

Total time:  
2-3 hours



Difficulty Level: Challenging

#### Skill Points:

- Understanding what color saturation is
- Discovering how to accurately adjust color saturation
- Learning what over color saturation looks like

# COLOR SATURATION

## CREATING ALTERNATIVE ART

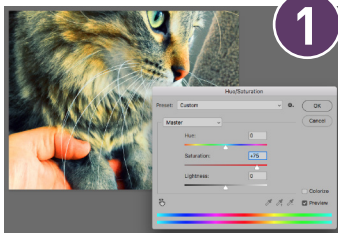


Color theory is extremely complicated. This time we'll look at color saturation. Over-saturation of color photography has been popular in recent years. There is nothing wrong with that -when the technique fits the subject. However, you should have an understanding of the difference between low saturation, accurate saturation, and over-saturation.

**KEY LESSON:** A hue is a pure color (they appear on a color wheel). Not all colors are hues. A color that has been tinted, shaded, or toned is not a hue. When you increase the color saturation level of an image, in post-production, it only affects the pure hues: red, green, yellow, and blue.

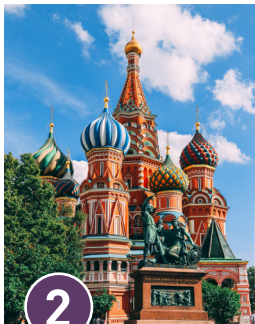
**EQUIPMENT:** Any camera including mobile | Any lens | Post-processing Software

### SAMPLE PHOTOGRAPHS



1

1- Outwardly, this image appears to have no hues. It's not dominant in red, green, yellow, or blue. So, you may be tempted to severely increase the saturation level to bring out some color. The software searches for any pure hue that it can find, and increases the saturation. This results in colors that look like crayon markings, not natural looking.



2

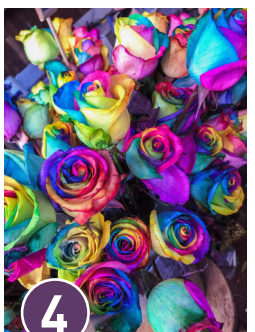


3

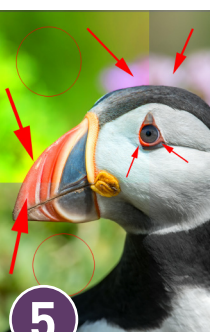
#### Accurate Saturation

2- This photo has a lot of red, green, yellow, and blue. Notice how the colors are vibrant without having the *chalky crayon* appearance. The color saturation level has been set properly to enhance the photo.

3- This example photo also has red, green, yellow, and blue. The colors do not look as vibrant as in the previous example. This photo could use a little increase in color saturation during post-production. The lighting of a scene affects color saturation. Bright light increases color saturation. Soft, less intense, lighting lowers color saturation.



4



5

#### Accurate Saturation

4- The color saturation level for this shot was set very high. In this case, it works, as the image is somewhat abstract. If the previous shot, of the child, were adjusted to this level, it would look awful. The technique really should fit the subject. Of course, this is up to individual interpretation.

5- This photo demonstrates 3 different color saturations levels. The lower left part of the image is neutral, as it emerged from the camera. The upper left has had the saturation level increased 50%. The very right side of the image has had the saturation level decreased by 50%.



### ACTION ASSIGNMENT!

- 1- Pick 6 images from your files. Each photo should display a different color scheme. Pick one with a lot of red, one with green, one with yellow, and one with blue. Pick one that is strong in all of the hues. Finally, pick one that appears absent of all of the hues (similar to the cat picture).
- 2- Take each photo into your editing software and create 3 different versions of that image file. One with the color saturation as it was created in the camera. One with the color saturation increased by 50%, and one with the color saturation decreased by 50%.
- 3- You should end up with a total of 18 image files. Print them all out, and study them as a group.

### HOW DID YOU DO?

- Do you now understand how the color saturation level setting will affect your photographs?
- Do you now feel confident to judge color saturation levels, and also decide when they may be set too high?

READY! SET! GO! **ACTION CARDS**  
**STRETCH GOALS: COLOR SATURATION**