

Value Range

Zone

Description

Low Values

Zone 0

Total black in print. Little useful density in the negative other than filmbase-plus-fog.

Zone I

Effective threshold. First step above complete black in print, with slight tonality but no texture.

Zone II

First suggestion of texture. Deep tonalities, representing the darkest part of the image in which some slight detail is required.

Zone III

Average dark materials and low values showing adequate detail. First Zone to show strong shadow texture.

Middle Values

Zone IV

Average dark foliage, dark stone, or landscape shadow. Normal shadow value for caucasian skin portraits in sun.

Zone V

Middle grey (18% reflectance). Clear north sky as rendered by panchromatic film, dark skin, grey stone, average weathered wood.

Zone VI

Average caucasian skin value in sunlight, diffuse skylight, or artificial light. Light stone, shadows in snow in sunlit landscapes.

High Values

Zone VII

Very light skin, light grey objects; snow with acute side lighting. Last Zone to show strong highlight texture.

Zone VIII

Whites with light texture and delicate values; textured snow; highlights on caucasian skin.

Zone IX

White without texture approaching pure white, thus comparable to Zone I in its slight tonality without true texture. Snow in flat sunlight.

Zone X

Pure white of the printing paper base; specular glare of light sources in the picture area.