



INTRODUCTION TO GRAPHICS

Adding Color to Black and White

Information Sheet No. **PS615**

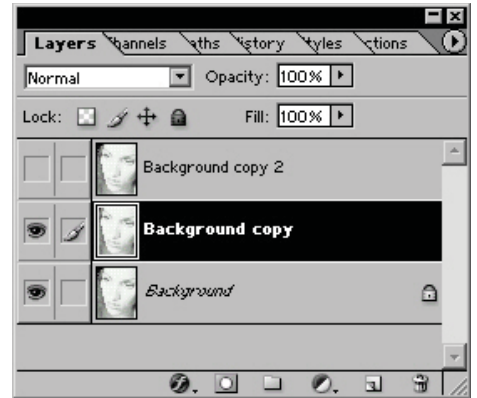
There are quite a few tutorials online dealing with removing color from images to gain crisp black and white versions. I've written a few myself. The thought occurred to me this morning that there really isn't much that I've seen showing how to add realistic color to a black and white image. This takes some time, patience and a bit of savvy, using tool and blending mode combinations, but it can produce some very realistic results. I'll be showing you how to colorize an image in Photoshop 7, but you should be able to replicate the effects in earlier versions or other image editing applications. For this tutorial I'll be using an example image from Photos.com. (Right-click on the image to download it, if you want to follow along using the same photo). The folks at Photos.com have been very gracious in allowing me to use their images for my tutorials and it has become my favorite photo site, due to the quality and wide variety of images available. If you haven't done so, I suggest you check them out. Now, on to the image.

This young lady seems

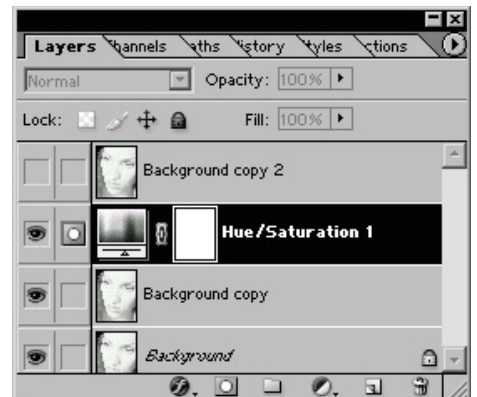
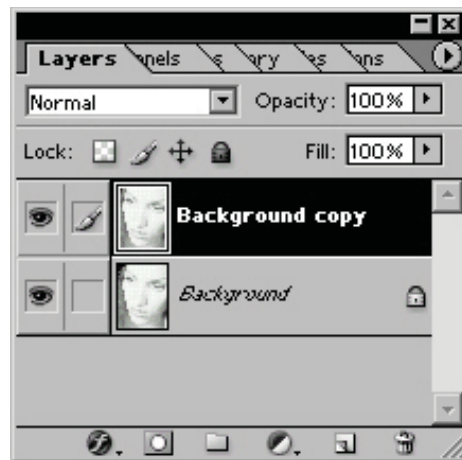


a bit down in the dumps. A little forlorn, a little blue... she could use a makeover! Okay, maybe I have been spending too much time watching TV with my wife. But I think we can at least make a try at cheering her up.

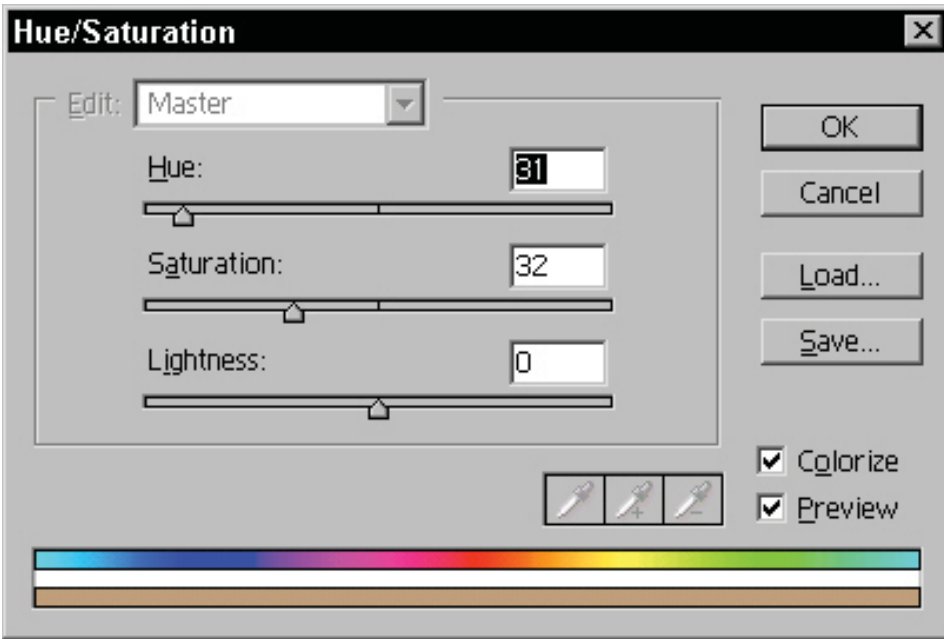
First, let's duplicate the original image and place a copy in its own layer. I always keep a copy of the original on hand.



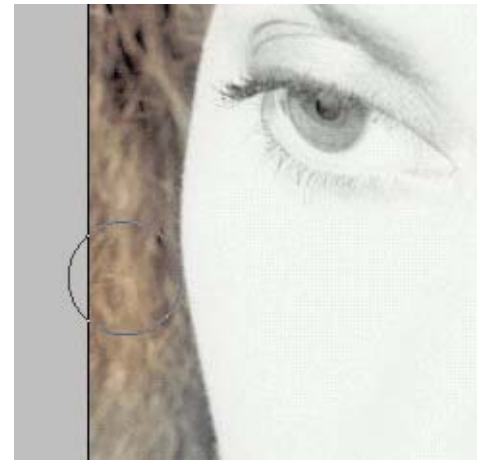
Duplicate the Background layer one more time. Make the top copy invisible for now and select the copy just above the background. We are going to begin our colorizing with the hair on this layer.



Click the Create a New Adjustment Layer icon on the bottom of the Layers Palette, or just go to Layer > New Adjustment Layer. Select Hue/Saturation.



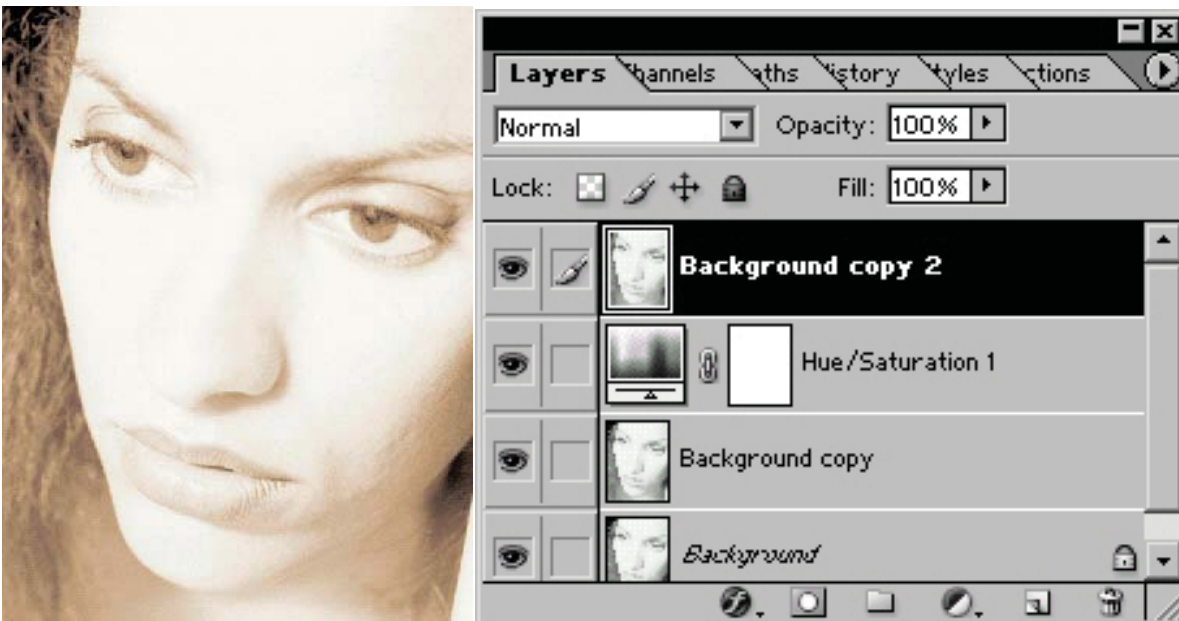
In the Hue/Saturation dialog box, check Colorize in the lower-right corner. Move the sliders to get a nice sepia/brown overall tone, as shown below. When satisfied, click OK.



ground, hit the D key to place black in the front, white in the back.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with masks, this is the one rule that you need to know: Black hides, and White reveals. What do I mean by that, you ask?

Well, the best way to describe it is to simply show you. When you paint with black in a Layer Mask, that portion of the layer contents becomes invisible, revealing the layer beneath. So when I paint with black in

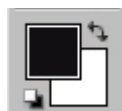


Now select the topmost layer. This is the one we made invisible earlier. We'll perform the majority of our coloring here.

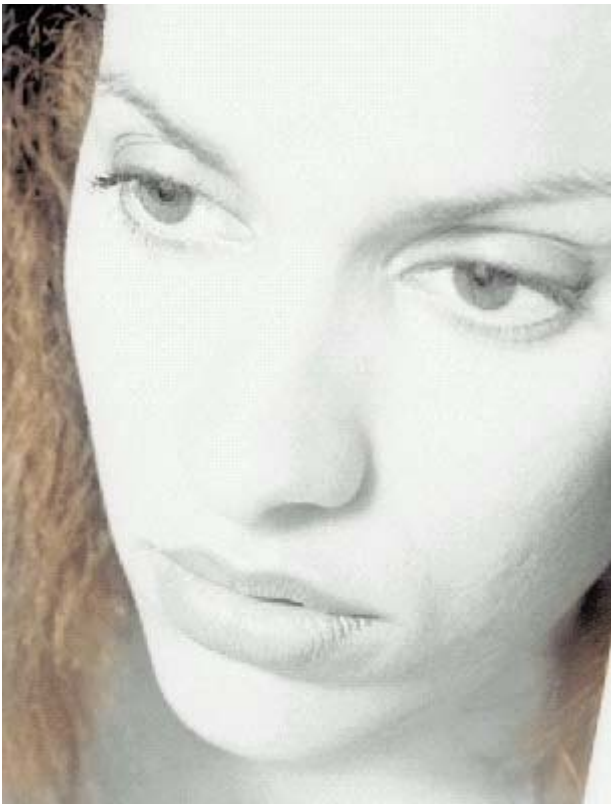


the Layers Palette. Your foreground and background colors will change to Black/White respectively when working on the mask. If white shows up in the fore-

Click the Add a Mask icon on the bottom of

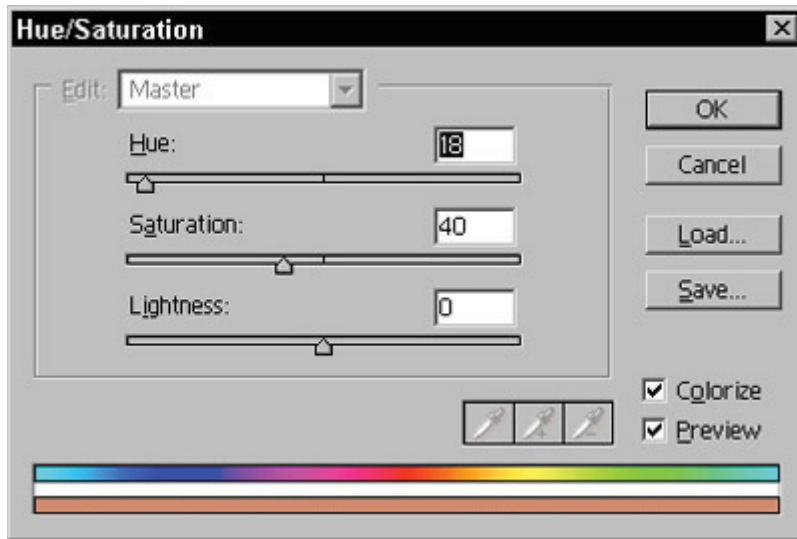
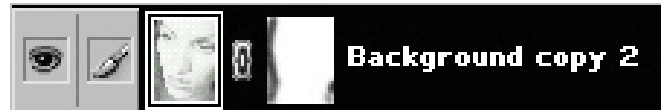


the mask where the hair is on the left side of the image, the layer we just colored beneath is revealed in those areas.



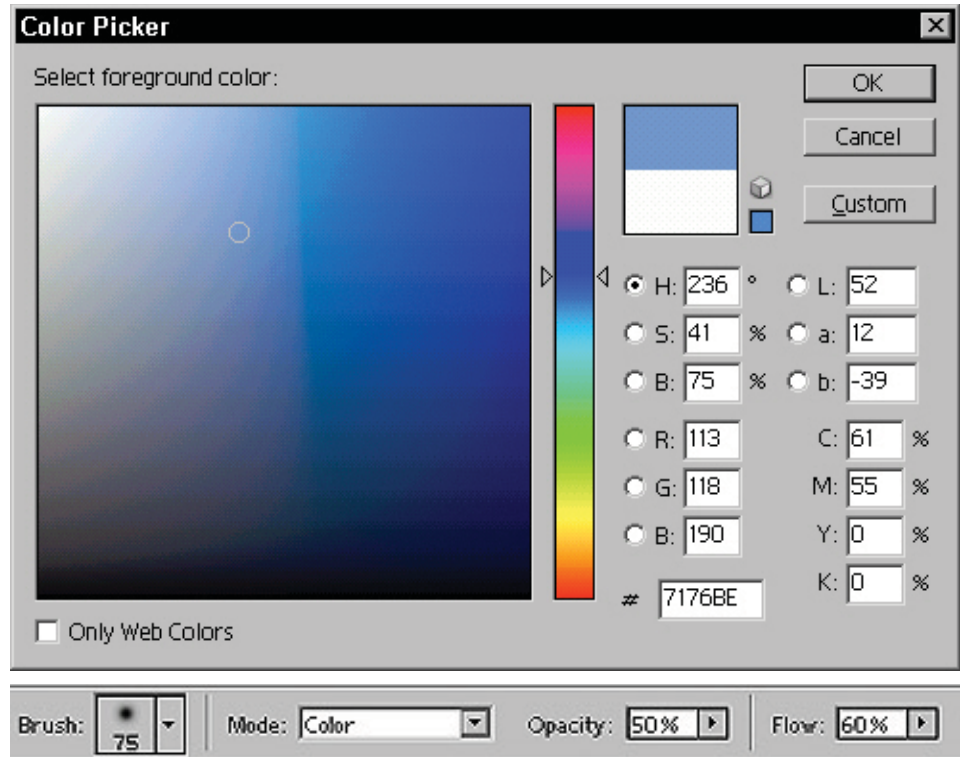
Go ahead and try it, painting all the areas where you see hair. Try adjusting your brush size so that only the hair is revealed.

Now select the image icon in the same layer. This allows you to work on the actual pixels in the layer rather than the mask.

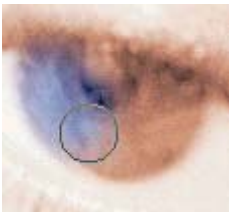


Go to Image > Adjustment > Hue/Saturation. Again, click the Colorize box. Adjust the tone of the layer until you get a subtle flesh tone in the skin. When satisfied, click OK.

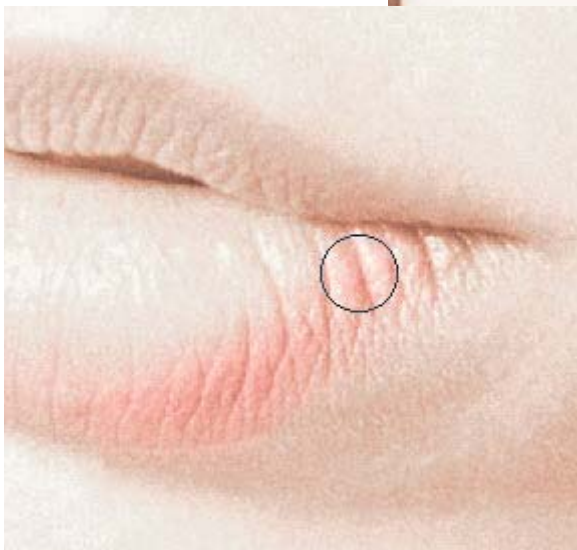
Click on the foreground color in the toolbar to open the Color Picker dialog box. Select a tone for the eyes – in this case I'm going to color them blue. When you have your color, click OK.



This part is important, and is a great trick for coloring eyes, lips, and so forth. Select the Paintbrush tool. Choose a feathered brush no larger than you need for the area you will be working on (in this case the iris). Set the Blending Mode for the brush to Color. Set the Opacity to 50% and the Flow to 60%.



Paint right over the irises. Note that when painting in the Color blending mode the white areas are not colored, only the darker areas are changed.

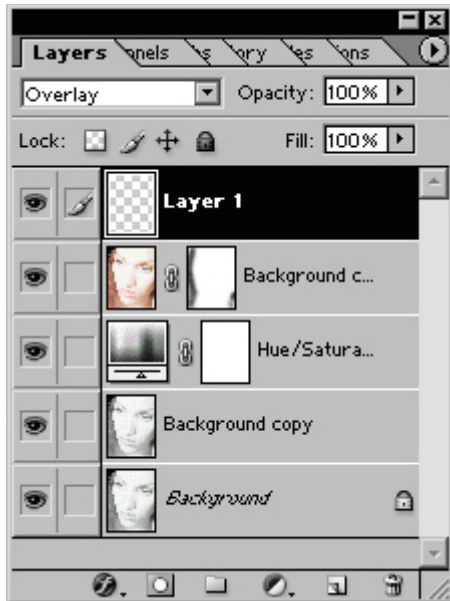


You can use this same trick on the lips. Select a reddish hue as your foreground color and, using the same process as the eyes, color the lips with the Paintbrush.

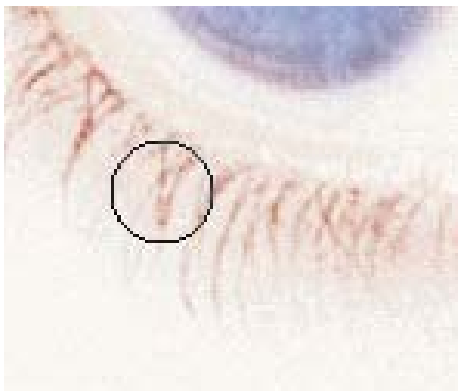
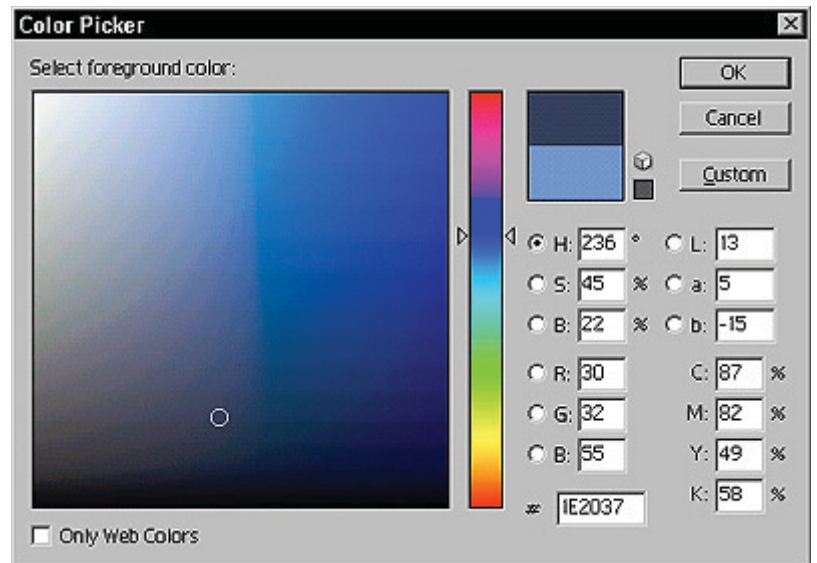
Take a look at the entire image and check your progress thus far. Here's mine (compare it to the original).

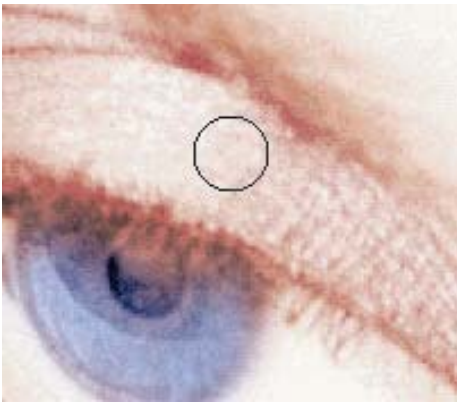


If the next few steps seem a bit overdone, you will have to forgive me. I am not in the habit of applying makeup, so the whole concept of what tones go with what skin type eludes me. I think you will pick up what I'm trying to do, though. Create a new layer. Set the Blending Mode for this layer to Overlay.

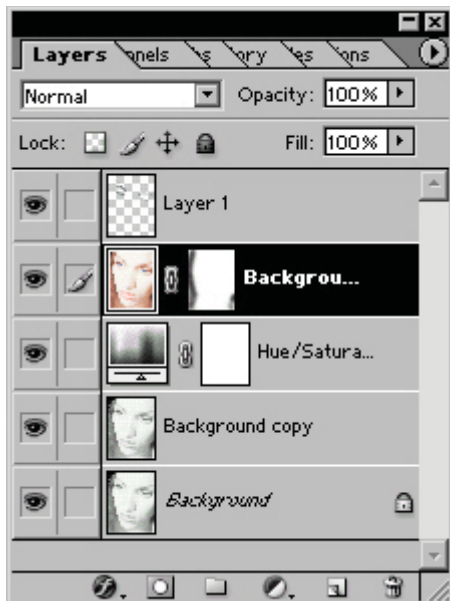


To work on the eyelashes, brows and lids we need a darker tone. Click the foreground color again to open the color picker and select a dark hue. I'm using a dark blue/gray.





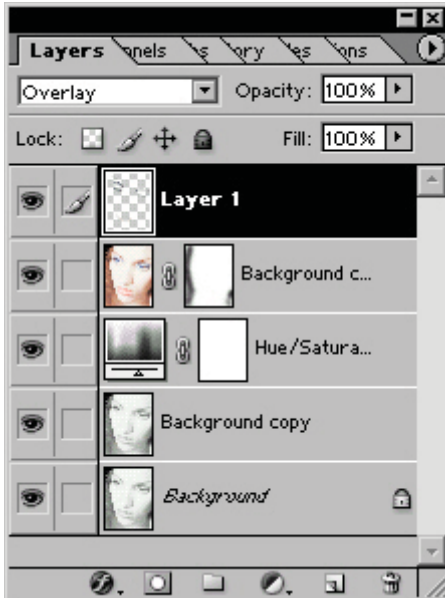
Select the Paintbrush again and paint over the lashes, brows and lids.



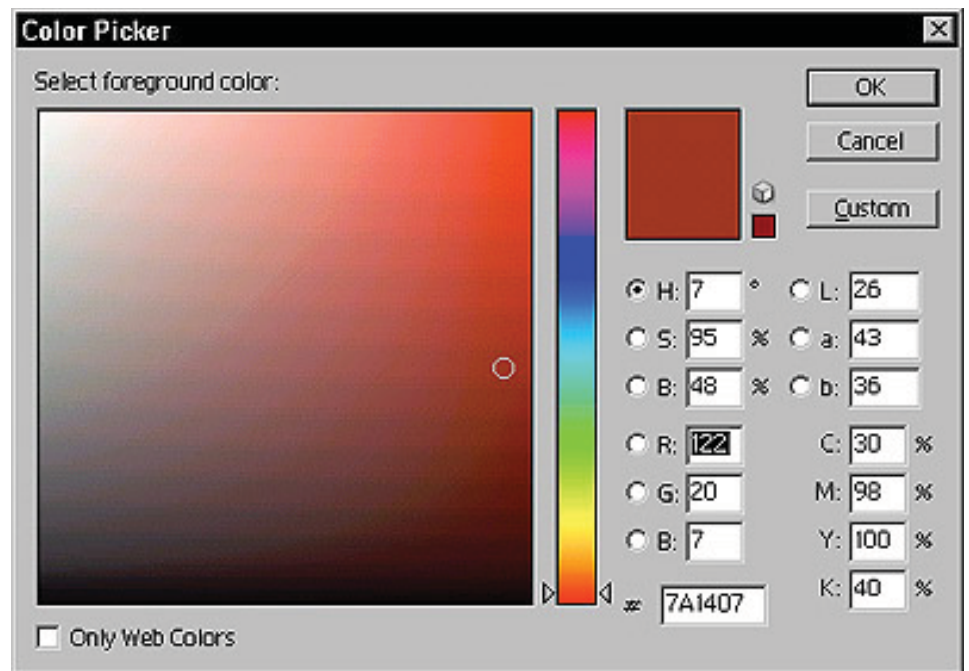
Change the foreground color to a lighter blue/gray. Select the layer with the mask and click on the Paintbrush tool. Keep the Blending Mode of the brush as Color, and paint the areas where you would like the eyeliner and mascara.



Now we can enhance and darken areas with the Burn tool. Select the Burn tool on the toolbar. Set the range to Shadows and Exposure to 20%.



Run the Burn tool lightly over the lips, brows, and areas where the makeup was applied. Select the top layer again. We can give the lips a bit more color by painting in this layer with a red/brown. Open the foreground color picker again. Select a tone (brown/red) for the lips and click OK.



Select the Paintbrush again, in Color Mode. Paint over the lips.

There you have it. You've made two examples using the same process, so you can see what it looks like with more or less makeup. For contrast, take another look at the original image.

