# 🟡 Introduction: The Power of Three Tools – Jim Nix

Renowned photographer Jim Nix kicks off his discussion by sharing his extensive experience with Luminar Neo, a software that boasts nearly 200 individual sliders and a multitude of tools. Despite the vast array of features, Jim consistently relies on just three core tools that have become the cornerstone of his editing workflow. These powerful, easy-to-learn tools are capable of dramatically transforming photos.

He demonstrates how he uses those tools to adjust light and color in order to transform a flat image into a striking photo. He emphasises the importance of controlling light, enhancing color depth, and creating color contrast. At the end, he adds a finishing touch using Axon AI for some extra punch. According to him, these three tools can cover 90–100% of the editing process.

Below is a summary of the video content along with the relevant time segments. The video is at [https://youtu.be/QIRTab99Epw](https://youtu.be/QIRTab99Epw).

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# 🟡 The Goal: Fixing Light and Color
**(0:25 - 0:45)**

The purpose of the video is to showcase how the speaker uses these three tools. He starts with a flat, uninteresting photo and aims to enhance two key aspects: **light and color**, which are the two elements he spends the most time adjusting in his editing process.

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# 🟠 Tool #1: *Develop Raw* – Foundational Light Control
**(0:45 - 2:01)**

The first essential tool is **Develop Raw**. The speaker recommends shooting in RAW format for more editing flexibility, though JPEGs can also benefit from the regular "Develop" tool.

He begins by brightening the photo, lowering highlights, lifting shadows, and then adding contrast. Next, he adjusts whites and blacks for better tonal balance and slightly cools the image using the temperature slider. He also shifts the tint slightly toward magenta and adds a touch of vibrance instead of saturation.

A bit of sharpening is added (around 15–20), but no noise reduction, optics, or transform features are used. A before-and-after comparison already shows a significantly improved image. This sets the stage for the next step.

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## 🔴 Tool #2: *Super Contrast* – Fine-Tuning the Light

**(2:02 - 3:53)**

Once the basic light is corrected, the speaker moves to **Super Contrast**, his second go-to tool. He typically sets each contrast slider (for highlights, midtones, and shadows) around 25–30 to start. Then, he adjusts the balance sliders to further refine light in different tonal zones, such as brightening the sky or deepening the shadows.

The example photo, taken at sunrise in Las Vegas, benefits from enhancing the midtones and shadows to add depth and richness. Subtle changes with the balance sliders make a noticeable difference, giving him precise control over how the photo feels.

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## 🔵 Tool #3: *Color Harmony* – Deep, Controlled Color Adjustments

**(3:54 - 6:09)**

The third and final core tool is **Color Harmony**, which is all about color control. It has four sections, and the speaker uses three of them:

- **Brilliance & Warmth**: Adds global vibrance and warmth. He uses this tool sparingly and carefully, often playing warm and cool tones off one another to create **color tension**, which enhances visual interest.

- **Split Color Warmth**: He pushes warm tones further to the right to enhance them and cool tones slightly to the left to deepen them. This contrast adds drama and dimension to the image.

- **Color Balance**: His favorite part of the tool. It allows adjustments by tonal range— **highlights, midtones, and shadows**. For example:

    - He adds red and magenta to the **highlights** (mainly the sky).

    - He boosts reds in the **midtones** for warmth.

    - He shifts the **shadows** toward blue to deepen cool tones.

This layered color work builds on the earlier light adjustments and creates a balanced, stylised look.

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## 🔁 Revisions and Returning to Previous Tools

**(6:10 - 7:24)**

After using all three tools, the speaker realizes the sky still needs more refinement. He revisits *Develop Raw* to pull down highlights further, proving that **editing is an iterative process**. Returning to tools like *Develop Raw, Super Contrast,* or *Color Harmony* is normal and even necessary for precision.

The before-and-after comparison highlights the transformation: a flat image now has vibrant color, improved light, and clear tonal structure.

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## ✅ Final Thoughts: 90–100% of Editing with Just Three Tools

**(7:24 - 7:51)**

The speaker emphasizes that with just *Develop Raw, Super Contrast,* and *Color Harmony,* you can complete **90 to 100%** of your photo editing. These tools offer complete control over light and color, which are the foundation of any great image.

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## 💫 Bonus Tip: *Axon AI* for a Finishing Touch

**(7:51 - 8:21)**

At the end of his editing process, he sometimes uses **Axon AI** to give the image a final bump— usually a light touch (20–25). It adds a subtle finishing punch, helping to tie everything together. Another before-and-after comparison shows how effective this final step can be.

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## 📘 Learn More: Free Luminar Neo eBook

**(8:21 - 8:41)**

The speaker invites viewers to download his **free 27-page eBook** about Luminar Neo @ https://jimnix.com/free -  which is packed with tips and tricks for mastering the software. It's a valuable resource for anyone looking to improve their photo editing skills.