



## Removing Blemishes

When it comes to removing blemishes, acne, or any other imperfections on the skin, our goal is to maintain as much of the original skin texture as possible. That way, our retouch doesn't look pasty and obvious. Here are three techniques that work pretty nicely, and when you have all of these methods in your retouching arsenal, if one doesn't carry out the repair the way you'd hoped, you can try the second, or even the third.

### Method One: The Clone Stamp Tool

#### Step One:

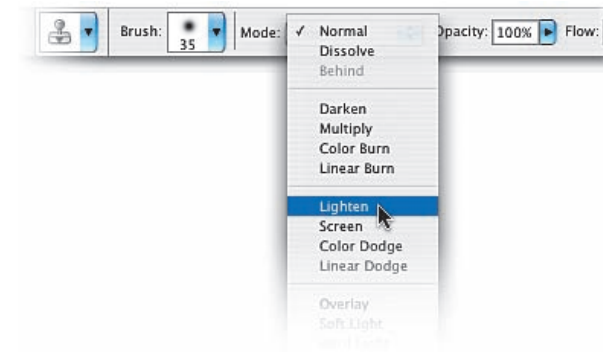
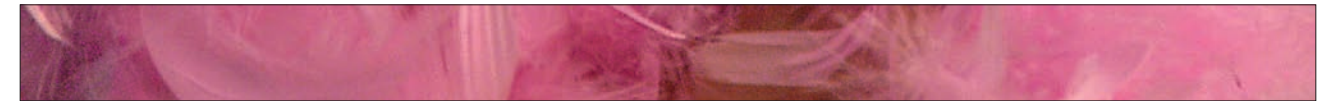
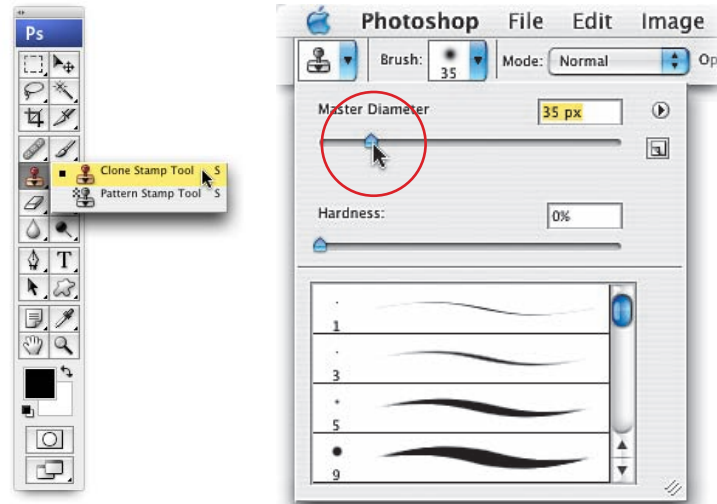
Open a photo containing some skin imperfections you want to remove (in this example, we're going to remove the mole on her left cheek).



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#### Step Two:

Press the letter S to get the Clone Stamp tool from the Toolbox. In the Options Bar, click on the thumbnail to the right of the word "Brush," and in the Brush Picker, choose a soft-edged brush that's slightly larger than the blemish you want to remove. You can use the Master Diameter slider at the top of the Brush Picker to dial in on the size you need. Once you're working, if you need to quickly adjust the brush size up or down, use the Bracket keys on your keyboard: The Left Bracket key makes your brush smaller; the Right Bracket makes it larger.



#### Step Three:

In the Options Bar, change the Mode pop-up menu for the Clone Stamp tool to Lighten. With its Mode set to Lighten, the Clone Stamp will affect only pixels that are darker than the sampled area. This means the lighter pixels (the regular flesh tone) will pretty much stay intact, while only the darker pixels (the blemish) will be affected.



#### Step Four:

Find an area right near the blemish that's pretty clean (no visible spots, blemishes, etc.), press-and-hold the Option (PC: Alt) key, and click once. This samples the skin from that area. Try to make sure this sample area is *very* near the blemish so the skin tones will match. If you move too far away, you risk having your results appear in a slightly different color, which is a dead giveaway you've done a repair.



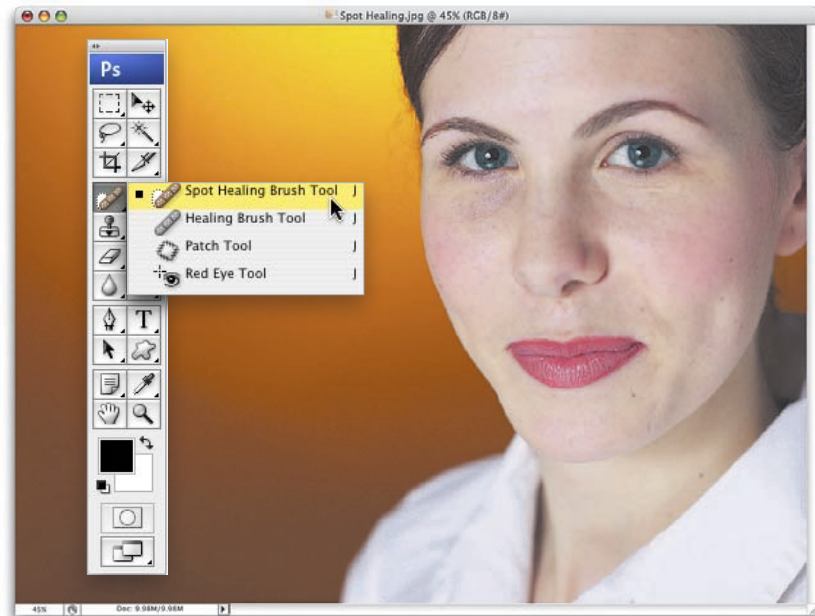
#### Step Five:

Move your cursor directly over the blemish and click once. Don't paint! Just click. One click will do it—it will remove the blemish instantly, while leaving the skin texture intact. But what if the blemish is lighter than the skin, rather than darker? Simply change the Mode to Darken instead of Lighten—it's that easy. On to Method 2.

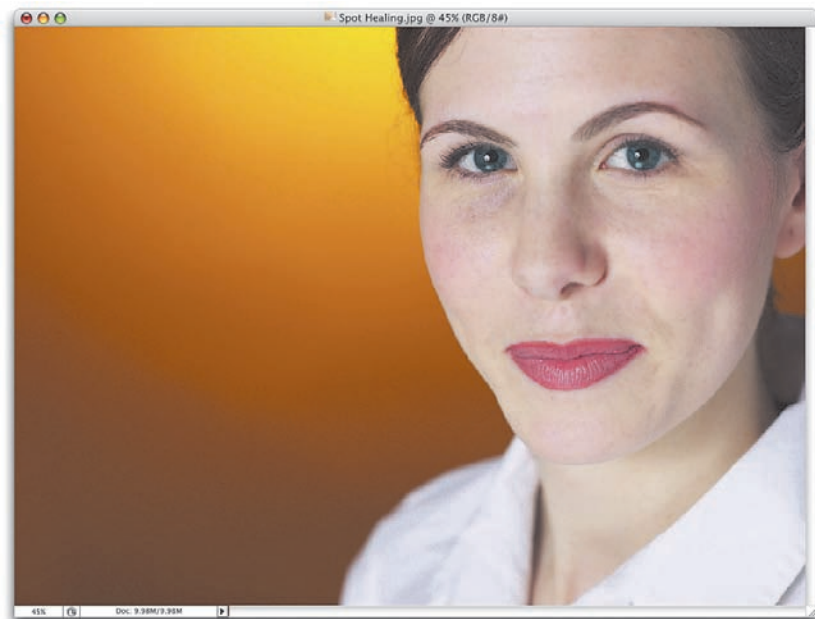
Continued

**Method Two: The Spot Healing Brush****Step One:**

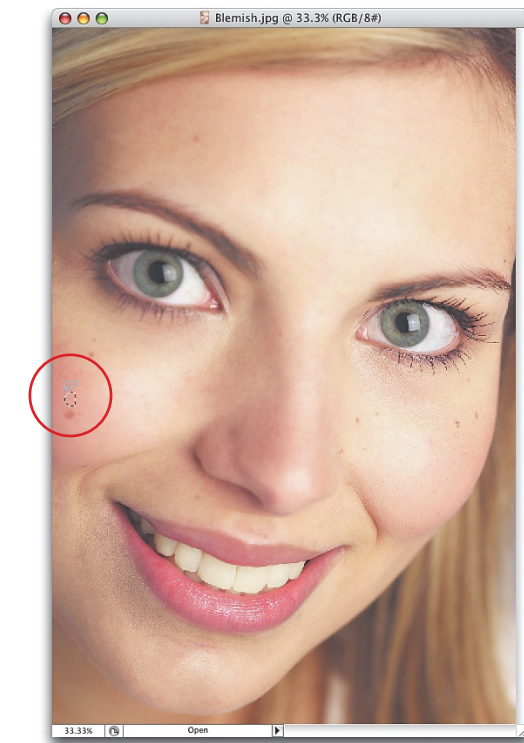
You can also use the Spot Healing Brush tool to remove blemishes effectively and quickly. (Notice I said “Spot” Healing Brush, not just Healing Brush.) So, press J to get the tool from the Toolbox.

**Step Two:**

Just like the Clone Stamp tool, the key thing to remember when using the Spot Healing Brush for repairing blemishes is to choose a brush size that’s just slightly larger than the blemish you’re trying to remove. In the Options Bar, click on the thumbnail to the right of the word “Brush,” and choose the size you need using the Diameter slider. (Note: The default for the Spot Healing Brush is a hard edge, and that’s fine—it works great that way.) However, unlike the Clone Stamp tool, you don’t need to sample an area before clicking. You just click on a blemish and it’s gone, so start clicking (here I clicked on all the visible moles on her face and neck). Now for Method 3...

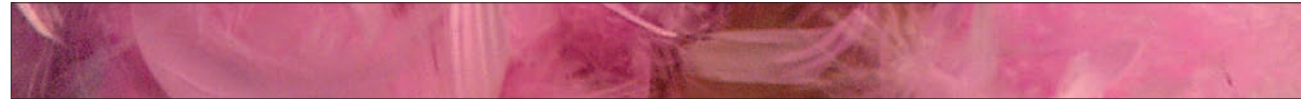
**Method Three: The Lasso Tool****Step One:**

Press L to switch to the Lasso tool. Find a clean area (no blemishes, spots, etc.) near the blemish that you want to remove (in this case, it’s a mole on her right cheek). In this clean area, use the Lasso tool to make a selection that is slightly larger than the blemish.

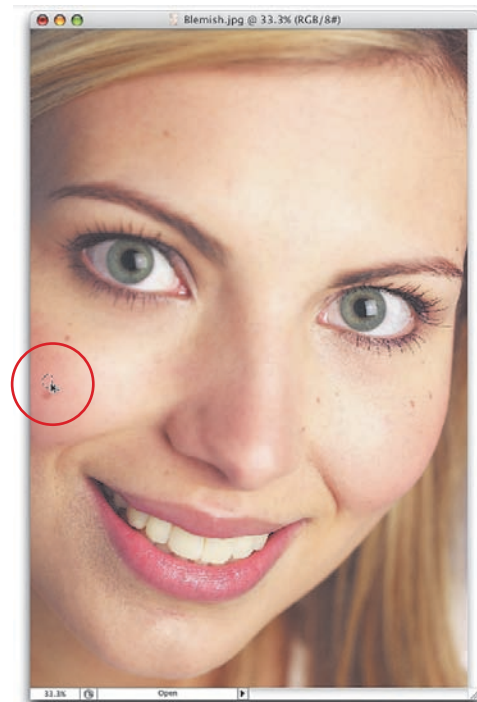
**Step Two:**

After your selection is in place, go under the Select menu and under Modify, choose Feather. When the Feather Selection dialog appears, enter 1 pixel as your Feather Radius and click OK. Feathering blurs the edges of our selected area, which will help hide the traces of our retouch. Feathering (softening) the edges of a selection is a very important part of facial retouching, and you’ll do this quite a bit to “hide your tracks,” so to speak.

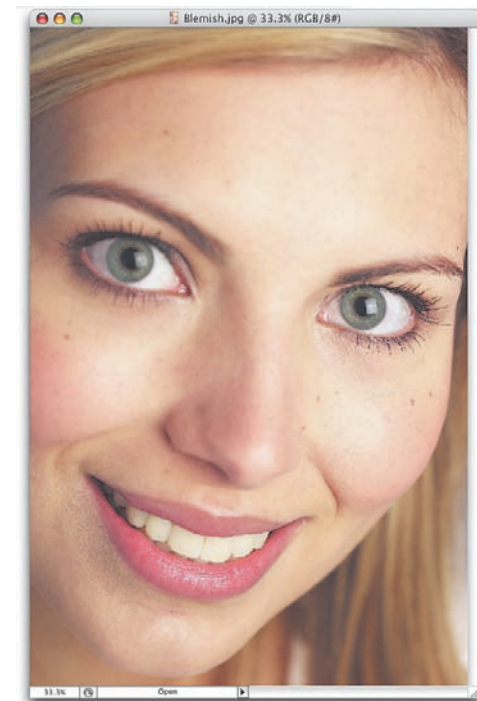
Continued

**Step Three:**

Now that you've softened the edges of the selection, hold Command-Option (PC: Ctrl-Alt), and you'll see your cursor change into two arrowheads—a white one with a black one overlapping it. This is telling you that you're about to copy the selected area. Click within your selection and drag this clean skin area right over the blemish to completely cover it.

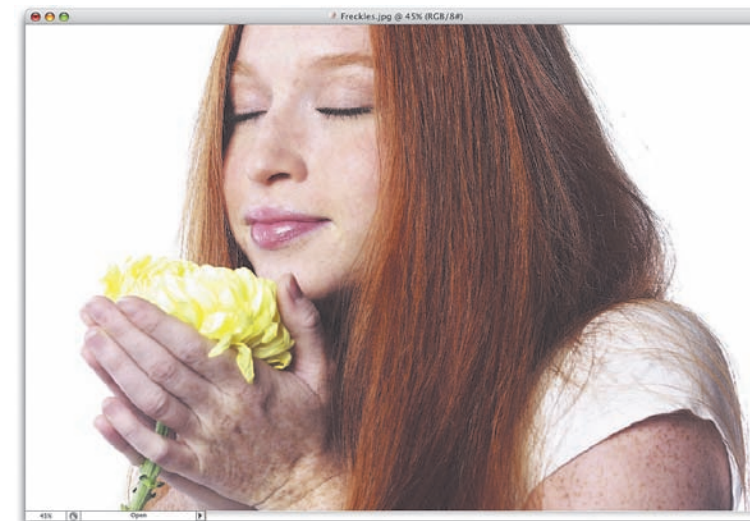
**Step Four:**

When the clean area covers the blemish, release the keys (and the mouse button, of course) and press Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D) to deselect. As you can see, the blemish is gone. Best of all, because you dragged skin over from a nearby area, the full skin texture is perfectly intact, making your repair nearly impossible to detect.

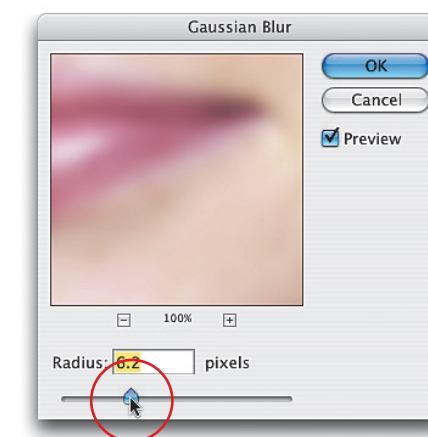


This technique is popular with senior-class portrait photographers who need to lessen or remove large areas of acne, pockmarks, or freckles. This is especially useful when you have a lot of photos to retouch (like a portrait retoucher) and don't have the time to use the methods shown previously, where you deal with each blemish individually.

## Lessening Freckles or Acne

**Step One:**

Open the photo that you need to retouch.

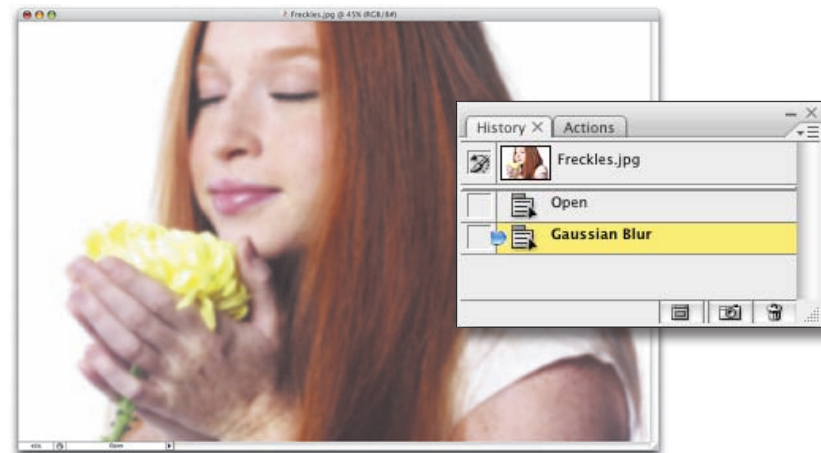
**Step Two:**

Go under the Filter menu, under Blur, and choose Gaussian Blur. When the Gaussian Blur dialog appears, drag the slider all the way to the left, and then drag it slowly to the right until you see the freckles (or acne) blurred away. The photo should look very blurry, but we'll fix that in just a minute, so don't let that throw you off—make sure it's blurry enough that the freckles are no longer visible—and then click OK.

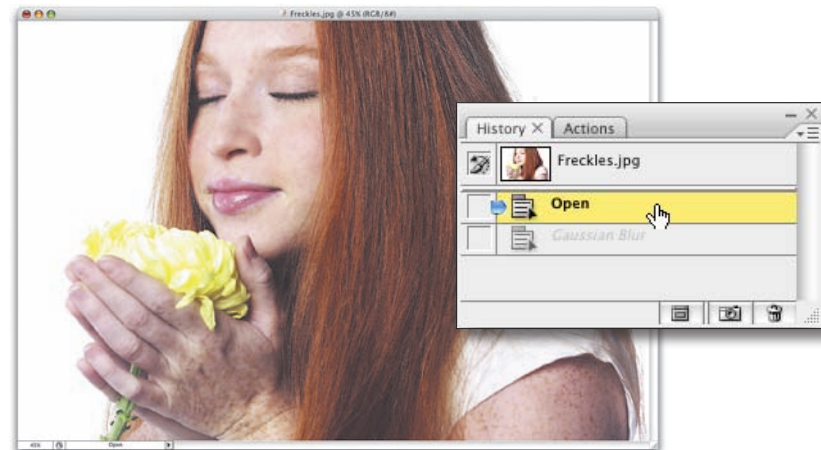
*Continued*

**Step Three:**

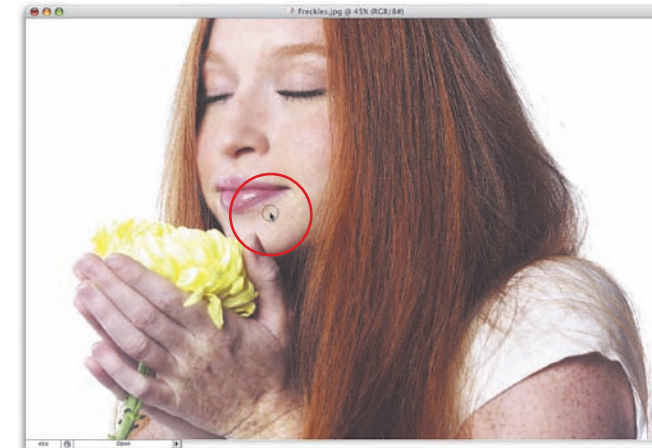
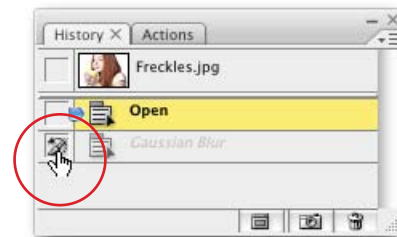
Go under the Window menu and choose History to bring up the History panel. This panel keeps track of the last 20 things you've done in Photoshop. If you look at the list of steps (called "History States"), you should see two States: The first will read "Open" (this is when you opened the document), and the second will read "Gaussian Blur" (this is where you added the blur).

**Step Four:**

Click on the Open State to return your photo to what it looked like when you originally opened it. The History panel also works in conjunction with a tool in the Toolbox called the History Brush, so press Y to get the brush. When you paint with it, by default it paints in what the photo looked like when you first opened it. It's like "undo on a brush." That can be very handy, but the real power of the History Brush is that you can have it paint from a different History State. You'll see what I mean in the next step.

**Step Five:**

In the History panel, click in the first column next to the Gaussian Blur State. If you painted with the History Brush now, it would paint in what the photo looked like after you blurred it (which would do us no good), but we're about to fix that.

**Step Six:**

To keep from simply painting in a blurry version of our photo, go to the Options Bar and change the History Brush's Mode pop-up menu to Lighten. Now when you paint, the brush will affect only the pixels that are darker than the blurred state. Ahhh, do you see where this is going? So, click on the thumbnail to the right of the word "Brush" in the Options Bar and choose a medium, soft-edged brush in the Brush Picker. Now paint over the blemished areas with the History Brush, and as you paint, you'll see the freckles diminish quite a bit. If they diminish too much, and the person looks "too clean," press Command-Z (PC: Ctrl-Z) to undo your History Brush strokes, then return to the Options Bar, lower the Opacity of the brush to 50%, and try again.



Before



After

## Removing Dark Circles under Eyes

Here's a different technique for removing those dark circles that sometimes appear under a person's eyes.

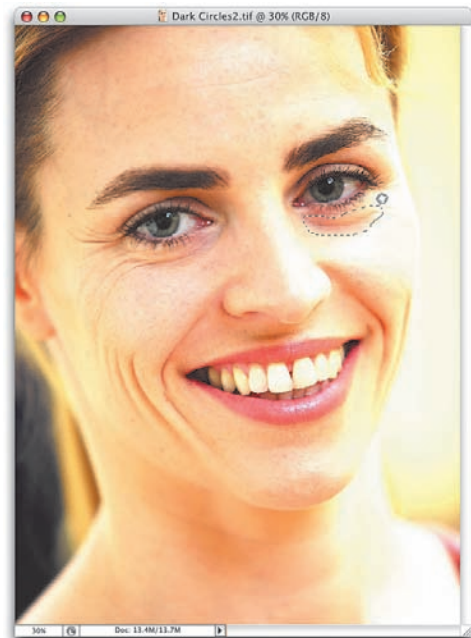
### Step One:

Go to the Toolbox and choose the Patch tool (click-and-hold on the Healing Brush until the flyout menu appears or just press Shift-J until you have the tool).



### Step Two:

Make sure the Patch tool is set to Source in the Options Bar and draw a selection around one of the dark circles under the eye. The Patch tool operates much like the Lasso tool for drawing selections (meaning you simply click-and-drag to create a selection). Also, like the Lasso tool, once your selection is in place, if you need to add to it, just hold the Shift key and "lasso" in some more areas. If you need to subtract from your Patch tool selection, hold the Option (PC: Alt) key instead.



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### Step Three:

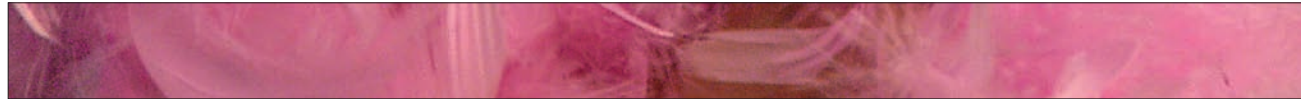
After your selection is in place, click directly within the selected area and drag it to a part of the face that's clean and doesn't have any edges. By that I mean you don't want your dragged selection to overlap the edge of any other facial features such as the nose, lips, eyebrows, edge of the face, and so on. You need a clean, uninterrupted area of skin. In Photoshop CS3, you'll see a preview of what your patch will look like (that's why you see two selections in the capture shown here).



### Step Four:

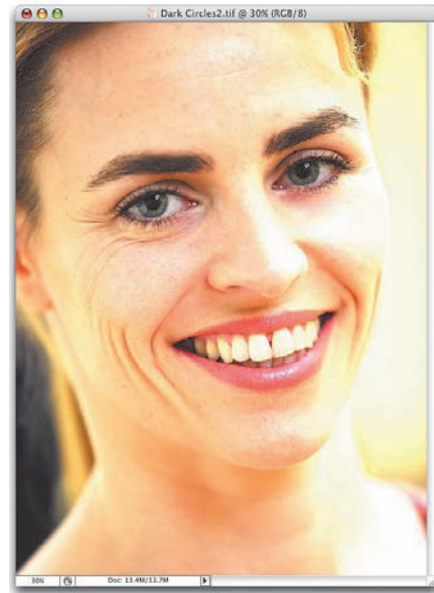
After you've found that clean area, release the mouse button and the Patch tool will automatically sample it, snap back to the original selected area, and perform the retouch for you.

*Continued*

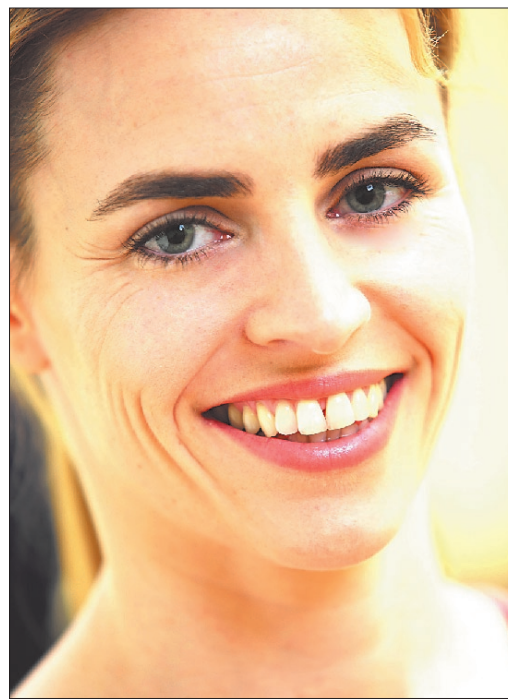


**Step Five:**

Press Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D) to deselect, and you'll see the dark circle is completely gone. The Healing Brush can also be used to diminish or erase dark circles, but the Patch tool does it so quickly and effortlessly that I greatly prefer it for this retouch.



Before (dark circles under the eyes)

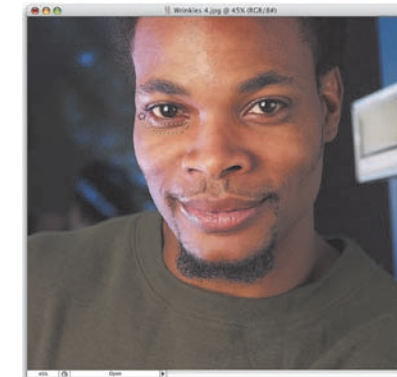


After (dark circles removed using the Patch tool)



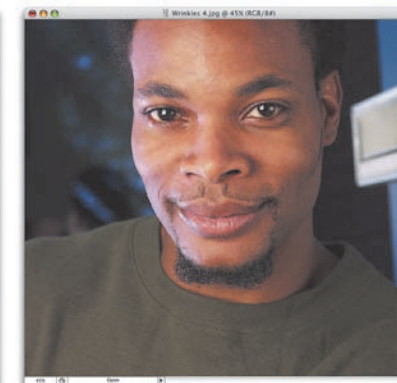
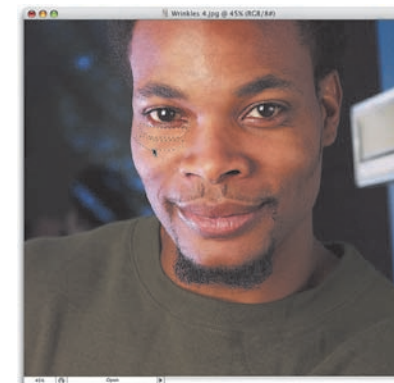
Photoshop has two tools that are nothing short of miracle workers when it comes to removing wrinkles, crow's-feet, and other facial signs of aging. We've touched on these tools slightly in previous techniques here, and we used the Healing Brush to reduce wrinkles in the book, but here's a closer look at how to use the Patch tool to quickly take 10 or 20 years off a person's appearance.

## Removing the Signs of Aging



**Step One:**

You can achieve similar results using the Patch tool, and personally, I prefer this tool to the Healing Brush for most instances, because the Patch tool lets you correct larger areas faster. Press Shift-J until you have the Patch tool, make sure that it's set to Source in the Options Bar, and draw a selection around the wrinkled area. It works like the Lasso tool, so if you need to add to your selection, hold the Shift key; to subtract from it, hold Option (PC: Alt).



**Step Two:**

After your selection is in place, click-and-drag it onto an area on the person's face that has a clean texture (you'll see a preview of what your patch will look like—that's why you'll see two lasso selections). Make sure your selected area doesn't overlap any other facial features (such as the nose, lips, eyes, edge of the face, etc.), and then release the mouse button. When you do, the selection will snap back to the area that you originally selected, and the wrinkles are gone.

**Step Three:**

Press Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D) to deselect, and view the amazing job the Patch tool did on his right eye.



## Colorizing Hair

This technique (that I learned from Kevin Ames) gives you maximum control and flexibility while changing or adjusting hair color. Best of all, because you use layer masks and an adjustment layer, you're not "bruising the pixels"; instead, you're following the enlightened path of "nondestructive retouching."

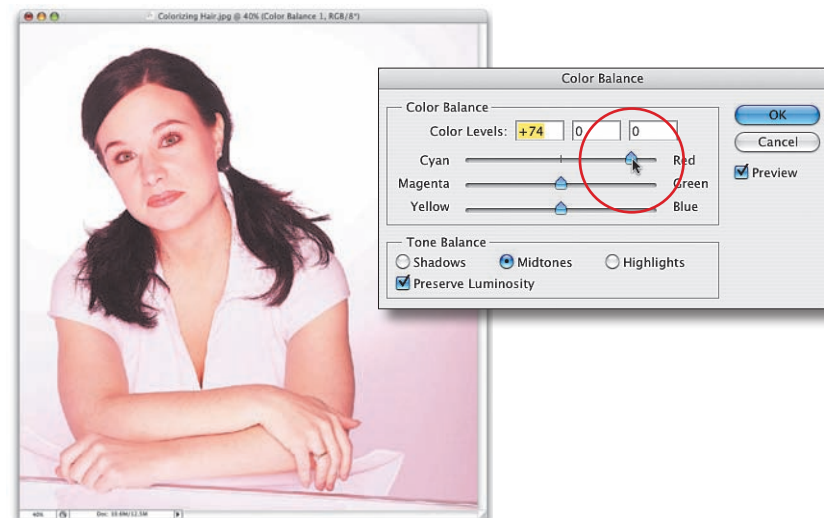
### Step One:

Open the photo you want to retouch. Choose Color Balance from the Create New Adjustment Layer pop-up menu (it's the half-black/half-white circle icon) at the bottom of the Layers panel.



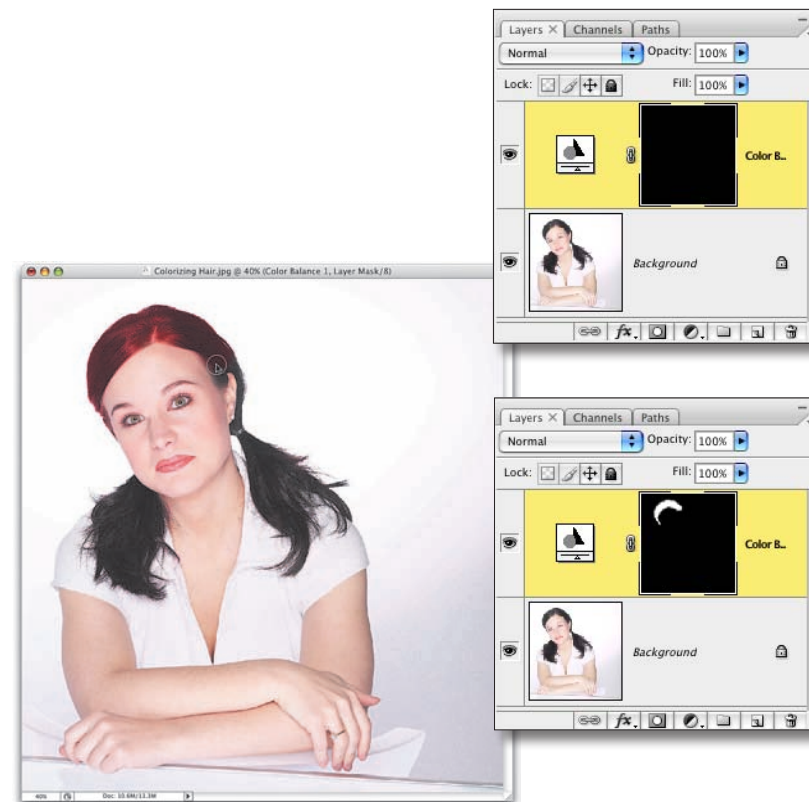
### Step Two:

When the dialog appears, adjust the sliders until you have a color that you want as the hair color. You can adjust the Shadows, Midtones, and Highlights by selecting each in the Tone Balance section of the Color Balance dialog and then moving the color sliders. In this case, we want to make her hair red, so we'll move the top slider toward Red for the Shadows (to +16), then the Midtones (to +74), and then the Highlights (to +45). Now, click OK, and the entire photo will have a heavy red cast over it.



### Step Three:

Press the letter X until your Foreground color is black, and press Option-Delete (PC: Alt-Backspace) to fill the Color Balance layer mask with black. Doing so removes the red tint from the photo.



### Step Four:

Press B to get the Brush tool from the Toolbox, click on the thumbnail to the right of the word "Brush" in the Options Bar, and then choose a soft-edged brush in the Brush Picker. Press D to set your Foreground color to white, and then begin painting over her hair. As you paint, the red tint you added with Color Balance is added back in. Once the hair is fully tinted, go to the Layers panel and change the layer blend mode of your Color Balance adjustment layer from Normal to Color, and then lower the Opacity until the hair color looks natural (around 50%).



Before



After

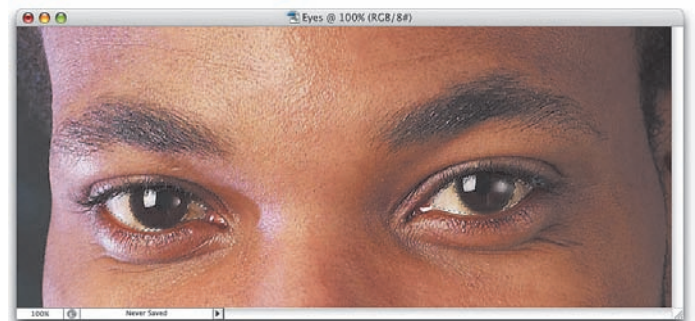


## Whitening the Eyes (Quick Trick)

This is a great little technique for quickly whitening the whites of the eyes, and it has the added benefit of removing any redness in the eye along the way.

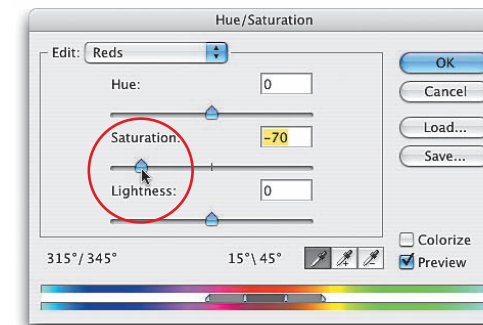
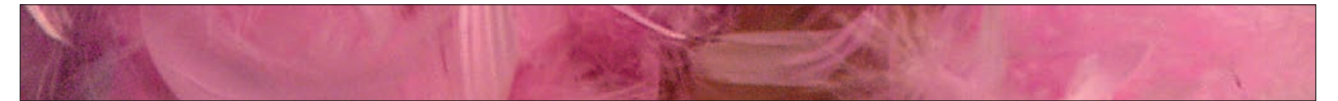
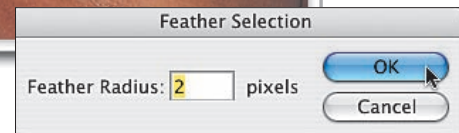
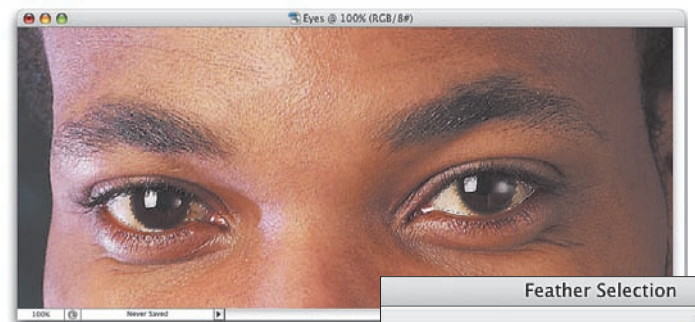
### Step One:

Open the portrait you want to retouch. Press L to get the Lasso tool from the Toolbox and draw a selection around the whites of one of the eyes. Press-and-hold the Shift key and draw selections around the whites of the other eye, until the whites of both eyes are selected. *Note:* Press Z to get the Zoom tool and zoom in if needed.



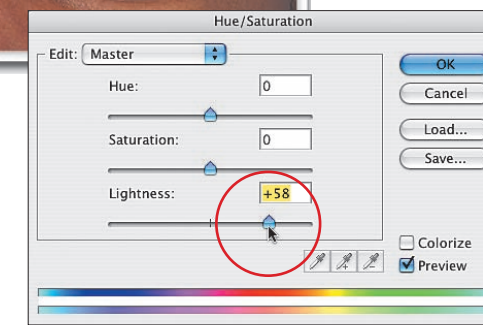
### Step Two:

Go under the Select menu, under Modify, and choose Feather, which will soften the edges of your selection so your retouch isn't obvious. In the Feather Selection dialog, enter 2 pixels and click OK.



### Step Three:

Go under the Image menu, under Adjustments, and choose Hue/Saturation. When the Hue/Saturation dialog appears, choose Reds from the Edit pop-up menu at the top (to edit just the reds in the photo). Now, drag the Saturation slider to the left to lower the amount of saturation in the Reds (which removes any bloodshot appearance in the whites of the eyes).



### Step Four:

While you're still in the Hue/Saturation dialog, from the Edit menu switch back to Master. Drag the Lightness slider to the right to increase the lightness of the whites of the eyes. Click OK in the Hue/Saturation dialog to apply your adjustments, and then press Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D) to deselect, completing the retouch. The enhancement appears fairly subtle in the capture shown here, but when you try it yourself at full size, the effect will appear much more pronounced.



Before



After (bloodshot lessened and whites brightened)

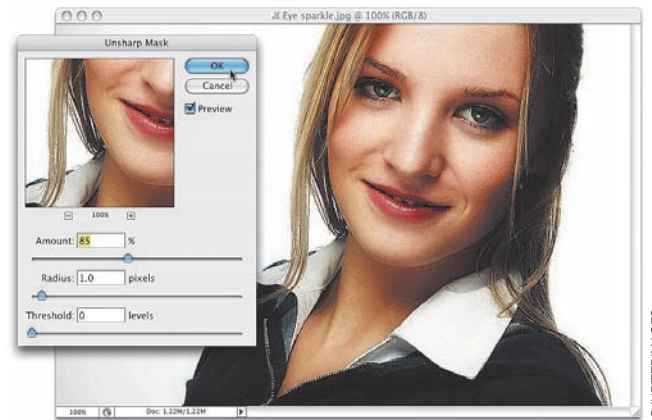


## Making Eyes Sparkle

This is another one of those “30-second miracles” for brightening eyes, enhancing the catch lights, and generally drawing attention to the eyes by making them look sharp and crisp (crisp in the “sharp and clean” sense, not crisp in the “I burned my retina while looking at the sun” kind of crisp).

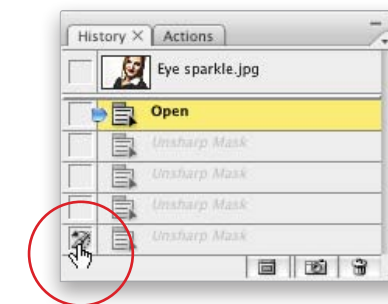
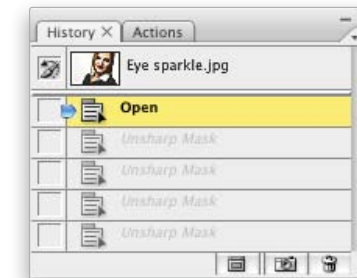
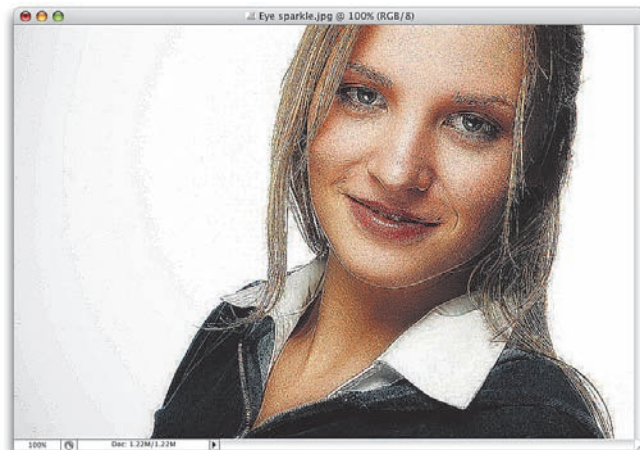
### Step One:

Open the photo you want to retouch. Go under the Filter menu, under Sharpen, and choose Unsharp Mask. When the Unsharp Mask dialog appears, enter your settings (if you need some settings, check out Chapter 11 in the book); then click OK to sharpen the entire photo.



### Step Two:

After you've applied the Unsharp Mask filter, apply it again using the same settings by pressing Command-F (PC: Ctrl-F), and keep applying it using the same keyboard shortcut until the eyes stand out (here I applied it four times). Although the eyes probably look nice and crisp at this point, the rest of the person is severely oversharpened, and you'll probably see lots of noise and other unpleasant artifacts, but we'll fix that in the next step.



### Step Three:

Go under the Window menu and choose History to bring up the History panel. This panel keeps track of your last 20 steps, and you'll see the four steps you've done thus far listed in the panel (an Open step, followed by your Unsharp Mask steps. By the way, these steps are actually called “History States”). Click on the Open State to return your photo to how it looked before you applied the Unsharp Mask filter.

### Step Four:

In the History panel, click once in the first column beside the bottom Unsharp Mask State. Press Y to switch to the History Brush, and in the Options Bar, click on the Brush thumbnail to choose a soft-edged brush (about the size of the iris) from the Brush Picker. Click once right over the iris, and it will paint in the crisp, sharpened eye, leaving the rest of the face untouched. It does this because you clicked in that first column in the History panel, which tells Photoshop to “paint from what the photo looked like at this point.” Pretty cool!



Before



After (with eyes that sparkle)

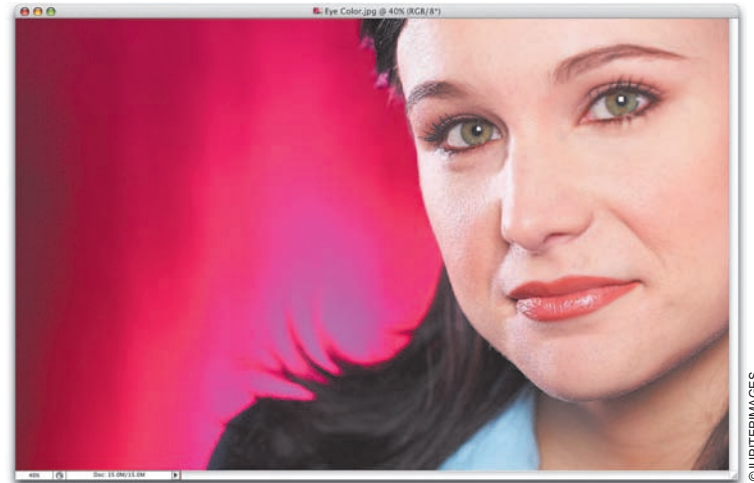


## Changing Eye Color

Well, Kevin Ames did it to me again. He calls me up, and we're talking about how I have just about finished the update to this book, and he says, "You're going to hate me again." I let him know I never stopped hating him for all the extra work he made me do in the last version of the book, then he says, "No, you're *really* gonna hate me." Stupidly, I said, "Why?" and he said, "Have you tried the Color Replacement tool for changing eye color?" He's really getting on my nerves.

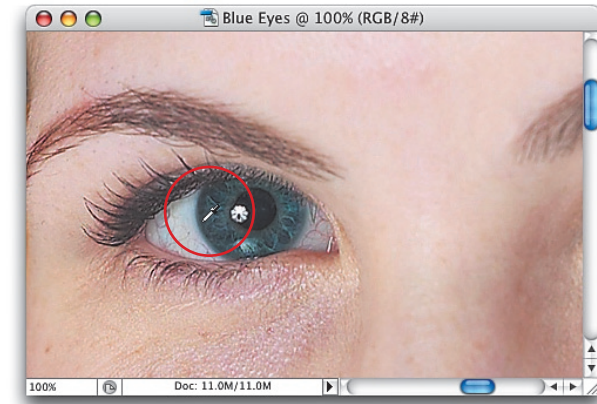
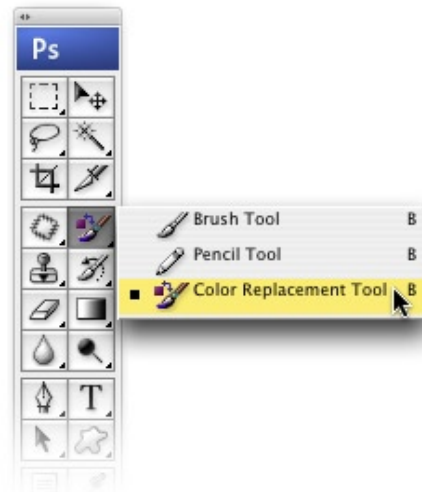
### Step One:

Open the photo that contains an eye color you want to change. In this case, the subject has green eyes and we want to change them to blue (hey, it's not me—that's what the client wants).



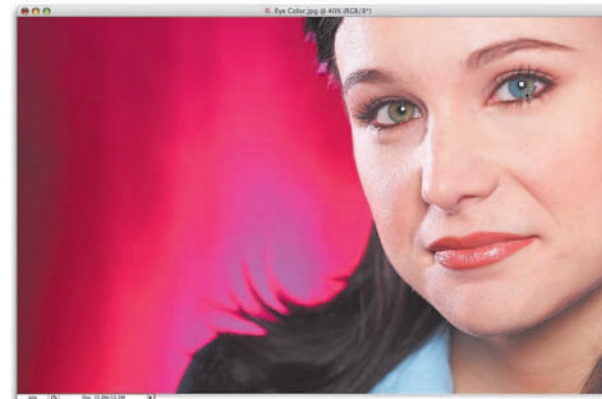
### Step Two:

Go to the Toolbox and choose the Color Replacement tool (it's nested beneath the Brush tool). In Photoshop CS, Adobe had this tool in mind for removing red eye, but since they added the Red Eye tool in CS2, you can just use that tool for red eye (and the Color Replacement tool actually works quite well for removing red eye, I might add, but we're going to do a more respectable job here).



### Step Three:

You'll need to open a source photo, a photo that has the eye color you'd like. Take the Color Replacement tool and move it over the eye in your source photo. Hold the Option (PC: Alt) key over the eye and click once to sample that eye color.



### Step Four:

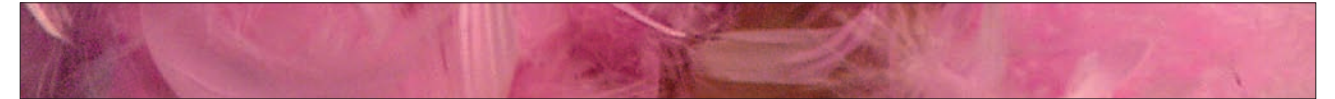
Now switch back to the photo where you want to change the eye color, and begin painting over the eye. As you paint, the new color (from the blue eye you sampled earlier) replaces the green eye (as shown in the subject's left eye here). *Note:* If needed, press Z to switch to the Zoom tool and zoom into the subject's eyes while replacing the color.



Before



After



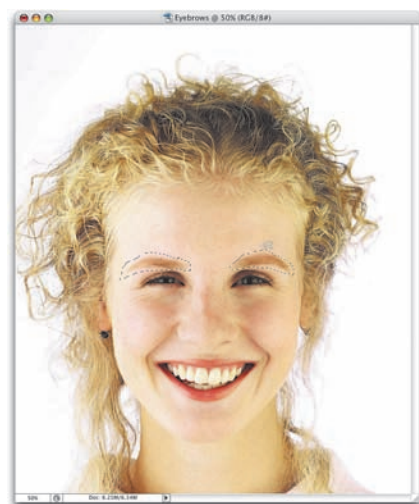


## Enhancing Eyebrows and Eyelashes

After Kevin Ames showed me this technique for enhancing eyebrows and eyelashes, I completely abandoned the method I'd used for years and switched over to this method because it's faster, easier, and more powerful than any technique I've seen yet.

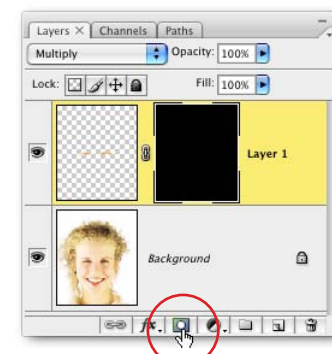
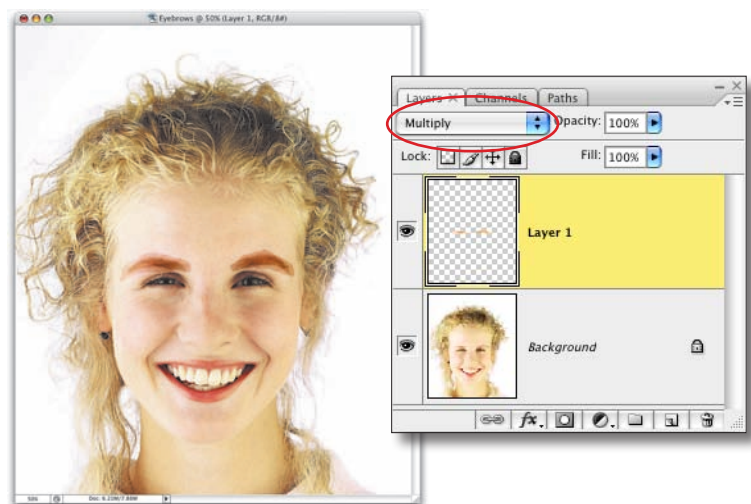
### Step One:

Open the photo that you want to enhance. Press L to get the Lasso tool and draw a loose selection around one eyebrow. It isn't necessary to make a precise selection; make it loose like the one shown here. Your subject might be turned so that there's only one eyebrow showing; but if there are two (meaning the person doesn't have a unibrow), after you select one eyebrow, press-and-hold the Shift key while creating a selection around the other eyebrow.



### Step Two:

Once your eyebrows are selected, press Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J) to put the eyebrows on their own separate layer. Then, switch the layer blend mode of this eyebrow layer from Normal to Multiply in the Layers panel, which will darken the entire layer.



### Step Three:

Press-and-hold the Option (PC: Alt) key and click on the Add Layer Mask icon at the bottom of the Layers panel. Holding down the Option/Alt key fills the layer mask with black, which hides the Multiply effect from view. The eyebrows will look normal again. Now, ensure your Foreground color is set to white (it should be by default), and then press B to switch to the Brush tool. In the Options Bar, click on the thumbnail to the right of the word "Brush," and choose a soft-edged brush from the Brush Picker that's about the size of the largest part of the eyebrow.

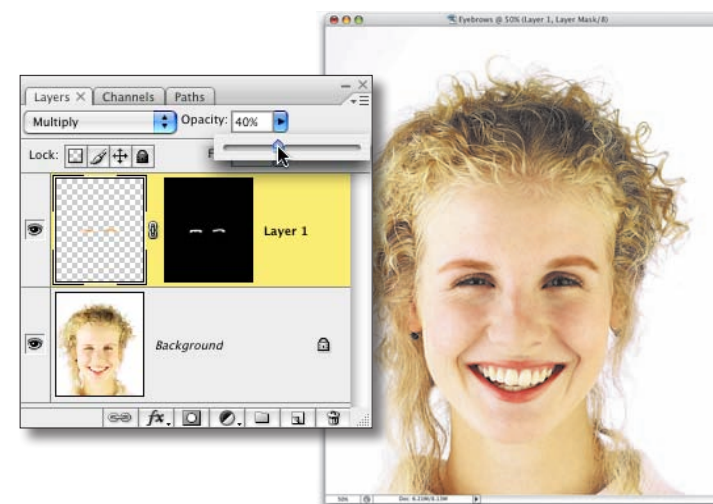


### Step Four:

Begin painting over the eyebrows, going from right to left. As you paint, press-and-hold the Left Bracket key to make your brush smaller as you trace the eyebrow. Painting on the layer mask reveals the Multiply effect, darkening the eyebrows.

### Step Five:

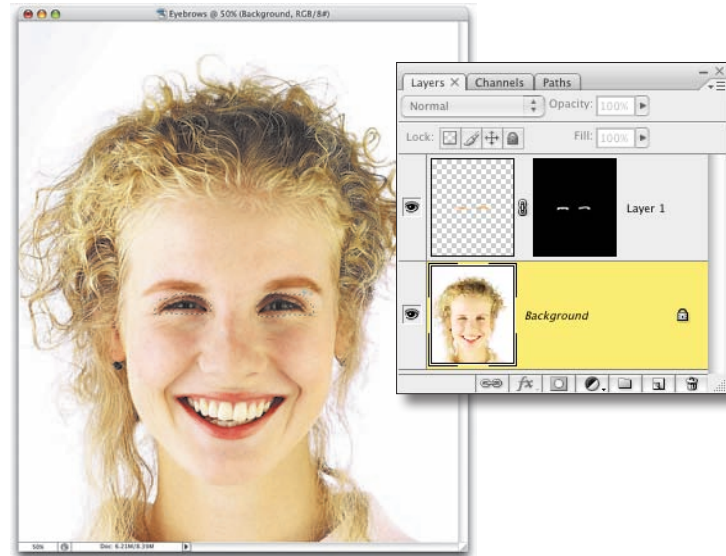
The final effect will probably be too intense, but you can fix that by lowering the Opacity of the Multiply layer in the Layers panel.



Continued

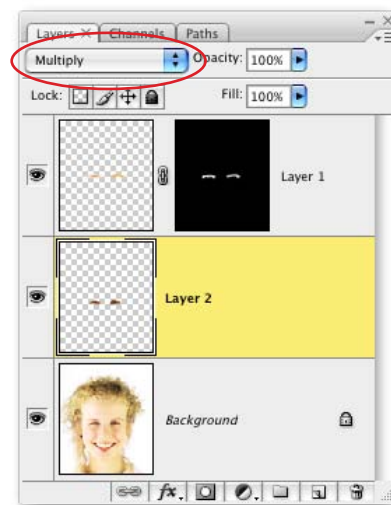
**Step Six:**

Now, on to the eyelashes: In the Layers panel, click on the Background layer. Get the Lasso tool again and draw a loose selection around the eyes, making sure your loose selection fully encompasses the eyelashes.



**Step Seven:**

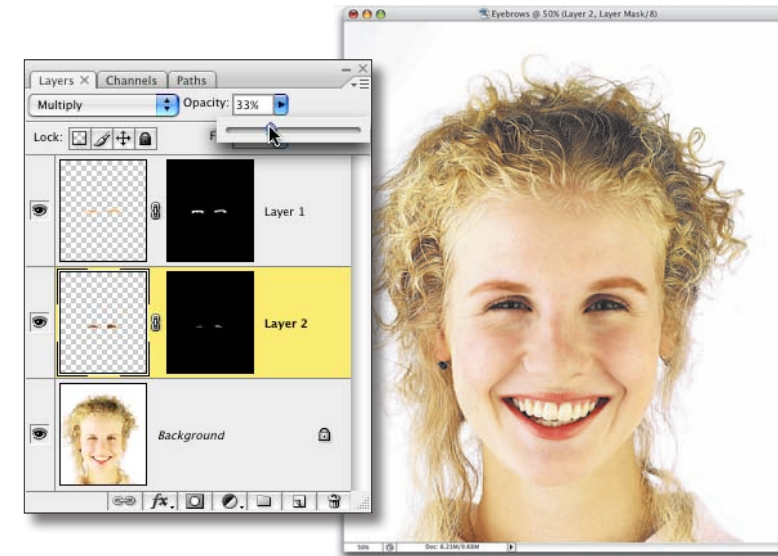
For the lashes, you're going to repeat what you just did to the eyebrows, so once the eyes and lashes are selected, press Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J) to copy them to their own layer. Change the blend mode of this layer from Normal to Multiply, which darkens the entire layer.



**Step Eight:**

Hold the Option (PC: Alt) key and click on the Add Layer Mask icon again to add a black-filled layer mask. Just like the eyebrows, doing this will hide the Multiply effect. With your Foreground color set to white, paint along the base of the eyelashes to darken that area using a very small, soft-edged brush. Also paint along the top eyelid at the base of the eyelashes. (Incidentally, we put the eyelashes and eyebrows on separate layers so you can control the Opacity of each individually.)

**TIP:** To enhance individual lashes, use the same technique. Just zoom in close on the eye using the Zoom tool (Z), and then with a very, very small brush, trace at the base of the eyelash, following its contours to darken it. You may have to use a 1- or 2-pixel brush. If the effect seems a bit too intense, just lower the layer's Opacity.



Before



After

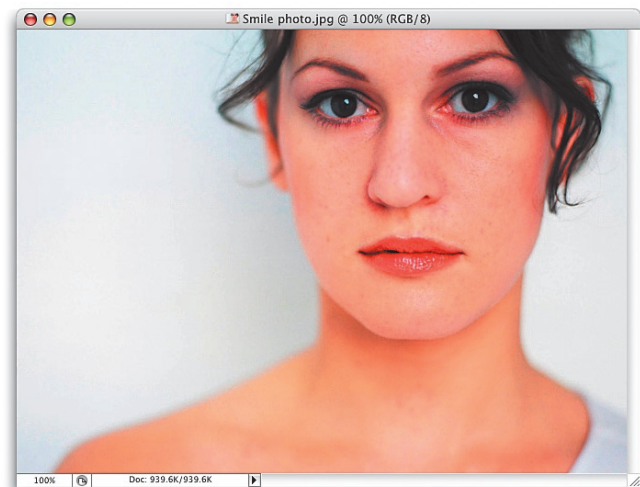


## Transforming a Frown into a Smile

This is a pretty slick technique for taking a photo where the subject is frowning (or is expressionless) and tweaking it just a bit to add a pleasant smile instead—which can often save a photo that otherwise would’ve been ignored.

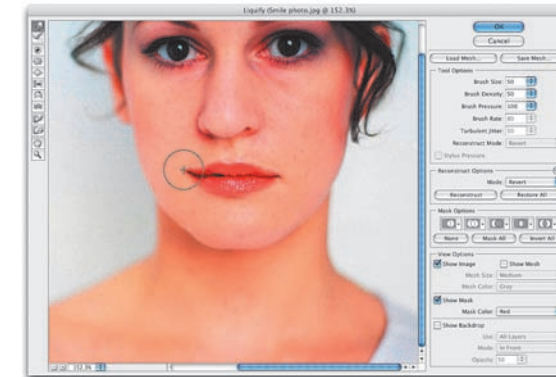
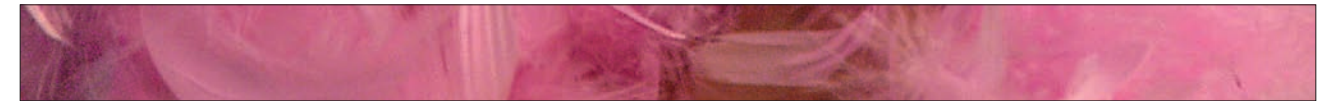
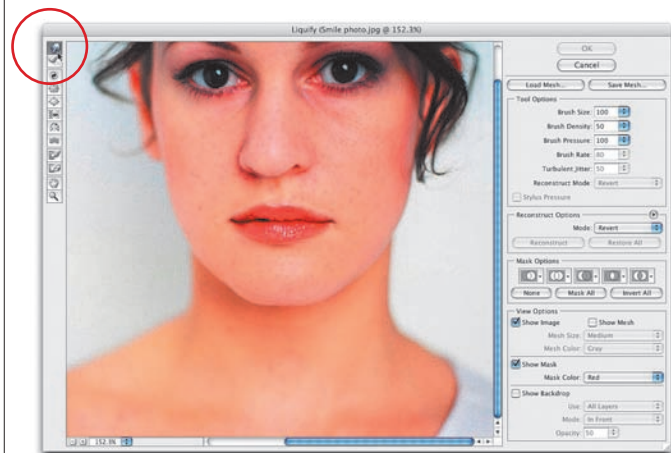
### Step One:

Open the photo that you want to retouch.



### Step Two:

Go under the Filter menu and choose Liquify. When the Liquify dialog appears, choose the Zoom tool (it looks like a magnifying glass) from the Liquify Toolbox (found along the left side of the dialog). Click it once or twice within the preview window to zoom in closer on your subject’s face. Then, choose the Warp tool (it’s the top tool in Liquify’s Toolbox).



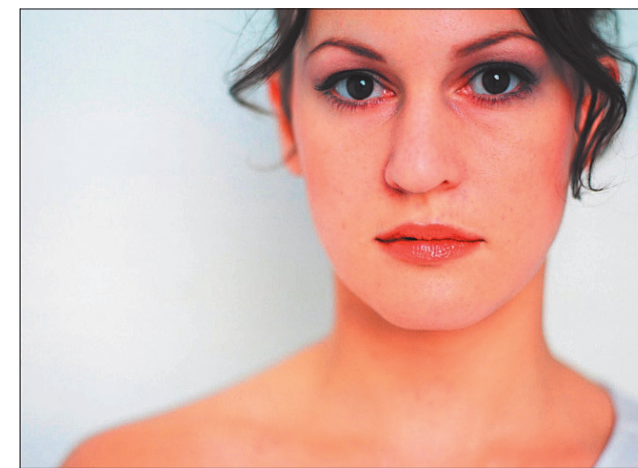
### Step Three:

Press the Left/Right Bracket keys on your keyboard to adjust the brush size until it’s about the size of the person’s cheek. Place the brush near the corner of the mouth, click and “tug” slightly up. This tugging of the cheek makes the corner of the mouth turn up, creating a smile.

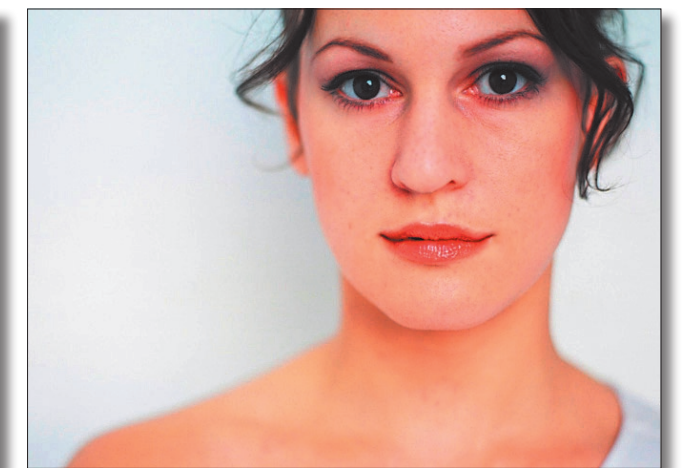


### Step Four:

Repeat the “tug” on the opposite side of the mouth, using the already tugged side as a visual guide as to how far to tug. Be careful not to tug too far, or you’ll turn your subject into the Joker from *Batman Returns*. Click OK in Liquify to apply the change, and the retouch is applied to your photo.



Before



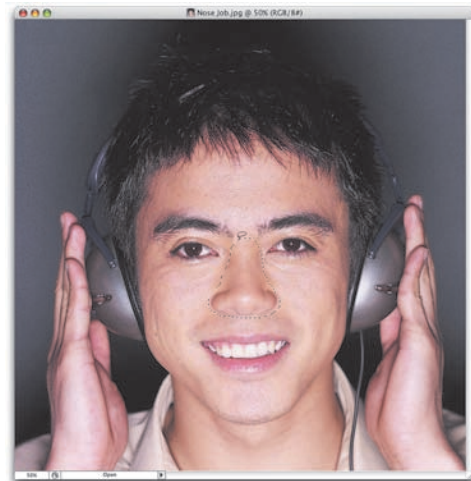
After

## Digital Nose Job

This is a very simple technique for decreasing the size of your subject's nose by 15–20%. The actual shrinking of the nose is a breeze and only takes a minute or two—you may spend a little bit of time cloning away the sides of the original nose, but since the new nose winds up on its own layer, it makes this cloning a lot easier. Here's how it's done:

### Step One:

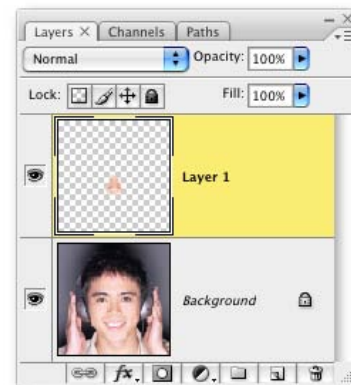
Open the photo that you want to retouch. Press L to get the Lasso tool, and draw a loose selection around your subject's nose. Make sure you don't make this selection too close or too precise because you need to capture some flesh-tone area around the nose.



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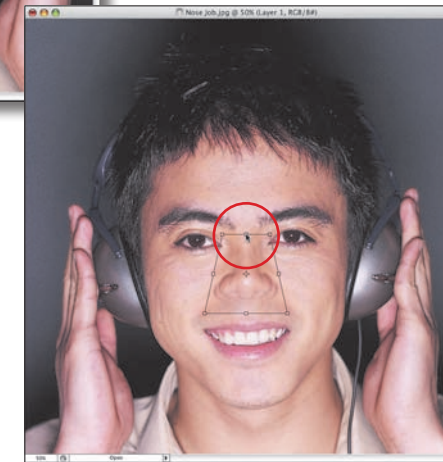
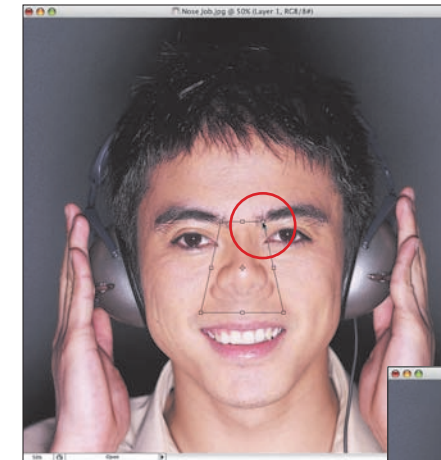
### Step Two:

To soften the edges of your selection, go under the Select menu, under Modify, and choose Feather. When the Feather Selection dialog appears, for Feather Radius enter 10 pixels (for high-res, 300-ppi images, enter around 22 pixels), and then click OK.



### Step Three:

Now, press Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J) to copy your selected area onto its own layer in the Layers panel.

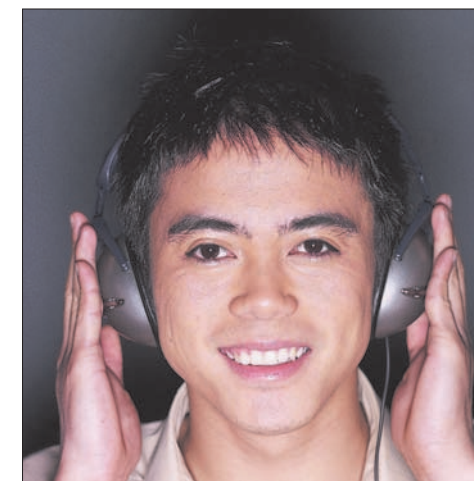


### Step Four:

Press Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T) to bring up the Free Transform bounding box. Hold Command-Option-Shift (PC: Ctrl-Alt-Shift), then grab the upper-right corner point of the bounding box and drag inward to add a perspective effect to the nose. Doing this gives the person a pug nose, but you'll fix that in the next step.

### Step Five:

To get rid of the "pug-nose" effect, release all the keys, then grab the top-center point and drag straight downward to make the nose look natural again, but now it's smaller. When the new size looks about right, press Return (PC: Enter) to lock in your changes. If any of the old nose peeks out from behind the new nose, click on the Background layer and use the Clone Stamp tool (S) to clone away those areas: Option-click (PC: Alt-click) an area next to the nose to sample it, and then paint (clone) right over it to complete the retouch.



Before



After