

Adobe Photoshop

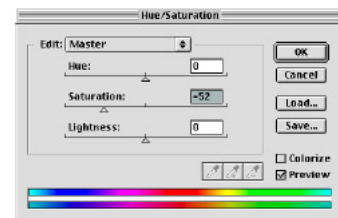


Transfer Effects

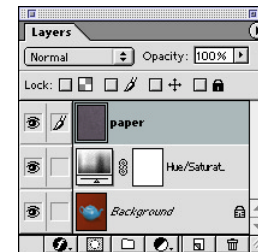
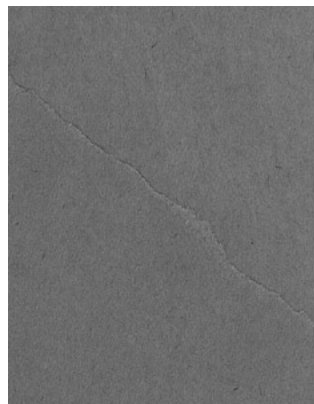
Software needed: Adobe Photoshop 6.0 or later

Creating real Polaroid transfers can be simultaneously inspiring, exhilarating and frustrating as a result of their unpredictability. Although I sometimes felt that this opportunity for accidents was a path to greatness, my inability to control the process became a liability. The disappointment felt when the transfer failed in any way – and there were many variables - led me to try to emulate those effects in Photoshop. This tip and technique reveals how to achieve the same Polaroid Transfer look with greater predictability in just a few steps and has the added benefit of using digital images as the source without having to make a slide.

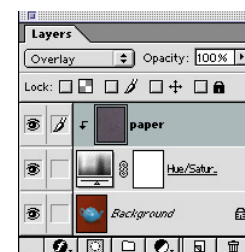
Open the image and select Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Hue/Saturation. In the New Layer dialog box, click OK. In the Hue/Saturation dialog box, lower the saturation until the colors appear as faded as you would estimate they would when transferred and click OK.



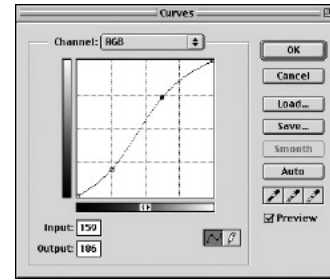
Often, the Polaroid is transferred onto a watercolor paper. However, one of the challenges is getting the image to transfer evenly onto paper. This is especially true when the paper has a tooth to it. Photoshop allows the freedom of applying any texture to an image, guaranteeing an even application (of course, you can always make it uneven if desired) First, open the texture that you want to apply and drag and drop the layer into the main image.



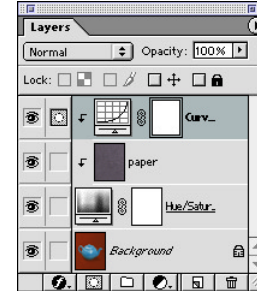
Select Layer > Group with Previous. This will group the texture file layer with the image layer below it. Experiment with the way the texture layer interacts with the image by changing the Blend Modes and the transparency setting on the Layers palette for the texture layer. The Overlay and Soft Light Blend Modes typically work the best. If none of the Blend Modes reveals satisfactory results, try the variation in the next step. (If you're satisfied with the results, skip the next step.)



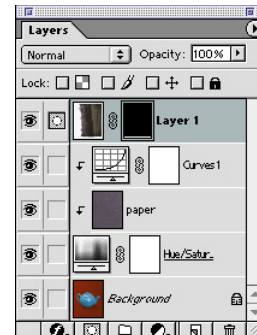
Set the texture layer to Soft Light or Overlay , then Select Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Curves. In the New Layer dialog box, check the "Group with Previous" option. In the Curves dialog box, alter the curve to adjust the application of the texture to the layer below.



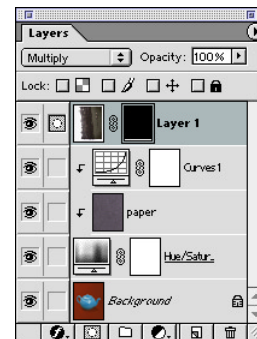
Adding the Polaroid edges is the tricky part if you don't have one! You can purchase pre-made edges from both Extensis and Auto FX or you can make your own. I prefer to use my own from a stash of "failed" transfers so that each image that I create is unique. Scan the edge, open it in Photoshop and drag and drop the layer into the same file as the image.



To hide the center of the transfer (which isn't transparent), use one of the selection tools to select it. To soften the edge of the selection choose Select > Feather and enter a small feather radius. Select Image > Add Layer Mask > Hide Selection to add the mask.



To blend the Polaroid transfer edge with the image, change the Blend Mode of the edge layer to Multiply.



If the image extends outside of the Polaroid transfer edge, add a layer mask on the image layer and use the paintbrush to paint with black in the mask to hide extra image area. (If the image is a background, a layer mask can't be added until the background is converted to a layer by double clicking on it.) To make the Polaroid transfer edge blend more realistically with the image in the transitional areas, paint with varying levels of black in the image's Layer mask.

