

Dodging and Burning

Dodging = lightening up part of the image

Burning = darkening down part of the image

Terms come from wet darkroom days where adding extra light (burning) would darken part of a print and holding back light (dodging) would lighten part of a print.

Judging term: "**Tone down**" means to darken or burn (usually subtly)

Judging term: "**Vignette**" a small illustration or portrait photograph that fades into its background without a definite border. Also used as a verb.

The purpose of doing this is

- Adjusting local areas to look better
- Pushing the viewer's eye towards a particular area(s) in the image
or just keeping the viewer's eye in the image

Be careful: Normally the viewer should not be able to tell that you have done it. Be subtle.

- More radical changes can be OK, but have a real reason for doing it.
- White vignette is a possibility, but have a reason for doing it.

Method A (bad)

- Use PS burn/dodge tool.
- Bad because it makes irreversible changes to your image.
- It actually changes the pixels directly.

Method B (good)

Preparing to dodge/burn:

- Add a new layer: Layer > New > New Layer .
- Set the layer blending mode to Soft Light or Overlay.
- Check the “Fill image...” checkbox.

Doing the dodging and burning:

- Make sure the color chips are black and white.
- We will use the “Brush” tool (“B” command)
 - set the hardness and size of the brush.
 - set the opacity and flow. 30% is fairly subtle.
- Brush on with Black to darken an area.
- Brush on with White to lighten an area.

Method C (good)

- Use File > Automate > Toolkit 2 > Burn Area (or Dodge Area)
- Select items like “Burn 4 corners”, “Dodge Top 1/3”, etc.
- Toolkit will make a new layer, usually with 40% opacity.
- Increase effect of overall dodge/burn by increasing layer opacity.
- Decrease effect of overall dodge/burn by decreasing layer opacity.

Most plugin packages have some sort of burn/dodge facility. Try them!