

OFX FOR DAVINCI RESOLVE

COLORBOY

USER GUIDE

A practical guide to Colorboy



VERSION 1.2 • MACOS • APPLE SILICON • DAVINCI RESOLVE

INTRO TO COLORBOY:

Colorboy is an OpenFX Plugin made for Davinci Resolve. It transforms camera footage into a common workspace and allows simplified workflow with design, tuning and finishing located in a single node. This guide outlines the Colorboy workflow and covers setting up your project, identifying the source, establishing a look, tuning it and then adding texture and character with the included FX.

COMPATIBILITY NOTES:

	REQUIREMENT
DaVinci Resolve	Free or Studio version. Ideally version 20+
Software	MacOS 12+ Apple Silicon M-series Macs and supported A-series devices
Storage	Allow approximately 300 MB of free space
Current Version	Colorboy version 1.2 (latest is now 1.3.1 same documentation applies)

WHAT'S INSIDE COLORBOY:

SECTION	WHAT IT DOES
Colorboy	Identify the source color space
Mappy	Choose and set the tone-map character: neutral, contrast, or vivid starting points.
Printy	Add a creative print-style color response after Mappy.
Tunerboy	Provides exposure, balance, contrast, saturation and tonal-range shaping.
FX Daddy	Add vintage lens emulation, responsive grain and warm highlight halation.

CONTENTS:

| 01 Setting up | 02 The Pipeline | 03 Build your Looks with Mappy + Printy | 04 Tune color and tone with Tunerboy | 05 Add character in FXDaddy | 06 Troubleshooting | 07 Useful Tips |

SETTING UP RESOLVE:

Keeping your project, timeline and output settings consistent helps to ensure what you make using Colorboy look great on as many different types of displays as possible.

Before adding the plugin

1. Open your project in DaVinci Resolve and move to the Color page.
2. Confirm that your clips are correctly interpreted in Resolve. If clip metadata is available, verify the camera gamma and gamut rather than guessing from the footage.
3. Set your project color-management to Davinci YRGB with timeline and output colorspace to REC.709 Scene and ensure tagging REC.709a is enabled.
4. Colorboy is designed to receive a known source and convert to its ACEScg and ACEScct pipeline. The Colorboy engine will operate in these ACES colorspace automatically when adjusting parameters in Tunerboy. Think of it as a complete node tree that's happening in the background.

TLDR:

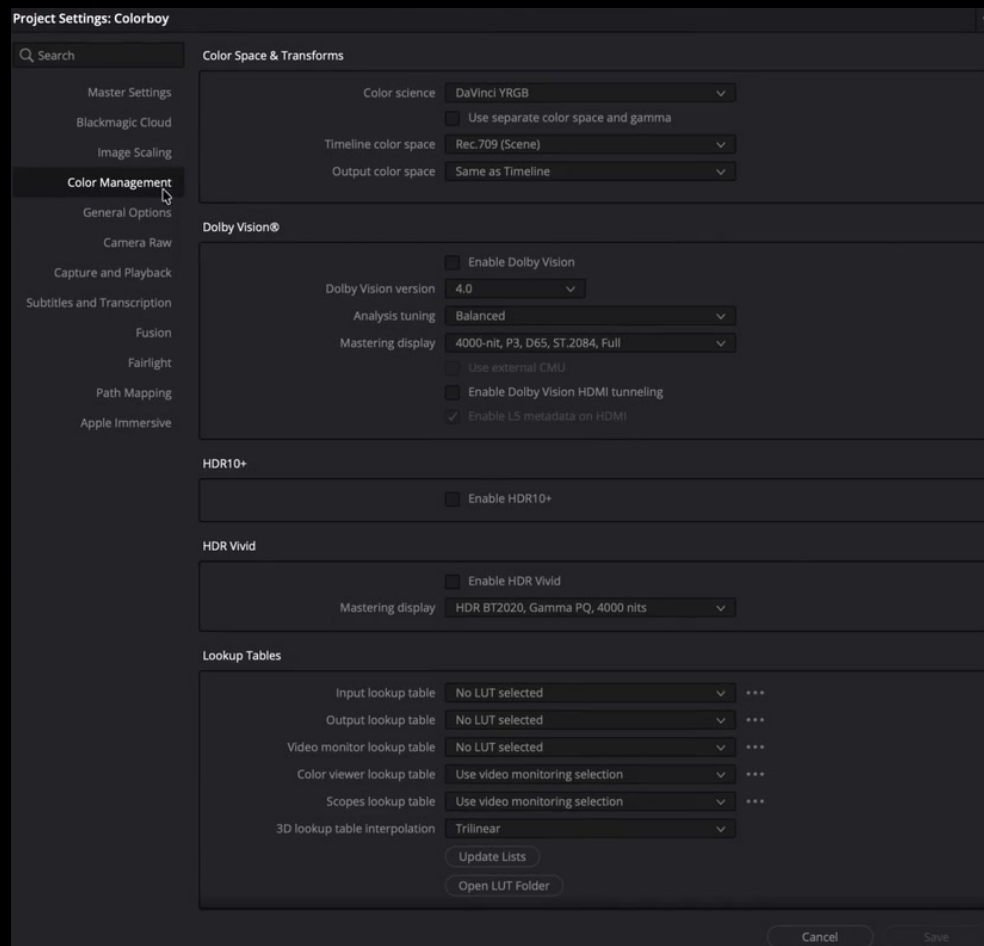
- For a straightforward grade, use only Colorboy. Make your primary look decisions inside the plugin using the inbuilt sliders.
- Do not bake a camera LUT into the clip and then select the original camera log space in Colorboy. Colorboy works best when operating from the original colorspace.

SET UP YOUR PROJECT

Establish a Rec.709 baseline in Resolve before applying the Colorboy grade. This makes the project timeline, output and viewer behavior predictable while Colorboy handles the creative work on its node.

Project Settings > Color Management

1. Open File > Project Settings, then select Color Management in the left sidebar.
2. Set Color science to DaVinci YRGB.
3. Set Timeline color space to Rec.709 (Scene).
4. Set Output color space to Same as Timeline, then click Save.



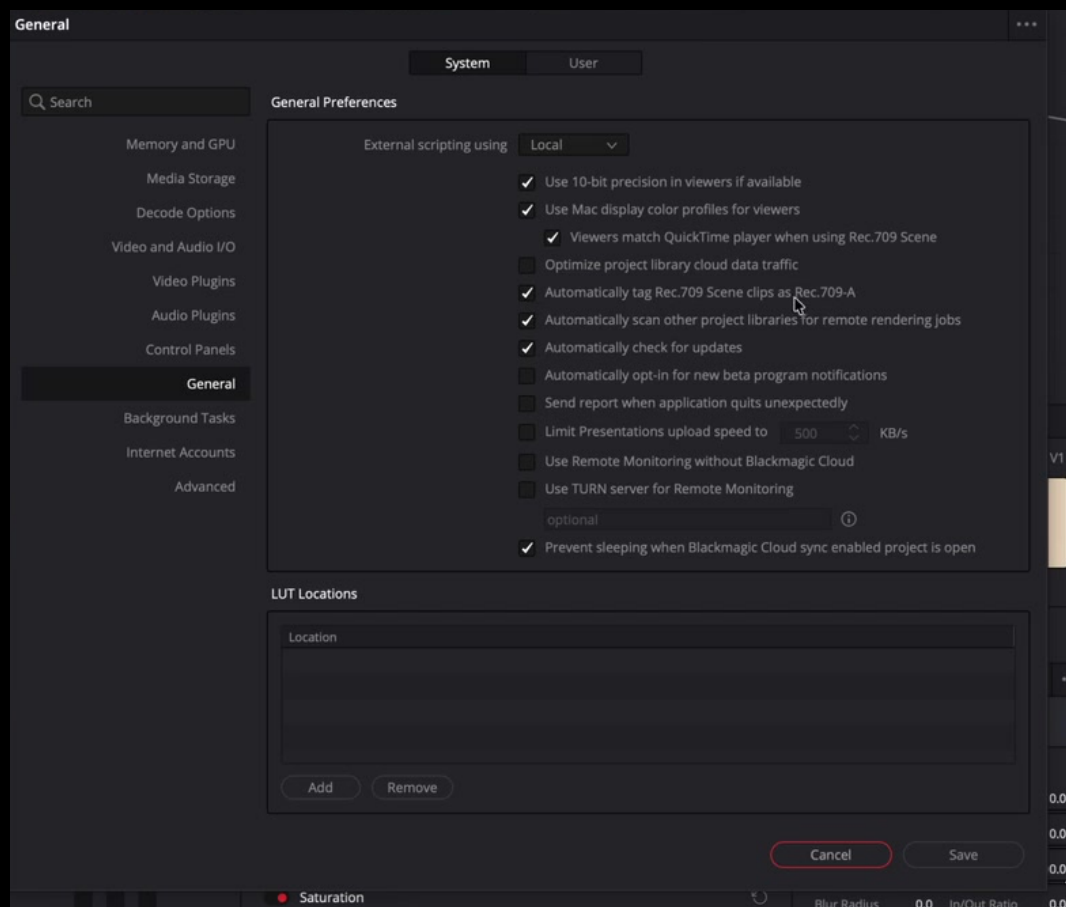
Project Settings > Color Management with the timeline set to Rec.709

SETTING REC.709A TAGGING

This is to ensure your exported videos will display accurately on apple devices with minimal gamma shifting.

DaVinci Resolve > Preferences > System > General

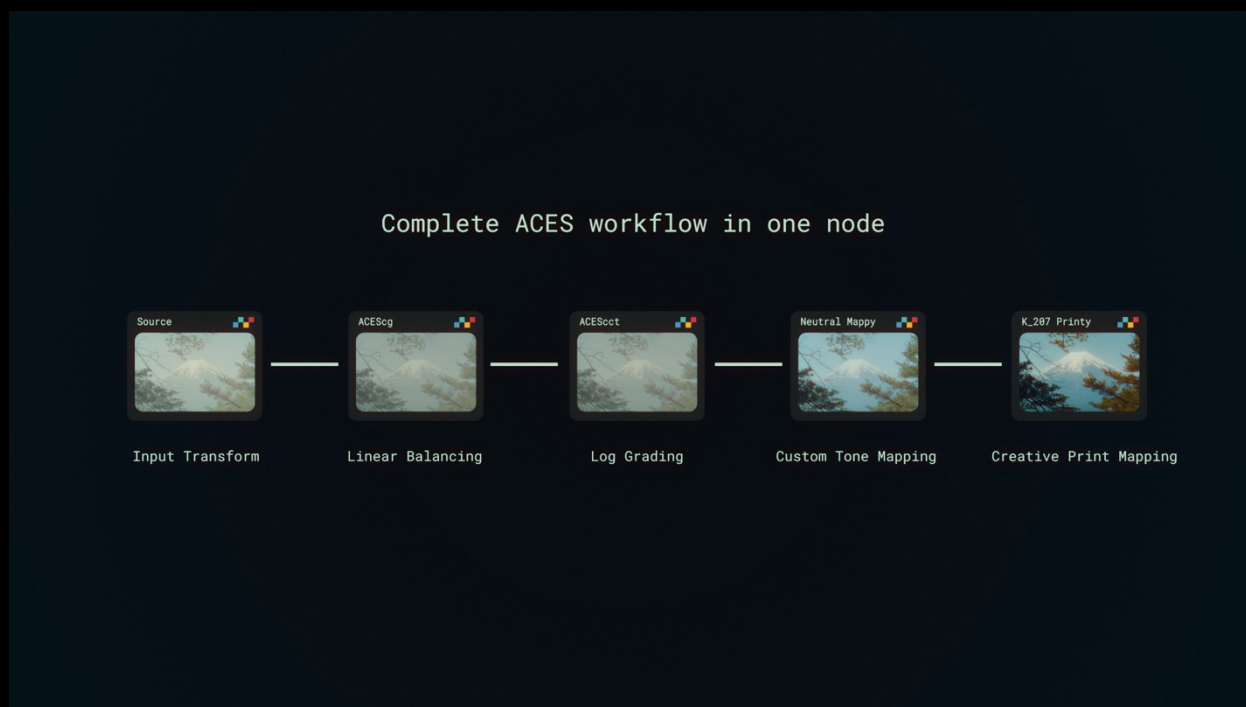
1. Open DaVinci Resolve > Preferences and stay on the System tab.
2. Choose General in the sidebar.
3. Enable Automatically tag Rec.709 Scene clips as Rec.709-A.
4. Click Save.



Preferences > System > General with Rec.709 Scene clips tagged as Rec.709-A.

COLORBOY + SETTING THE SOURCE

1. On the color page, select the Colorboy node and drag it onto your footage
2. In the Colorboy section, choose the Source ColorSpace that matches the input colorspace.
3. For normal operation, make sure 'Bypass Transform' is off.
4. Once you've selected your source you can move onto Mappy, Printy, and then FX Daddy as you develop and finish the look.



TIP:
Colorboy
Node
Placement

Colorboy is designed to end in REC.709. So keeping that in mind, any adjustments that you'd like to make outside of Colorboy should usually happen **before** the Colorboy node. If you want to apply something to your footage after the Colorboy node keep in mind it will be using the REC.709 data that Colorboy outputs.

COLORBOY WORKFLOW:

STAGE	DECISION	WHAT ITS DOING:
1	Source ColorSpace	Tells Colorboy how to interpret the incoming footage
2	Mappy	Sets the overall tone of the footage before fine work. Think of this as a Colorboy > REC709 map.
3	Printy	Adds a creative color response on top of the selected tone map.
4	Tunerboy	Balance the footage, adjust exposure, contrast etc. Like you would in a node tree. All these adjustments are occurring in the Colorboy engine using the intermediate ACES pipelines.
5	FX Daddy	Applies lens, grain and halation as finishing character.

MAPPY AND PRINTY

Deliberately simple, Mappy and Printy are the key to building your look. Mappy controls the tone of the footage while Printy supplies the character. Choose your Map first and then try out the Printy options to build your custom combos. These maps are carefully designed to work with Colorboy's grading pipeline.

Mappy

OPTION	USE IT WHEN
Neutral	You want the most clean baseline or want to build the image mainly with Tunerboy.
Neutral +/++	You want a gentler contrast base with more color presence.
Low Contrast	Used to create softer, more open tonal shape.
High Contrast	You want stronger separation and a firmer tonal curve.
Vivid variants	You want a more pronounced film-like curve and color response.

Printy

Printy's are creative maps options based off the tones of Kodak (K), Fujifilm (F). Start at full strength, compare a few candidates and then reduce the strength to your preference.

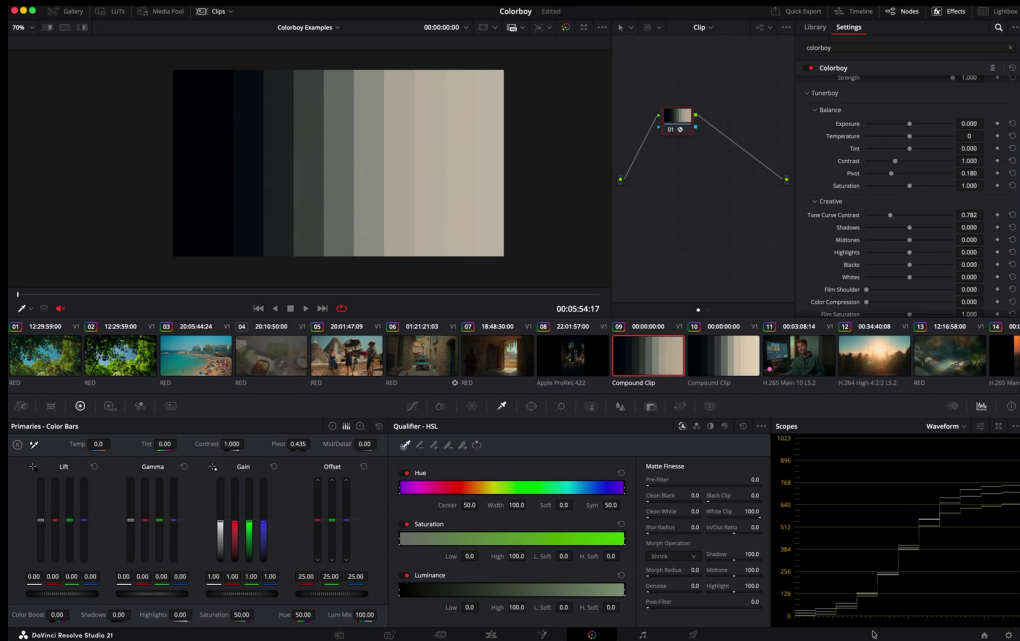
TIPS FOR USE:

1. Select a Mappy that gives the footage the right look/feel for your edit.
2. Choose a Printy LMT and judge hue separation, skin and saturated highlights.
3. Adjust Printy Strength after selecting the best candidate.

I personally start with Neutral+ or Vivid for mappy and K_207 for printy

USING TUNERBOY

Tunerboy is the correction and shaping tool. Use the technical controls to balance the image and then the creative tools to finish your look. It's a faster way to make small, but purposeful adjustments without a complex node tree.



Colorboy workflow in Resolve with scopes visible

Technical controls

CONTROL	USE
Exposure	Adjusts the exposure. Watch the waveform while protecting highlights.
Temperature and Tint	Adjust warm/cool or green/magenta tones to balance your footage.
Contrast and Pivot	Sets contrast and the tonal point around which the contrast change is applied.
Saturation	Controls global color intensity.

Creative controls

Once you're happy with exposure, white balance and the broad contrast, use the creative controls to your preference/what works well with the printy you've chosen.

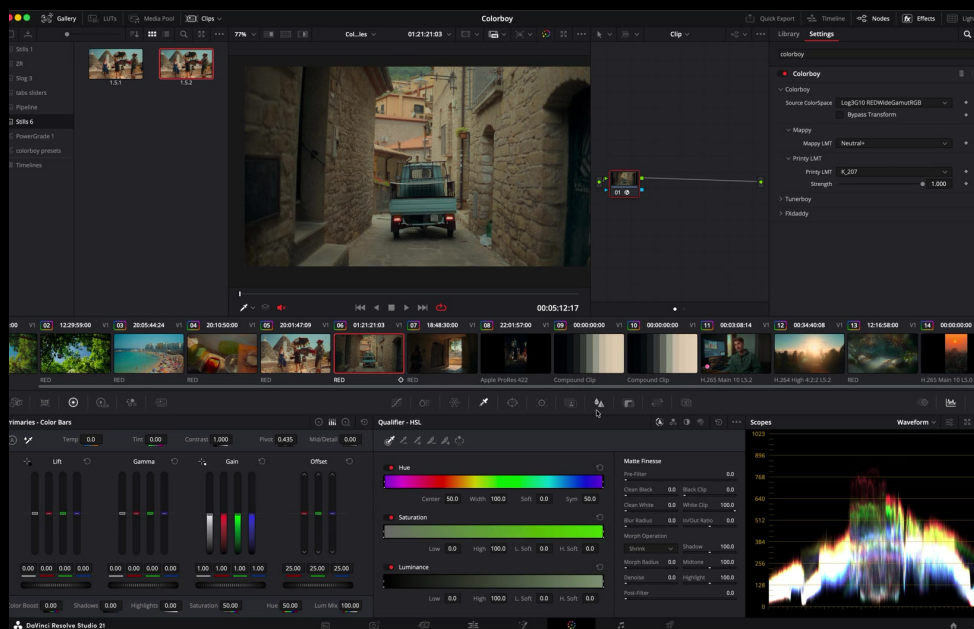
CONTROL	WHAT IT DOES
Tone Curve Contrast	A custom gamut compression or expansion slider. Below 1 compress with a highlight bias. Above 1 expands.
Shadows	Shadow range adjustment slider.
Midtones	Midtone range adjustment slider. This usually is where the bulk of your image lives.
Highlights	Highlight range adjustment slider.
Blacks	Adjustment heavily gated for almost pure blacks in the footage.
Whites	Adjustment heavily gated for almost pure whites in the footage.
Film Shoulder	Add's slight bloom and cinematic roll off for bright sources. E.g. windows, skies and light sources.
Color Compression	Dynamically compresses the colors of your footage. Bias to fight against peaking reds.
Film Saturation	I use this to add / subtract saturation over the main saturation slider. The math is dialed to feel more natural / photometric. My current taste is taking it back ever so slightly.

A practical tuning pass

1. Set Exposure, Temperature and Tint while watching the image and a waveform or RGB parade. To be honest, a lot of this is more an intuition / feeling. Just swing the sliders around, go too far and back them off.
2. Use Contrast to check the overall separation without chasing individual areas. I currently stick to the custom **Tone Curve Contrast**. The math is just more visually pleasing to me overall.
3. Adjust Blacks, Shadows and Midtones so faces and important details feel intentional.
4. Refine Highlights, Whites and Film Shoulder for roll-off rather than simply making the image brighter.
5. Adjust Film Saturation and Color Compression last, check the feel on moving footage as well as still to see how the color feels.

CHARACTER BUILDING

The FX tab is where you'll find the tools to add a little something extra to your footage. Vintage Lens behavior, film grain, and halation are all awesome ways to add character to your footage.



finishing controls in the Colorboy FX workflow.

Vintage lens

Enable the Vintage Lens emulator in this section. Named after cheeses, the preset amounts 'brie', 'gouda' and 'cheddar' select the different COC (circle of confusion) model. Once you're happy, use the swirl, distortion, softness and vignette sliders to adjust the look to your preference. Use the more advanced controls to make any other adjustments you want. I will look at refining the controls in a later update, I've added a reset button in case you go too far.

Responsive grain

Enable the Grain effect. Use the sliders to adjust the grain amount, size, shadows, midtones, highlights and chrominance. Keep in mind that midtones and highlights control where the texture is most visible and chrominance subtly controls how colorful the grain feels.

Halation

A custom halation model built to taste and playback speed. Use size, strength, color and outer glow sliders to see the impact in the high contrast areas of your footage. It's designed to add that warm glow / bloom that film without a remjet layer would produce.

TROUBLESHOOTING COMMON ISSUES

SYMPTOM	CHECK FIRST	PRACTICAL FIX
Image looks dramatically wrong immediately	Source ColorSpace	Confirm whether the footage is log, linear or already display-referred. Remove duplicate camera LUTs or select the actual incoming state.
Look feels too strong	Mappy and Printy	Try a more neutral Mappy, lower Printy Strength, then rebuild small Tunerboy changes from there.
Skin or saturated colors break apart	Saturation, Film Saturation, Color Compression	Reduce the global adjustment, then tune saturation more selectively. Use the vector-scopes.
Highlights feel like video glare	Halation and Film Shoulder	Reduce Halation Strength or Outer Glow. Shape highlights roll-off with Tunerboy before adding more glow.
Grain looks static or distracting	Temporal controls and size	Play the shot. Adjust amount and size first and then other sliders as needed.
Playback slows down	FX stack	Temporarily disable the FX Daddy section while building the base grade. Re-enable it for final checks.

If Colorboy doesn't appear:

- Confirm that you're using a supported device
- Restart Davinci after installing or updating Colorboy
- Check that the plugin installer completed fully

If you've confirmed the above and Colorboy is still not appearing in Davinci's library, please contact support.

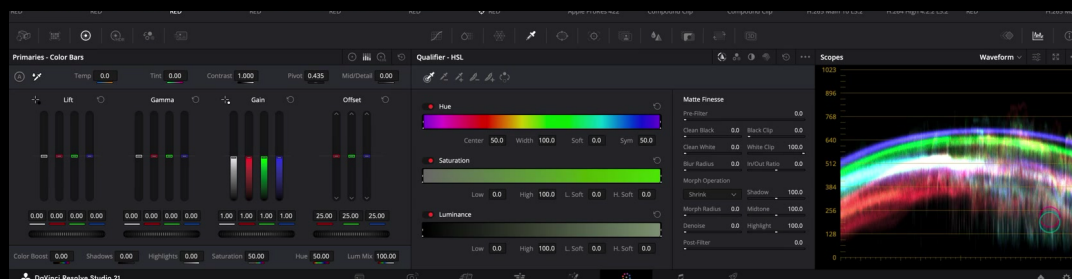
Support details to include:

- Which version of Colorboy you are downloading as well as your Davinci resolve version, MacOS version and Apple model.
- Clear information about the issue you're facing – screenshots are great if its something happening within the plugin.

USEFUL TIPS

- Having the Scopes open while using Colorboy lets you see the impact your exposure and balance adjustments are having on the RGB waveform
- Toggle Colorboy on and off during your workflow rather than relying on visual memory.
- When adding FX Daddy looks, compare the footage at normal view but also zoomed to see the full impact of your changes
- Check the look across several shots from the same clip before you call a look ‘finished’.
- Evaluate the light and skin tones separately as they can reveal different kinds of overcorrection in balance.
- Different scopes have different uses (see below):

SCOPE	WHAT TO CHECK
Waveform	Overall exposure, black floor, highlight headroom and tonal separation.
RGB parade	Channel balance in neutral areas and color casts in shadows or highlights.
Vectorscope	Saturation level, hue direction and the behavior of skin tones.
Histogram	Distribution and clipping. Use as a quick companion, not as the only judge.



AN IDEAL WORKFLOW

1. Make sure to select the correct ‘Source Color space’ to correctly transform your footage
2. Pick a neutral ‘Mappy’ as a base or play around with ‘Mappy’ + ‘Printy’ combinations to find your favorites.
3. Settle on a look you love.
4. Use the sliders in ‘Tunerboy’ to balance the image. See what you like visually or use the vector scopes for technical balancing.
5. Shape the blacks, shadows, midtones and highlights of the footage.
6. Check the look you’ve created on several frames – this helps to check the balance
7. Once you’re happy with your look. Add FXDaddy features to add character and individuality to your footage. Make sure to inspect the footage in motion.

Optional: Save a still of your look so that you can easily copy it accross clips and projects. That still / powergrade will retain the custom settings you’ve dialed into colorboy. 😊

