Black and White Photo Series – Color Conversion (Adobe Photoshop)

Jenifer Juris   Use the adjustment layers to their maximum power by customizing the color conversion process.

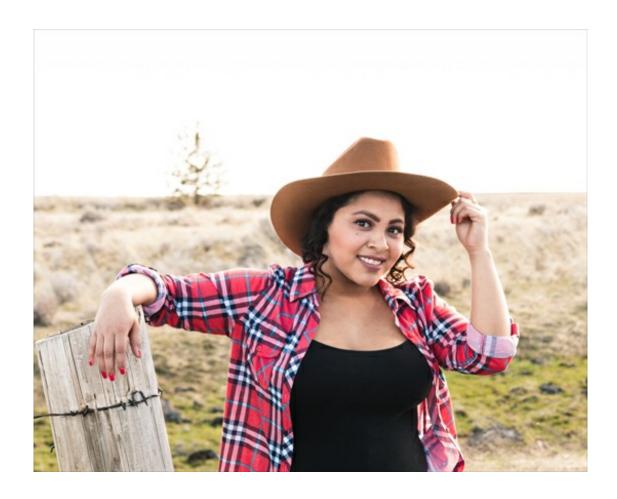### Step One: Open a Photo

- Open a photo (File > Open) that you wish to use.

Why this photo for black and white?

I chose this photo for a few reasons:

- This photo has a single focus or one main subject.
- This photo has various colors in it which will work well for highlighting the power of this tutorial.
- This photo was taken outside so it's well lit and already has good contrast to start with.

Step Two: Convert the Photo to Black and White

- In the Layers panel, click on the Add New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon and choose Black and White.
- In the Black and White (Properties) panel, choose a Preset from the Preset drop down box.

I almost always use the Default preset, but with this photo, I used the Darker preset.

- Adjust the Red, Green, and/or Blue Intensity sliders.

For this photo I made the following adjustments: Red +42, Yellow +63, Cyan +94, and Blue:+82.

The goal is to provide greater contrast and clarity.

In this photo her face is now brighter. Also, changing the Blue and Cyan sliders brought out the smaller lines of color in her shirt.

Tips for using the color sliders:

- Each slider responds differently depending on the amount of that color and overall tone in the photo.
- Increasing the number of a color slider makes that tone lighter. Decreasing the number makes it darker.
- If you are struggling to find the right balance of color conversion, click on Auto. Stop there or use the settings as a starting point.

before (Darker Preset only)   after (Color Conversion)

Step Three: Add a Brightness/Contrast Adjustment Layer

For additional contrast, complete this step.

- In the Layers panel, click on the Add New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon and choose Brightness/Contrast.
- Adjust the Brightness and Contrast sliders to give the photo good contrast.

The goal is to make dark areas black (or almost black) and light areas to be white (or almost white).

For this photo, I adjusted the Brightness to +10 and the Contrast to +13.

Note the changes in her face and that the light areas are more white.

before (Color Conversion)   after (Brightness/Contrast Adjustments)

Here's the final black and white photo:

Step Four: Save Photo

- Save the photo (File > Save As) as a high quality JPEG file with a unique name.
- Close the working copy without saving.

Here's a scrapbook page I made using the photo I converted to black and white using this method:

Credits:
Page & Photo: Jenifer Juris
Tutorial: Black and White Photo Series – Color Conversion by Jenifer Juris
Kit: APP Airy by Anna Aspnes
Extras: Frame – APP Beautiful Day by Anna Aspnes, Elements – APP Document by Anna Aspnes
Fonts: Betterfly Narrow, Betterfly Draft

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