



Do you want to know how to edit photos on iPhone? The simplest way is to use the editing tools in the iPhone Photos app. From one-tap edits to advanced color and exposure settings, you can enhance your images without leaving your photo library. In this tutorial, you'll discover how to edit pictures on iPhone using the built-in Photos app. Read on to discover how to turn your ordinary photos into stunning edits!

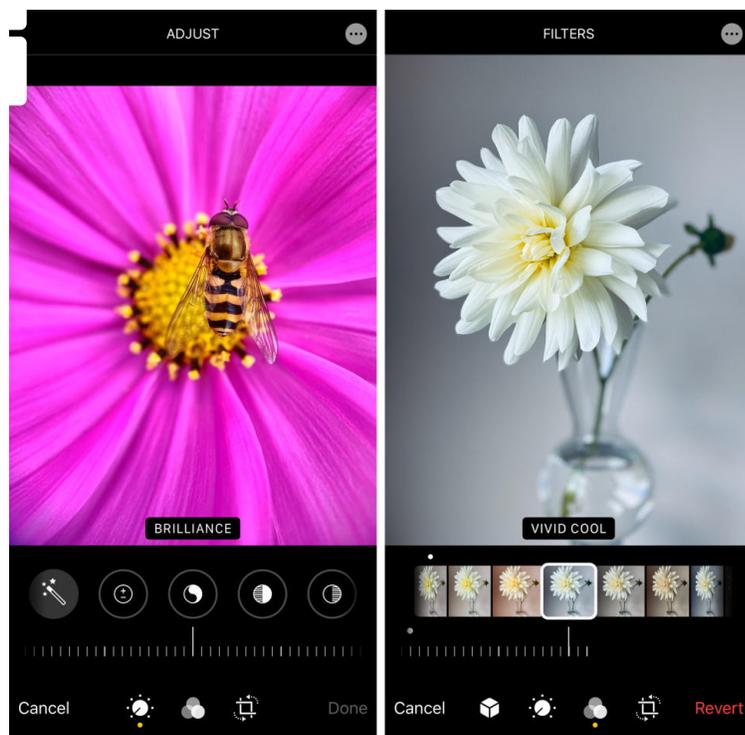


Table Of Contents: How To Edit Photos On iPhone

Click any title link below to go straight to that section of the article:

- [1. Ensure Your iPhone Is Updated To iOS 13](#)
- [2. Duplicate Your Photo To Preserve The Original \(Optional\)](#)
- [3. Open The iPhone Photo Editor In The Photos App](#)
- [4. Adjust Color, Brightness & Sharpness](#)
- [5. Use A Filter To Adjust The Color Tone](#)
- [6. Crop, Rotate, Straighten & Adjust Perspective](#)
- [7. Save Your Edited Photo](#)
- [8. Remove Or Change Your Edits](#)
- [9. Edit Portrait Mode Photos](#)
- [10. Edit Live Photos](#)
- [11. Edit Videos In The Photos App](#)
- [12. Benefits Of Using The iPhone Photos App For Editing](#)
- [13. Limitations Of The iPhone Photos App](#)

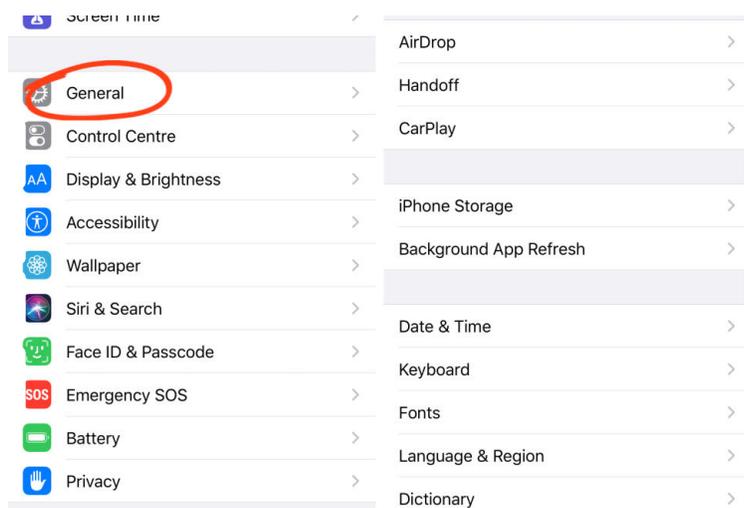
1. Ensure Your iPhone Is Updated To iOS 13



The new Photos app has a wider range of editing tools. And you can fine-tune your edits with more precision than before. You can even [edit videos](#) using the same tools that you use to edit photos.

To ensure you have these new iPhone photo editor tools, make sure your iPhone is running the latest iOS 13.

To update your iPhone to iOS 13, open the **Settings** app from the Home screen. Then go to **General > Software Update**.



If your software is up to date with iOS 13, you'll already have access to the new photo editing tools.



If your software isn't up to date, follow the on-screen instructions to download and install the latest iOS 13. (Before doing this, it's a good idea to **back up the data on your iPhone** – just in case something goes wrong during the update process!)

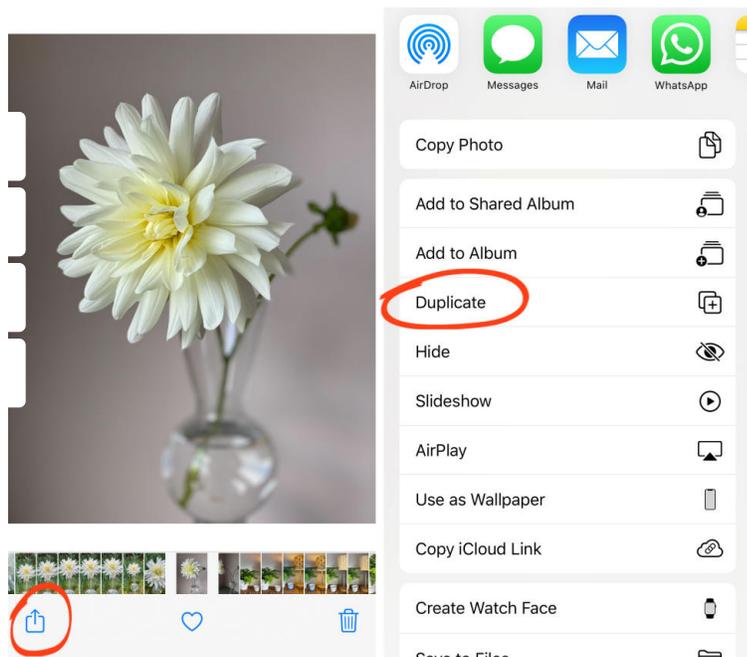
Note that if you have the **iPhone 6** or earlier, you won't be able to update to iOS 13. And therefore, you won't have access to the new editing tools in the Photos app. You can still use the old editing tools though – you just won't have as many tools to work with.

2. Duplicate Your Photo To Preserve The Original (Optional)

When you edit a photo in the Photos app, the original image gets replaced by the edited version.

However, editing in the Photos app is non-destructive. This means you can undo edits or revert back to the original image at any time.

But sometimes you might want to keep the original photo, along with a separate edited version. If so, you can easily duplicate the image before editing.



Tap the **Back** arrow at the top left to return to your photo library.



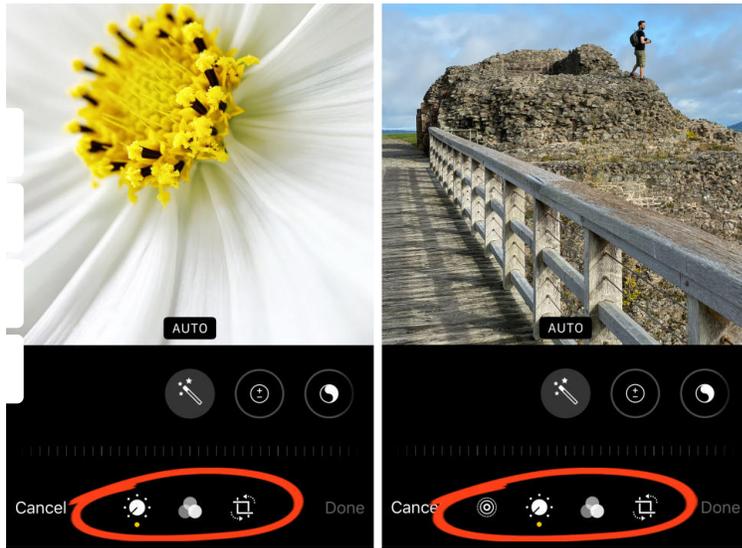
The duplicate image will appear at the bottom of your photo library. You can edit this image while the original remains unedited.



Just open the photo you want to edit, then tap **Edit** at the top right of the screen.



In the iPhone photo editor, there are three icons at the bottom of the screen. Or if you're editing a Live Photo, there will be four icons.

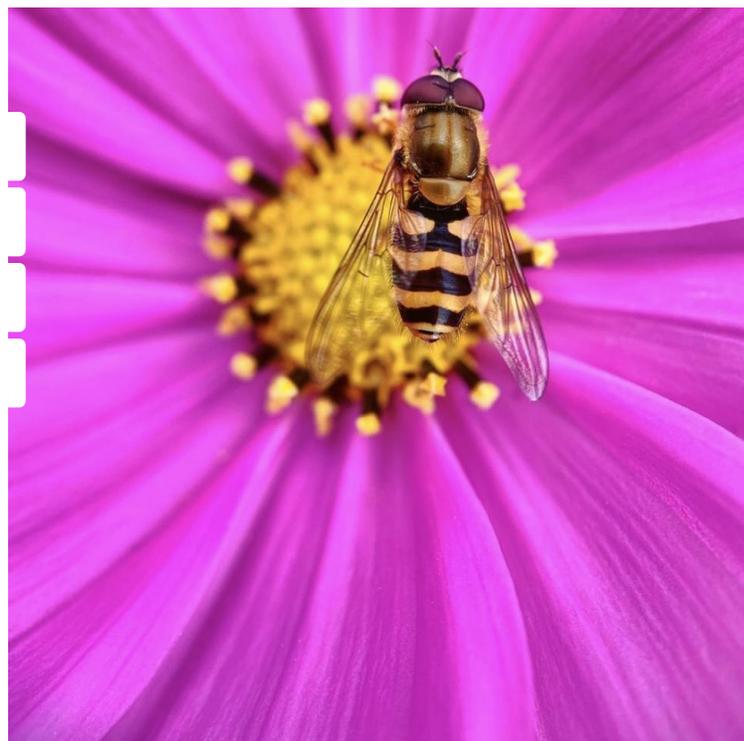


These icons give you access to a range of editing tools for improving your image.

Now you'll learn how to edit pictures on iPhone using these photo editing tools.

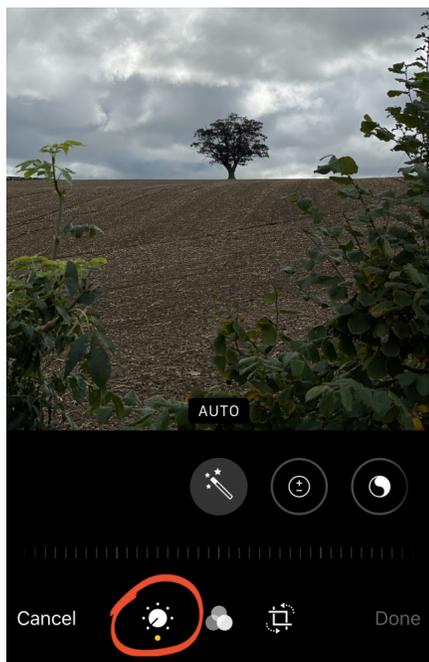
4. Adjust Color, Brightness & Sharpness

Knowing how to edit photos on iPhone allows you to turn an average image into an amazing one!

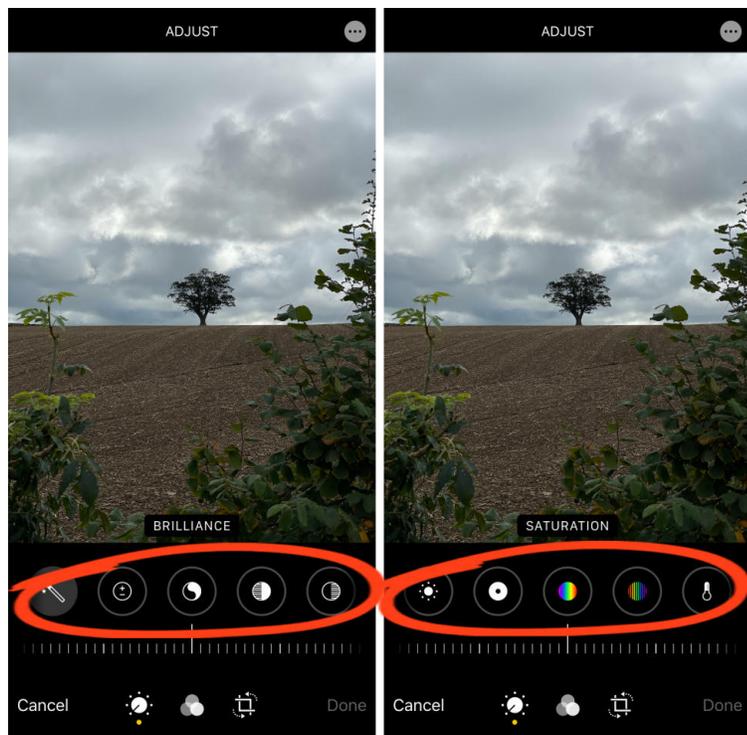


And the best place to start is by making a few quick adjustments to color, brightness, and sharpness.

To make adjustments to your photo, ensure the **Adjust** icon (dial) is selected at the bottom of the screen.



Beneath your photo, you'll see a row of adjustment tools. Swipe across to see more tools.



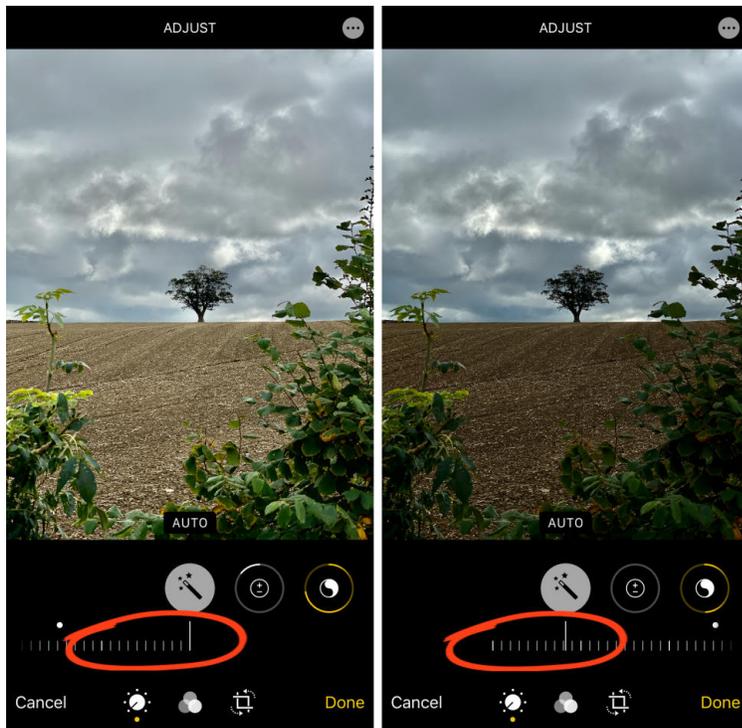
4.1 Auto Enhance

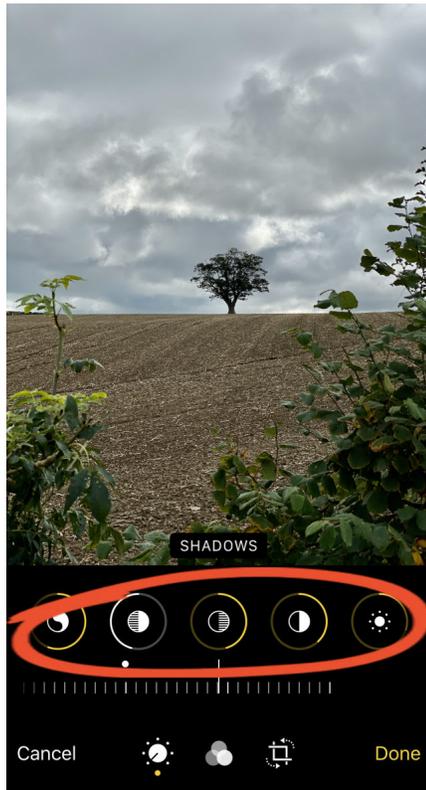
The **Auto** tool automatically adjusts the colors and brightness levels in your photo.



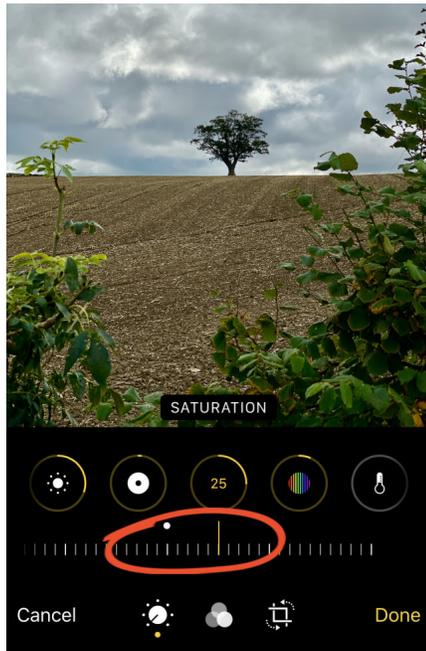
The great thing about the **Auto** tool is that you can actually fine-tune the edits that it's made.

You can use the slider at the bottom of the screen to adjust the strength of the edit.

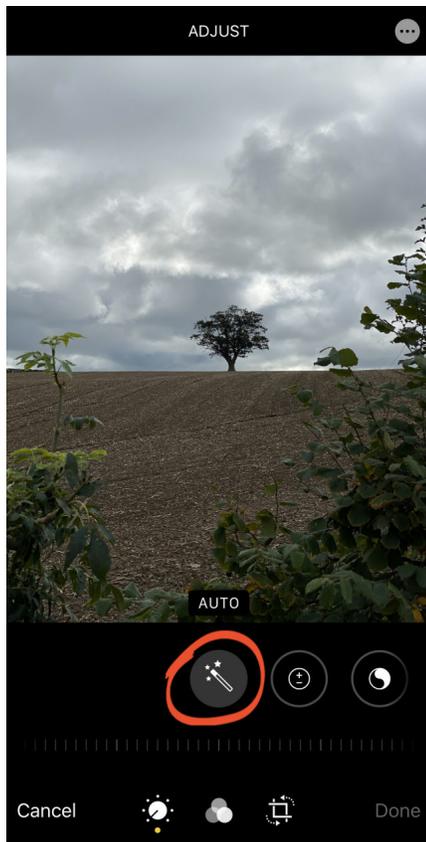




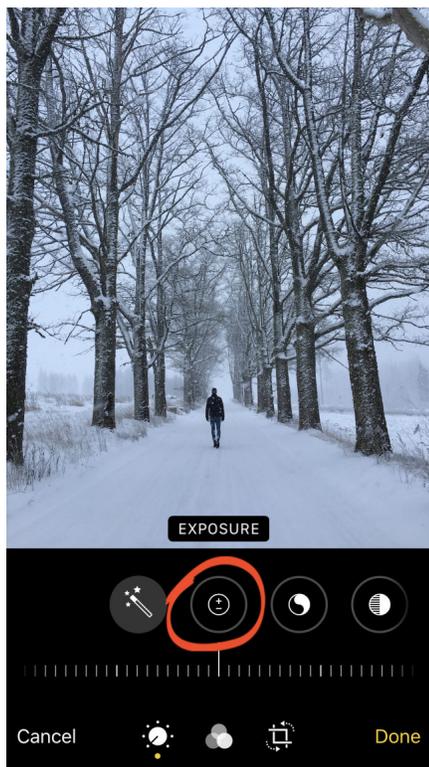
To fine-tune an individual adjustment, tap on the tool and use the slider to adjust its strength.



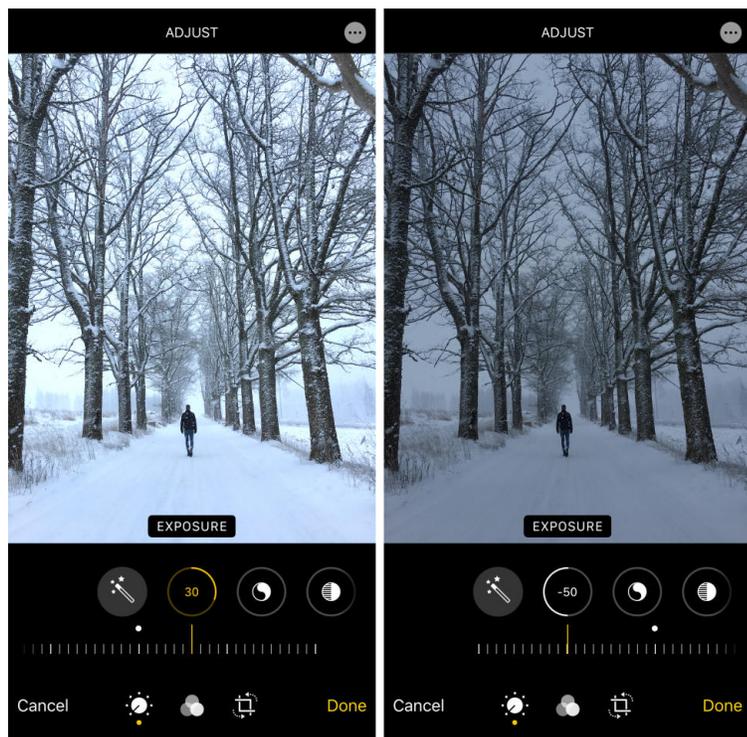
If you want to remove the Auto edit from your photo, tap the **Auto** icon so it turns dark gray.



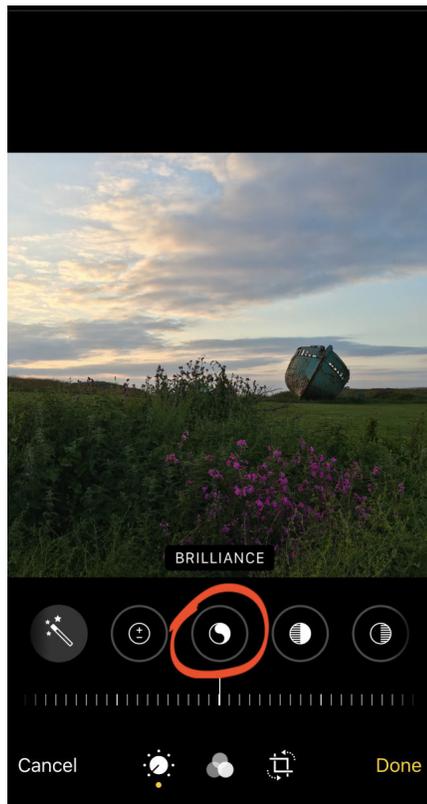
Now, you'll discover how to use the manual adjustment tools to make your own edits.



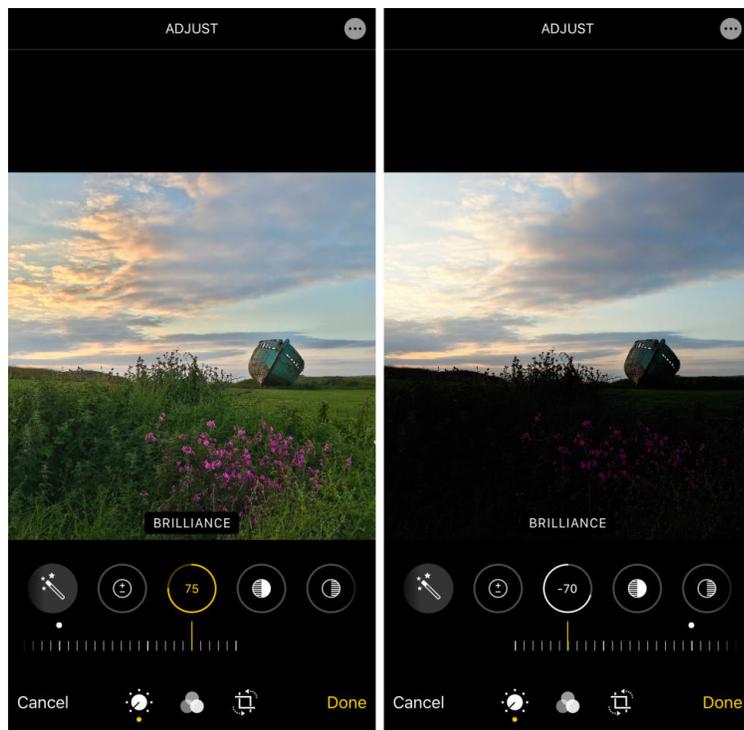
Drag the slider right to brighten the image, or left to darken it.



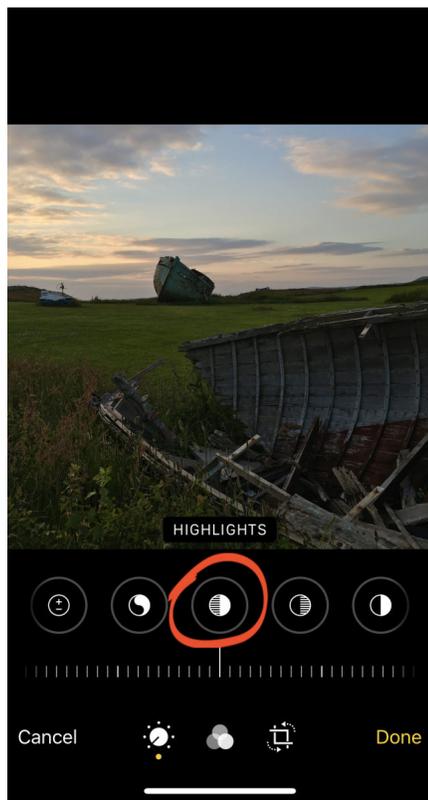
The Exposure tool has more effect on the highlights than the shadows. This means that the bright tones in your photo are affected more than the dark tones.



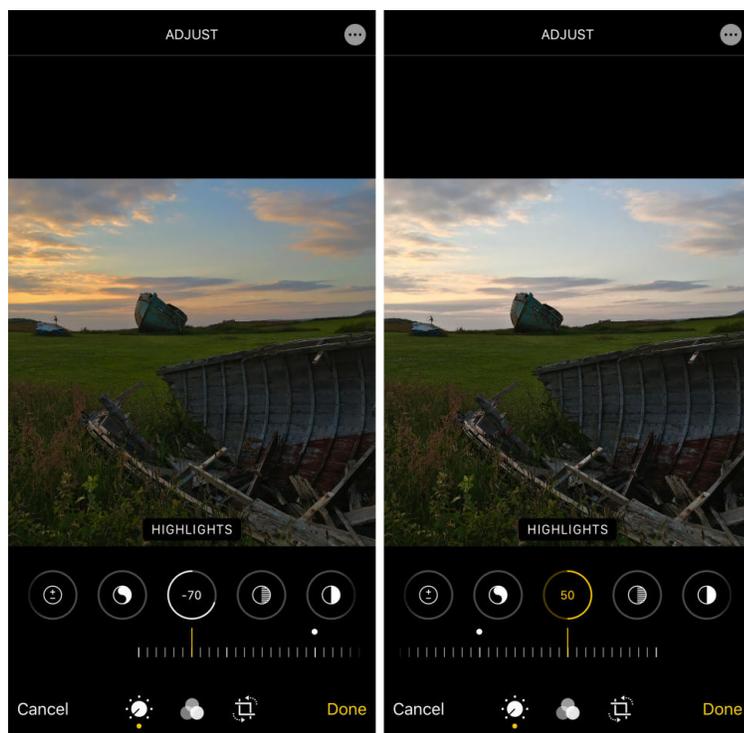
Drag the slider right to brighten shadows and darken highlights. If you drag left, the shadows will become darker and the highlights brighter.



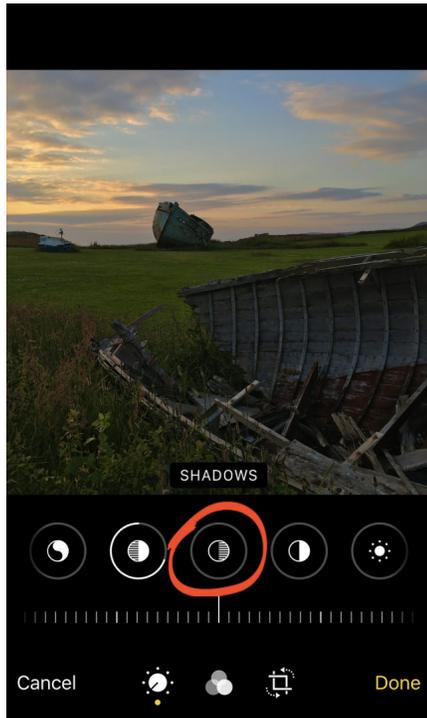
4.4 Highlights



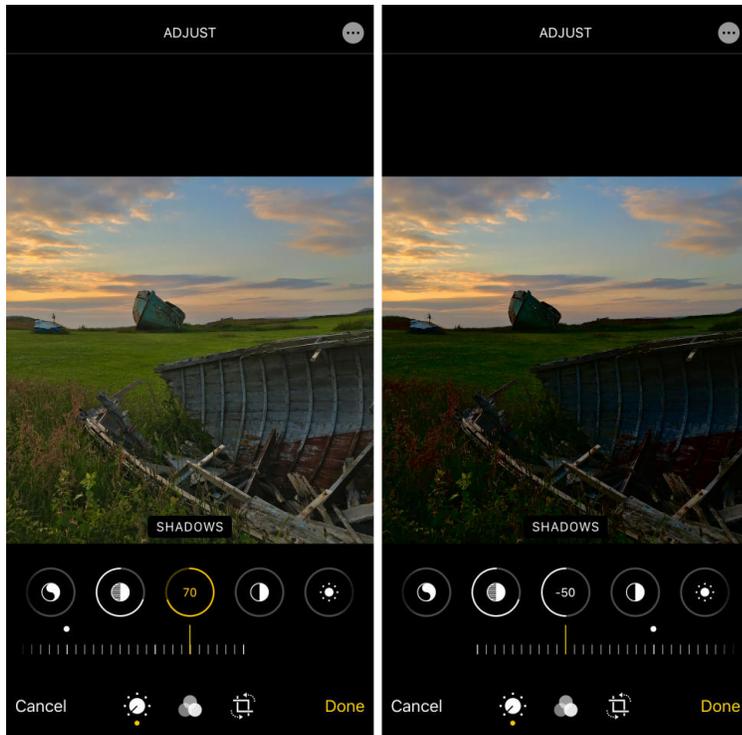
Drag the slider left to make the highlights darker, or right to make the highlights brighter.



4.5 Shadows

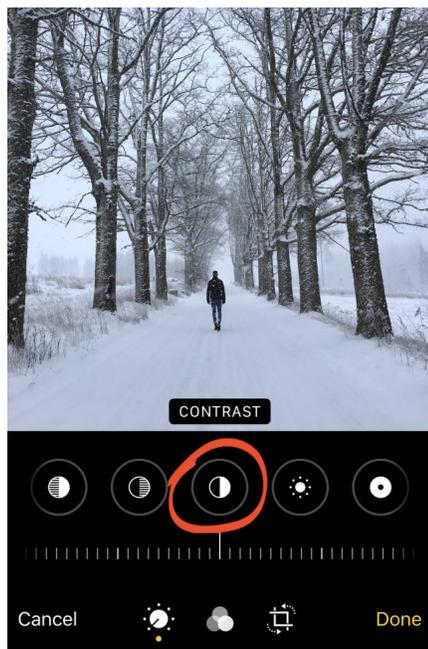


Drag the slider right to make the shadows brighter, or left to make them darker.

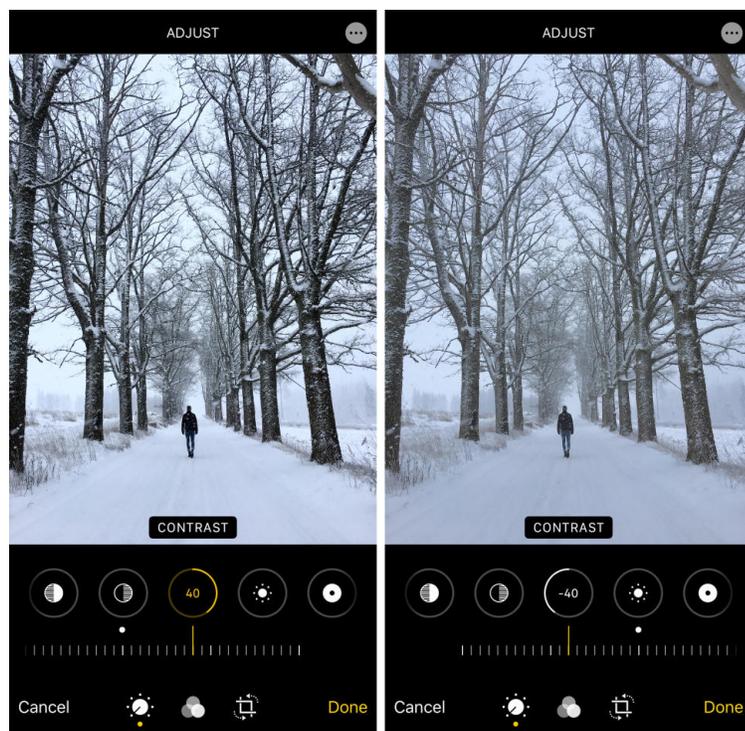


4.6 Contrast

The **Contrast** tool adjusts the contrast between the dark and bright tones in your photo.

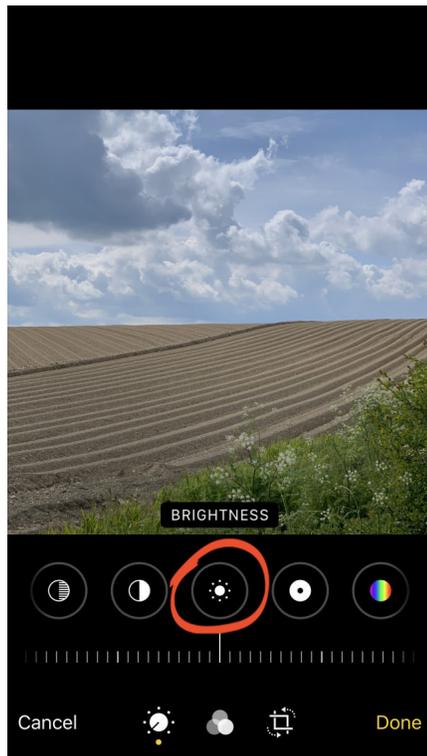


Drag the slider right to increase contrast, making the shadows darker and the highlights brighter. Or drag left to reduce contrast, making the shadows and highlights more similar in tone.

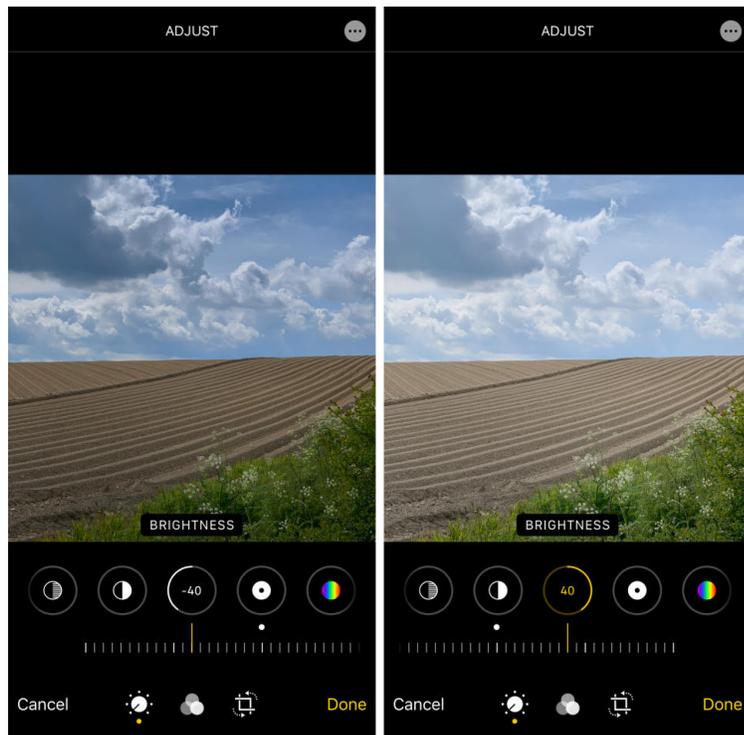


In most cases, reducing contrast doesn't produce good results. Increasing the contrast a little can make your photo look sharper. However, you'll often get better results with the **Brilliance** tool as it keeps the colors nice and vibrant.

4.7 Brightness



Drag the slider left to darken your photo, or right to brighten it.

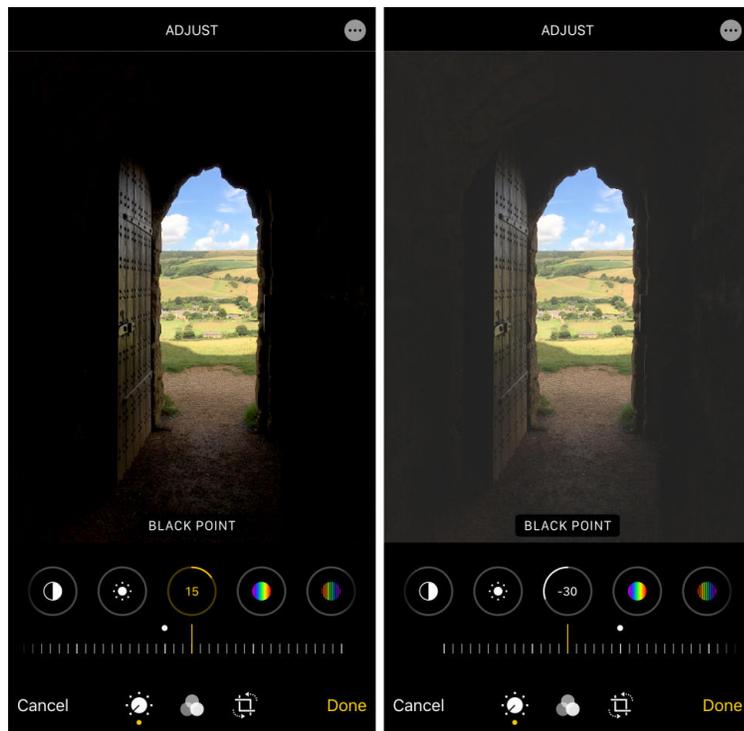


The Brightness tool has more effect on the shadows and midtones. This means the dark and medium tones get adjusted more than the bright tones.

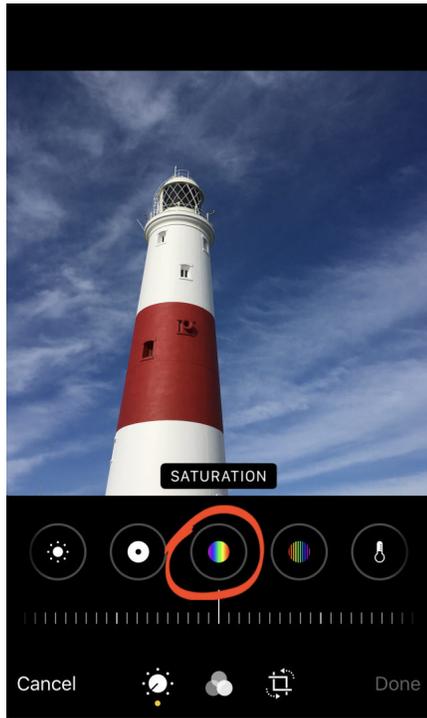
4.8 Black Point



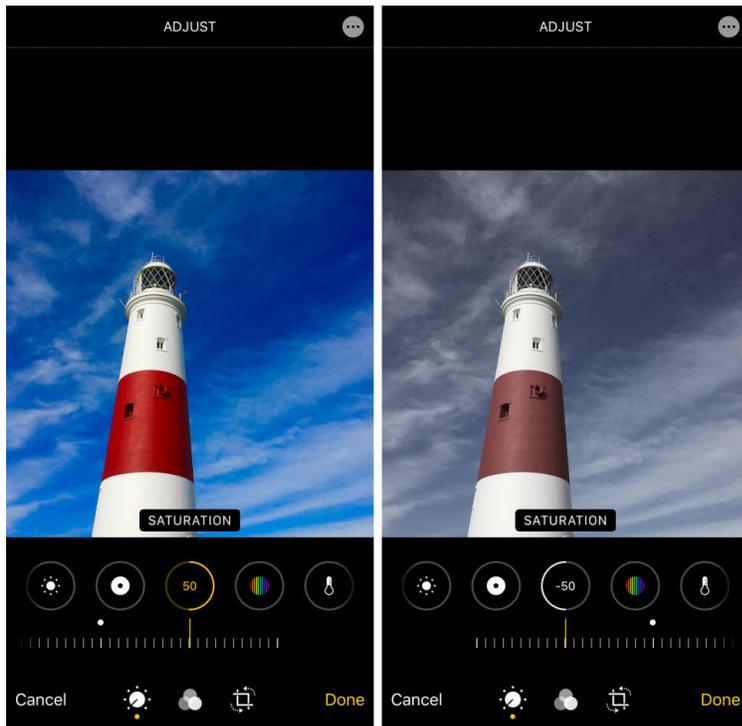
If your photo lacks rich black tones, drag the slider to the right to make the darkest areas appear black. Dragging to the left will make the dark areas appear faded.



4.9 Saturation



Drag the slider right to make the colors more vibrant, or left to make the colors more muted.

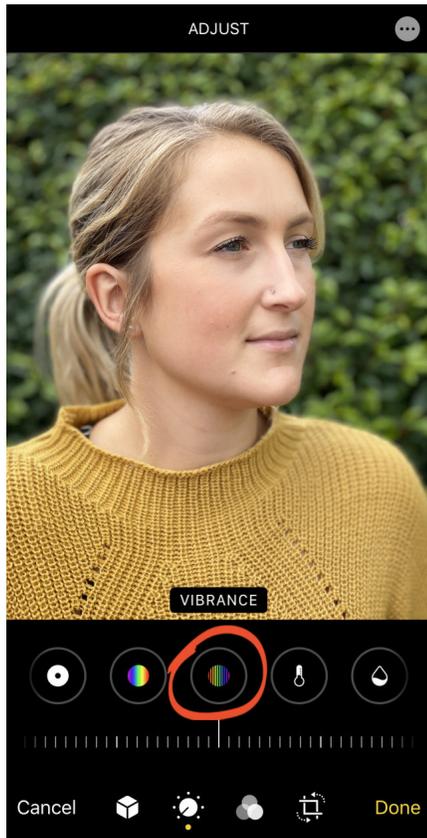


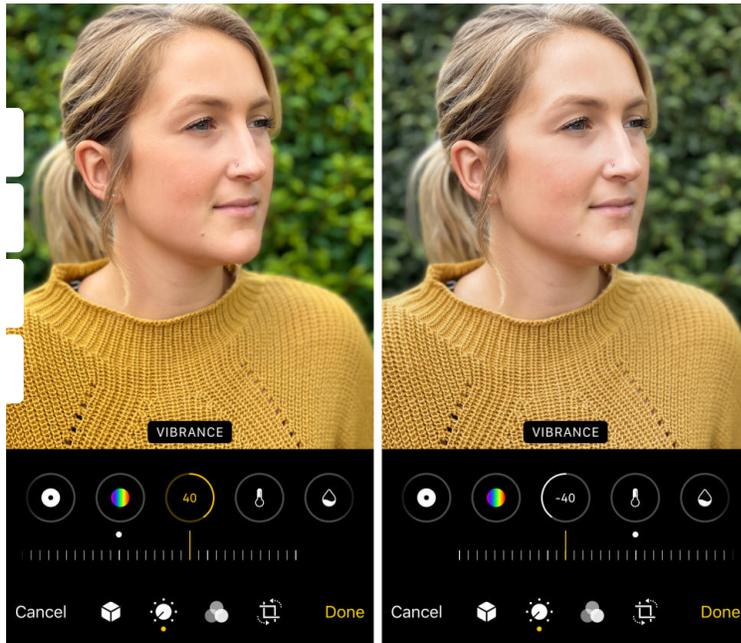
In most cases, increasing the saturation a little bit will make your image “pop.” But be careful not to over-saturate the colors. If you make the colors too vibrant, they won’t look natural.



4.10 Vibrance

The **Vibrance** tool makes muted colors more vibrant without affecting skin tones or saturated colors too much.

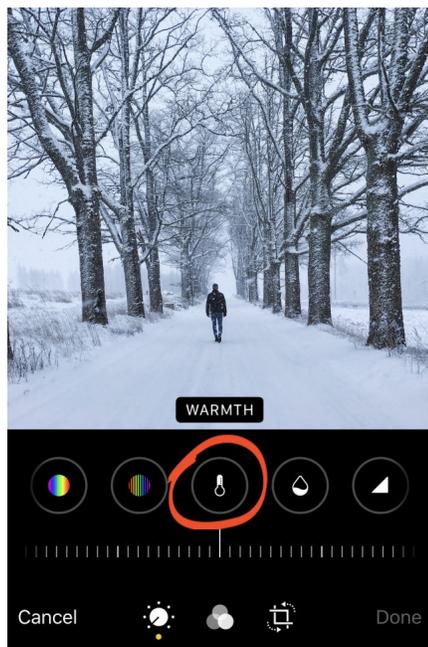




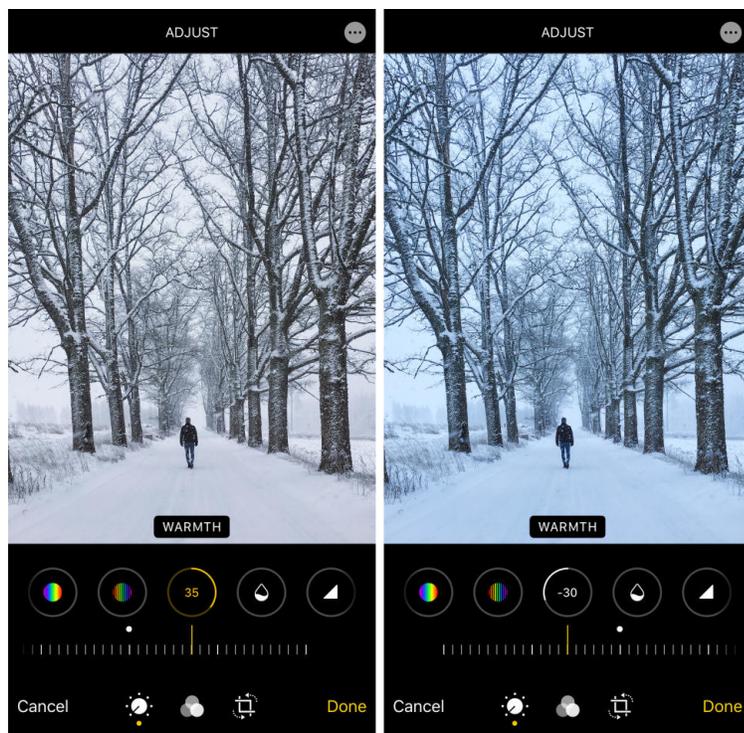
The **Vibrance** tool usually produces more natural-looking colors than the **Saturation** tool. This is because it doesn't over-saturate skin tones or colors that are already vibrant.

4.11 Warmth

The **Warmth** tool makes the colors in your photo warmer or cooler.



Drag the slider right to make the colors warmer (more orange). Or drag it left to make them cooler (more blue).



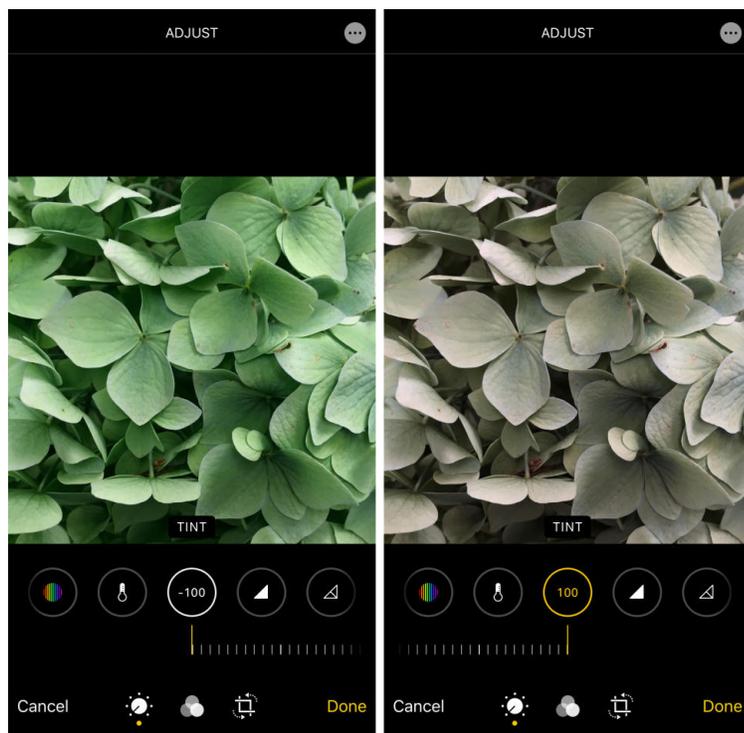
You can use the **Warmth** tool to correct the color balance of a photo. Or use it to change the overall mood of an image.

4.12 Tint

The **Tint** tool allows you to add a green or magenta color tint to your photo.



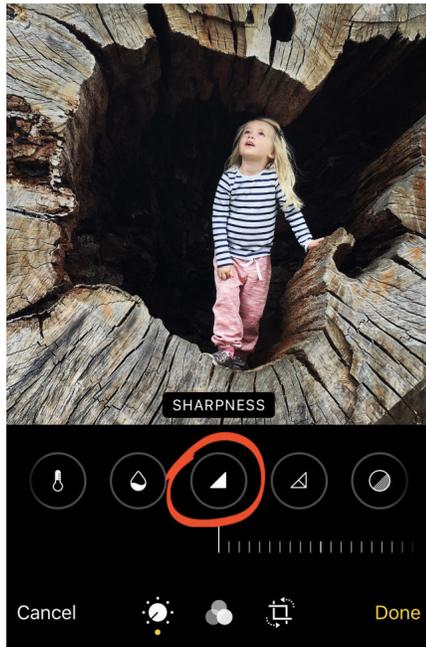
Drag the slider left to add a green tint, or right to add a magenta tint.



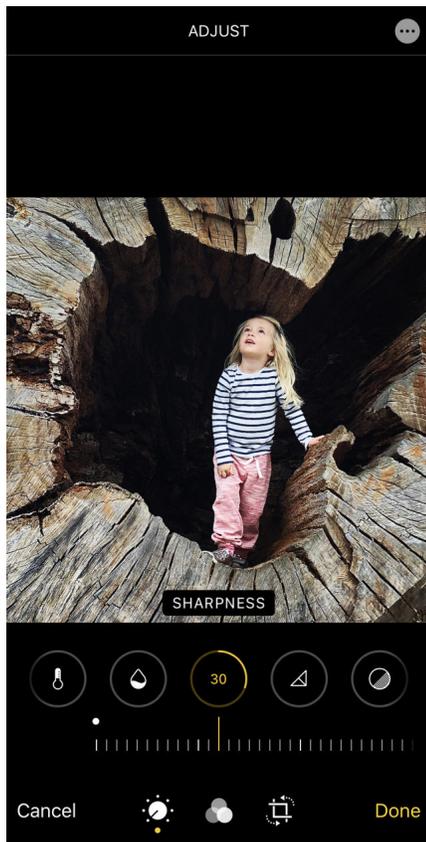
The green tint is great for increasing the vibrancy of green leaves or fields. Just be aware that it tints the entire photo, so all colors will be affected.

4.13 Sharpness

The **Sharpness** tool sharpens detail in your photo by making edges crisper and more defined.

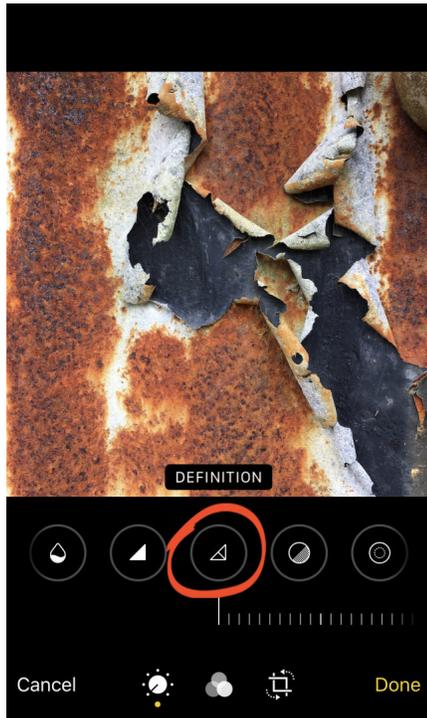


Drag the slider right to make the image sharper.

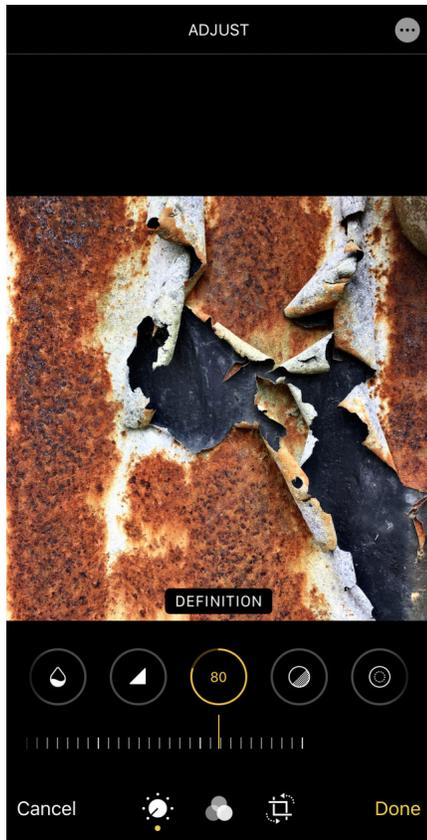


Be careful not to increase sharpness too much. Over-sharpening will reduce the image quality.

4.14 Definition



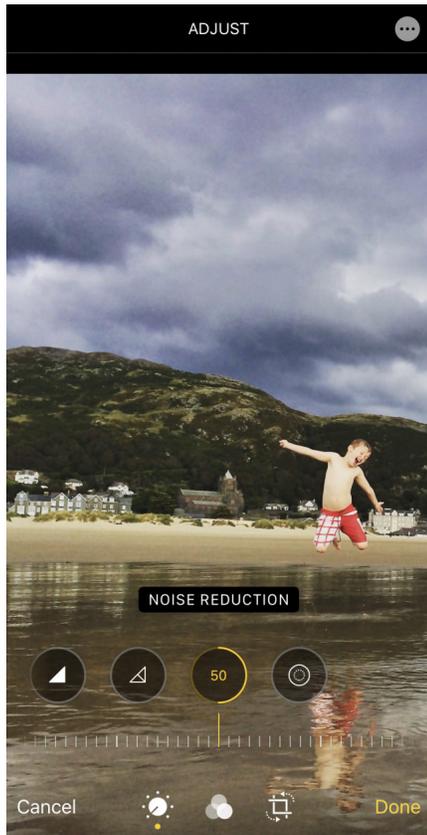
Drag the slider right to increase clarity and definition in your image.

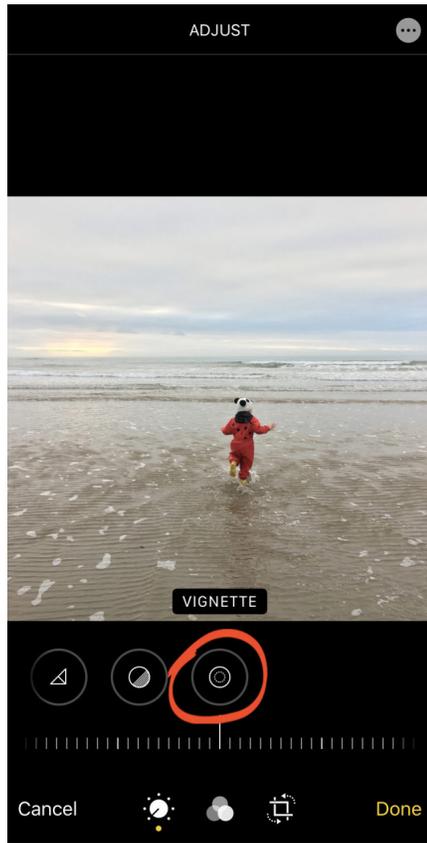


4.15 Noise Reduction

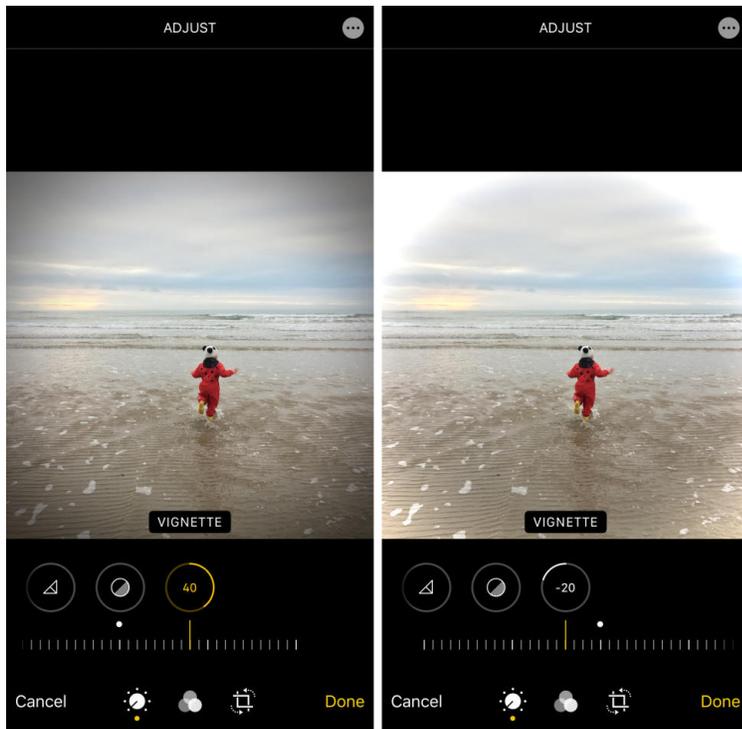


If you have a grainy or "noisy" photo, drag the slider right to reduce the noise.



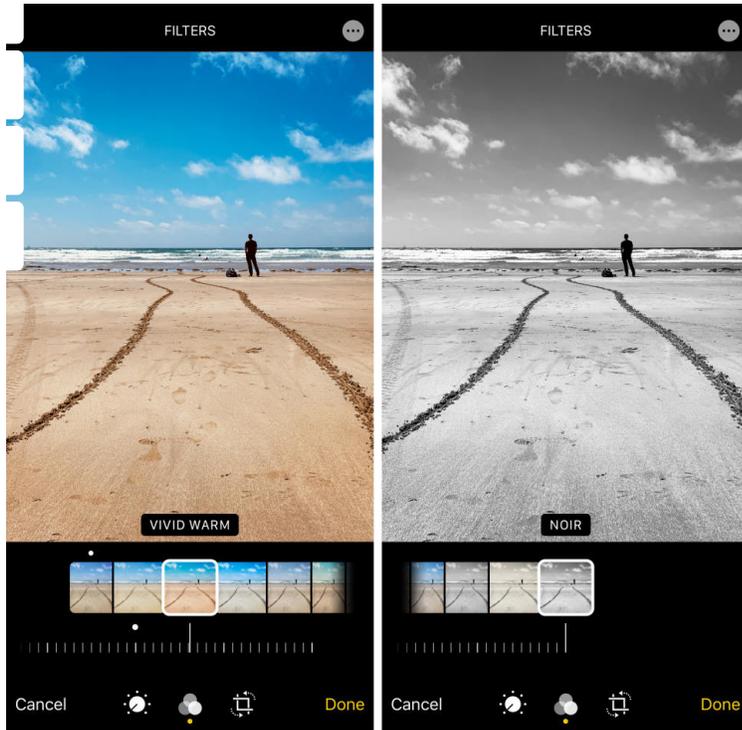


Drag the slider right to add a dark vignette, or left to add a bright vignette. A dark vignette usually looks better than a bright one.



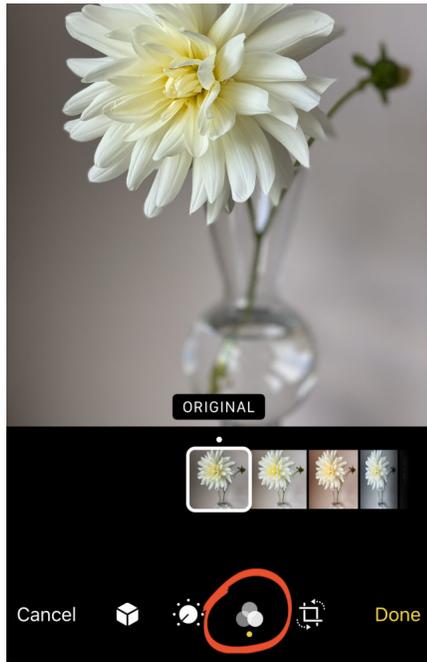


With a single tap, you can adjust the color tone of your image using a range of color and black and white filters.

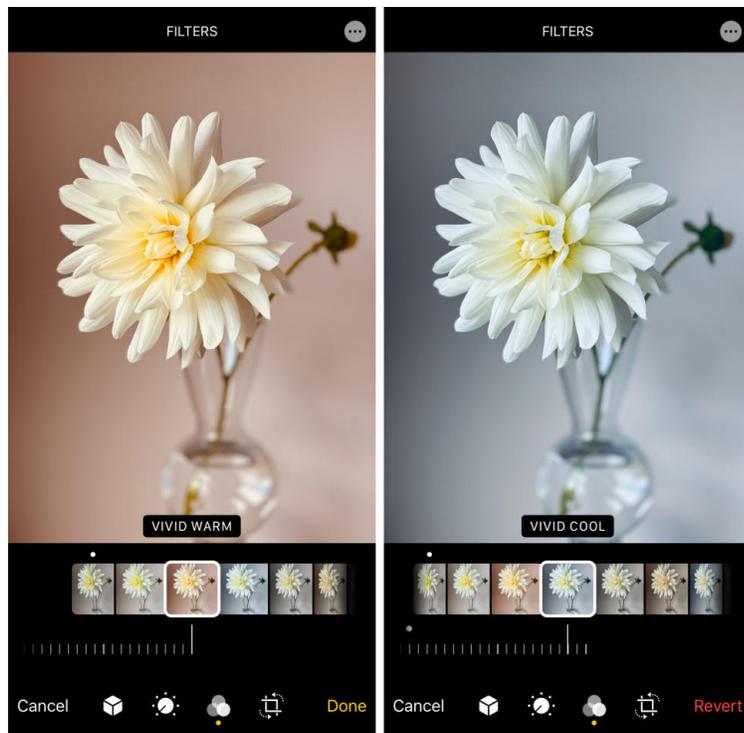


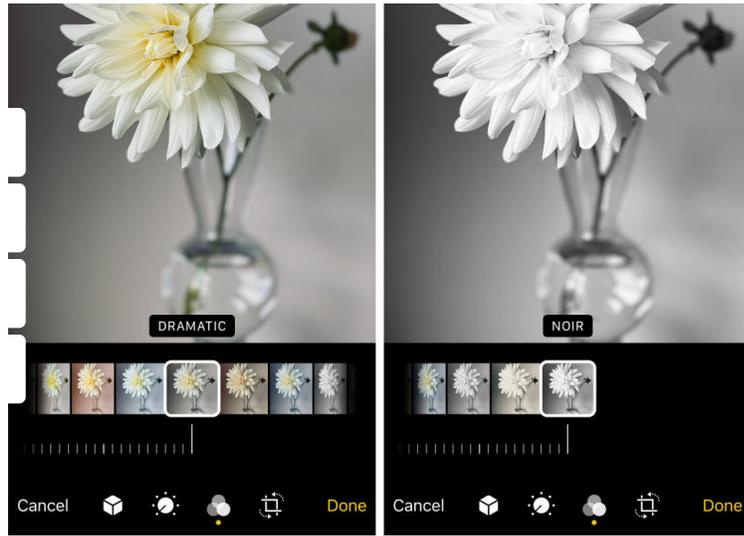
Read on to discover how to edit photos on iPhone using the built-in filters in the Photos app.

In the Photos app **Edit** mode, tap the **Filters** icon (three circles) at the bottom of the screen.



Swipe across the filter thumbnails beneath your image. Watch how the colors change as you select different filters.

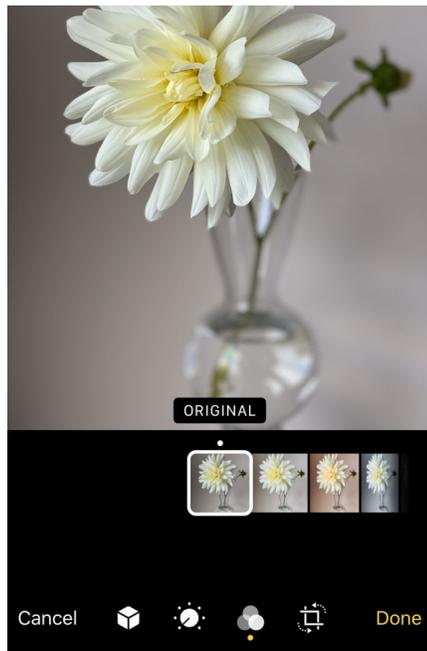




When you've chosen a filter, drag the slider at the bottom of the screen to adjust the filter strength.



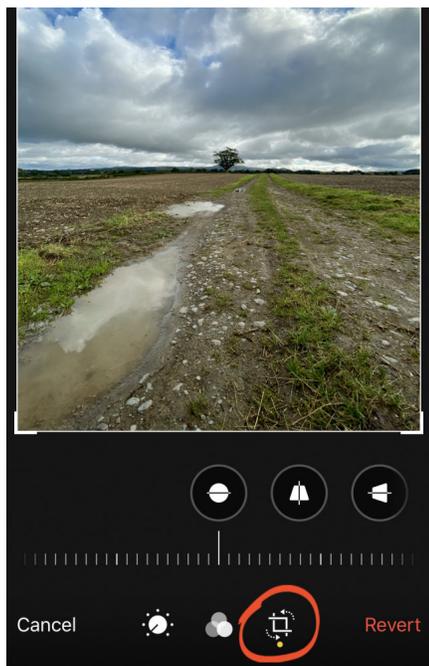
To remove a filter, select the **Original** filter.



6. Crop, Rotate, Straighten & Adjust Perspective

The Photos app has a range of tools for cropping, rotating, straightening, and adjusting perspective.

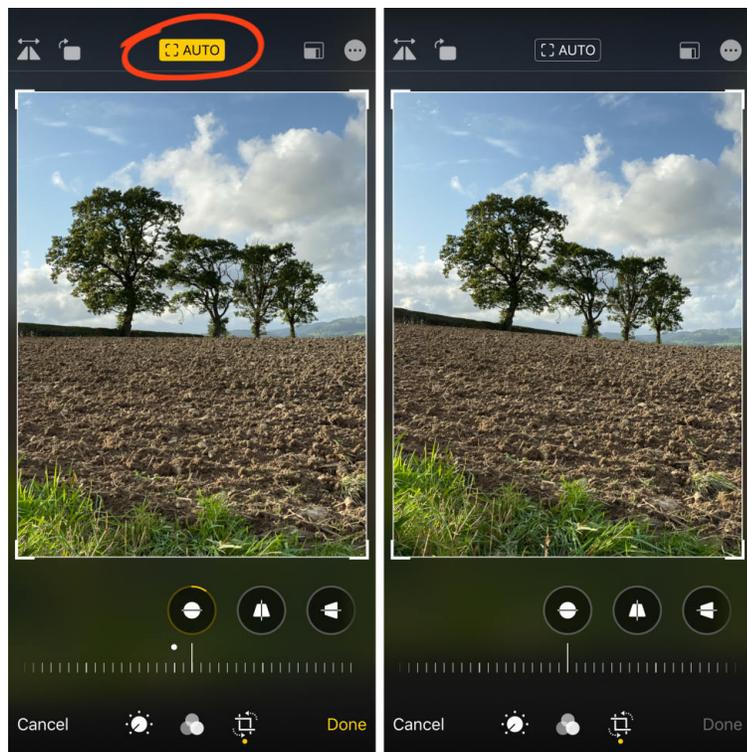
To access these tools, tap the **Crop** icon at the bottom of the screen.

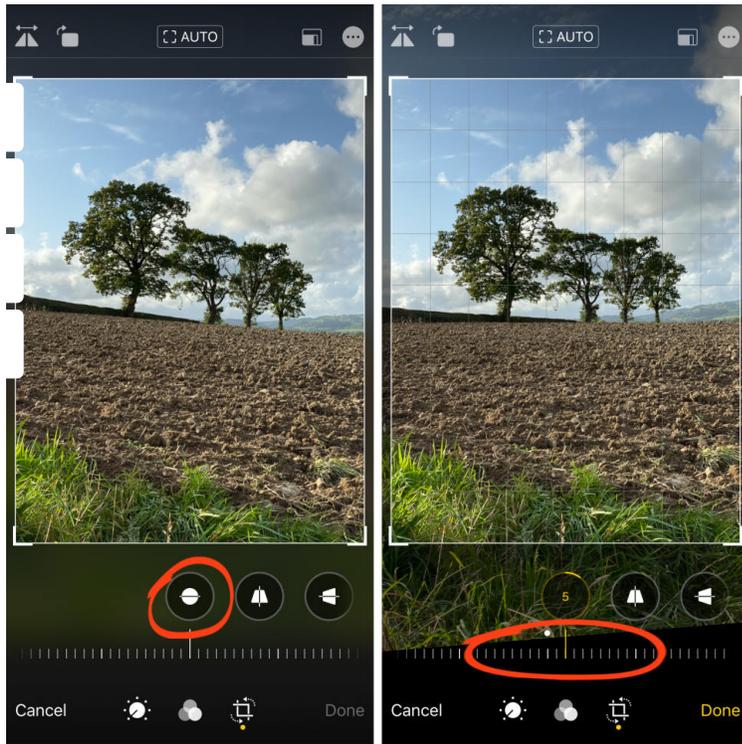


6.1 Auto Crop & Straighten

When you first open the **Crop** options, you might notice that your image is automatically straightened and/or cropped.

If your iPhone has applied Auto cropping or straightening, you'll see **AUTO** in yellow at the top of the screen. If you don't want to accept these automatic adjustments, tap the yellow **AUTO** icon.

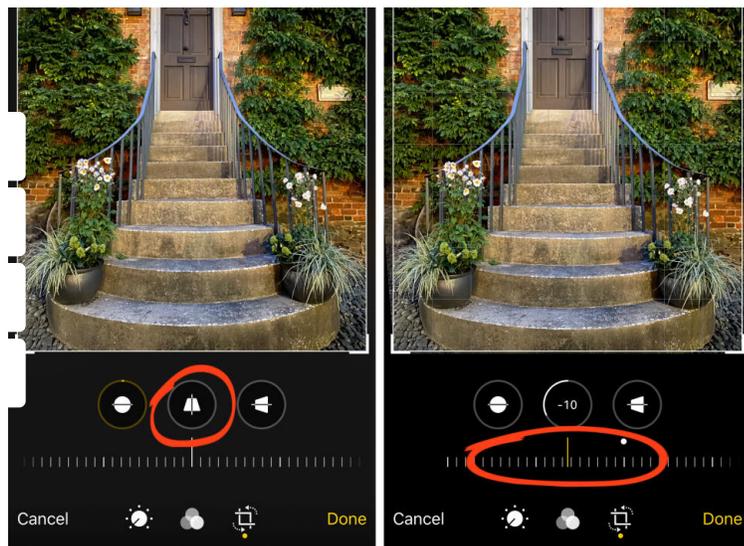




6.3 Perspective

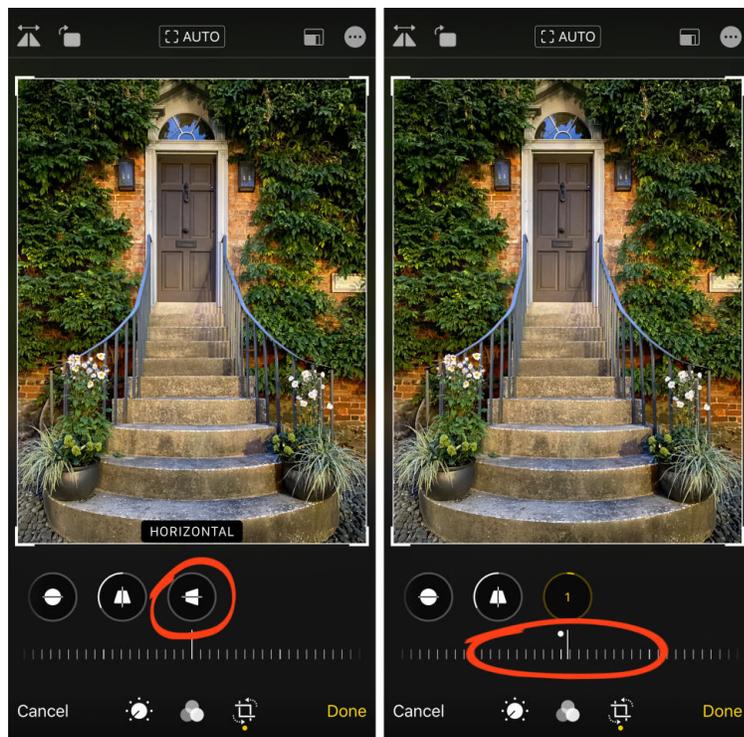
Sometimes, you might want to adjust the vertical or horizontal perspective in your photo.

To adjust the vertical perspective, tap the **Vertical Perspective** tool beneath the image. Drag the slider to adjust the vertical perspective.



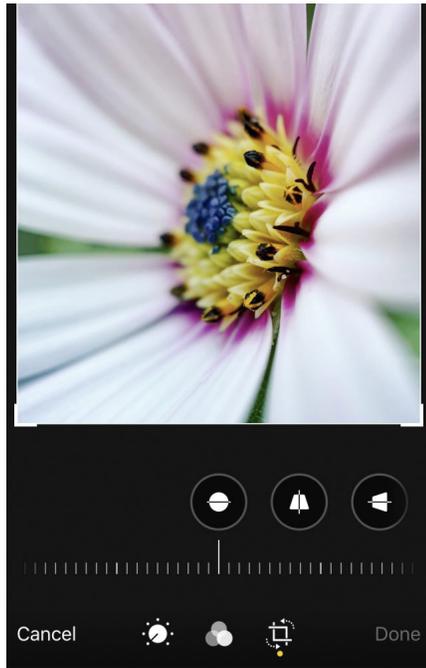
This tool is great for architecture photography. If you took a photo of a building from a low angle, the building may appear to converge towards the top. Adjusting the vertical perspective allows you to straighten up the vertical lines on the building.

To adjust horizontal perspective, use the **Horizontal Perspective** tool.

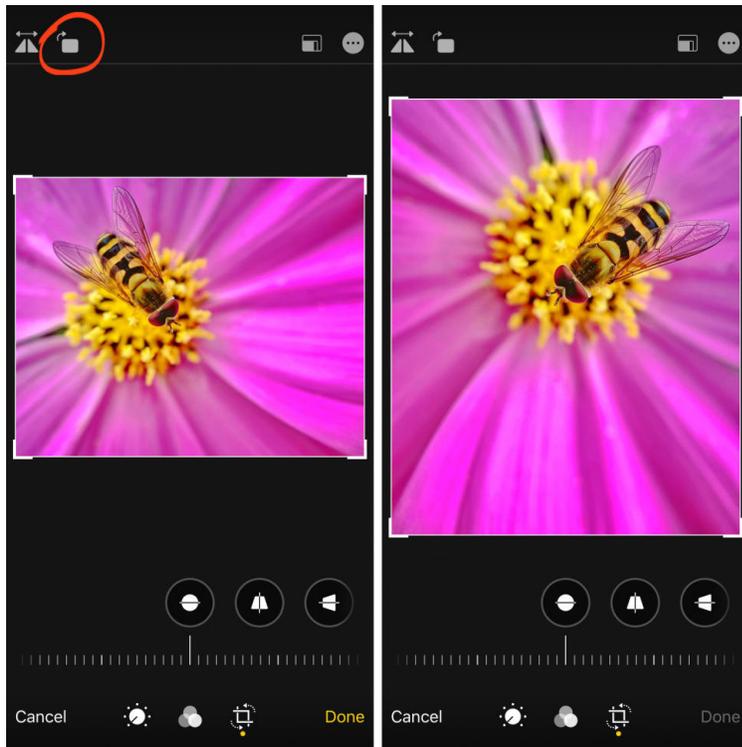


6.4 Rotate & Flip

At the top left of the Crop screen are two icons: **Flip** and **Rotate**.



Tap the **Rotate** icon to rotate your photo 90 degrees at a time.



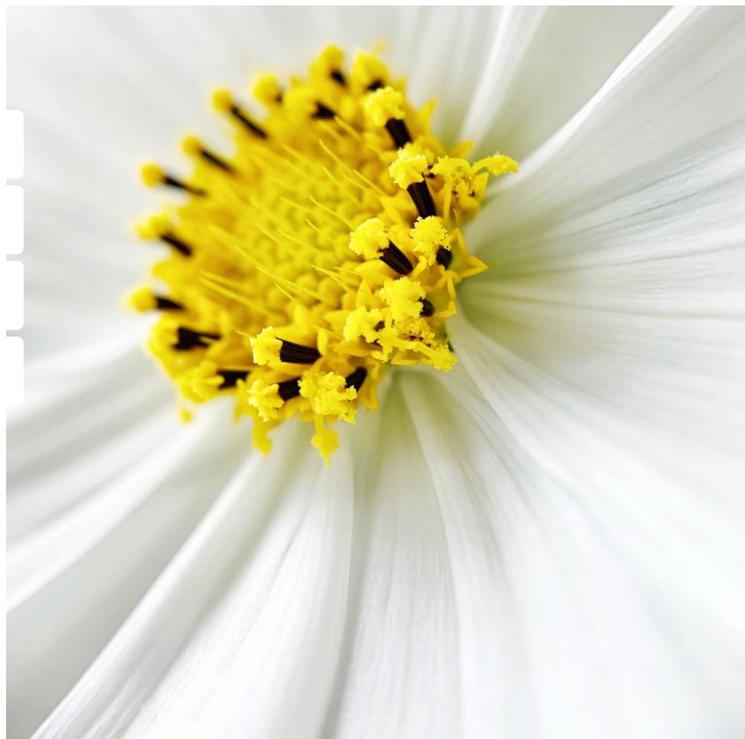
Tap the **Flip** icon to flip your image horizontally.



6.5 Crop

The Crop tool lets you remove the edges of your image.

Cropping your photo is great for getting rid of distracting elements from the edges of the frame. This results in a cleaner, simpler image with a stronger visual impact.

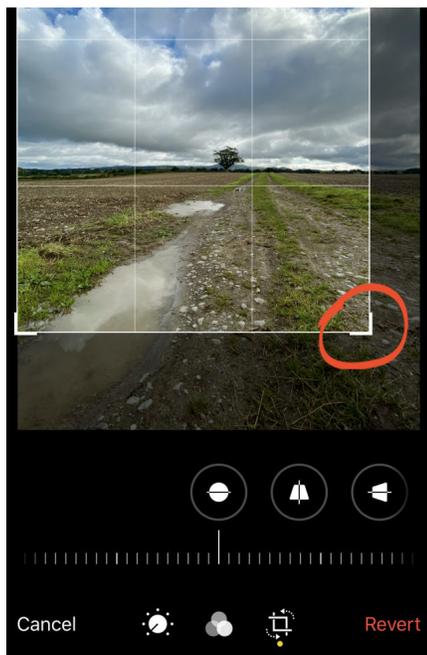


You may also wish to crop your image to **improve its composition**. For example, cropping can help you **create better symmetry** or **apply the rule of thirds** after taking your photo.



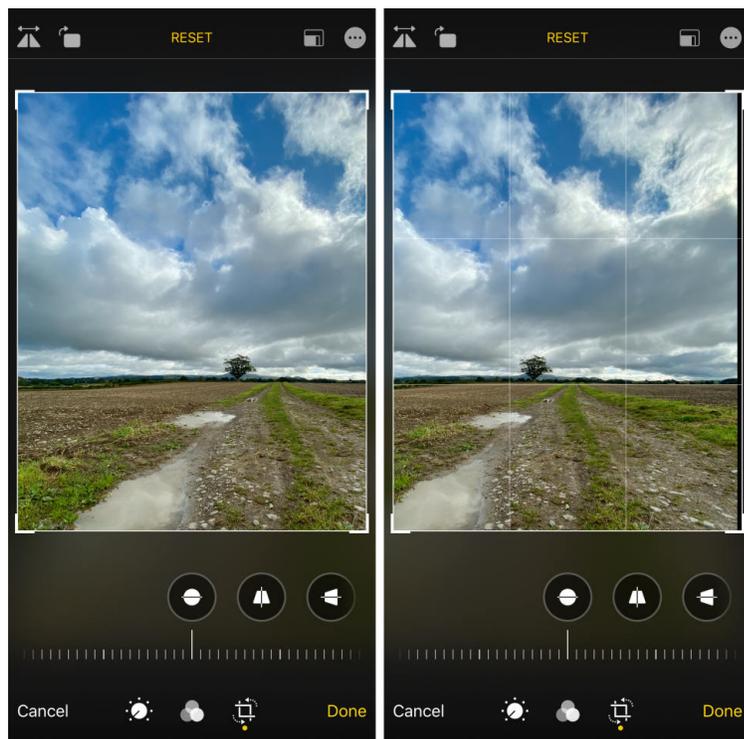
Cropping also allows you to zoom in on a distant subject. But be careful not to crop too much of the photo as this can result in a small, low-quality image.

To crop your photo, drag the corner crop handles. A white border indicates where the new edges of the photo will be.

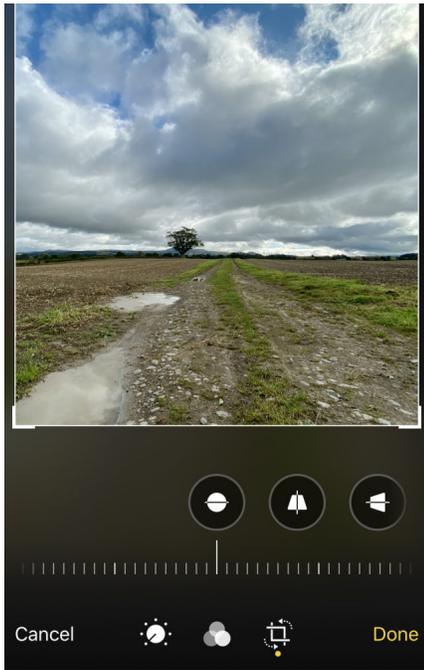


If you crop in too far, drag the corner crop handles out again. Or pinch inwards with two fingers to bring more of the image back into the frame.

You can also drag the image preview to adjust the position of the image within the crop frame.



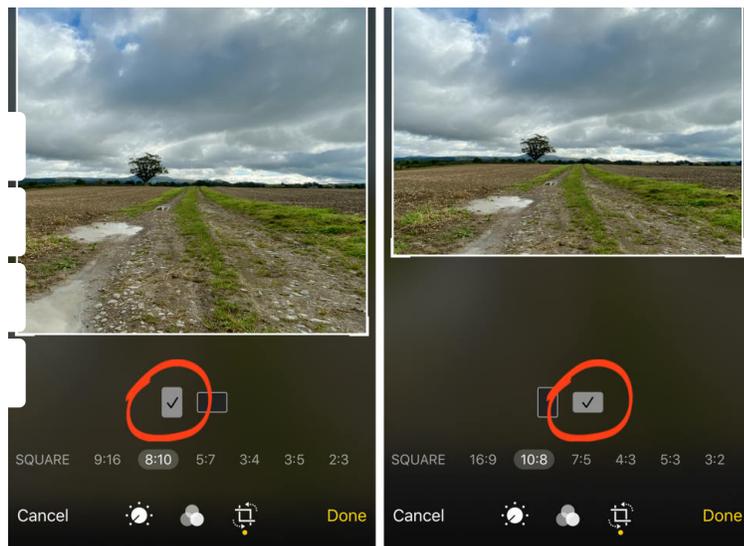
If you want to crop to a specific aspect ratio, tap the **Aspect Ratio** icon at the top right.



Swipe across the row of aspect ratios, e.g. **Square**, **9:16**, **8:10**, etc. Then select the one you want to use.



Above the aspect ratio options, you can choose whether your photo to be cropped vertically or horizontally.



You can pinch in or out to adjust how much of the picture is cropped. And you can drag the image to adjust which area appears within the crop frame.

To exit the Aspect Ratio settings, tap the **Aspect Ratio** icon at the top right.



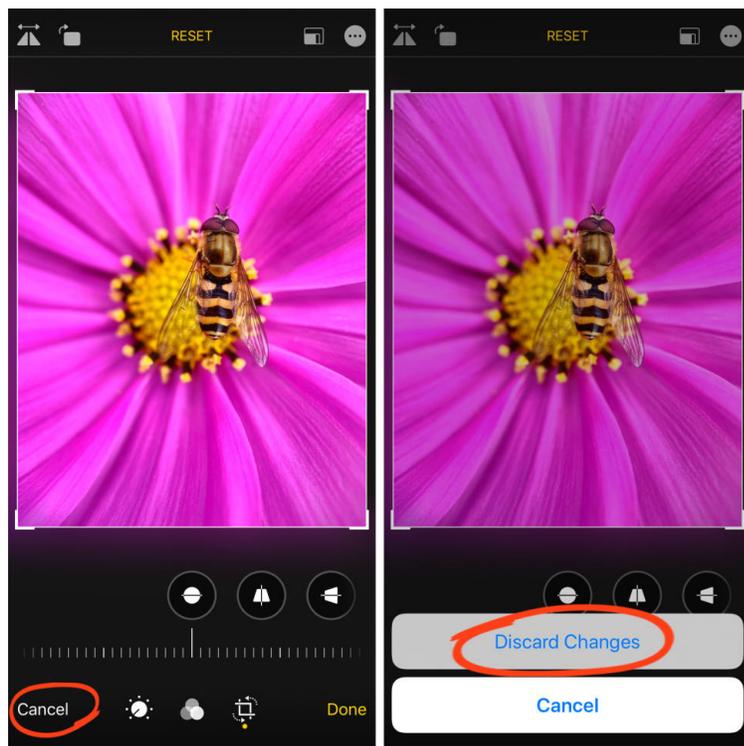
7. Save Your Edited Photo

When you've finished editing your photo, tap **Done** to save the changes.



Your edited image will appear in your photo library.

If you'd prefer not to save your edits, tap **Cancel** (instead of **Done**) in the photo editor. Then tap **Discard Changes**.



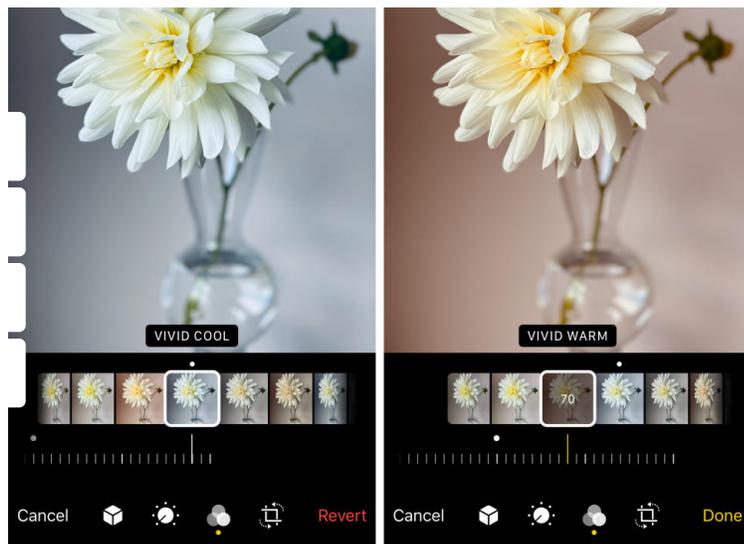
8. Remove Or Change Your Edits



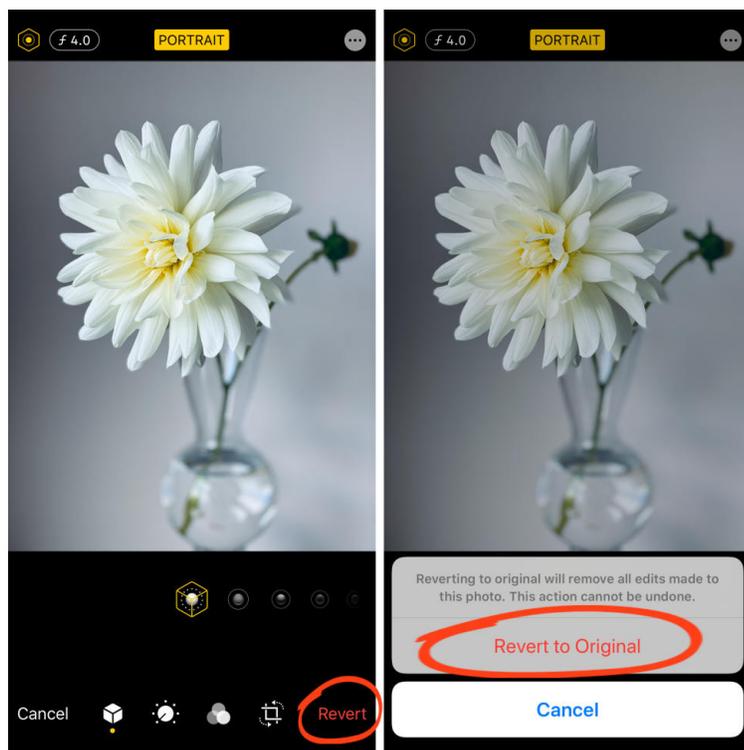
To change or remove your edits, open the photo in the Photos app and tap **Edit**.



If you want make changes to your edit, open any editing tool and make your adjustments.



To revert to the original photo, tap **Revert** at the bottom right. Then tap **Revert To Original**.



9. Edit Portrait Mode Photos

Portrait mode in the iPhone camera app allows you to shoot photos with a beautifully blurred background.



You can edit Portrait mode photos in the same way as any other photo. But you also have some additional editing options unique to Portrait mode.

9.1 Depth Control

Do you have the [iPhone 11, 11 Pro, 11 Pro Max, XR, XS, or XS Max](#)?

If so, you can change the strength of the background blur in your portrait photos.

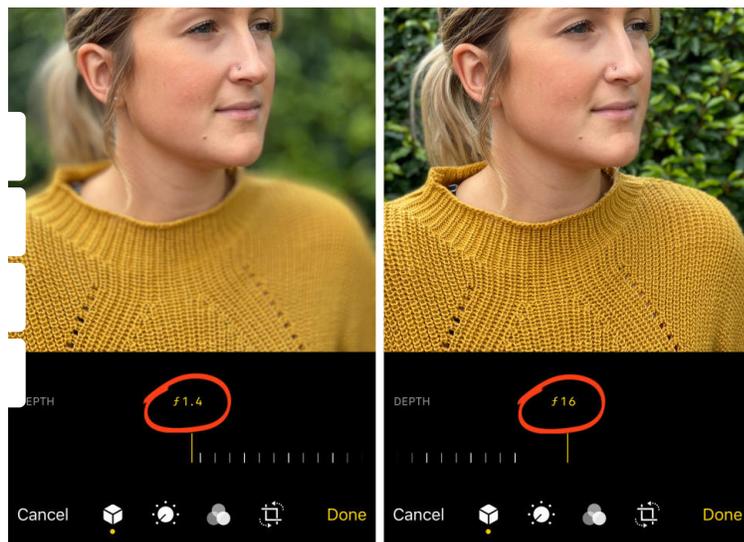
To adjust the blur strength, open your Portrait mode photo and tap **Edit**.



Tap the **f/number** icon at the top left of the screen.



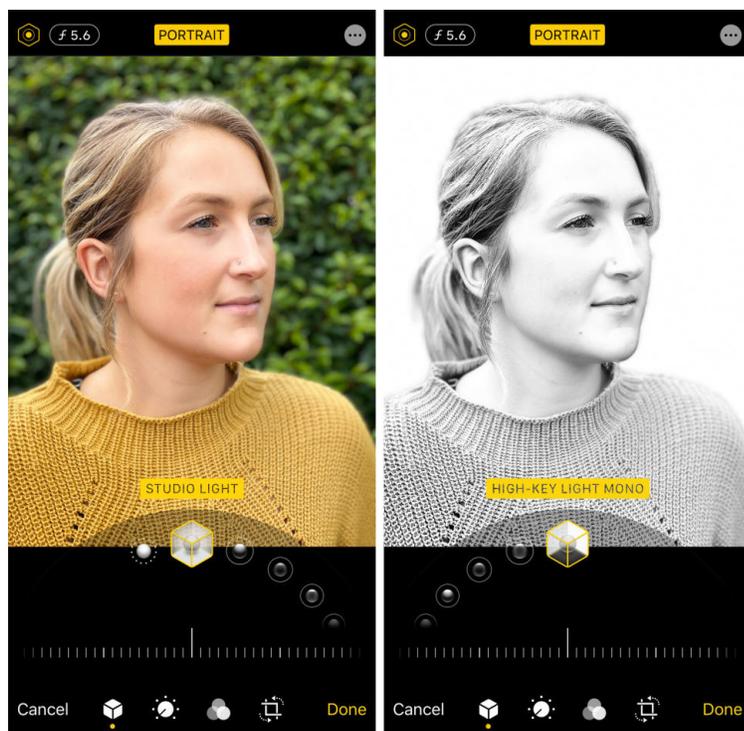
Now drag the **Depth** slider beneath your photo. A low f/number creates more blur. A high f/number shows more detail in the background.



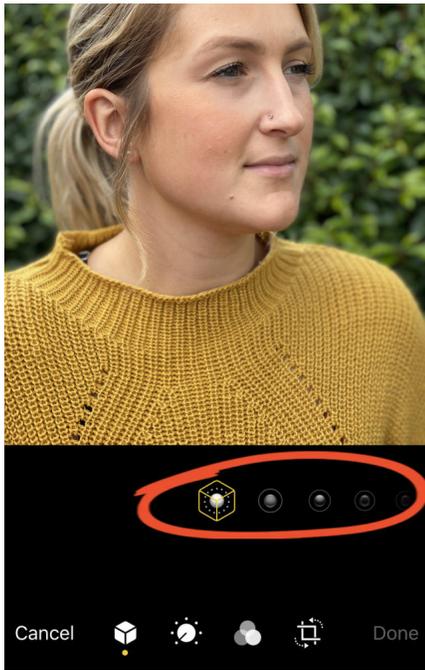
9.2 Portrait Lighting

Another Portrait mode editing option is **Portrait Lighting** (not available on iPhone 7 Plus).

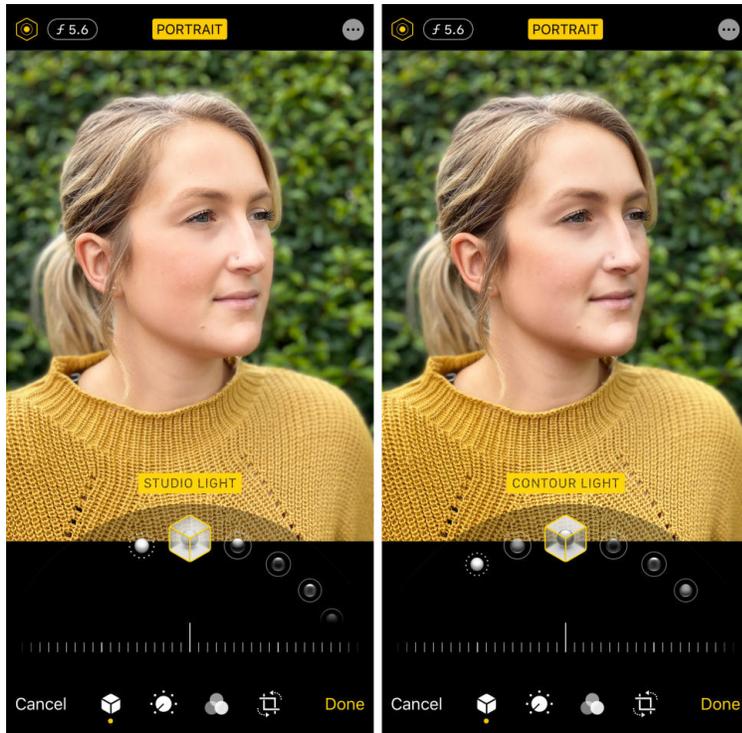
Portrait Lighting lets you apply studio lighting effects to your Portrait mode photos.

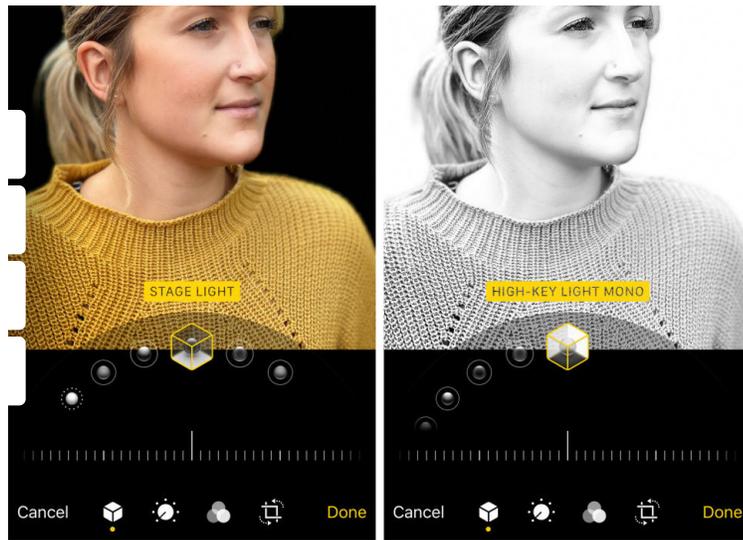


In **Edit** mode, ensure the **Portrait Lighting** (hexagon) icon is selected at the top left of the screen. Then swipe through the **Portrait Lighting** options (cube icons) at the bottom of the screen.



Select a Portrait Lighting effect, e.g. **Studio Light**, **Contour Light**, **Stage Light**, etc.





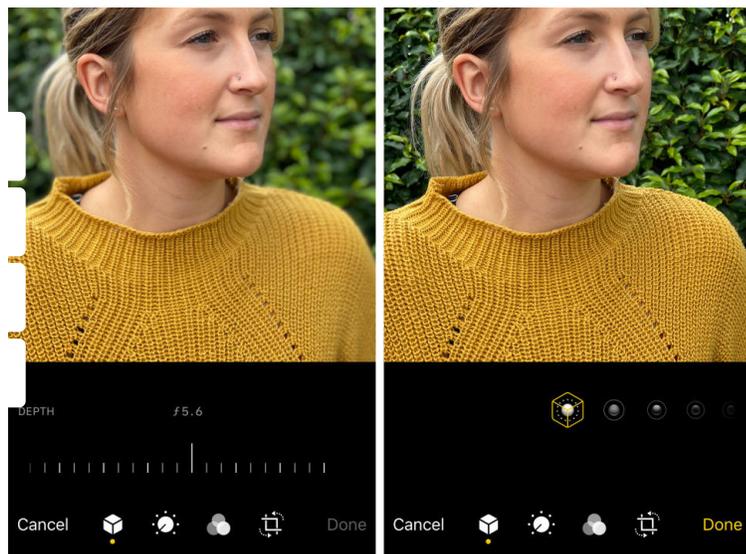
Use the slider to adjust the strength of the Portrait Lighting effect.



9.3 Remove Background Blur

If you decide you don't want the background blurred, you can remove the depth effect from your portrait photo.

In **Edit** mode, tap the yellow **Portrait** option at the top of the screen. You can switch the blur back on at any time by tapping the **Portrait** option again.



When you've finished editing your Portrait mode photo, tap **Done** to save the changes.

10. Edit Live Photos

Live Photos is an **iPhone camera feature** that allows you to capture moving images. When you shoot a Live Photo, the result is a 3-second video, complete with movement and sound.

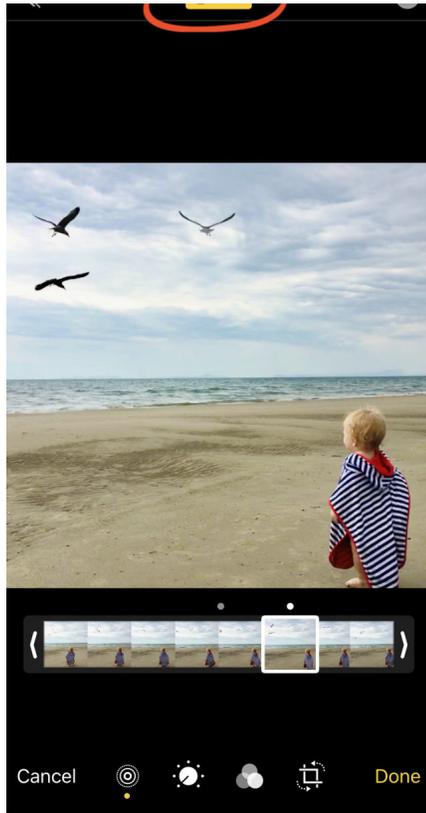
You can edit Live Photos in the same way as regular images. But you also have some other editing options available.

When you open **Edit** mode for a Live Photo, you'll see the **Live** icon at the bottom of the screen. Tap the **Live** icon to open the Live Photo editing tools.

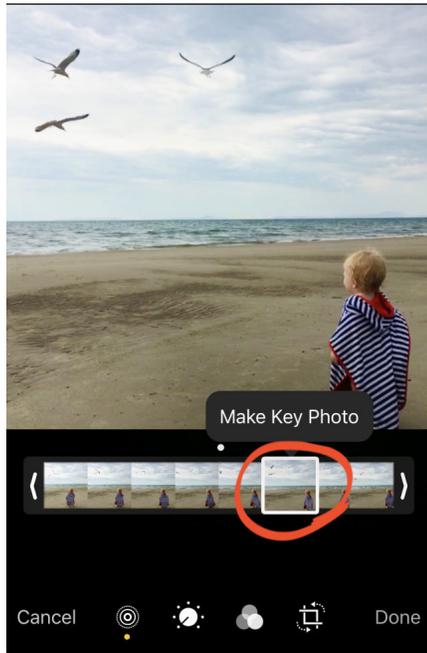


If you don't like the audio on your Live Photo, tap the yellow **Sound** (speaker) icon to switch off the sound. You can turn the sound back on at any time by tapping the **Sound** icon again.



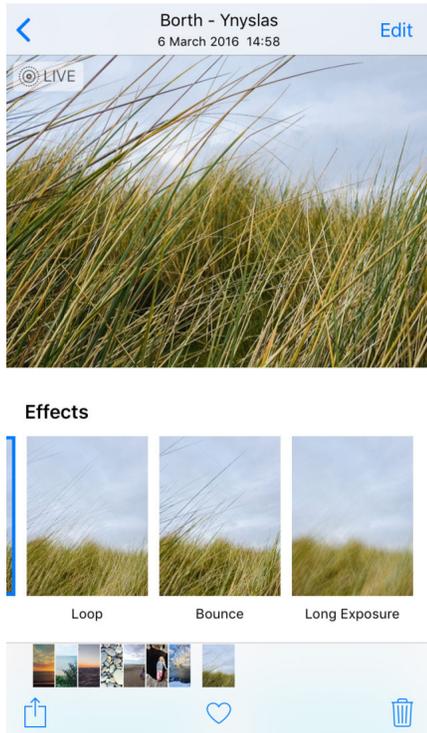


Beneath your photo is a row of image thumbnails. These are the individual frames that make up the 3-second Live Photo. To change the key photo (the one you see in your photo library), drag across the thumbnail slider until you find the frame you want. Then tap **Make Key Photo**.

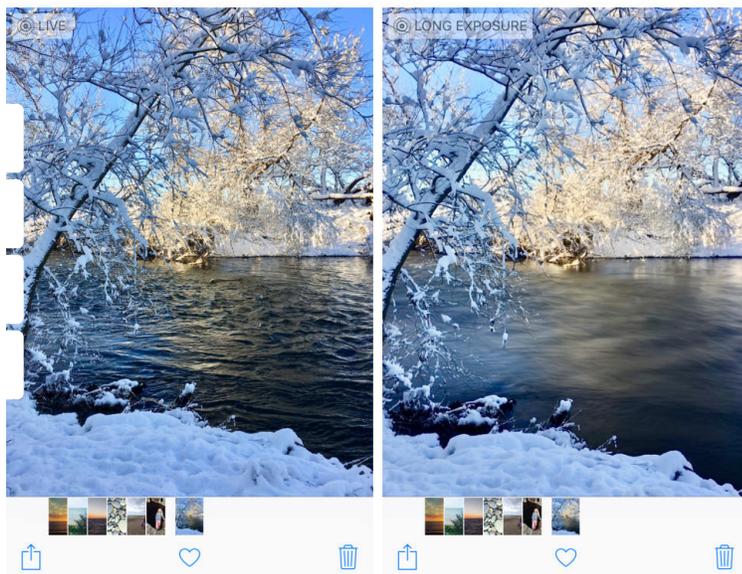


When you're happy with your Live Photo edits, tap **Done** to save the changes.

As well as the Live Photo settings in **Edit** mode, you'll find other options by swiping up on a Live Photo in your photo library. Here, you can apply a **Loop**, **Bounce**, or **Long Exposure** effect to your Live Photo.

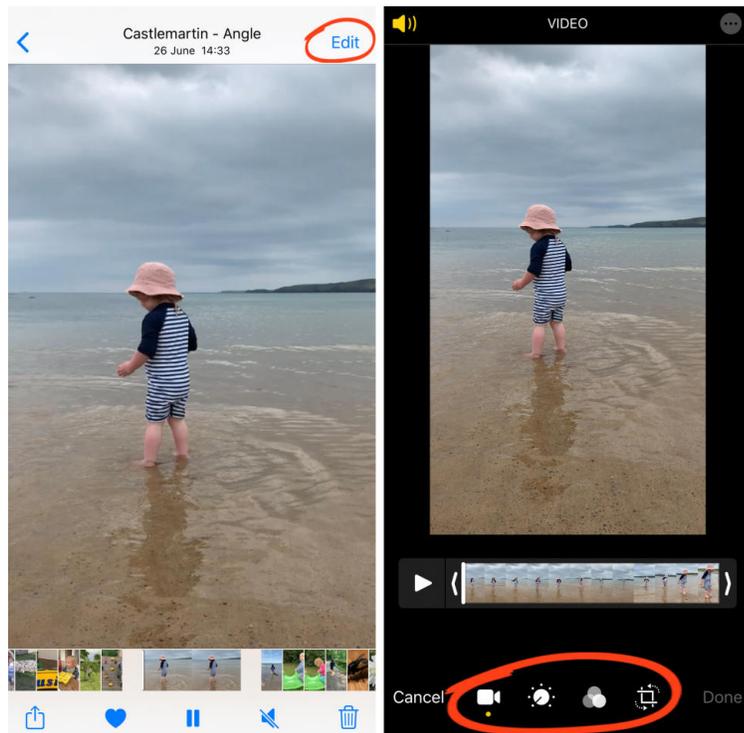


Loop converts your Live Photo into a continuous video loop. **Bounce** turns your Live Photo into a continuous video that plays forwards and then in reverse.

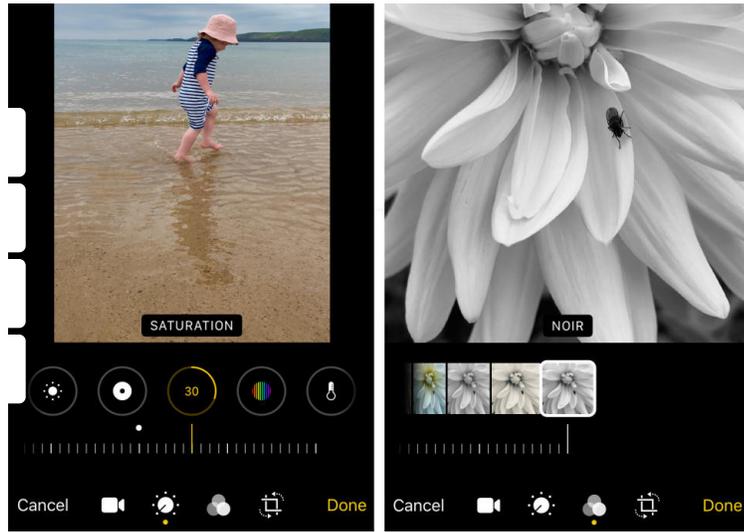


11. Edit Videos In The Photos App

Did you know you can now edit videos in the iPhone Photos app?



You can use all of the photo editing tools to edit videos, **time-lapse videos**, and slo-mo videos.



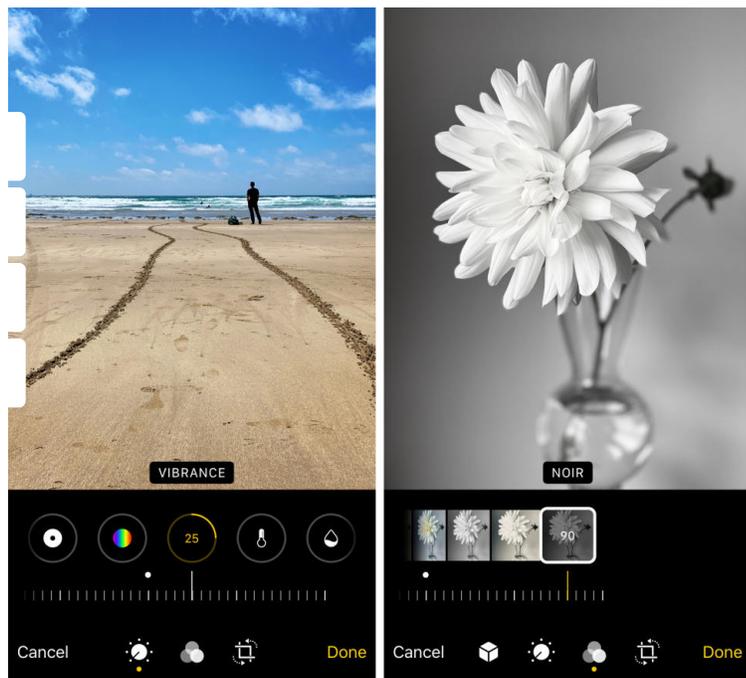
There's also a **Trim** tool for trimming the start and end of your video.



[Click here for a complete guide to editing videos in the iPhone Photos app.](#)

12. Benefits Of Using The iPhone Photos App For Editing

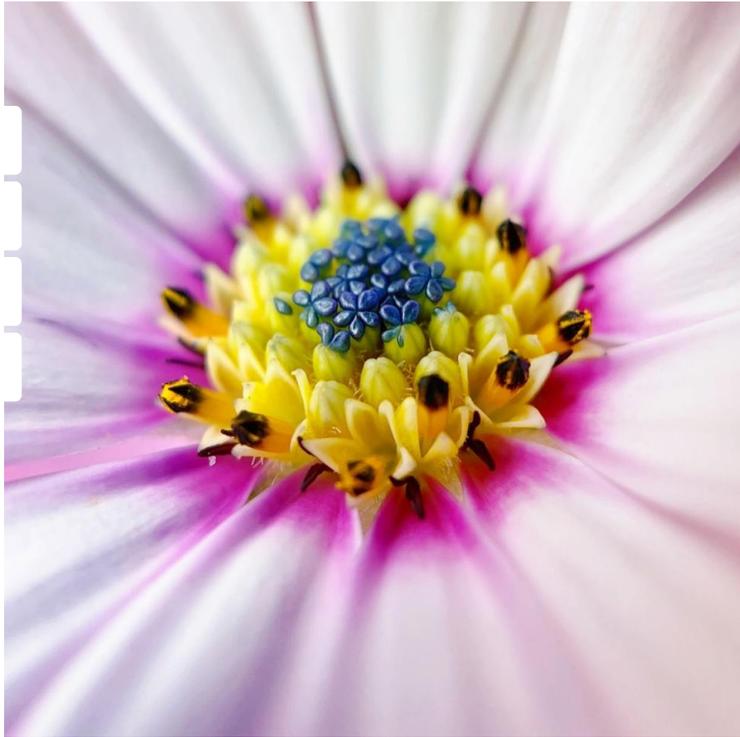
With so many [iPhone photo editor apps](#) available, it can be difficult to know which ones to use.



Depending on your editing needs, the Photos app might be all you need for improving your iPhone photos.

Benefits of using the Photos app to edit your images include:

- No need to download additional third-party photo editing apps
- Edit your images without having to leave your iPhone photo library
- Suitable for beginners as well as more advanced users
- You can change settings for Live Photos and Portrait Mode *after* taking the shot
- Edits are non-destructive, allowing you to change or remove your edits at any time
- You can also edit videos in the same way that you edit photos



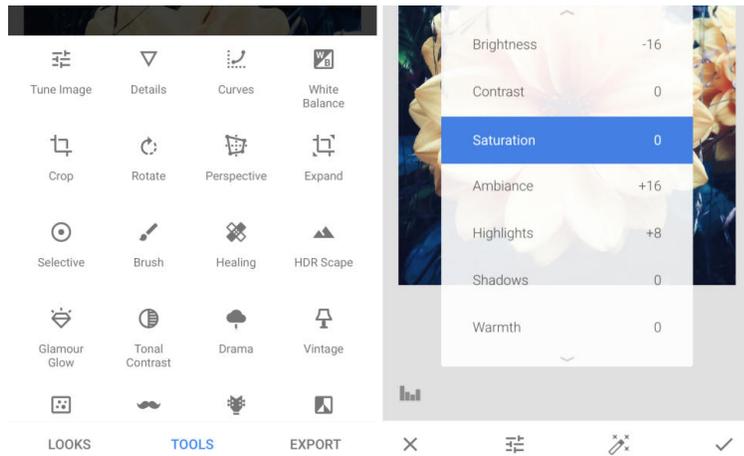
13. Limitations Of The iPhone Photos App

The editing tools in the Photos app are perfect for everyday image editing. But it does have some limitations.

It's missing certain features that you'll find in some other popular photo editor and [photoshop apps](#).

In particular, it doesn't include the option to make selective adjustments to a certain part of an image. And it doesn't have a healing tool for [removing objects from your photos](#).

If you're looking for a more advanced photo editing app with these tools, the [free Snapseed app](#) is a great option.



Snapseed gives you ultimate control over how to edit photos on iPhone. Yet it's still easy for beginners to use.

[Click here to learn how to edit photos on iPhone using the Snapseed app.](#)

iPhone Editing Academy
Make Ordinary Photos Spectacular

[Improve Your iPhone Photos »](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Google Plus](#)

[Pinterest](#)



a year ago · 2 comments

Learn how to use the iPhone Night mode camera feature on iPhone 11 and ...

2 years ago · 1 comment

Do you want to take wide, sweeping landscape photos using only your iPhone? ...

a year ago · 10 comment

Discover how to use the new iPhone video editing tools in the iOS 13 ...

[Comments](#) [iPhone Photography School](#) [Privacy Policy](#)

Sandy Flores ▾

[Recommend](#) 7

[Tweet](#)

[Share](#)

[Sort by Best](#) ▾



Join the discussion...



Annette · 6 months ago

Wow, had no idea I could edit photos so in depth with the built in phone app. Much appreciated.

^ | ▾ · [Reply](#) · [Share](#) ▾



Carolyn · 9 months ago

I just want to thank you for this exhaustive and thorough tutorial.

^ | ▾ · [Reply](#) · [Share](#) ▾

[Subscribe](#) [Add Disqus to your site](#) [Add Disqus](#) [Do Not Sell My Data](#)

Our website will help you take incredible iPhone photos that everyone adores

[START HERE](#)

FREE Report Reveals...
The 7 Best iPhone Photography Apps

[FREE DOWNLOAD](#)