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Photography Tips and
Ecuador photo tours

White balance is unique to digital cameras, this was not an issue on film cameras. It is the process of getting rid of the 'weird' colour cast that we often see after taking the photo. Proper camera white balance has to take into account the "colour temperature" of a light source, which refers to the relative warmth or coolness of white light. Our eyes are very good at judging what is white under different light sources, but digital cameras often have great difficulty with auto white balance (AWB) — and can create unsightly blue, orange, or even green color casts. Understanding digital white balance can help you avoid these color casts, thereby improving your photos under a wider range of lighting conditions.

- Auto – (AWB) this is where the camera makes a best guess on a shot by shot basis. You'll find it works in many situations but it's worth venturing out of it for trickier lighting. If you are shooting in RAW you can use this setting all the time and adjust in your favourite editing software. The downside is the time you take in doing so.

- Tungsten- this mode is usually symbolized with a little bulb and is for shooting indoors, especially under tungsten (incandescent) lighting (such as bulb lighting). It generally cools down the colors in photos.

– Fluorescent- this compensates for the 'cool' light of fluorescent light and will warm up your shots.

- Direct Sunlight/Daylight- Great for direct sunlight..

– Cloudy- this setting generally warms things up a touch more than 'daylight' mode. Used in cloudy situations. I personally like this setting and use it more for outdoor shooting even with sunny days. It can also be used for shade.

– Flash- the flash of a camera can be quite a cool light so in Flash WB mode you'll find it warms up your shots a touch.

- Shade - Use shade white balance in shady areas or sunset shots. It will help give a warmer color to your shots.

-Custom. With this setting you must take a picture of something of neutral color, (a white card of grey car) in the light situation you are currently in. Use the menu setting on your camera (read the manual) you can calibrate the camera to use this setting. Personally I prefer this setting for indoors when you have more control over the light, as when you use it outside the light changes very frequently and therefore the settings need to be changed in camera.



All photos taken with a D90 and a 50m F1.8 lens indoors.

An introduction to White Balance. A PDF by www.fotografiadelecuador.com

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