



*Bonus Module 2*  
Managing White Balance

# Managing white balance

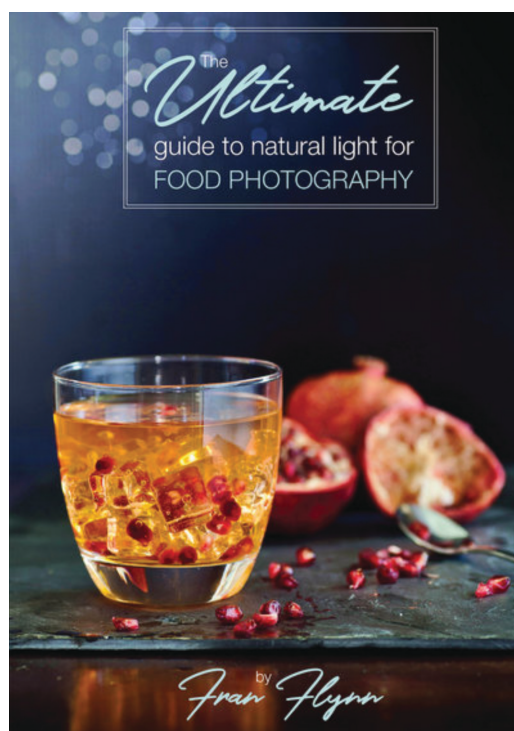
I also cover white balance and colour temperature in Chapter 7 of the free eBook that you downloaded at the beginning of the course, ie. The Ultimate Guide to Natural Light for Food Photography.

If you haven't had the opportunity to delve into it yet, this bonus module will give you an overview. I recommend reading the chapter in my book also, to give you a rounded understanding. The reason that I have added it here also is because white balance is such a key component of good food photography. Poor white balance can even render an image unusable.

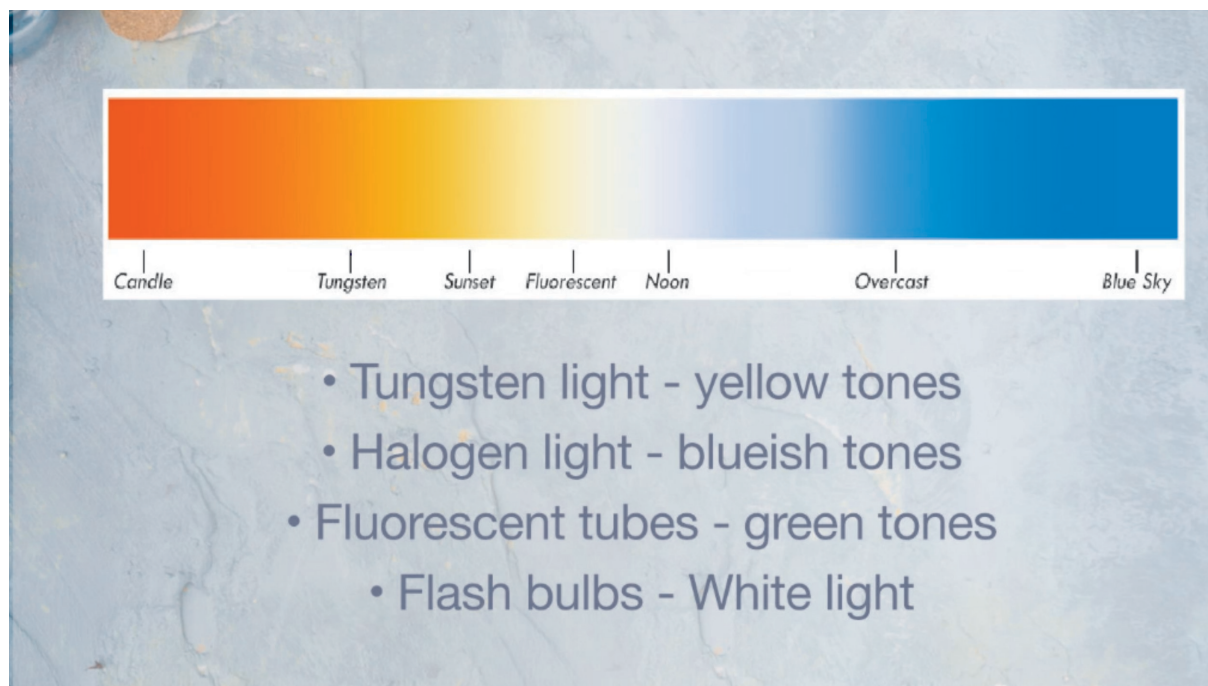
By definition, white balance is the ability to adjust the tonality of colour in an image, to remove undesirable colour casts, so that objects that appear white in person also appear white in your photo.

Your eye and brain automatically make these adjustments to make you feel comfortable and familiar with the lighting in an environment, no matter what the light source, however, a camera is not as intuitive (yet!). Once you become aware that a colour cast is present in a scene, you can then 'see' it, because your awareness 'switches off' the auto-adjustment that your brain facilitates.

The key factors that can have an impact on the tonality of light in your image are;  
the type of lighting, e.g. daylight, nightlight, artificial light;  
the weather, i.e. full sun, cloudy, stormy;  
the time of day, i.e. sunrise, sunset, midday full sun.  
Additionally, the other environmental factors that can create a cast are;  
a deliberately introduced reflector with a colour tone;  
the tonality of blinds or curtains covering a window;  
the colour of the walls in a room reflecting onto your subject etc.



If you are using artificial light, the type of bulb will also have a big impact. Tungsten usually creates yellow tones, halogen blueish tone, fluorescent tubes create green tones and flashbulbs for photography will create bright white even light. Flash bulbs and photographic bulbs are the only artificial light sources that don't create a colour cast.



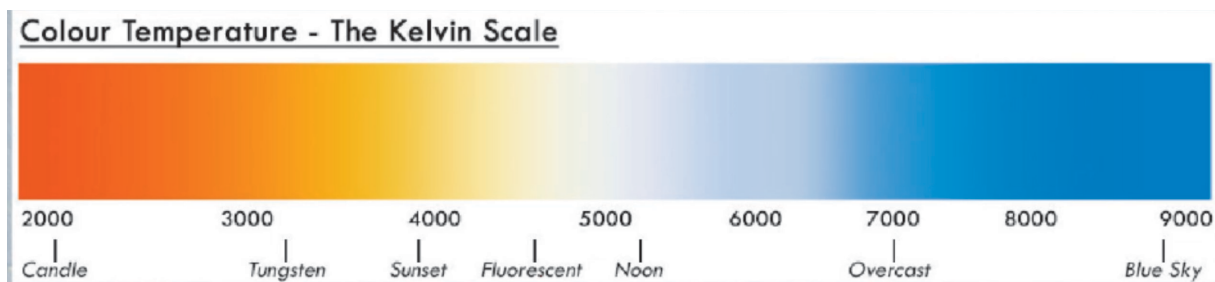
The most likely unappealing tones you will find in your food photography are either overly warm tones or overly cool tones.

With warm tones, colours like yellow, orange and red are usually cast by tungsten light bulbs or by natural light when it's close to sunrise or sunset. The cool tone range includes blues, greens and purples. These can occur during very cloudy/stormy days, or at the end of the day when the sun has sunk but there is still some light, and sometimes from fluorescent or halogen light sources.

There are 3 core ways to adjust the tonality in your image back to an acceptable level.

- 1) You can change the lighting in your environment;
- 2) You can adjust the white balance in your camera or;
- 3) You can adjust the tonality in post-production using a software tool like Photoshop or Lightroom.

You might also choose to manipulate the white balance to create a colour cast, to give a sense of environment or occasion. For example, adding warm tones to give a feeling of Christmas time or cooler blue whites to emphasise the colours of the food.



The tonality of the colour that is apparent in a scene is measured on a scale called The Kelvin Scale. Like many scales in photography, it runs inverse to what would appear logical, i.e. the warmest reddest end of the scale has the lowest number (1500 Kelvin (K)) and the coolest, bluest end of the scale has the highest number (9000K).

Having an awareness and associated ability to alter the white balance in your images can make the difference between an average and a great image, so I recommend taking some time to fully comprehend its value.

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This concludes the entire 'Mastering Manual Mode' for Food Photography course. Congratulations on making it to the end. I hope that you have enjoyed it and feel like you have taken a substantial leap forward with both your knowledge and ability.

You will continue to have ongoing access to the course and you can review and revise the material whenever you like. If you ever get stuck you're also welcome to contact me via the student query form that appears throughout the course.

Finally, I'm really looking forward to working with you further in my Facebook group and seeing the continuing development of your images. Bye for now!

