

Nik Software Captured: The Complete Guide to Using Nik Software's Photographic Tools

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Tony L. Corbell, Joshua A. Haftel : Nik Software Captured: The Complete Guide to Using Nik Software's Photographic Tools before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Nik Software Captured: The Complete Guide to Using Nik Software's Photographic Tools:

95 of 95 people found the following review helpful. In some ways, this should have been the software manual By S. Tang I purchased this book, because I found the Nik Software Collection's built-in help to be very perfunctory. The built-in help summarizes what a particular tool does and briefly describes the controls. However, it doesn't always describe what the ramifications of changing those controls do to the photo. That is why I wanted to buy this book. However, the book ends up being a mixed bag. 1) The first chapter covers some aspects of capturing photos and selecting photos to edit in post-processing. I felt that this chapter was unnecessary, because its space could have been used to talk more about the software. There are plenty of other books dedicated to the topic of capturing photos (composition, etc.) and selecting photos. Even this book states that this topic "could fill volumes" (page 3). The book

may have been better off providing a short bibliography for such topics.2) The images that show off the Nik Software interface are too small, as other reviewers have mentioned. For a book about teaching the reader how to use the software, it is essential that the images of the software interface be readable. Not everybody has good vision. In addition, the authors do not highlight parts of the interface when talking about a particular function like other photography software books. For example, the author would talk about a function and then refer to Figure X.Y. When you go look at Figure X.Y, it's hard to tell what in the interface has changed. The book should circle the area in question, use a callout, or some similar technique.3) My main interest was in learning about all of Color Efex Pro 4's controls. On page 144, it says "With 55 filters and a pretty good online help system, we won't go into what each slider does in this book." Unfortunately, most people buy these books, because the online help is bad! Software vendors have spent so little money and effort on their instruction manuals that customers have become accustomed to them being bad. To be fair, I did check out Color Efex Pro 4's online help. It shows you an HTML version of the interface with hot points that you can click to bring up help for it. The content in the online help describes what the controls do, but it is still basic. For example, when I checked out the Global Contrast control for the Bleach Bypass filter, the online help says, "Controls the overall contrast of the image." That is somewhat of a "captain obvious" description, and something I have come to expect from an online help system or software manual. This is why I would have expected this book to delve further on topics like that, but the book does not sadly.4) The book's writing is very good. The writing is not too dry and also does not try to get too funny like some of Scott Kelby's books. In conclusion, I can't but feel that this book should have been the software manual. The biggest letdown is the Color Efex Pro 4 section, since it does not cover every control of every filter. I suspect another author will be publishing a book about this, to which people will have to pay again. :(When the software maker publishes a book about their own software, I expect it to be comprehensive and go beyond the software manual or online help. This book isn't there yet.21 of 21 people found the following review helpful. Complete coverage of Nik Software toolsBy Alan ShiNik's software plug-ins are fantastic tools, although documentation is sorely lacking, and the online videos only give hints at what functionality is available or how the tools can (and should) be used. "Nik Software Captured" does a good job filling this gap to provide the insights into the Nik Software plug-ins that you will have a hard time finding described elsewhere. The book starts off discussing digital editing and workflow. One thing I found particularly valuable was a description of the pros/cons between the Lightroom/Aperture plug-ins and the Photoshop plug-ins. Had I known this earlier, I might have made a different purchasing decision. It's actually somewhat sad that this information isn't made more obvious in Nik Software's own website. A good description of the overall interface, and the crown jewel of the Nik Software tools (U point technology) comes next. I found it refreshing to get a more technical description of how U Point works, and some commentary on how it should be used. Again, it's disappointing this information isn't really described well in other sources from Nik itself. The next several chapters discuss each of the various tools Nik offers, with a tour of the interface and examples on how to use each product. The weakest of these chapters is probably the one on Sharpener Pro. Although there was some detail given motivating the need for the tool, I didn't find the explanations on when to use pre-sharpening vs. output sharpening very clear. It's still ambiguous to me after reading the descriptions given. The final chapters give example sessions/workflow on example portrait and landscape photos. There are a few good ideas given, but there was nothing particularly remarkable about these topics. If you are looking for a way to maximize your understanding (and value) of the Nik Software tools, this is a very good resource. None of the tools are particularly complex to use, so your alternative is to just play with stuff and examine the results. However, it's likely if you just experiment with the product, you'll be left puzzled on exactly how some things should be used (or even leave some of the power of the tools unexploited). So, although this book really isn't needed beyond a quick initial read, there is value you'll likely get out of it. Recommended.4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Mixed ReactionsBy RWTFirst, a lot of this book is well done and it is currently the best book available on Nik Software. What I liked about this book is that it does eventually address all the applications included in the complete package sold by Nik Software. Their chapter on Nik Silver Efex Pro is excellent. Anyone who wants to convert their digital images to black white will probably find this chapter helpful. Also, their chapter on Viverza 2 and Dfine 2.0 is helpful. Their chapter on U Point technology (which is chiefly what Nik Software is famous for) is incomplete and had me searching the internet for a better explanation of how to use it. What I was most disappointed with was the quality of the pictures/graphics in this book. The authors try to provide specific examples of how control points (or specific application control settings) are used in images, but unfortunately, the quality of the printing does NOT produce an easy way to see and understand/view what the authors are trying to explain. These images are mostly too dark and poorly produced to be of much value to the reader; unless the reader has prior experience with the application or really good eyes, the images are confusing and ineffective. A simple solution would have been to highlight the featured example with a simple highlight (such as a colored circle/highlight on the specific area described). The impact is that the reader is often confused with the example presented and doesn't clearly see what is trying to be presented (many of the images look identical). This is, in my opinion, just poor quality in publication and is a major flaw in this book. My other concern with this book is that the authors do NOT fully engage in explaining each application opting instead to assume that the readers have an understanding equal to their own. Readers without a good base in photo editing

software, may find this book to be too technical or poorly explained for their level of understanding - too bad, as Nik software is not that difficult to use or understand. In summary, I would recommend this book to people who have a little extra money and are looking for something which may help them understand the basics of Nik Software applications. It is NOT, however, a complete manual on how to use Nik Software or how to understand how to use Nik Software applications. It does provide some interesting information, especially on Silver Efex Pro, but it is not a complete manual. This book is not a Que Book or a Missing Manual book or a complete, step-by-step manual by any means.

Learn all the features and functionality of the complete Nik family of products Styled in such a way as to resemble the way photographers think, Nik Software Captured aims to help you learn to apply all the features and functionality of the Nik software products. With Nik Software Captured, authors and Nik Software, Inc. insiders Tony Corbell and Josh Haftel help you use after-capture software products easier and more creatively. Their sole aim is to ensure that you can apply the techniques discussed in the book while gaining a thorough understanding of the capabilities of programs such as Dfine 2.0, Viveza 2, Color Efex Pro 4.0, Silver Efex Pro 2, Sharpener Pro 3.0, and HDR Efex Pro. Helps you learn all the features and functionality of the Nik family of products

.com Sample Photos from the Authors: Yosemite, California Color Version(Click on photo to zoom)