to sample. If necessary, you can use the View > Show Current Clip With Handles option to show additional frames at the beginning of the current clip to reveal a color chart in the leader of your media.
- 2 If necessary, choose an option from the Source Gamma pop-up menu that corresponds to the gamma with which the media was recorded.
- 3 Then, choose a target gamma and color space that corresponds to the format you want this clip to be matched to.
- 4 Click the Viewer tool pop-up, choose the Color Chart overlay, and use its corner-pinning controls to line the sampling boxes up with the color patches of the chart.



Aligning the Color Match target with the chart in the video

- 5 When you're finished, click the Match button, and the clip will be automatically corrected.





A clip before and after automatic color matching

Keep in mind that not every shot needs to have a chart. If the lighting in a scene is consistent, you really only need a single chart analysis to generate a correction that you can copy to all other clips in the same scene. Of course, if you are using multiple cameras in a scene, you should have a chart analysis for each separate camera if you want to try and match them more closely together.

Configuration Controls

Here's a more detailed explanation of each of the parameters found in the Color Match palette.

- **Source Gamma:** Defines the source gamma the media was recorded with. You must select the correct gamma or the results will not be as accurate.
- **Target Gamma:** Lets you select a target gamma that you want the corrected clip to use. While this will most likely be the gamma you're outputting the finished program at, you can choose other target gamma values for specialized workflows.
- **Target Color Space:** The color space you'll be outputting the finished program with.
- **Color Temp:** An adjustable color temperature control that lets you manually adjust the target color balance of the resulting correction to be warmer (lower values) or cooler (higher values).
- **White Level:** A checkbox that's disabled by default, which lets you manually choose the target white point that the automatic correction should use. Raising or lowering this value will stretch or compress the contrast of the final correction.
- **Match button:** Once you've chosen the appropriate settings, and aligned the color match target with the chart that was recorded, click to execute the match. The default is 6500K.
- **Chart type pop-up menu:** You can choose from among the supported chart types in this pop-up. At the time of this writing, these include the ChromaDuMonde 24+4, the Datacolor SpyderCheckr, the DSC Labs SMPTE OneShot, X-Rite ColorChecker, the X-Rite ColorChecker Video, and the X-Rite ColorChecker Passport.
- **Reset All button:** Resets all controls and adjustments in this palette.

Reset Controls

The Color Match option menu has a variety of commands you can use to reset your work in the Color Match palette.

- **Reset Match Configuration:** Resets the Configuration parameters described above.
- **Reset Match:** Resets the matching operation without resetting the Configuration controls.

Color Wheels Palette

If you've had any exposure to color correction tools in any application, the controls found within the Color Wheels palette should look familiar. These controls correspond to the most basic color correction functionality available in DaVinci Resolve, and are designed to let users without a control panel have easy access to color balance and YRGB contrast manipulation using a mouse, tablet, or trackpad.



Color Wheels for primary grading, in Primaries mode

The Color Wheels palette has three distinct modes of operation:

- Primaries Wheels mode contains the traditional DaVinci Lift/Gamma/Gain/Offset controls that allow tonally specific yet widely overlapping regions of adjustment.
- Primaries Bars mode affects the same Lift/Gamma/Gain/Offset controls as the Primaries Wheels mode, but the bars interface lets you make vertical slider-driven adjustments to YRGB lift, YRGB gamma, and YRGB gain, as well as providing a slider-driven interface for Offset.
- Log mode contains Shadow/Midtone/Highlight/Offset controls that offer more restrictive yet customizable regions of adjustment intended for making adjustments to log-encoded image data.

Which mode you use depend entirely on what kinds of adjustments you need to make.

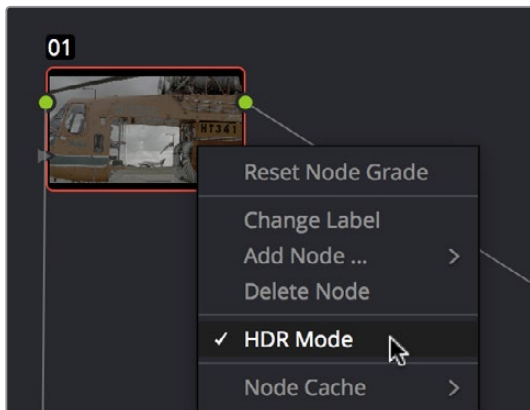
Opening the Color Wheels Palette Using the DaVinci Control Panel

You can open any mode of the Color Wheels palette by doing one of the following:

- To open the Primaries Bars: Press SHIFT DOWN and then PRIMARY.
- To open the Color Wheels: Press SHIFT UP and then PRIMARY.
- To open the Log controls: Press SHIFT DOWN and then PRIMARY. Alternately, you can open any of the other Color Wheels palette modes, and then press the LOG soft key on the Center panel of the DaVinci control panel. Press the MAIN soft key to return to the more traditional Lift/Gamma/Gain mode of adjustment.

HDR Grading Using Color Wheels Palette Controls

When using various grading controls in the Color page to grade wide-latitude images for HDR output, you may find it useful to enable the HDR Mode of the node you're working on by right-clicking that node in the Node Editor and choosing HDR Mode from the contextual menu (only available in Resolve Studio).



Using a node's contextual menu to put that node into HDR mode

This setting adapts that node's controls to work within an expanded HDR range. Practically speaking, this makes it easier to work with wide-latitude signals using controls that operate by letting you make adjustments at different tonal ranges such as Lift/Gamma/Gain, Custom Curves, Soft Clip, etcetera.

How to Use Color Balance Controls and Master Wheels

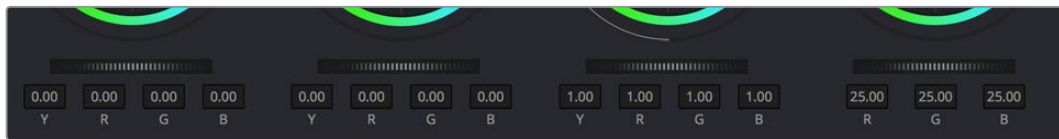
Each of the modes in the Color Wheels palette use the same controls, albeit in different ways. This section explains, in a generic way, how to use these controls to make adjustments.

Color Balance controls provide a way to adjust all three color channels simultaneously with a single move of the pointer, according to the mode that's currently selected. These controls correspond to the trackballs found on the DaVinci control panel, but there are a variety of keyboard modifiers that let you make specific adjustments via the GUI.

To make adjustments using the Color Balance controls:

- **Click and drag anywhere within the color ring:** Moves the Color Balance indicator relative to its previous position, and rebalances the three color channels in whatever range of image tonality is governed by that control. You don't need to drag the Color Balance indicator itself. This simulates the kind of relative control you get when using a trackball to manipulate these parameters. As the Color Balance indicator moves, the RGB parameters underneath change independently to reflect the independent adjustments being made to each channel.
- **Shift-click and drag within the color ring:** Jumps the Color Balance indicator to the absolute position of the pointer, letting you make faster, more extreme adjustments to the color balance governed by that control.
- **Double-click within the color ring:** Resets the color adjustment without resetting the corresponding contrast adjustment for that control.
- **Command-click and drag within the color ring:** Adjusts YRGB contrast identically as if you were dragging that control's master ring.
- **Click the reset control at the upper-right of a color ring:** Resets both the Color Balance control and its corresponding master ring.

The Master Wheels, located below the Color Balance controls, let you adjust the YRGB channels together to adjust Lift, Gamma, and Gain by individually adjusting the black point, the white point, and distribution of midtones that fall in-between. This has the practical effect of letting you adjust image contrast when you manipulate any two of these wheels together.



Lift, Gamma and Gain master wheels to balance the grades

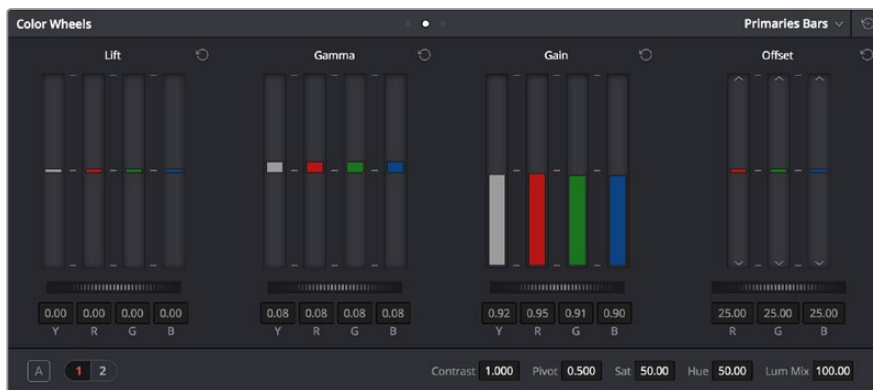
The Master Wheels correspond to the rings surrounding the trackballs on the DaVinci control panel, which let you modify image contrast via YRGB adjustment (as opposed to modifying image contrast via Y-only adjustment, covered later in this chapter).

To adjust a Master Wheel:

- Dragging a Master Wheel to the left makes the corresponding tonal region of the image darker, and dragging it to the right makes that tonal region of the image lighter. The effect will vary according to the Color Wheels mode you're in. As you make an adjustment, the YRGB parameters located underneath all change together to reflect the simultaneous adjustment you're making to all channels.

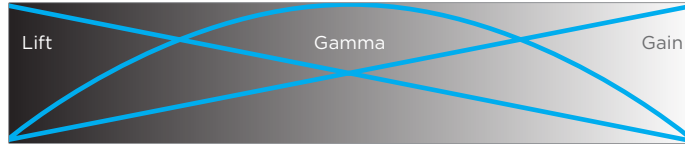
Understanding the Primaries Wheels Controls

The Color Wheel palette's Primaries Wheels mode lets you rebalance color and adjust contrast via the traditional DaVinci controls, which govern three overlapping tonal ranges referred to as Lift, Gamma, and Gain. The Lift/Gamma/Gain color balance and Master Wheel controls are tied to the YRGB Lift/Gamma/Gain sliders found in the Primaries palette; adjustments made to one set of controls are mirrored in the other.



Though they may look different, the Primaries Wheels and Primaries Bars actually adjust the same components, but in different ways.

These tonal ranges are defined by image lightness, on a scale where 0 is absolute black and 1023 is absolute white. The following illustration shows an approximation of how the Lift, Gamma, and Gain tonal zones broadly overlap, and how each zone's influence falls off towards the opposing extremes of image tonality.



Graphic displays the relationship of the Lift, Gamma and Gain controls over the image brightness range that they control

The Lift color balance control region of influence starts at black, and then falls off through the middle grays to diminish to no influence at white. Meanwhile, the Gamma color balance control has its greatest influence over the image in the middle grays, and its influence diminishes towards black and white. Lastly, the Gain control is the inverse of Lift, having its greatest effect on the image at white, with its influence falling off to diminish at black.

Because these tonal ranges overlap so broadly, you can make very soft, subtle, naturalistic adjustments using these controls. Furthermore, you can capitalize on their overlap by moving an adjacent color balance control toward a color that's complementary to an adjustment you've just made to restrict further how much of the image is affected.

The following image shows the interaction of extreme corrections made to a grayscale image using all three Color Balance controls. Lift has been pushed toward green, Gamma has been pushed toward blue, and Gain has been pushed toward red.



Extreme adjustments showing the overlap of the Lift, Gamma, and Gain color balance controls

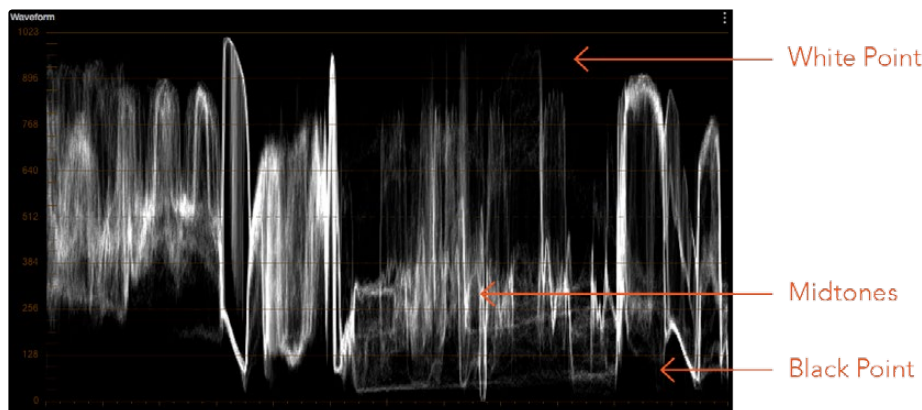
Notice how, even though these corrections are extreme, the colors blend smoothly. This is the reason for the broad overlap among all three controls, and why Lift, Gamma, and Gain are so effective in making corrections to the ambient color temperature of a scene to account for inconsistencies in lighting or camera settings.

3-Way Master Wheel Adjustments

The Master Wheels located below the Color Balance controls let you precisely modify image contrast by YRGB adjustments, which individually alter the black point, the white point, and distribution of midtones that fall in-between.

These controls correspond to the rings surrounding the trackballs on the DaVinci control panel.

- **Lift:** Lets you adjust the perceived shadow density of the image by altering the black point of the image. Dragging the Lift master wheel to the left makes the darkest values in the image darker, increasing the distance between the black and white points of the image, and stretching all the midtone values in-between. Dragging the Lift master wheel to the right makes the darkest values in the image lighter, reducing contrast and squeezing all the midtone values between the black and white points.
- **Gamma:** Lets you adjust the overall perceived lightness of the image by altering the distribution of midtones that fall between the Lift and Gain master wheel settings. Dragging the Gamma master wheel to the left darkens the overall image, while dragging it to the right brightens it. Most Gamma contrast adjustments have a minimal effect on the black and white point of the image, but large adjustments may push either boundary of image lightness farther out. This interaction is described in more detail below.
- **Gain:** Lets you adjust the lightness of the highlights by altering the white point of the image. Dragging the Gain master wheel to the left makes the lightest values of the image darker, squeezing the midtones between the white and black points of the image. Dragging Gain to the right makes the lightest values even lighter, eventually clipping at maximum white.



Waveform display shows the clips contrast range

These contrast adjustments are not limited by one another. For example, raising or lowering the Gamma master wheel by a large amount may push the highlights of the image higher or the shadows of the image lower, regardless of the current Lift or Gain contrast setting.

As a result, these controls are somewhat interactive, and you may find yourself going back and forth between controls as you make your final contrast adjustments. This is one of the reasons a control panel is valuable, as it allows you to adjust all three settings simultaneously.

Offset Color and Master Controls

The fourth set of Color Balance and Master Wheel controls is actually shared with the Log controls and with the Offset sliders in the Primaries palette. These are the Offset controls, which let you make linear adjustments to rebalance the entire tonal range of the RGB channels.

- **The Offset color balance control:** Works as a simultaneous adjustment to all three Offset sliders located in the Primaries palette; adjustments made to the Offset color balance control also alter the Offset sliders. Used subtly, this makes it easy to neutralize color imbalances in the darkest part of the image, while simultaneously rebalancing every other part of the image. Used more dramatically, this control makes it easy to add a color wash throughout the entire image.
- **The Offset master wheel:** Acts as a global adjustment to image lightness, an operation sometimes referred to as setup, raising or lowering all YRGB channels together.

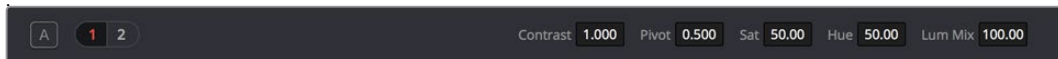
When using a DaVinci control panel, the Offset color balance control is adjusted in either Lift/Gamma/Gain or Log modes via the fourth trackball, while the Offset wheel is adjusted via the ring surrounding the fourth trackball.

Shared Adjustment Controls

The three modes of the Color Wheels palette all share two pages of controls for making more specific adjustments to different aspects of the image such as Contrast, Saturation, Hue, Highlight retrieval, Color boost, et cetera.

Page 1 Adjustment Controls

The shared Contrast, Pivot, Saturation, Hue, and Lum Mix controls are located in a set of “Page 1” controls found at the bottom of the Color Wheels palette



The Page 1 adjustment controls

The Contrast parameters let you quickly narrow or widen image contrast about a user-definable pivot point. Regardless of which mode you're in, these parameters are identical. Contrast and pivot can also be adjusted using the DaVinci control panel via the CONTRAST and PIVOT knobs on the Center panel's default page, regardless of whether you're in Lift/Gamma/Gain or Log mode.

- **Contrast:** This one parameter lets you increase or reduce the distance between the darkest and lightest values of an image, raising or lowering image contrast. The effect is similar to using the Lift and Gain master controls to make simultaneous opposing adjustments. Bright and dark parts of the image are pushed apart or brought together about a center point defined by the Pivot parameter. The “Use S-curve for contrast” setting in the Color panel of the Project Settings (on by default) sets the contrast control to apply an “S-curve” to the image, such that the shadows and highlights of a signal will not be clipped when you increase the value. If you would prefer for these contrast adjustments to be made linearly, and for the signal to be allowed to clip when you reach the upper and lower boundaries of the video signal, you can turn this checkbox off.
- **Pivot:** Changes the center of tonality about which dark and bright parts of the image are stretched or narrowed during a contrast adjustment. Darker images may require a lower Pivot value to avoid crushing the shadows too much when stretching image contrast, while lighter images may benefit from a higher Pivot value to increase shadow density adequately.

The Saturation, Hue, and Lum Mix parameters mirror the three knobs found at the right of the Center panel of the DaVinci control panel.

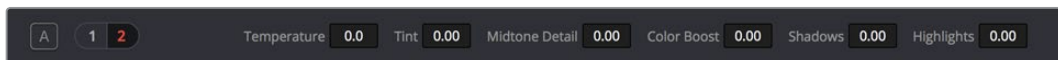
- **Saturation:** Increases or decreases overall image saturation. At higher values, colors appear more intense, while at lower values, color intensity diminishes until, at 0, all color is gone, leaving you with a grayscale image.
- **Hue:** Rotates all hues of the image around the full perimeter of the color wheel. The default setting of 50 shows the original distribution of hues. Raising or lowering this value rotates all hues forward or backward along the hue distribution as seen on a color wheel.
- **Lum Mix:** Lets you control the balance between YRGB contrast adjustments you've made using the Master Wheels or ganged Custom curves, and Y-only adjustments to contrast made using the Y channel Lift/Gamma/Gain controls of the Primaries palette or the unganged Luma curve. At the default of 100, YRGB and Y-only adjustments to contrast contribute equally. Reducing this value diminishes the effect of Y-only contrast adjustments until, at 0, Y-only contrast adjustments are turned off.

Additionally, you'll notice that at a Lum Mix setting of 100, individual adjustments to R, G, or B using the RGB sliders or unganged Custom curves result in automatic adjustments being made to the other two color channels in order to maintain constant Luma levels. At a Lum Mix setting of 0, individual color channel adjustments have no effect on the other color channels.

Like most parameters in Resolve, clicking and dragging a parameter's name or value to the left or right lowers and raises that parameter with a virtual slider, while double-clicking that parameter's number lets you edit it numerically, and double-clicking that parameter's name resets the parameter to its default position.

Page 2 Adjustments Controls

The "Page 2" section of the Color Wheels palette has the same kind of highlight and shadow recovery, Color Boost, and Midtone Detail controls that are found on the Camera Raw palette. If you're grading a camera raw format, then these controls on the Camera Raw palette will give you greater latitude for adjustment. However, the identically named controls in the Color Wheels palette can be used for any media format you like.



The Page 2 adjustment controls

Even though you won't have the kind of wide latitude that you do when using these controls with raw clips, you can still accomplish quite a lot, depending on the format you're adjusting.

- **Temperature:** A specifically-constrained Gain color balance adjustment that lets you adjust the image along a warm/orange to cool/blue axis corresponding to the naturalistic spectrum of color temperatures used for lighting. Raising this parameter performs a Gain color balance adjustment toward orange, while lowering this parameter to a negative value performs a Gain color balance adjustment toward a blue/cyan split. 0 is unity. The range is -4000 to +4000.
- **Tint:** A specifically-constrained Gain color balance adjustment that lets you adjust the image along a magenta to green axis corresponding to the unnatural spectrum of color temperatures found in artificial lighting sources such as fluorescent and sodium vapor lighting fixtures. Raising this parameter performs a Gain color balance adjustment toward magenta (sometimes referred to as "minus green" to correct for fluorescent lighting), while lowering this parameter to a negative value performs a Gain color balance adjustment toward green ("plus green" to correct for other kinds of lighting). 0 is unity. The range is -4000 to +4000.

- **Midtone Detail (MD):** When this parameter is raised, the contrast of regions of the image with high edge detail is raised to increase the perception of image sharpness, sometimes referred to as definition. When this parameter is lowered to a negative value, regions of the image with low amounts of detail are softened while areas of high-detail are left alone. 0 is unity. The range is –100 through +100.
- **Color Boost:** Lets you naturalistically raise the saturation of regions of low saturation, sometimes referred to as a vibrance operation. Can be used also to lower the saturation of regions of low saturation. 0 is unity. The range is –100 through +100.
- **Shadows:** Lets you selectively lighten or darken shadow detail. Raising this value retrieves shadow detail recorded below 0 percent, while leaving the midtones alone. 0 is unity. The range is –100 through +100.
- **Highlights:** Makes it easy to selectively retrieve blown-out highlight detail in high-dynamic-range media by lowering this parameter, and achieves a smooth blend between the retrieved highlights and the unadjusted mid tones for a naturalistic result. 0 is unity. The range is –100 through +100.

Auto Correction in the Primaries Mode Controls

The Auto Color button provides a quick way to automatically balance the blacks and whites of a clip based on the current frame at the position of the playhead. Resolve looks for the darkest levels in the image to neutralize the RGB color balance in the blacks, and the brightest levels to neutralize the RGB color balance in the highlights. Furthermore, Master Lift and Master Gain are adjusted to maximize image contrast at the outer boundaries of 0 and 100 percent. Using this control with the Primaries Bars mode open makes it easier to see what's been changed after these automatic adjustments are made.

The Log Mode of the Color Wheels Palette

The Shadow/Midtone/Highlight color balance and Master Wheel controls operate independently of the Lift/Gamma/Gain color balance and Master Wheel controls found in the Primaries mode. While the Log mode uses the same types of controls as the Primaries mode, the way each control affects the image is very different.

To switch between the Primaries and Log modes of the Color Wheels:

- Choose an option from the mode pop-up, click the right mode button, or press Option-Z.



Log color wheels, with behavior that is very different from the Primaries mode color wheels

There are two ways of using the Log mode controls. The first takes advantage of the way these controls work to make fast, filmic adjustments to log-encoded media while it's normalized by LUTs or manual adjustments added after it in the image processing pipeline.

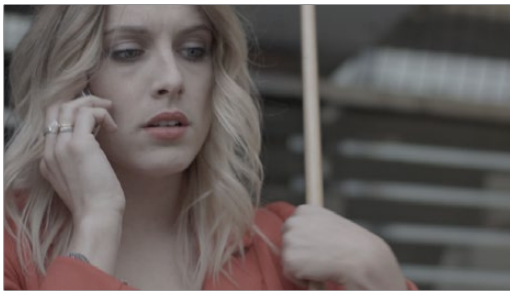
The other way of using the Log controls is to take advantage of the more restrictive, but adjustable tonal range of the Shadow/Midtone/Highlight controls to stylize normalized clips by tinting specific regions of the image.

Whether or Not to Use Legacy Log Grading Ranges and Curve

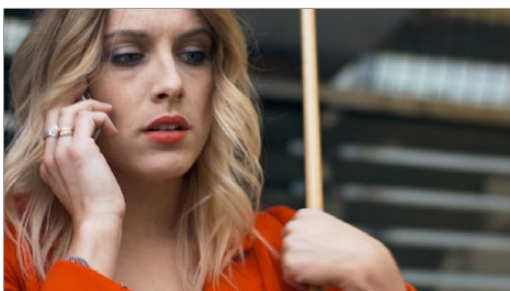
DaVinci Resolve 12.5 introduced a modification to the Log grading controls that provides smoother, more pleasing results using the same controls. To maintain backward compatibility with older projects, a “Use legacy Log grading ranges and curve” checkbox in the Color panel of the Project Settings lets you switch your project between the older Log control behavior and the newer one. Older projects that are opened in Resolve have this checkbox turned off by default, while new projects have this turned on by default.

Using the Log Mode Controls to Grade Log-Encoded Media

The Log controls are so named because they’re designed to work specifically with media with Log-C or similar gamma and color encoding, derived from the Cineon Log gamma curve, developed by Kodak to digitally store flat-contrast, wide-gamut image data that preserves image detail with a wide latitude for adjustment.”



An example of a log-encoded clip



The same clip after being normalized

You can debayer most raw formats to a log-encoded image in order to derive the maximum amount of image data and adjustable latitude from that source (For more information, see Chapter 4, “Camera Raw Settings.”). However, the resulting image needs to be normalized to occupy the final range of color and contrast that you intend for the final result. You can do this one of two ways:

You can make a very careful curves adjustment in a second node to stretch the log-encoded out to fit the contrast profile you want. By making this adjustment in Node 2, you make room for a customizing adjustment made using the Log controls in Node 1, prior to the normalization adjustment. This is key.

You can also apply a 1D Output or 3D LUT to the first node of a clip to normalize the image. This is a faster, if less flexible operation, but a smooth tonal range may be easier to obtain. Since a LUT applied within a node is always the last adjustment within that node's order of operations, you can also use Node 1's Log controls to customize the look of the footage.

In either case, it's important that the normalizing adjustment happens after your Log control adjustments, for the Log control adjustments to work as they should. With your node tree set up in this way, you'll be monitoring an ordinary-looking image, but taking advantage of the Log mode controls' unique tonal ranges to manipulate the log-encoded image data with great specificity.

When using the Log mode controls, here's a workflow to consider as you learn how they work:

- **First**, use the Offset master wheel to set the black point, and use the Contrast and Pivot parameters to stretch or compress contrast as necessary to achieve the tonal range you require.
- **Second**, use the Offset color balance control to adjust the overall color balance of the image to your liking.
- **Third**, use the Shadow/Midtone/Highlight color balance and Master Wheel controls to make specific, targeted adjustments to the color and contrast of the image in tonal ranges that match where that data is in the log-encoded image.

Working in this way, you'll find that adjustments made with the Offset color balance and Master Wheel controls and Contrast controls control the log-encoded image very nicely to create an overall adjustment, while the Shadow, Midtone, and Highlight controls allow you to fix specific issues, such as shadow balance and density, after your main adjustment has been set.

The following illustration shows an approximation of how the default ranges of the Shadow, Midtone, and Highlight controls divide the tonal range of a log-encoded image.



This graphic shows the tonal range of each of the Log controls when used with a log-encoded image

As you can see, when used with a log-encoded image the color interactions between each adjustment overlap very softly, while still allowing more specific adjustments than those made by the Lift/Gamma/Gain controls.

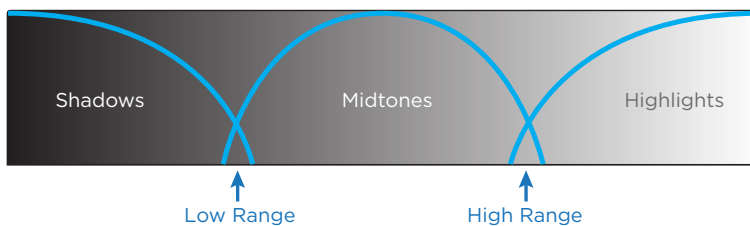
Furthermore, the boundaries of the Shadows, Midtones, and Highlights Log controls can be customized using the Low and High Range parameters. This gives you added flexibility to apply more specific contrast and color adjustments.

Once you've made an adjustment using Log mode controls along with a normalizing LUT or curve adjustment, you can always apply additional nodes and use the Primaries mode of the Color Wheels palette to make further alterations to the now normalized image, working as you normally would with any of the other tools in Resolve.

Using the Log Mode Controls to Stylize Normalized Media

You can also use the Log mode controls on normalized images. Although the results you get will be somewhat different, this can be a fast way to create interesting stylizations. Whereas the broadly overlapping tonal ranges of the Lift, Gamma, and Gain color balance controls allow subtle adjustments to be made very easily, the Log palette's color balance controls affect much more restrictive tonal zones that overlap much less when used on normalized images.

The following illustration shows an approximation of how the Shadows, Midtones, and Highlights, by default, divide the tonal range of the image into non-overlapping thirds. As you saw in the previous section, these divisions were originally intended to map to log-encoded media. However, with normalized media these divisions provide a different, and potentially useful, set of ranges from the Primaries mode controls.



This graphic shows the tonal range of each of the Log controls with the additional low and high range to expand or contract the range

With normalized media, the Shadows really do only affect the darkest shadows, falling off at approximately the bottom third of image tonality. The Midtones affect only the middle third of grays, and the Highlights affect the brightest top third of image values. However, these default ranges of image tonality can be adjusted using the Low Range and High Range controls, which are described in more detail later.

The following image shows the default interaction of extreme corrections made to a grayscale image using the Log mode controls. The Shadows have been pushed toward green, the Midtones have been pushed toward blue, and the Highlights have been pushed toward red.



Extreme adjustments showing the overlap of the Shadow, Midtone, and Highlight color balance controls

As you can see, with normalized media the color interaction between each adjustment is very subtle. The darkest shadows end up bright green, the midtone values are vivid blue, and the highlights are almost pure red. This restrictiveness is useful when you want to limit a correction to a specific tonal range within the image without needing to use a Luma qualifier. It's also quite useful for making bold, stylistic color adjustments when creating a non-naturalistic look.

Adjusting Tone Ranges In Log Mode

Two parameters let you modify the range of Shadows and Highlights that each Color Balance control affects, in turn narrowing and widening the range of Midtones. Keep in mind that while the ranges can be customized, the amount of overlap between each range cannot.

- **Low Range:** Moves the border where the Shadows and Midtones meet. Lowering this parameter widens the range affected by the Midtones, and narrows the range affected by the Shadows. Raising this parameter narrows the Midtones and widens the Shadows.
- **High Range:** Moves the border where the Midtones and Highlights meet. Lowering the High Range parameter narrows the range affected by the Midtones, and widens the range affected by the Highlights. Raising this parameter narrows the Highlights and widens the Midtones.

There are also Saturation and Hue parameters which mimic these settings found within other palettes and modes.

Adjusting Contrast in Log Mode

When using the Log mode controls, your primary tools for adjusting image contrast will usually be the Offset master wheel and Contrast and Pivot parameters. Using these three controls, you can set a black point and adjust the overall contrast very quickly.

The Shadow, Midtone, and Highlight master wheels let you adjust image lightness within the same restrictive ranges of image tonality that are defined by the Low Range, High Range, and Pivot parameters. These adjustments should appear smooth, if somewhat narrower than the Lift/Gamma/Gain controls, when used with log-encoded media. However, when used with normalized images, severe adjustments made with one master wheel may not always make a smooth transition to the next adjacent range of image lightness.

NOTE: Because these controls are so restrictive when used with normalized images, it's easy to create solarization effects by raising the shadows to be higher than the Midtones, or lowering the Highlights to fall below the Midtones, to give two examples.

Log Offset Color and Master Controls

The Log controls also share the same Offset color balance and Master Wheel controls that appear in the Lift/Gamma/Gain mode of the Color Wheels palette (which are tied to the Offset controls of the Primaries palette).

- **The Offset color balance control:** Works as a simultaneous adjustment to all three Offset sliders located in the Primaries palette; adjustments made to the Offset color balance control also alter the Offset sliders. Used subtly, this makes it easy to neutralize color imbalances in the darkest part of the image, while simultaneously rebalancing every other part of the image. Used more dramatically, this control makes it easy to add a color wash throughout the entire image.
- **The Offset wheel:** Acts as a global adjustment to image lightness, an operation sometimes referred to as setup, raising or lowering all YRGB channels together.

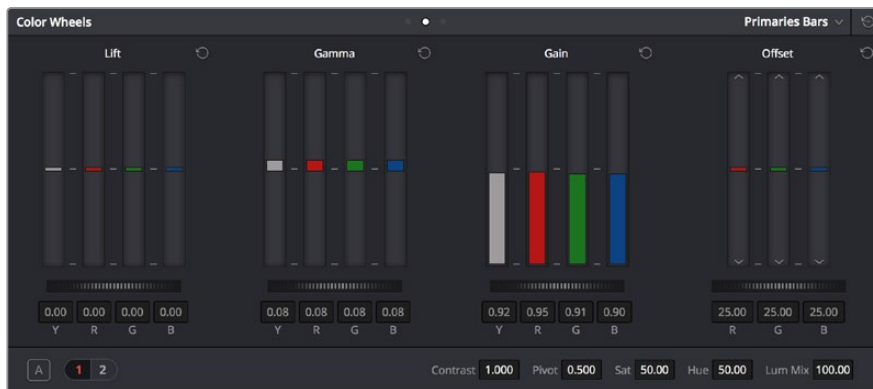
Switching to Log Mode Using the DaVinci Control Panel

You can switch to the Log grading mode of the currently selected node by doing one of the following:

- Press SHIFT DOWN and then PRIMARY.
- Press the LOG soft key on the Center panel of the DaVinci control panel. Press the MAIN soft key to return to the more traditional Lift/Gamma/Gain mode of adjustment.

The Primaries Bars Mode of the Color Wheels Palette

The Primaries Bars palette contains the original set of DaVinci Resolve color adjustment sliders. These sliders serve two uses. First, they're highly visible indicators of the individual YRGB channel adjustments that are made using the trackballs, rings, and knobs of a control panel. Second, they provide control of individual YRGB Lift/Gamma/Gain parameters using a mouse, tablet, or trackpad.



Primary grading controls

RGB Lift/Gamma/Gain Sliders

The main controls of the Primaries Bars mode are the individual Luma (or Y), Red, Green, and Blue sliders, four each for Lift, Gamma, and Gain. These sliders correspond to a set of knobs on the POTS page of the DaVinci control panel, and provide precise Lift/Gamma/Gain style control over each of the YRGB channels of the image. When used in conjunction with a Parade Scope video analysis of the image, these controls can enable you to fix irregular color imbalances in specific channels quickly.

Additionally, the Luma (Y) Lift/Gamma/Gain sliders correspond to the three knobs arranged vertically to the left of the Center panel of the DaVinci control panel. These three controls allow easy Y-only adjustments to contrast, where an increase in contrast results in perceptually diminished color saturation.

Making Y-only adjustments to contrast is a great way to increase contrast when you're going for muted saturation or a gritty look. This kind of adjustment is also useful in situations where you're trying to increase shadow density without increasing image colorfulness.

Four Master Wheel controls appear underneath each group of Lift/Gamma/Gain sliders. The first three of these controls are identical to the Lift/Gamma/Gain master wheels in the Primaries mode of the Color Wheel palette, and control YRGB contrast, while the fourth is identical to the Offset master wheel found in the Log mode of the Color Wheel palette.

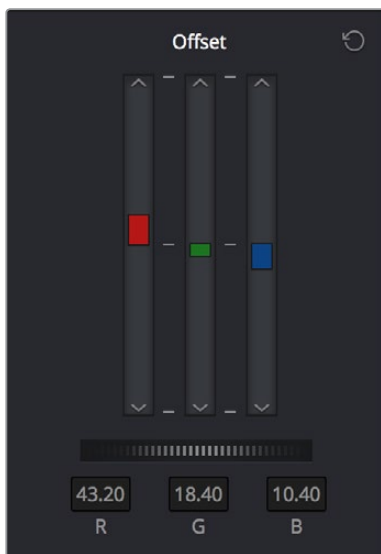
Finally, each group of Lift/Gamma/Gain sliders has its own reset button. To reset individual channels, double-click the single-letter label underneath that slider.

To adjust RGB Lift/Gamma/Gain using the DaVinci control panel:

- 1 Press the POTS soft key on the main page of the Center panel.
- 2 Use the variously identified LUM/RED/GREEN/BLUE and OFFSET/BLACK/GAMMA/GAIN knobs to make the required adjustments.
- 3 Press the MAIN soft key to return to the Center panel's main page.

Offset Sliders and Wheel

These vertical sliders mirror the settings of the Offset color balance controls in the Color Wheel palette, except that they provide individual control over the Red, Green, and Blue color channels. When you drag one of the Offset sliders up or down, you raise or lower that color channel in its entirety, which can be useful for adjusting color channels that are particularly problematic.



Offset RGB and master controls

Each Offset slider also has a pair of arrow buttons, one at the top and one at the bottom. These buttons provide “Printer Point” adjustment of these values, which let you adjust each Offset channel in discrete increments. Printer Points can be useful for projects that have tight integration with a film lab, and are designed to emulate color adjustments made using optical printers.

The Offset wheel control underneath the Offset sliders lets you adjust all three sliders at once, performing a setup adjustment. The Offset sliders, Printer Point buttons, and Offset wheel can be adjusted using the DaVinci control panel.

To adjust the Offset sliders individually using the DaVinci control panel:

- Use the MASTER OFFSET, RED OFFSET, GREEN OFFSET, and BLUE OFFSET knobs on the main page of the Center panel.

To adjust Offset Printer Points using the DaVinci control panel:

- 1 Press the PRINTER LITES soft key on the main page of the Center panel to display the Printer Points controls page on the Transport panel.
- 2 Use the + and – MASTER, RED, GREEN, and BLUE buttons that appear on the Transport panel.
- 3 Press PRINTER LITES again to return the Transport panel controls to their previous state.

There's also a special set of keyboard shortcuts, mapped to the numeric keypad of an extended keyboard, that lets you make Printer Point adjustments in discrete increments, adding or subtracting a point at a time.

To use the Printer Lights Hotkeys:

- Choose Color > Printer Lights Hotkeys, or press Option-Command-Grave Accent (`)

When you enable Printer Lights Hotkeys, there are two sets of shortcuts you can use to manipulate printer points. If you want to directly manipulate RGB, there's one set for that, which makes sense when used on a numeric keypad.

However, if you want to work in the classic way by manipulating cyan, magenta, and yellow, there's another set of shortcuts for that, using the remaining keys on the numeric keypad

| Red | Green | Blue |
|--------|----------|---------|
| 7 +Red | 8 +Green | 9 +Blue |
| 4 –Red | 5 –Green | 6 –Blue |

NOTE: The increments used by the Printer Point buttons are defined by the Printer Light Step Calibration parameters, found in the General Options of the Setup window. For more information, see Chapter 3, “Project Settings and Preferences.”

| Red | Green | Blue |
|-----------------|------------|--------------------|
| 1 +Cyan | 2 +Magenta | 3 +Yellow |
| Minus (–) –Cyan | 0 –Magenta | Period (.) –Yellow |

RGB Mixer Palette

The RGB Mixer palette lets you remix different amounts of image data from one channel to another, and has a wide variety of creative and utilitarian uses. Furthermore, the RGB Mixer can be used either to remix the color channels, or to add different proportions of each color channel into a monochrome image.

By default, the RGB Mixer palette is set to mix any amount of the Red, Green, and Blue color channels into any of the other channels. Each color channel has a dedicated control group of Red, Green, and Blue sliders that you use to do the mixing, and the default values of these can be seen in the screenshot above.

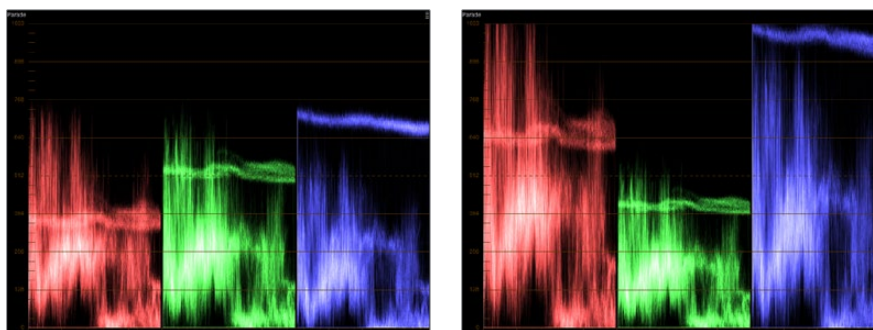


RGB Mixer palette

Each slider has an overall range of -2.00 to +2.00. This means that you also have the option of subtracting any combination of color channel values from a particular channel. For example, you can lower the Red control group's Green slider to -.24 to subtract 24 percent of the Green channel from the Red channel.

Preserve Luminance

With the “Preserve Luminance” checkbox turned on, any channel adjustment you make is prevented from altering the luma of the image by automatically raising or lowering the other two channels to compensate. In the following example, you can see that when “Preserve Luminance” is turned on, lowering the Green control group's Green slider results in the Red and Blue channels being raised by the same amount (as seen in the Parade scope). Conversely, raising a color channel's slider ends up lowering the other two channels by the same amount to keep overall image luminosity the same.



The result of an RGB Mixer adjustment with “With luminance level preserved” turned on. You can see that lowering the green channel slider also raises red and blue.

Resetting the RGB Mixer

Clicking the Reset button at the top right-hand corner of the RGB Mixer resets each slider to its default position, where Red = 1.00 for Red output, Green = 1.00 for Green output, Blue = 1.00 for Blue output, and all other sliders = 0.

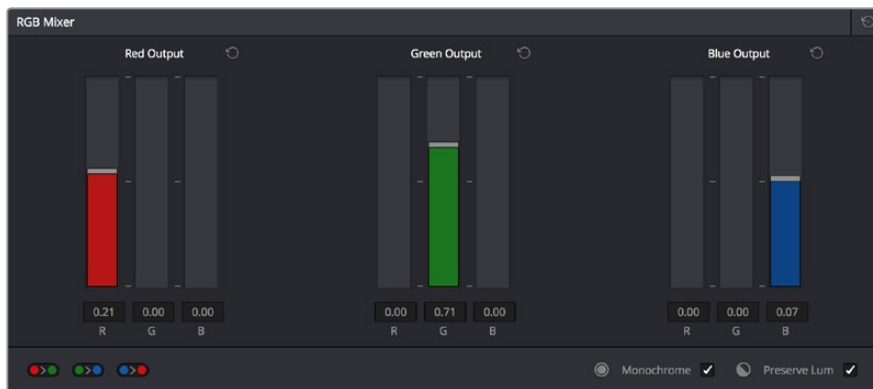
Swap Channels Buttons

A set of three buttons at the bottom of the RGB Mixer lets you easily swap two channels with one another. This can be useful as part of a creative look, or corrective in instances where two channels are accidentally reversed.

- **Swap Red and Green:** Swaps these two color channels.
- **Swap Green and Blue:** Swaps these two color channels.
- **Swap Red and Blue:** Swaps these two color channels.

Using the RGB Mixer in Monochrome Mode

When you turn on the Monochrome checkbox, two of the sliders within each Output group are disabled. This leaves the Red > Red slider, the Green > Green slider, and the Blue > Blue slider as the only available controls.



Sliders at their default values when “To monochrome” is enabled

Keeping in mind that each of the color channels that makes up an image is itself a grayscale channel, the RGB sliders in Monochrome mode let you add different proportions of the Red, Green, and Blue color channels together to create custom grayscale versions of a shot.

To understand why this is useful, let’s consider the default values of the Red, Green, and Blue sliders. To emulate the human eye’s sensitivity to the wavelengths of light, the Rec. 709 video standard defines an isolated Luma (Y’) component as consisting of 0.2126 of the Red channel, 0.7152 of the Green channel, and 0.0722 of the Blue channels added together. This can be seen in the default values (rounded to the nearest integer percentage) of 21, 71, and 7.

This is the standard method of deriving a black and white version of a color image, and in fact produces identical results to those obtained by setting the Saturation parameter to 0.

However, there have traditionally been other ways of mixing the colors of life into different grayscale interpretations. For example, photographers often use colored filters in conjunction with black & white film stocks, such as a yellow/green filter to emphasize pleasing skin tone for lightly-complexioned people. A much older example is the use of black & white film stocks with different sensitivities (old orthochromatic stocks were not sensitive to red wavelengths, recording only blue and green to create an image).

Using the RGB Mixer with “To monochrome” turned on gives you the ability to mix your own custom blends of all three color channels to emphasize the creative characteristics you require. For instance, increasing the mix of blue and decreasing red and green can give skin tones a darker, metallic sheen. The following screenshots show multiple versions of the same image with different monochrome mixes.



Three monochrome mixes of the same image.
The top image is the result of setting saturation to 0.

Like the parameters in Color mode, you can use the RGB Mixer’s Monochrome mode to subtract one color channel from the others, for even more creative effects.

RGB Mixer Controls on the DaVinci Control Panel

All of the RGB Mixer palette controls are available from the DaVinci Resolve control panel.

To open the RGB Mixer curve controls on the DaVinci Resolve control panel:

- Press the CURVES soft key on the main page of the Center panel.

To exit the RGB Mixer curve controls:

- Press the MAIN soft key on the Center panel.

To adjust the principle color regions using knobs:

- Adjust one of the four groups of knobs on the Center panel. All are labeled to identify which RED/GREEN/BLUE source channels are paired with RED/GREEN/BLUE destination channels. For example GREEN->BLUE adds or subtracts an amount of the Green color channel from the Blue color channel.

- Press the PRESERVE LUM soft key to turn on the “With luminance level preserved” checkbox.
- Press MONO to turn on the “To monochrome” checkbox.
- Press COLOR to turn off the “To monochrome” checkbox.

Automated Grading Commands

While DaVinci Resolve has a wide variety of manual grading controls that afford you control over just about every component of digital imagery, DaVinci has spent a lot of time investigating ways of increasing colorist efficiency by creating automated grading tools. Furthermore, with integrated editing bringing professional editors into the world of editing, grading, and finishing in Resolve, the same automated tools being developed to help colorists go home earlier can also be used to give non-colorists a hand in taking care of simple grading tasks.

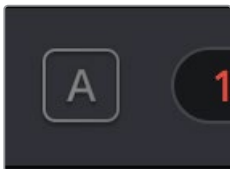
Auto Color

The Auto Color command provides a quick way to automatically balance the blacks and whites of a clip based on the current frame at the position of the playhead. Resolve looks for the darkest levels in the image to neutralize the RGB color balance in the blacks, and the brightest levels to neutralize the RGB color balance in the highlights. Furthermore, Master Lift and Master Gain are adjusted to maximize image contrast at the outer boundaries of 0 and 100 percent. Using this control with the Primaries Bars mode open makes it easier to see what’s been changed after these automatic adjustments are made.

The advantage of Auto Grade is that it gives you an immediate result for any clip without the requirement for sampling the image or having a specific test pattern to analyze, but the disadvantage is that this lack of guidance makes the usefulness of this command somewhat hit-or-miss. When it works, it can work very well to give you a neutral starting point for further grading. When it fails, you’re better off resetting the resulting adjustment and grading the old fashioned way.

To make an automatic correction:

- Open the Color Wheels palette to any mode, and click the A button in the lower left-hand corner.
- Choose Color > Auto Color (Option-A)
- Press the AUTO COLOR button on the T-bar panel.



The Auto Color button

If you crave a bit more control over how the automatic color adjustment is made, and you have a DaVinci control panel, you can use the cursor to choose which color values to sample when making this automatic adjustment. This additional bit of guidance can make the results a lot more predictable.

To use Auto Grade to sample a feature using the DaVinci control panel:

- 1 Press the CURSOR button, on the trackball panel.
- 2 Use the fourth trackball to move the cursor to a feature you want to use to define the automatic correction. Whichever color you move the cursor over will be sampled to form the basis of the resulting color and contrast adjustment. Ideally, you should place the cursor over a feature that's supposed to be neutral, such as a black shadow, grey wall, or white T-shirt. Don't place the cursor over a feature that actually consists of saturated color, or that's overexposed, as Resolve will overcompensate and you'll get poor results.
- 3 With the cursor placed over the desired neutral feature, press AUTO COLOR on the T-bar panel.

Resolve calculates an appropriate correction, which is applied to the selected node.

Color Match

The Color Match palette is described in much more detail earlier in this chapter, but it bears mentioning here because it's a fast, automated way of creating a good neutral starting point for a clip's grade, that has a better chance of being truer to the original scene than Auto Color because of the color science involved with extracting colorimetry from the way the color patches on a recorded test chart reflect the light of the scene. For more information about using Color Match, see the "Color Match Palette" section previously in this chapter.

Shot Match

The previously available automated color correction commands, Auto Color and Color Match, are both useful for adjusting a selected clip to give it a clean, neutral starting point when you're either in a hurry, or if you're having trouble manually working out a solution. However, this is only the first step in grading a scene.

After you make a general adjustment to improve the color of a clip in a scene, one of the other principal tasks of the colorist is to adjust all of the clips in that scene so that they match the clip you started with, such that they all look like they were shot at the same time and in the same place. This is called scene-to-scene color correction, scene balancing, or shot matching. While there are abundant tools in Resolve to ease the process of doing this manually, wouldn't it be nice if you could just select a series of clips that you want to match, and have the software do the work?

That's exactly what Shot Match has been designed to do. Whether you're a colorist in a hurry, trying to blast through a low-budget feature with an absurd schedule, a DIT making best light dailies who just wants to make them match a little more closely before sending media off to editorial, or an editor who isn't fast at color correction who needs to give a rough cut a quick color balance before showing the project to the client for the first time, the Shot Match feature of DaVinci Resolve has been created to quickly make different clips in a timeline match one another more closely, with a minimum of steps.



Original scene



After using shot match to match all selected clips to clip 62

Shot Match Guidelines

Keep in mind that Shot Match isn't supposed to make your clips look good, it's supposed to make them look the same as the clip you choose to match to, or to at least get as close as possible without creating a color correction that will do harm to the image. The purpose of Shot Match is to make it easier for you to match a scene's worth of clips together so you have a starting point for building the rest of the look you want for that scene, on top of this initial match.

The clip you choose to match to can have a correction applied to it, but for the best results, you should limit yourself to simple Lift/Gamma/Gain primary adjustments. If you make Custom curve or secondary adjustments to the image, it will be much more difficult for Shot Match to give you a good result.

Shot Match works best with normalized clips. If you've got a timeline edited with log-encoded clips, you may want to use DaVinci Color Management to normalize all the clips in the Timeline before you use Shot Match, to get the most accurate results. It's certainly possible to use Shot Match with log-encoded media, but the flat color signal of log-encoded media may make it harder to get good results, depending on the scene.

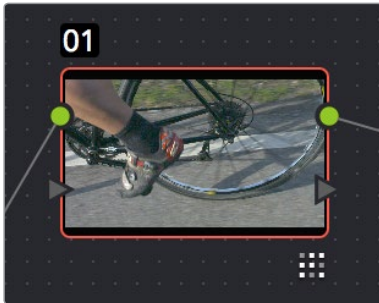
Furthermore, Shot Match is not the right tool to use to try and match un-normalized log-encoded clips that use different types of log encoding, such as LogC and RedLogCine, or to try and match normalized and un-normalized clips. Because log-encoding is similar to a set of red, green, and blue curve operations, Shot Match is not equipped to achieve a successful result in this situation.

Shot Match is not designed to apply corrections to clips that already have node adjustments. The results will be unpredictable, and probably won't match. While the clip you're matching to may have simple primary adjustments applied to it, but the other selected clips that are being matched should be completely ungraded.

Lastly, Shot Match has been designed to do no harm to the image. This means if you use Shot Match to try and match an underexposed interior shot to an exterior shot exposed at high noon on a sunlit day, the Shot Match algorithm will do its best to "split the difference" in order to make the difference between these two clips less jarring, while at the same time taking care not to stretch the color and contrast adjustments being made to the underexposed clips to the point where the image falls apart.

How to Use Shot Match

There's no way to easily describe what Shot Match does. It's a complex algorithm designed to try and deal with an impossibly varied number of different situations. As a result, Shot Match doesn't apply adjustments to any of the user-editable controls in the Color page. Instead, the image adjustment created by Shot Match is applied invisibly, as the very last adjustment to the node that was selected when Shot Match was used, similar to a LUT.

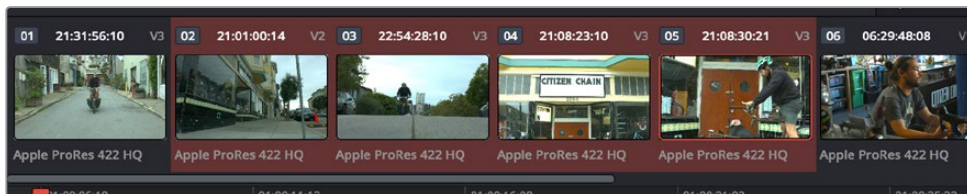


A Shot Match adjustment applied to a clip

The procedure for using Shot Match is deceptively simple. However, getting a good result requires some careful thought in terms of choosing which clips to match to one another.

To match one or more selected clips to a specific clip:

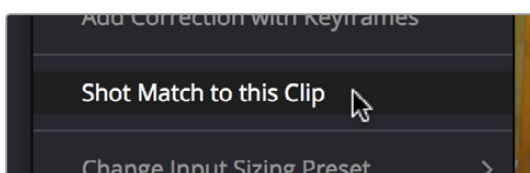
- 1 Following the guidelines presented in this section, Command-click or Shift-click one or more clips that you want to be matched. The clip you want to match to may or may not be part of the selection. You may select as few as one clip, or as many as you like.



Selecting clips you want to be matched

TIP: If you want to make it easier to notice the before and after, you can turn on Split Screen, and choose Selected Clips from the mode pop-up in the Viewer Options. This lets you see all the clips you're about to match in a grid.

- 2 Next, right-click the clip you want to match all of the selected clips to, and choose Shot Match to This Clip.



Shot Match command used on the clip you want to match the other selected clips to

If the resulting automated match looks good and plays well, then congratulations, you've got an excellent starting point for additional grading. However, keep in mind that even if the resulting match isn't perfect, it may have taken care of enough inconsistencies between the clip you're matching to and the clips that are being matched, that you need only make smaller, easier-to-spot adjustments in order to nail the final match between the shots in a scene. Either way, you can save time.

Suggestions for Using Shot Match

It's certainly possible to select every clip in a scene and use Shot Match, and the results may be wonderful depending on what kind of visuals are in the scene. However, for other scenes, this may not always get you the best results.

Be strategic about which clips you select to match to one another. Don't use Shot Match on shots that you know already have the same lighting, as you'll risk having Shot Match make a minor adjustment that may actually make the shots match less well. Think of Shot Match as a tool for matching clips that look different.

It can also help to use Shot Match an angle at a time, and to do a small test before committing yourself to matching a bunch of clips. For example, suppose you have a scene consisting of angle A (an over of character 1), angle B (an over of character 2), and angle C (a master shot), and you want to match the scene entire scene to angle C since it has the best lighting. First, match one shot from angle B to your favorite shot from angle C, and see how you like the result. If it's good, then go ahead and select every angle B clip and match them to angle C, before moving on to test one shot from angle A. This way, if there's ever an angle that doesn't work well using Shot Match, you can try matching it to one of the other angles in the scene that you've already matched to see if you get a better result.

NOTE: Keep in mind that, since each clip in the Timeline has its own undo stack, you cannot undo a shot match operation applied to multiple clips all at once.

Beware of clips with large areas of color in the background that don't match any of the other angles in a scene, such as a shot-reverse-shot sequence that cuts between someone standing in a back yard and someone standing against a purple wall. You can try it to see what happens, but this kind of color distribution can often throw Shot Match results off.

Using CDL Grades and ARRI Looks

These features are only available in DaVinci Resolve Studio.

There are two instances where primary grading adjustments may be applied to a clip outside of adjustments that you make within the Node Editor of the Color page. If you import a CDL (Color Decision List), then the CDL adjustment for each clip is made available to you via a contextual menu command in the Thumbnail timeline of the Color page.

Likewise, if you've ingested ARRI raw media with embedded ARRI Look metadata, the embedded look can be copied to the currently selected node via a contextual menu command in the Thumbnail timeline of the Color page.