

Vignetting

Vignetting is the phenomenon where the corners of an image are darkened because the areas farthest from the center of the camera lens don't get enough light. This occurs to some degree with most lenses, especially wide-angle lenses at wide apertures. Attachments like filters and lens hoods on the front of the lens can make it much worse.

If vignetting is a problem, the first thing to do is to get rid of any unnecessary front-of-the-lens attachments. Use fewer and/or thinner filters. Or use a step-up ring on the lens to attach larger diameter filters. Then set the lens to a mid-range f-stop in order to minimize vignetting. If the lens hood is the problem, get a wider one, or one with four notches cut out to avoid shadowing the corners of the image. Or get rid of the lens hood altogether. If sunlight shining into the lens is causing lens flare, get an assistant to shade the lens while standing out of the field of view, or try to stand in the shadow of a tree or building.

If you have already taken an image that has objectionable vignetting, you may be able to crop it to eliminate the dark corners. Or you could try the feature in the Photoshop CS Camera Raw Plug-in which attempts to compensate for vignetting. Or you could just paint over the dark corners using the Clone Stamp tool.

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