

## Using HDR Exposure Merge in Corel® Paint Shop™ Pro X4

In this tutorial, we'll look at using the HDR Merge tools to combine photos taken with different exposure settings to create stunning images.



### What you will learn:

- What is HDR Exposure Merge?
- Adjusting HDR Exposure Merge
- Using HDR Exposure Merge

## What is HDR Exposure Merge?

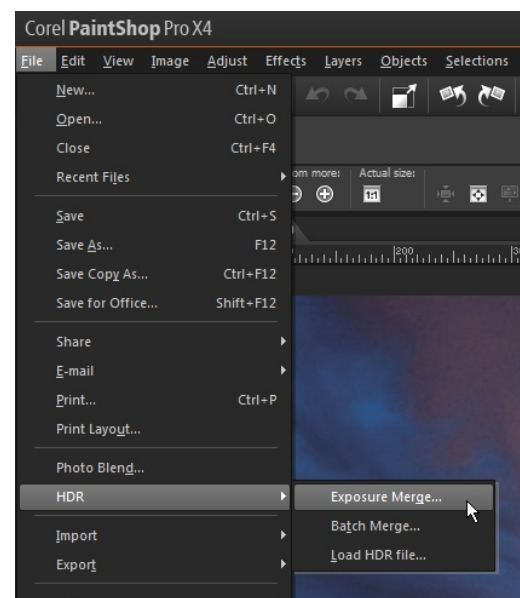
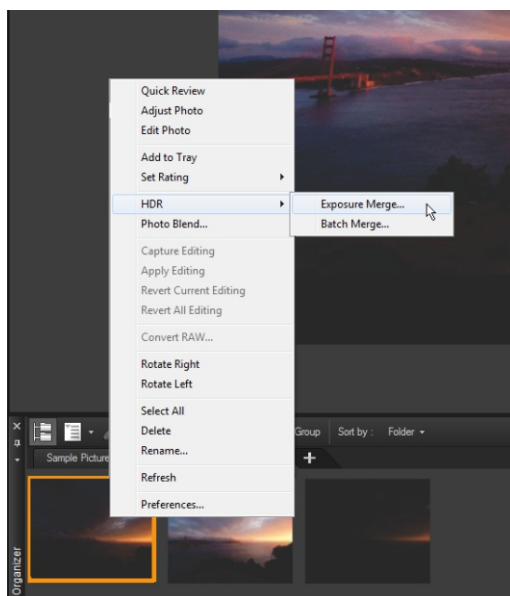
The HDR Exposure Merge feature lets you combine photos taken with different exposure settings to create perfectly exposed images. Ideal for high-contrast backlit scenes, such as sunsets and interior window shots, HDR Exposure Merge lets you bring out color and detail in the foreground, midground, and background areas.

## Accessing HDR Exposure Merge

You can access the HDR Exposure Merge feature by doing any of the following:

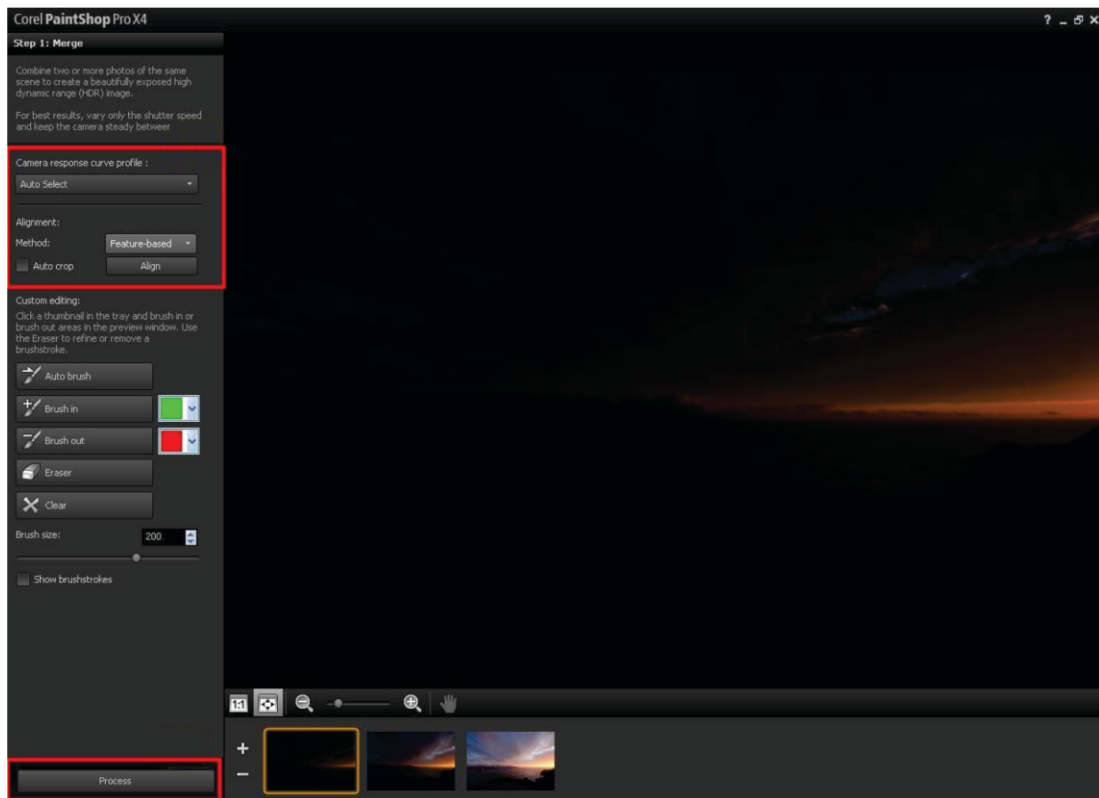
- Right-click a photo in the Organizer palette, and choose **HDR ▸ Exposure Merge**.
- Click **Edit** menu ▸ **HDR ▸ Exposure Merge**.

HDR Exposure Merge has 3 steps, each with its own window: **Step 1: Merge**, **Step 2: HDR Adjustments**, and **Step 3: Fine-Tune**.



## Step 1: Merge

1. Choose a profile from the **Camera response curve profile** drop-list to apply a curve adjustment to the image, based on the known characteristics of the sensor in your camera. If you are not sure what to choose, select **Auto Select**.  
If the **EV interval slider** displays, set the exposure value that you used between photos.
2. In the Alignment area, choose an alignment type from the **Method** drop-list.  
**Feature-based** detects features in the photos; **Edge-based** detects edges within the photos. If you want to crop any edges that don't overlap, mark the **Auto crop** check box.
3. Click **Align**.  
You can also use the Custom Editing tools to choose image areas you want to keep (Brush in) or remove (Brush out). Often, custom editing is applied to remove "ghosting" — the semitransparent effect caused by merging photos that captured moving objects.
4. Click **Process** to go to Step 2: HDR Adjustments.



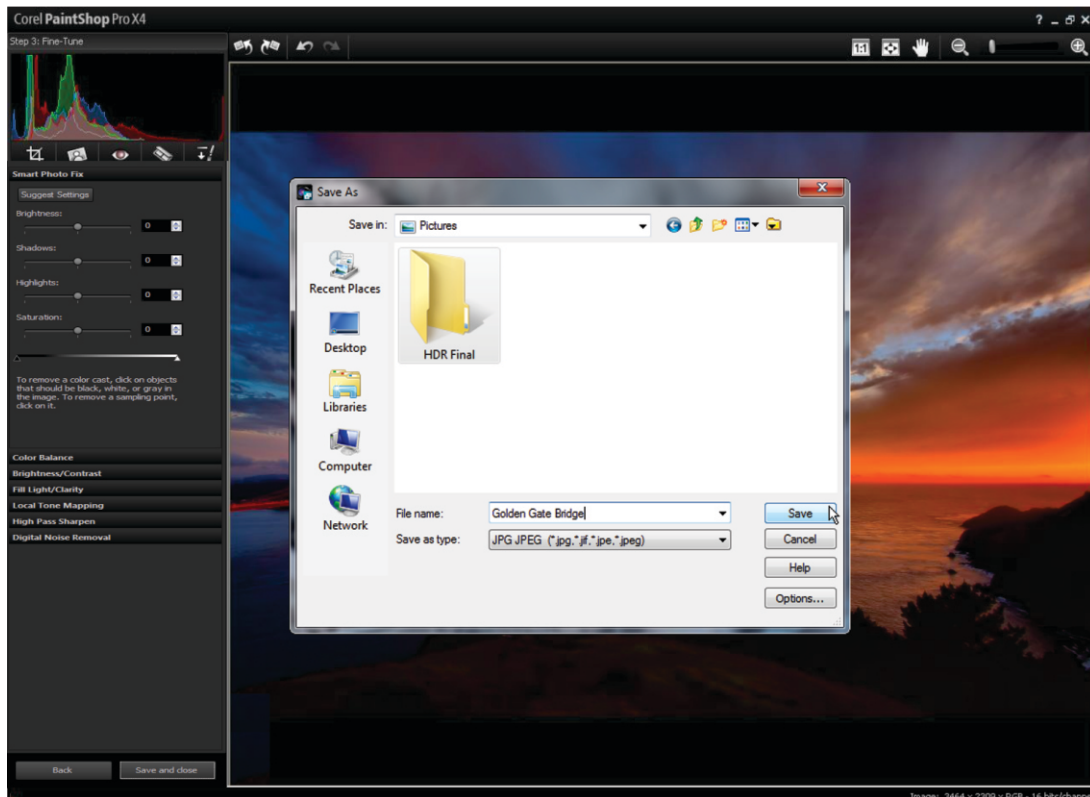
## Step 2: HDR Adjustments

1. In the Presets area, click a preset thumbnail.
  2. Mark the **White Balance** check box, and click **Auto** or click the **Dropper** tool and click the image to set the white point.
  3. Drag the **Temperature** slider to warm or cool the colors in the image.
  4. Drag **Contrast**, **Highlights**, **Midtones**, and **Shadows** sliders to adjust the overall tone and contrast.
  5. Drag the **Vibrancy** slider to saturate or desaturate the colors.
  6. From the **Detail** drop-list, choose **Natural detail** or **Creative detail**, and drag the respective sliders to adjust the amount of local detail.
- You can save your HDR image for further editing by clicking **Create HDR file**, navigating to the folder you want, typing a file name, and clicking **Save**.
7. Click **Process** to go to Step 3: Fine-Tune.



### Step 3: Fine-Tune

1. Apply any of the following tools or adjustment options to adjust the final image:
  - **Digital Noise Removal** is a great tool for cleaning up noise that can result from merging photos.
  - **High Pass Sharpen** can help reduce blurred areas that may result from movement between photos.
  - **Smart Photo Fix** and **Color Balance** let you tweak the colors.
  - To brighten the entire image, try adjusting **Brightness/Contrast**. To brighten only the dark areas, try **Fill Light/Clarity**.
  - **Local Tone Mapping** and **Fill Light/Clarity** can be used to further enhance details in the image.
2. Click **Save and close**.
3. In the Save As dialog box, navigate to the folder that you want, type a file name, and choose a file type from the **Save as type** drop-list.  
The file is saved to a standard, 16-bit file and the Exposure Merge window closes.



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