

White Balance 1.

The colour present in different light sources is described as the colour temperature of the light, measured in degrees Kelvin (K). For example, tungsten lights are quite red, fluorescent lights green and daylight is blue.

White balance is the process of setting the camera to correct for the colour temperature of the light source. White balancing removes any colour cast from the image so that anything white actually looks white, regardless of ambient light.

Two principle colour temperatures are often used in filmmaking and are known as outdoor/daylight (measured as 5600K) and indoor/tungsten (3200K).

White balancing for daylight effectively corrects the image by adding red. White balancing for tungsten adds blue. So in practice changing the white balance involves adding red to the image (commonly described as warming it up) or adding blue (cooling it down).

This chart shows the colour temperature of various light sources.

Temperature	Source	
8,000K	daylight, overcast	8000K
5,500 – 6,000K	typical daylight	5600K
5,000K	horizon daylight	4000K
4,000K	fluorescent	3200K
2,700 – 3,300K	tungsten or incandescent	2800K
1,800K	candle flame	1800K

A white balance setting of 3200K. The resulting image is too blue.

The 'correct' white balance was used.

The colour temp. is set high and the image is too warm.

These images were shot with different white balance settings. The camera compensates for the colour temperature by adding the complimentary colour

