

Adobe Photoshop

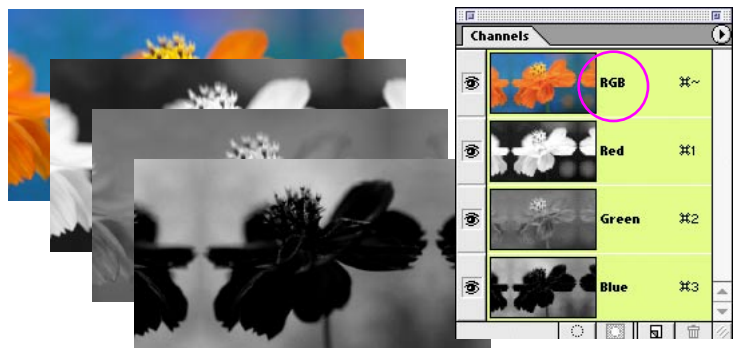
Custom Color to Grayscale Conversions in Photoshop with Julieanne

Software needed Adobe Photoshop 5.0 or later



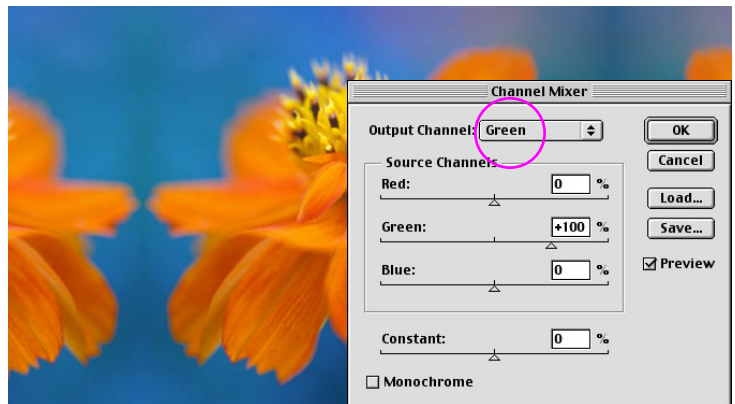
How many times have you wanted to customize a color to Grayscale conversion but didn't know? Instead, you simply settled for Photoshop's default settings and used the Image > Mode > Grayscale command? Well, now it's time to take control! With the addition of the Channel Mixer, mode conversions have become as flexible as you could possibly need and as easier than ever before! Now you can simply use the sliders in the Channel Mixer dialog box to interactively modify the conversion while watching it update in real time.

Open the image. Select File > Open and open the RGB file. In the Channels palette, click on the individual channels to view them. (Typically the green channel will hold most of the detail in an image.) When finished viewing the channels, click the RGB composite channel and make sure that all of the channels are visible. *Note: knowing what channel holds the most detail gives us a head start in making the best conversion from color to grayscale.*

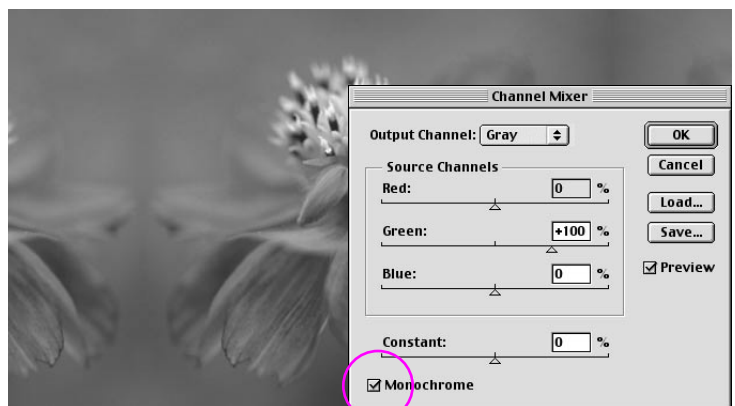


Composite RGB, Red, Green and Blue Channels

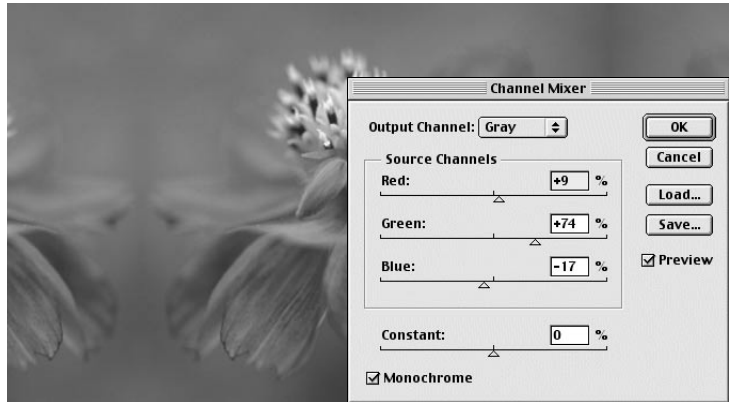
Use the Channel Mixer. Select Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Channel Mixer and click OK. In the Channel Mixer dialog box, select the channel with the most detail in it as the Output Channel (in this example, I selected Green).



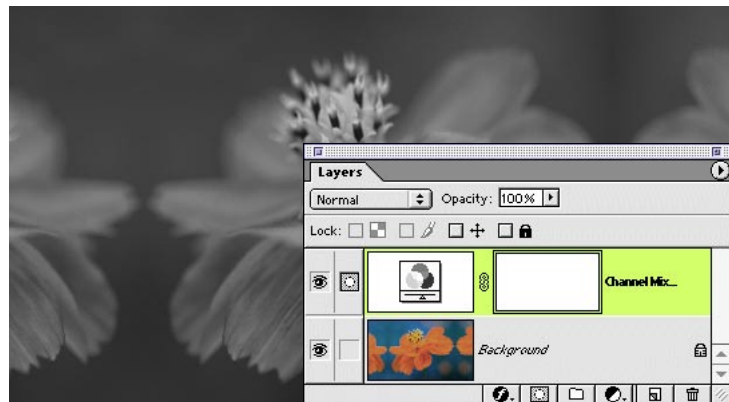
Check the Monochrome box. In the lower left corner of the Channel Mixer dialog box, check the Monochrome box. The Output Channel changes to Gray and the image displays as grayscale. At this point, the image conversion is solely comprised of the green channel. *Note: although the image appears to change to grayscale, the Channel Mixer adjustment layer is merely hiding the color without permanently altering the source information.*



Customizing the conversion. In the Channel Mixer dialog box, use the Red, Green, and Blue sliders to add or subtract amounts of each of the channels. This amount will vary depending on each image and how much you want each of the channels to contribute. When finished, click OK.



Benefits of adjustment layers. In this example, we used the Channel Mixer adjustment layer to give us added flexibility. Using an adjustment layer allows you to go back and change the conversion at any time by simply double clicking on the adjustment layer in the Layers palette and modifying it. This means that you can make as many changes at any time without harming the original data in the file since its on it's own layer



Convert to Grayscale. If however, you need the image in Grayscale mode, save a copy of the layered file and then select Image > Mode > Grayscale. In the warning dialog box, select Flatten. This applies the Channel Mixer adjustment layer to the image, discarding the color information and changing it to a single channel Grayscale file. *Note: save a copy of the grayscale image with a different name so you don't write over the layered file.*

