GRADIENT LIGHT DIRECTION

# Let a gradient follow the light.

Broad local adjustments should support existing direction. Check that the transition feels natural across different surfaces.

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| 01 | **Direction** | Identify where light becomes brighter or darker in the scene. Use that pattern to guide the adjustment. |
| 02 | **Purpose** | Decide whether the sky, foreground or side of the frame is taking too much attention. Target that relationship. |
| 03 | **Width** | Spread the transition enough to avoid a visible band. The right width depends on the scene and the strength of the adjustment. |
| 04 | **Protect** | A broad gradient can darken buildings or faces along with the sky. Refine the affected area when those subjects need different treatment. |
| 05 | **Toggle** | Compare with the original. If the gradient seems to invent a spotlight or shadow without a reason, reduce or reposition it. |

### Worked example

A windmill scene may benefit from a quieter sky, but a straight darkening band can also dull the white sails. Shape the sky's role while protecting the structures that cross the transition.

### Keep in mind

A gradient is not always the right selection. Use a more specific mask when the desired region follows complex boundaries.

### Your decision

Light direction

target imbalance

transition width

protected subject

final strength

Adapted from the PhotoMind source manuscript, section 8.2, pp. 144-147. Examples and worksheet are editorial applications.