



A few Colour management Q&A's

1. What's the difference between sRGB and Adobe RGB and when should they be used?

The main difference between sRGB and Adobe RGB is quite simply the size - Adobe RGB is a significantly larger colour gamut.

Advantages of using AdobeRGB in photography are:

- Blue/Cyan and yellow colours of increased saturation can be achieved in a photograph when printing from the AdobeRGB colour space. The increased cyan/blue will be visually more noticeable than the yellow
- The flexibility of using other types of output device with the potential of future devices able to achieve more saturated ranges of colour

Advantages of using sRGB in photography are:

- Many computer monitors will only display colours to a colour saturation as defined by sRGB. Therefore this is appropriate as it avoids colours that cannot be accurately displayed on a monitor.
- Many cameras are configured to work as a default in sRGB. Avoiding conversions between colour spaces reduces the potential for errors.

There is no single, correct working space to operate in and it depends on the type of photography you are undertaking but for minimum fuss and maximum control, use sRGB, however if you want to capture as much as possible and make amends to colour from the top down then using AdobeRGB may be just fine.

2. How does your system compensate for the differences between profiles?

The straight answer to this is that it doesn't! A monitor does not work to a colour space rather it attempts to reproduce colour as closely as possible. This is exactly why monitor profiling is so essential. A monitor profile optimises your monitor to only produce colours it is capable of using the known data saved in the profile, thereby not creating colour distortions. Put simply without a monitor calibration device you cannot truly trust your monitor. If you do start looking at rendering intents I would suggest further reading, however for most photographic work the perceptual rendering intent is suitable.



3. Can you explain how the grey balance of your image can be corrected post-shooting in photoshop?

There are two ways to do this, try both and see which one works best for you:

Using levels adjustment in Photoshop:

1. Use the grey picker to select your grey point
2. Save ".alv" file (adjustment file)
3. Apply to future files through actions button

Using curves adjustment:

1. Use the grey picker to select your grey point
2. Save ".acv" file (adjustment file)
3. Apply to future files through actions button

Levels adjustment uses a histogram to measure the grey point whereas curves uses an a-symmetric curve, the net result tends to be very similar so have a look and see which suits your images best.

4. Do all printers need to be profiled according to CMYK colour space rather than RGB?

No!

All desktop, inkjet printers that are plugged directly into a PC or MAC should be profiled in RGB. The drivers in the printer accept RGB data and are programmed to convert this into CMYK. With 99% of photographers using RGB it makes sense to colour manage your devices using this colour space. The only situation when CMYK profiling is necessary is when printing is conducted through a RIP. A RIP is only usually implemented when a high volume of prints are being produced.