

Adobe Photoshop

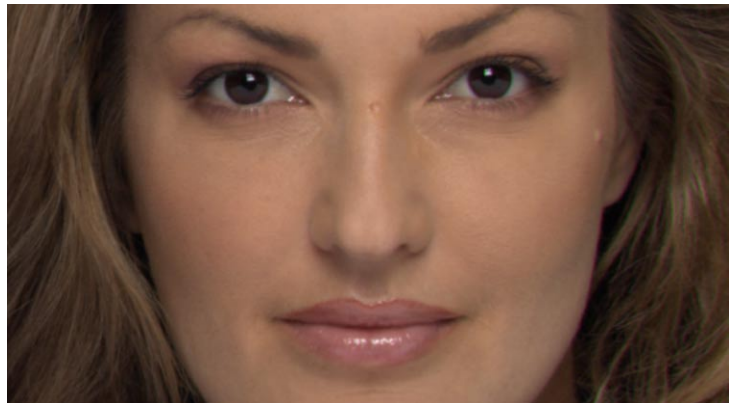
Portrait Retouching in Photoshop with Julieanne Kost

Software needed Adobe Photoshop 5.0 or later



When retouching images, I think it's always best to keep in mind the character of the person that is being manipulated. I always try to keep my editing to a minimum, making the person look better by removing such temporary imperfections as blemishes or dark circles from lack of sleep, while still maintaining the personality of the individual and the integrity of the image. This tip and technique will show you how to make these type of corrections creating a pleasing portrait that both you and your client will be happy with by maintaining the true essence of the person.

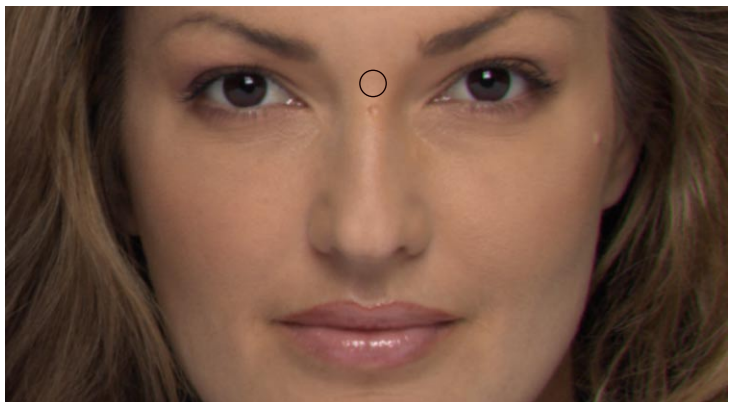
Open the File. Open the image that you are going to work on making sure that you have rotated and cropped it to the desired size. Then, look at the image for a minute and get a good feel for what you are going to change and what you are going to leave alone. I find that if I don't do this, I have a tendency to over retouch the image, and having to go back and undo some of the changes to the image.



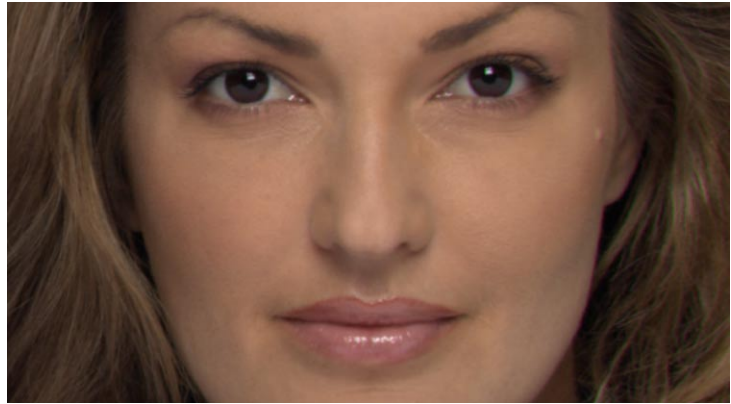
Retouch the blemishes. In the Layers palette, click on the background and drag it to the new layer icon at the bottom of the palette. Now if you make a mistake and want to start over, you can, at any time simply throw away this layer. From the tool box, select the Clone Stamp tool. From the Options bar, choose a brush a little larger than the blemish that you're trying to remove. *Note: experiment with the brush hardness to eliminate the slight blur you might get around the edges of the retouch.*



Set the sample point. Position your cursor as close to - but not on top of - the blemish that you want to remove. Holding the Option (Mac)/ Alt (Win) key, click to set the sampling point of the tool. The sampling point is the area that the brush will clone with so try to make is as close in tonal values as you can to the area that you are trying to cover up. Release the Option (Mac)/ Alt (Win) key.



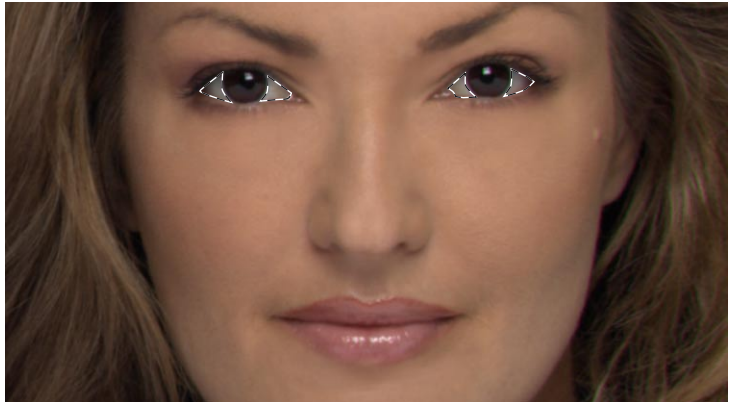
Move the cursor over the blemish and click. The blemish disappears like magic! *Note, while you're holding the mouse down, you'll see two cursors, the circle that displays the size of the area that you are covering, and the cross hairs that show the area that you're sampling from.* It's always best to ask before removing moles, freckles or other distinguishing marks as they can be essential to the character of an individual and they might not want them removed.



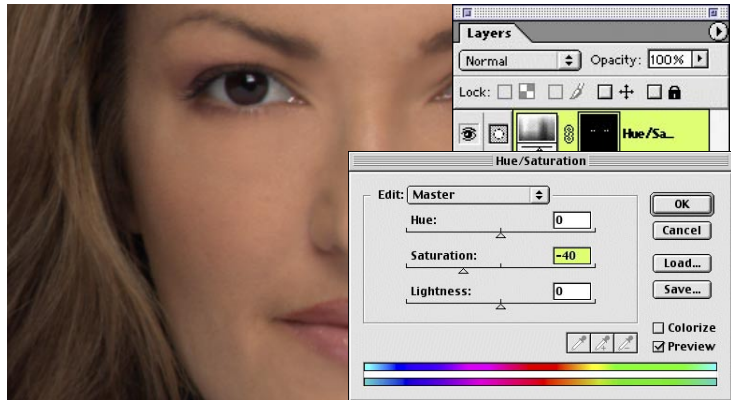
Retouching the eyes. Begin by lightening any circles and lessening any unwanted lines under and around the eyes the eyes. Still using the Clone Stamp tool, on the Options bar, set the mode to Lighten and lessen the opacity to 50% or less. Set the sample point like before and then stamp over the areas that you want to lighten. *Note: the reason you lessen the opacity and change the mode to lighten is so you can make multiple passes over an area and slowly lessen the dark area and lines.* If you try to do this in one swoop, the skin tends to look like plastic. This technique also works well for lightening darker shadow areas in the image.



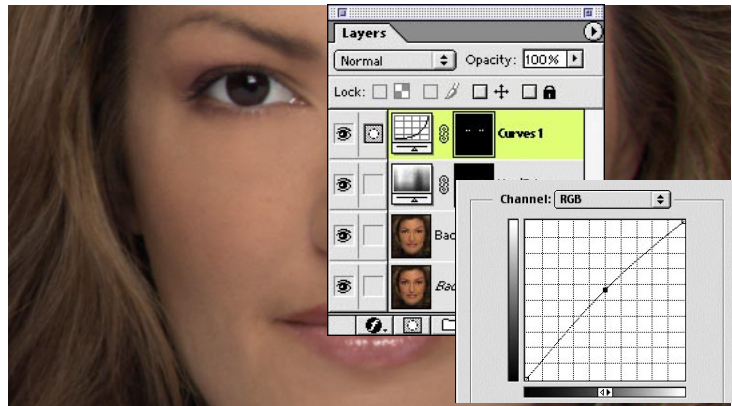
Drawing attention to the eyes. I believe that the eyes are the most important feature of the face and can either make or break a portrait. One way to draw attention to the eyes is to brighten them. Since no one's eyes are perfectly white, there are two methods that I will use to make them stand out. First, select the lasso tool and draw a selection around the white areas of the eyes. *Note: to add to a selection, hold the shift key or click on the Add to Selection icon on the option bar.* To make the selection look real, choose Select > Feather and add a slight feather to the selection of 1 or 2.



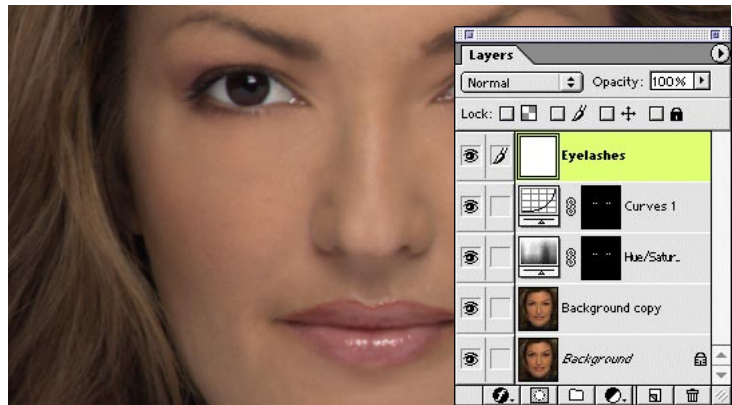
Take the red out. Select Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Hue/Saturation and click OK. Drag the Saturation slider to the left to desaturate the redness in the eyes. *Note: Photoshop automatically creates a mask from the selection so that only the selected areas are effected.* Warning, if you can tell that there has been an adjustment made, then you have gone too far and will want to back off on the adjustment! If you want to selectively desaturate a color, click Master and choose the color that you want to desaturate.



Lighten the eyes. Since you have already made the mask for the eyes once, duplicate the Hue/Saturation adjustment layer by dragging it down to the new layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. Then, select Layer > Change Content Layer > Curves. In the Curves dialog box, drag the curve upward to lighten the whites of the eye. Again, if you can see the adjustment, then you have probably gone too far.



Accenting the eyelashes. If needed, select the Airbrush from the tool box and lower its opacity to 2-3%. Choose black as your foreground color and select a brush that is about the same size as the eyelashes. From the Options bar, click the icon for the brush and change its angle and roundness until it conforms to the shape of the lashes. Create a new layer and paint over the lashes with the Airbrush to darken them. Continue creating other brushes with differing angles and roundedness until all of the lashes have been darkened.



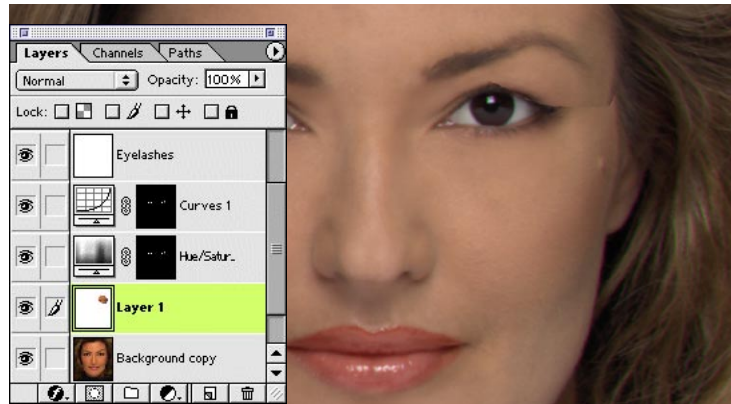
Changing lip color. This same technique can be used to change things like lip color if needed - especially if that client is a cosmetic manufacturer! Select the lips with the lasso tool, add a slight feather and then select Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Color Balance. Drag the sliders until you achieve that perfect lip color you're after.



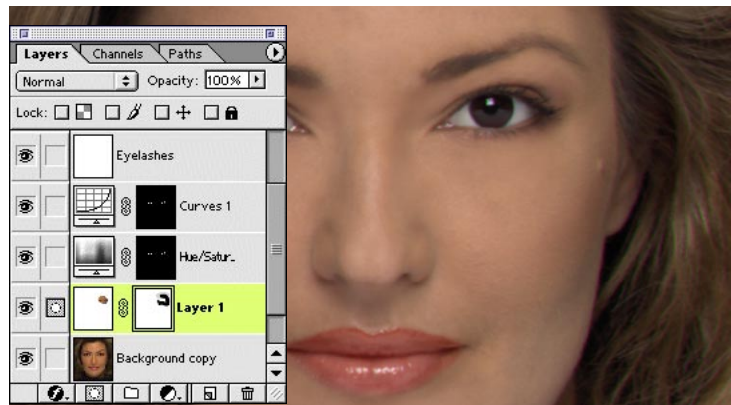
Darkening the cheekbones. Sometimes adding a little more of a contour to the cheekbones can help give a little lift to the face. Select Layer > New Layer to paint on and using the Airbrush set to a very low opacity (like 2-3%) with a large brush, paint on the new layer over the cheekbone area. If needed, erase any overspray of paint from the lower cheek area with the Eraser tool.



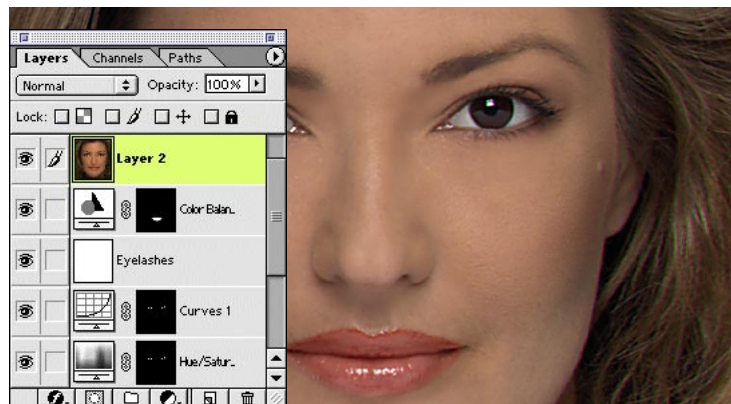
Transforming features. Depending on the client will depend on how dramatic the retouching will get. Here we will rotate and lower the models right eyebrow to make her more symmetrical. The same technique can be used to straighten noses, adjust lips, slim hips and just about anything else you can think of. In the Layers palette, target the layer with the image in it. Using the Lasso tool, make a generous selection around the feature that you want to change. Select Layer > New Layer Via Copy. This copies the feature on to it's own layer. Select Edit > Free Transform and transform the layer as needed - scaling rotating and distorting if needed.



Apply the transformation. When you are satisfied with the transformation, double click inside the transformation boundaries to apply it. Add a mask to the layer by selecting Layer > Add layer Mask > Reveal All. Using the Paint brush, paint with black in the layer to hide the rough edges and blend the transformed copy with the original below.



Selectively sharpening the image. Target the top layer and select Layer > New > Layer. While holding down the Option (Mac)/ Alt (Win) key, select Layer > Merge Visible. This creates a flattened copy of all of the layers. Select Filter > Sharpen > Unsharp Mask and sharpen the image. *Note: use the Amount slider to boost contrast along edges, the Radius to choose how many pixels around the edges will be effected and threshold to determine how much contrast there needs to be before Photoshop decides that it's an edge and applies the Amount and Radius too.* Make sure that the eyes are sharp and don't worry if other areas get overly sharp.



Paint out the overly sharp areas. If needed select Layer > Add Layer Mask > Reveal all. Using the paintbrush with black paint, paint in the mask over the overly sharp areas you want to hide.

