

COLORIZE a black-and-white photograph

Hand-coloring a photograph can be a difficult process using traditional paints and traditional film photos. With Photoshop, hand-coloring an old black-and-white image is much easier. You can use any black-and white photo, called a grayscale image, and paint areas using any colors that you choose. You can start with larger areas and then focus in on specific parts to colorize individually and on additional layers. By making selections of detailed areas and then applying the colors, you can be as precise as necessary to achieve the effect. Zoom in to select and paint detailed areas and then zoom out to see the overall effect. Continue making different selections and choosing other colors until the whole image is colorized. After the entire image is painted, you can lower the opacity of each colored layer as a final touch. You can vary the size of the Brush tool as you paint using the left and right bracket keys. If you are using a pressure-sensitive stylus and tablet, open the Brushes panel, click Shape Dynamics, and set the Control to Pen Pressure.

1 Click Image.

2 Click Mode.

3 Click RGB Color. The color mode changes, but the image on the screen does not.

4 Click the New Layer button in the Layers panel.

5 Click here and select Soft Light.

6 Click the Quick Selection tool.

7 Click Sample All Layers in the Options bar.

8 Click in an area to make a selection. Note: You can optionally use any of the other selection tools to complete the selection.

9 Click the foreground color in the Tools panel. The Color Picker appears.

10 Click and drag the Color slider to select a color range.

11 Click in the Color Preview box to select a color. Click OK to close the dialog box.

13 Press B to select the Brush tool.

14 Click to open the Brush picker. Click the soft-edged brush. Press the left or right bracket keys to adjust the brush size. Paint over the selected areas to apply the color

15 Click Opacity and drag to the left to adjust the color for the layer.

Repeat steps 4 to 17 until the entire image is painted. The black-and-white photo now appears in color.

ADD A CREATIVE TOUCH with a little color

You can hand-color an old grayscale photograph with Photoshop to create an antique look. You can also start with a color image, convert it to grayscale and then colorize it to get a very different look; this type of colorization is much easier to accomplish. You can colorize the entire photo or just one area for effect. You can brush the color into specific areas and even create a more or less muted colorized effect by changing the opacity of the brush as you paint. Start with a low opacity setting and bring the original color back gradually. If you have already saved a grayscale version of the photo without the original layers, you can still use the method shown here. First open both the original color image and the converted grayscale photo. Using the Move tool, press and hold Shift as you click and drag the grayscale version onto the original color photo. Then follow steps 4 to 14 of this task using the Eraser tool instead of the Brush tool to paint a very creative image.

1 Open a color photo.

2 Apply a black-and-white adjustment layer

The photo appears in grayscale.

- the color photo is the Background layer. The Black & White adjustment layer with a white mask appears as the second layer.

3 Click the mask thumbnail in the Layers panel to select it.

4 Click the Default Colors icon to reset the foreground to black and background to white.

5 Click the Brush tool.

6 Click here to open the Brush picker. Click the soft-edged brush.

Click the Airbrush button. Double-click and type 20 to lower the opacity. Paint over the area to be colored.

Double-click again and type 40 to increase the opacity. Press the left bracket key several times to reduce the brush size. Paint over parts of the colored area to increase the color. The image is selectively colored and the viewer's attention is drawn to the perfect spot.

SHARPEN THE PHOTO

1 Press (Ctrl+J) to duplicate the Background layer.

2 Double-click the Zoom tool to zoom the image to 100%.

3 Click Filter.

4 Click Sharpen.

5 Click Smart Sharpen. The Smart Sharpen dialog box appears.

6 Click and drag the slider to reduce the default radius amount to 0.5 as a starting point.

7 Click and select Lens Blur. Note: Lens Blur finds the edges and detail and produces a sharper effect with fewer halos.

8 Click and slowly drag the Amount slider to the right until you see halos on the edges.

9 Click and drag the Amount slider slowly to the left just until the halos are no longer visible. Note: You can click and drag the Radius slider to increase the edges affected. 0 Click OK.

The image appears sharper.

10 Press and hold the spacebar and click and drag in the image to view different areas. Click Fit Screen to view the whole image.