

# Matt's Guided Edit Experience

## Assignment Extra #1

Step 1: Open the photos. You have the raw file for the sloth and JPGs for the others.

Step 2: Read Part 1 and Part 2 assignments below.

Step 3: Part 1 requires you to edit the photo first. Then you can read my thoughts after.

Step 4: Part 2 requires you to crop the photos and then read my thoughts.

Step 5: You're done. This is not a group project. Just something to get you thinking and doing.

### Part 1 - Photo Edit: Sloth in the Trees

This was a photo I took in Costa Rica. Sloths are a common "bucket list" animal for people because they're typically hard to see. One could be in the tree directly above you and you'd never hear it and they're often so high up that you can't get a clear view of them.

In this example, I believe I had a good sighting of a sloth, but it's not a particularly amazing photo. I simply wasn't in a position to make a great shot. But I feel I made a good shot. One that I'd be happy to share online via social media and put in a book about my Costa Rica trip.

Would it make my main wildlife photography portfolio where I only show my best of the best?

No.

That portfolio is reserved for my absolutely best wildlife photography. And over the years I've had to make the hard decision to not include photos that had some emotional investment by me in them. This was by far my best sloth encounter, and the only photos of sloths that I'd even consider showing off. Yet I have to be honest with myself that my best-of-the-best portfolio can only include just that. The best of the best wildlife photos - not the best of the best of an animal that I don't see often, but are personally happy and proud of.





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## Editing the Sloth

### The Crop

To me, there's not a lot of cropping to do with this photo. A good center crop is fine and cropping in a bit on all sides was fine. Because I'd plan to use this in a photo book of my trip, the crop is something I'll most likely adjust when I see what size page it has to fit in to. But there's no rule for this photo. Keep it in the center and be done.



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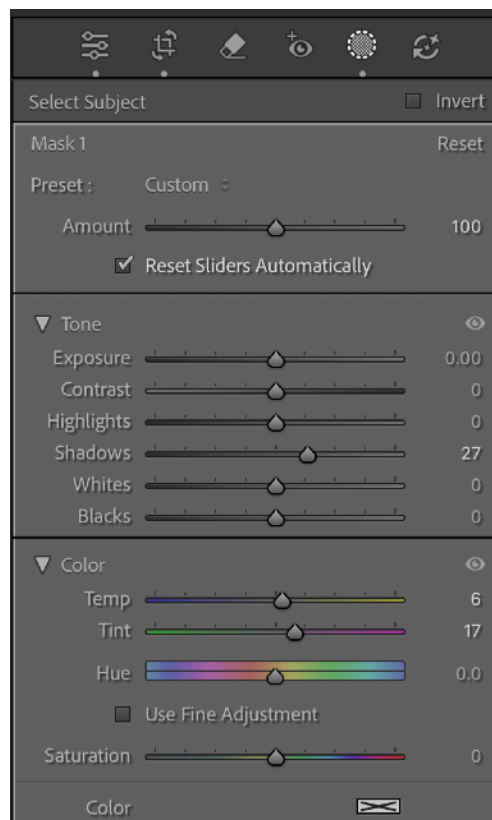
## Editing

I started with using the Adaptive Profile on this photo. It just looked good to me and got pretty close to done just by doing that.

You could do Noise Reduction at this point. The photo is ISO 1600 so I didn't personally think it needed it, but it also isn't wrong to do either. It's personal taste at this point.

Then I used a Subject Mask on the Sloth to enhance the shadows a bit so we can see more detail. You just have to be careful not to go too far here. It doesn't need to be that bright.

Then, on the same mask, I used the Color / White balance adjustments. I thought the sloth looked green (it is of course, because of it's green surroundings). But too green in my opinion. So I used the White Balance tools to add more magenta and warm it up a bit from the Shadow adjustment which would make it feel more cold.

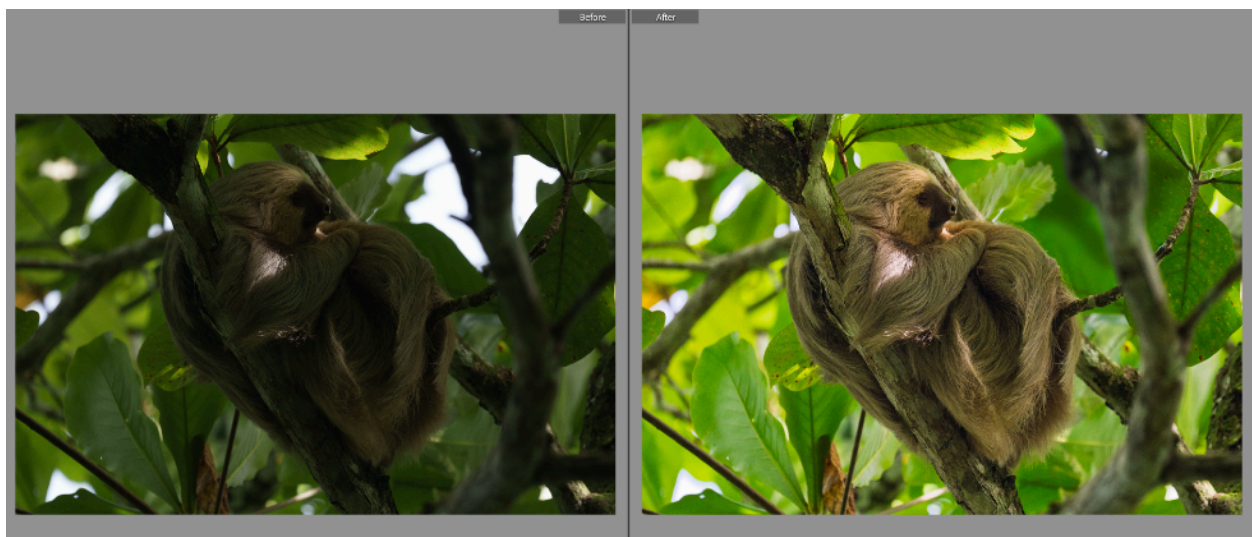
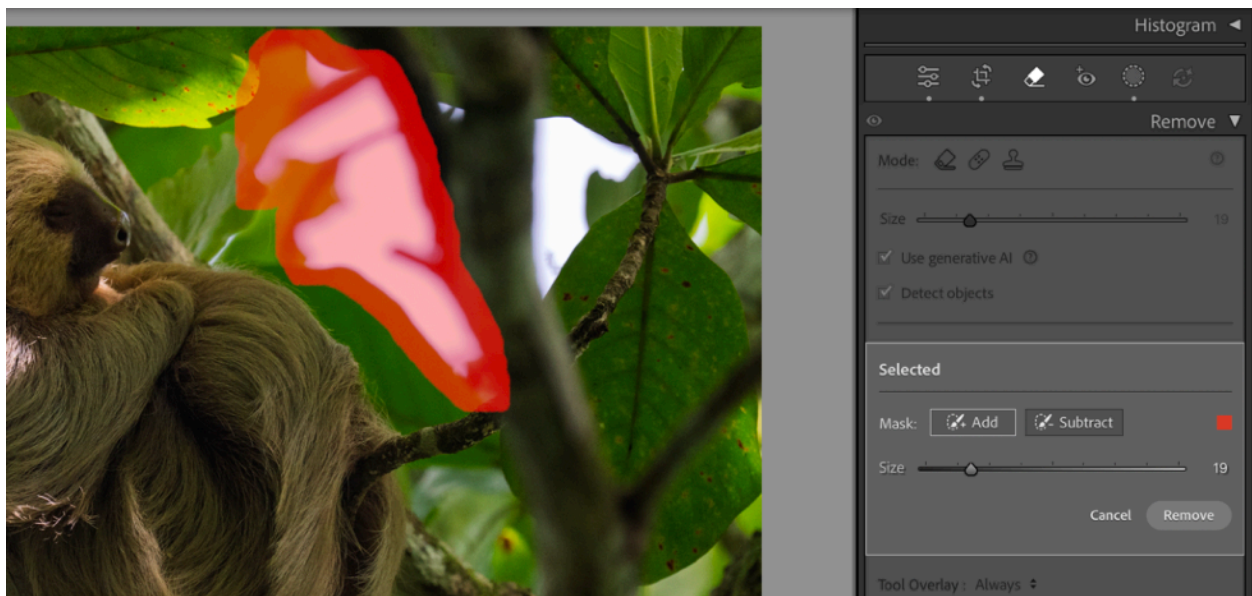


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Lastly, I used the Remove section and painted over that bright spot to the right of the sloth. There are of course 100 distractions in this photo. As the popular saying goes... it is what it is. We will never make this perfect. But removing that bright spot ensures that we remove a big distracting white area and try to get attention on the sloth.

*SIDE NOTE: I know some of you will have the urge to remove many of the other little branches and bright spots, and that's totally okay. If you're wondering why I stopped, it's because removing more and editing more won't change the impact of this photo. In my opinion it'll resonate the same whether I spend 10 more minutes doing that or not.*

Finally, I went back to the overall Basic panel and nudge Exposure to +0.65 to brighten the whole thing a bit. Before and After are below. **(END OF PART 1)**



## Part 2 - How Would You Crop?

Next, I thought we'd have a little fun with a "How would you crop this" assignment. You can skip forward past the next (blank) page, to the one after for my personal choices in cropping.

Photo 1



Photo 2



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# Cropping Answers

## Photo 1 (Some small shore bird that I'm too lazy to find the name of)

I could see two ways to crop this. I think it's interesting to include the other bird in the photo, but I also think it's interesting to crop in tighter and just show the one bird. Both work for me, but I do think we definitely need to see the ground where it's about to land.



## Photo 2 - Canadian Geese

I love photos where you can see a baby with it's parent nearby. Both photos don't have to be in focus and usually it's the baby that is preferably sharp. This photo set up well because the parent's neck frames the baby nicely. And we don't need the whole animal in the photo either. The photo needs to be straightened according to the line of sharpness across and I placed the baby along the lower third line if there were a rule of thirds grid here.

The common problem I see with cropping photos like this is that many people were told, at some point, to leave space for the wildlife to move in to. So they overcompensate, and end up leaving too much space (second version below). In my opinion that's too much blank space for no reason.

