

EXTRACT

digital

RETOUCHING

for FASHION
BEAUTY &
PORTRAIT
PHOTOGRAPHY

photoshop CS4

GRY GARNES

EXCLUSIVE EXTRACT FOR PHOTOSHOPSUPPORT.COM

**DIGITAL RETOUCHING FOR FASHION, BEAUTY
AND PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY
in Photoshop CS4**

GRY GARNESS

© 2009 by Gry Garness

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THE AUTHOR

Gry Garness works in London as a digital photographic retoucher and Adobe Photoshop trainer. She has for several years been an Adobe Certified Expert (ACE) and has a broad range of other qualifications, amongst them a BA Hons Photography and Master of Crafts Hairdresser (Norway).

Since graduating from London College of Printing in 1995 she has enjoyed a successful career within photography – shooting fashion, music and advertising for clients such as Body Shop, Sure, American Express, Polydor, British Airways, Martini, Marie Claire, Black Book, Scene, and Atomica magazine.

She retouches on commission for various top photographers in the UK – specializing in retouching personalities within music and entertainment, fashion and celebrity.

Her training and retouching clients include photographers, retouchers, design agencies, publishing companies, picture libraries, broadcasting & production companies, corporate organizations, charities, photographic labs, printers and digital hire companies.

She has also contributed Photoshop tutorials for What Digital Camera and Advanced Photoshop Magazine.

USEFUL to know about the new LAYOUT

APPLICATION BAR

The **Application Bar** takes some things that are already available in the tools and Menu, placing them together in a single bar. It contains a **Bridge** button, A **View** dropdown for **Guides/Grids/Rulers** (also found in the View menu) as well as **Zoom level**, **Hand tool**, **Zoom tool** and the new **Rotate View** tool. **Arrange Documents** is also found here, as well as **Screen Mode** and the **Workspace** button. I've moved it to sit right on top of the **OPTIONS bar** in my customized workspace so that it takes up less space.

THE APPLICATION FRAME

If you should choose **Window>Application Frame** the Photoshop app becomes a window in itself. This is the way it's always worked on the Windows platform. This is still **not** the default option on Macs.

TABBED DOCUMENT VIEW

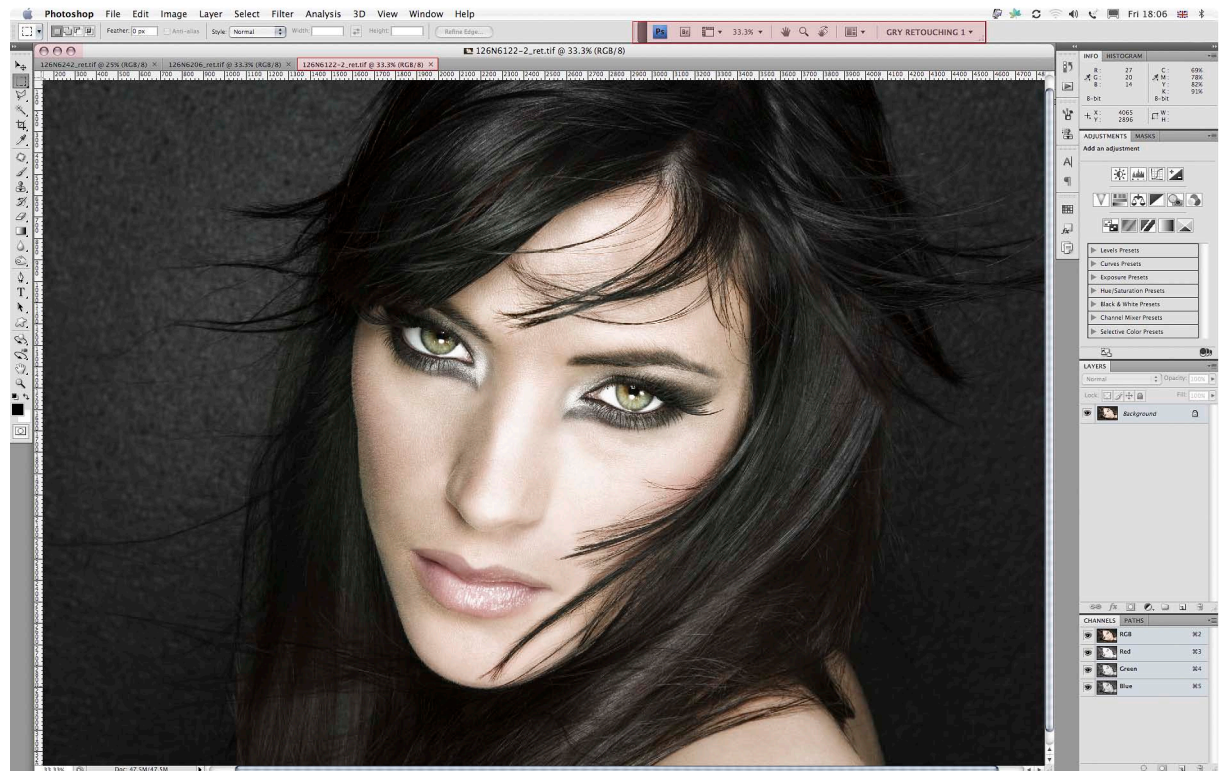
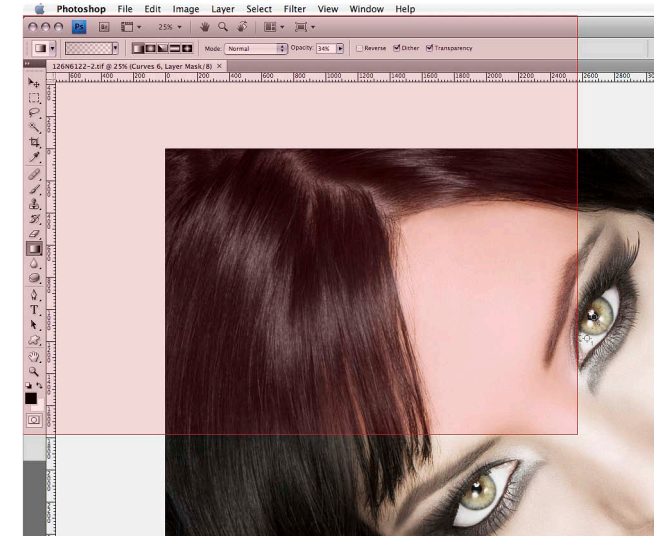
When working with more than one open document in Photoshop we now have a **tabbed documents** view, similar to some web browsers. It provides an efficient way of toggling between several documents, making a quick comparison for continuity of color and retouching, and even comparing alternative versions of the same image. Most of all, it's neat and tidy. In the screenshot on this page we actually have three documents open, with only one showing (red tab). The other tabs can be clicked on to see the other images one by one. If you need to rearrange the tabs, you can drag and drop them in the order you want. If you like to use a shortcut to toggle through the tabs, use **Control + Tab** to go forward, and **Control + Shift + Tab** (both PC and Mac) to go backwards. An image can be dragged outside the group as a free-floating window.



Above: The new **Application Bar**

Right: The **Application Frame** encompasses everything below the Menu, including panels and the tools. Compare it to the screenshot below.

Below: The full interface as I normally choose to work with it. The **APPLICATION bar** is moved into the **OPTIONS bar** and I choose to work without the Application frame. Note that there are 3 images open in tabbed view. See also the next page for a 3-up view.



viewing MULTIPLE IMAGES in CS4

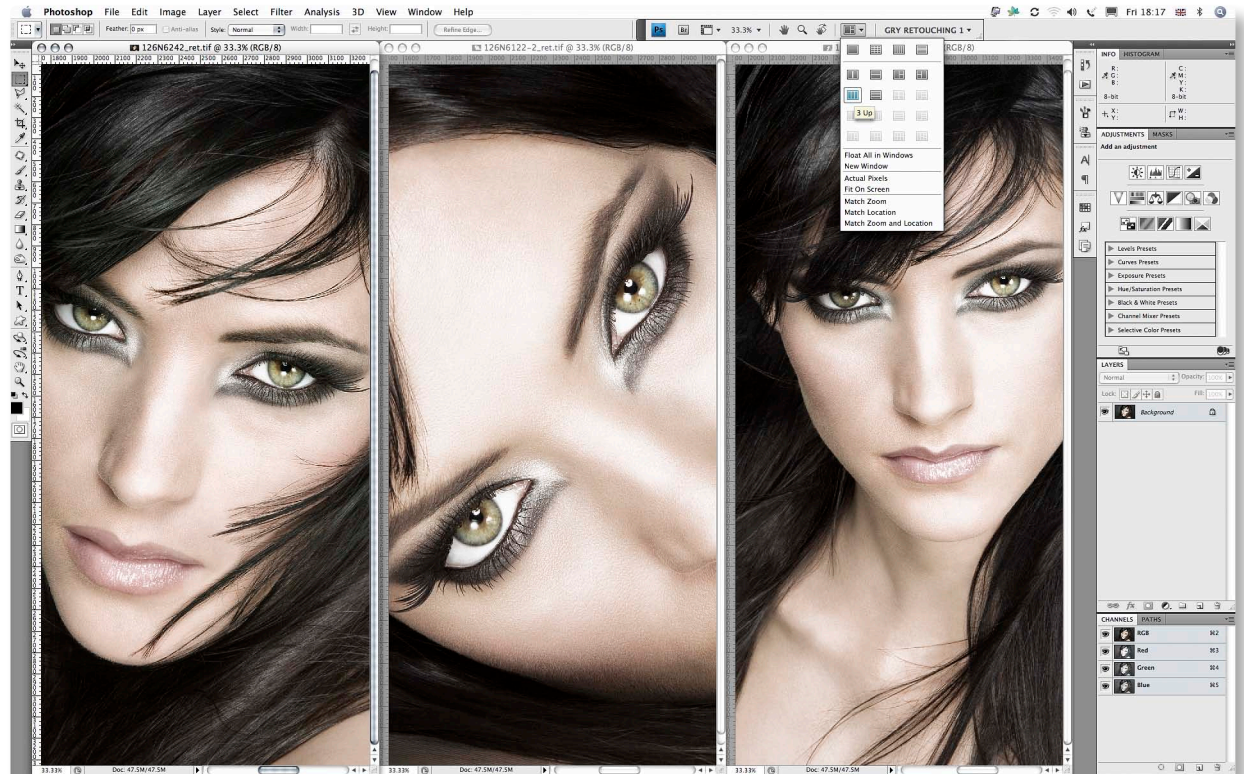
A free-floating window can even be placed on top of the Panels – something you couldn't do before. To put a floating document back into the group, drag it to the top bar, and take notice of a blue line appearing, ready for you to drop it back in as a tab. I do sometimes find it awkward that you can't turn off the tabbed behavior – even just for a single session where it's more practical to work without it. I get around it by a custom shortcut for **Window>Arrange>Float All in Windows**. You can go to the **Edit>Keyboard Shortcuts** and make your own workaround.

ARRANGE DOCUMENTS

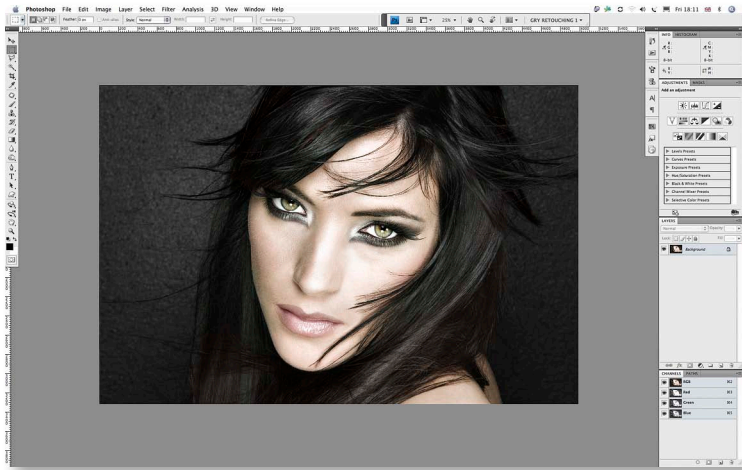
You can easily view the images in a **2-up**, **3-up** and **4-up** view. These views are selected by choosing the **Arrange Documents** button in the **Application Bar**. They open up in free floating windows. You can also match the zoom, and the location, and pan all the images at once, or individually, by holding down **Shift + Spacebar** and panning with the stylus or mouse. This is great for fashion stories, or any images in series where continuity is essential.

DRAG-DROPPING BETWEEN TABS

When working with tabbed documents you may wonder how you can (with GPU enabled) drag and drop a layer or a selection from one image to another. Just choose the **Move** tool as you normally would, and drag the layer or selected area to the **tab** of the target document. After a very short delay, this document is brought to the front, and an **arrow with a plus sign appears**. You can either **click** where you want the item to be placed, or **shift-click** to place it **centered** in the image. You can of course copy and paste if you prefer that.



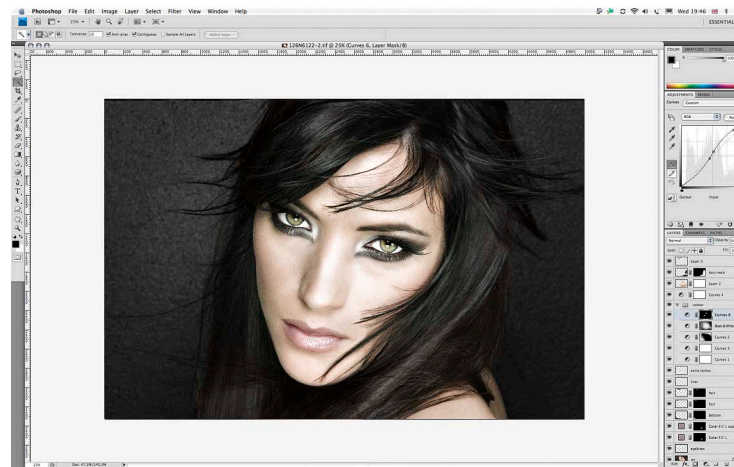
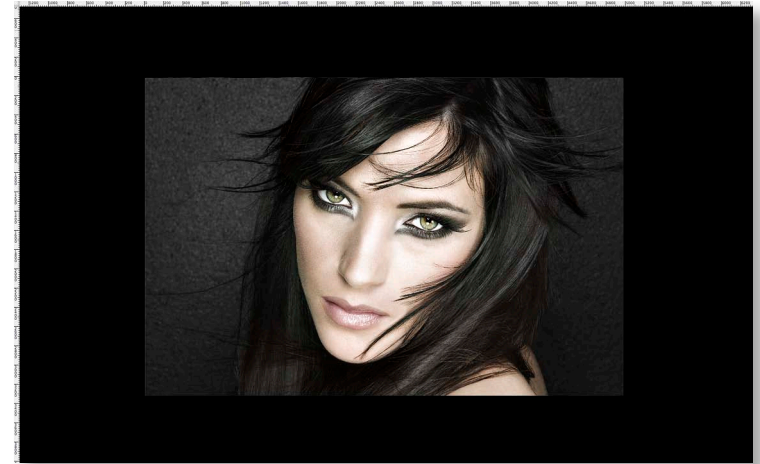
*You can separate an image from the tabs if you wish – by **dragging its tab** away from the rest. If you want all the documents separated, use **Float all in Windows**. If you change your mind, you can then **Consolidate all to Tabs**.*



Left: The **Full Screen with Menu** mode

Right: The **Full Screen Mode** without menu or Panels

Below: My customized **Standard Screen Mode** with an almost-white background.



screen MODES

After a version of Screen Mode overload – there were 4 modes in CS3 – Photoshop has thankfully gone back to the original **three screen modes**. You can still toggle through them by pressing **F** or use the button in the Application Bar. The new thing is that you can easily customize the background color of each of them in **Preferences>Interface**. I am at the moment experimenting with the **Standard Screen Mode** at 245/245/245. This is 10 points away from absolute white, but calibrates the eyes to the detailed highlights in the image, and mimics the relationship between an exhibition image with a white matte around it, or a print on paper. At this stage I'm still experimenting, and may go even brighter. This canvas color is not set in stone, and I may find that I'll change it from one project to the next. The default gray for the **Full Screen With Menu** mode is the perfect background for most color corrections. The Full Screen mode is where I personally do the bulk of the work on individual images. The **Full Screen (without Menu) black**

color is great for assessing contrast, and to judge if the image stands up to it, or just looks milky and flat. Between these three views I can get a pretty good sense of how the image will present itself in a different environment from the screen. Note that the black Full Screen without menu mode is also without Panels – oops Panels – but if you hover the cursor over the right edge of the screen they pop up temporarily.

In Standard Mode you may have noticed a new **asterisk*** appearing after the name and mode at the top of the document. If you see one, it indicates that the **document is unsaved**. If you see an asterisk within the inverted commas, it means the document profile does not match the color working space. This is not a new thing – it's been around for several versions.

DODGING and
BURNING concepts



WHEN TO USE IT

This image has been retouched using only the dodging and burning techniques described in the tutorial. Removing freckles and birthmarks is not something I'd normally recommend it in a character portrait – but I wanted to show the full-on treatment on a natural face, in order to make my points about the workings of D&B. It's a great way to work when you have enough time, and with sensitivity and skill the result can be amazing. Without skill, time and patience the results can be appalling! It's very time consuming and isn't really something I employ much on press shots if I have 30 minutes per image. However, you'd be surprised at how quickly the image changes. Often I've heard a gasp of surprise from a client when I've turned off the layer eyeball after 5 minutes work. The progress is so subtle that to them it looks as if I've been doing virtually nothing, but when the difference is revealed it turns out there has been quite an impact. This is also the reason why it can easily go wrong, and why so many botched jobs have been the result of this technique. I tend to combine it with other steps in the workflow, where I need to refine with some extra control.

THE IMPACT OF DODGE AND BURN

The term Dodging & Burning comes from **photographic printing**, where **dodging means selective lightening**, and **burning means darkening a local area of a print**. In Photoshop it means pretty much the same thing, but we can also add another dimension – **color**. We can influence the color at the same time as we lighten or darken. The good thing about retouching like this is that you're not actually moving pixels around, you're just modifying the pixels that are there in the first place. This seems to lead many to think that it's less destructive than cloning or healing, but that's not necessarily so. Judging from the amount of botched attempts, and over-retouched images I've seen, caused by over-enthusiastic D&B, it's fully possible to lose all

skin texture and even change the shape of the face. It's important to be aware of the limitations of this technique. It doesn't come with a built-in guarantee against over-retouching. If you don't know when to stop, **D&B can have pretty much the same effect as blurring**. Stop for a moment and think – what blurring actually does is average out the pixels, making them similar to each other. D&B aims at brightening the too-dark pixels and darkening the too-bright ones – in other words making them more similar. If you become too blinkered you'll find yourself taking hours to achieve what a simple blurring could do. I suppose the art is to know when to stop.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS AND TECHNIQUES

You have to consider how much D&B the specific image can take. Typically you can see a **strange flat color** emerging when you brighten it too much in the shadows. Under the eye on this image there is definitely a borderline area. Often you'll see this with an underexposed image that's been pushed in the processing, and this will limit how much further you can lighten it. When you then try to lighten it, there is simply **no variation in detail**, so you end up with a really **flat area**, lacking in local contrast and pixel variety.

You can use both **airbrush** and non-airbrush for dodging and burning. It really depends on your technique and the task at hand. For small blemishes and small brushes you may not want to use an airbrush, but for bigger softer brushes and shading it makes sense to use it.

WORK BIG OR SMALL

There are two main ways to work with D&B. One is to **work on a pixel level**, zooming right in, using a very small brush. The other is to use it as **shading**, and correcting areas of undesirable exposure – darkening some areas and lifting others. On [p.92](#) I use it to shape

and shade a face. In this tutorial we are using small brushes on a type of skin that has a lot of variation. Although I've exclusively used D&B for the whole image, this was for your benefit only. I'd never work this way. I tend to use the **Clone** and **Heal tools first**, zapping anything obvious, while preserving and improving the texture. I then use a **variation of the methods** described on the next page. I have to admit that I often merge them down into the **Retouch** layer, simply to avoid **layer conflict**. Other times I leave them editable. It all depends on the amount of time I have, and how confident I feel.

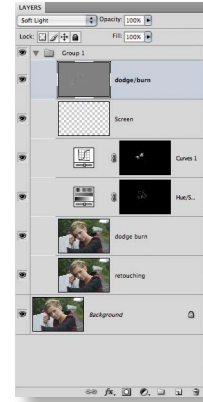
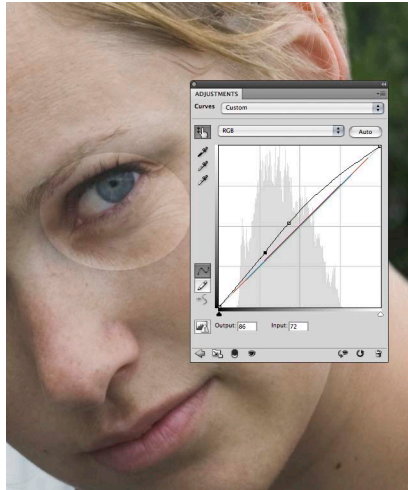
THE LOCAL DODGE & BURN TOOLS

If you're going to use these tools, always work on a **duplicate layer**, avoid working on big areas, and use **low exposure** with **small brushes**. As you're working, turn the eyeball of the duplicate layer on and off at regular intervals. The changes may seem subtle but the effect when it all adds up can be dramatic. By setting the **History Source** at the state where you start dodging/burning, you can locally revert with the **History Brush** if it all goes pear shaped, brushing at a lower opacity, to reduce **some of the effect, but not all**. One rather unique thing about the D&B tools is the ability to target highlights, midtones or shadows, so you can afford to be a bit more sloppy in your handiwork than with the other methods, and are therefore suited to less skilled users. The tools also have a hidden function – you can temporarily hold down the **Alt-key** to switch between the two, so that if you're using the **Burn tool** and you need to do a quick **Dodge** you can give it a few strokes without actually switching tools. This is called **spring-loading** – something there's much more of in CS4.

The background on this page is zoomed-in skin, slightly sharpened for your benefit, so you can really appreciate that skin is just a mosaic of pixels with a regular/irregular pattern.

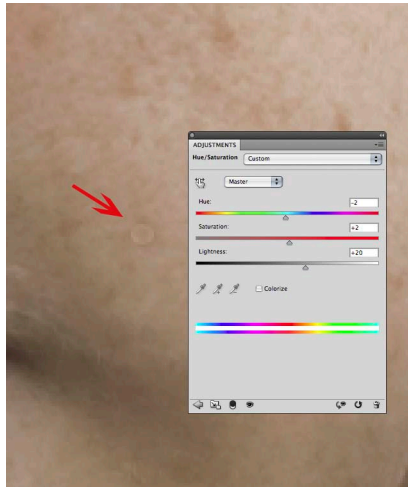
USING CURVES

I tend to selectively lighten and darken with a **Curves adjustment layer** on virtually every image. It isn't strictly D&B but it can have exactly that function. With Curves you can control all the aspects of color, brightness and contrast. It's ideal for larger surfaces, but also for the smaller irregularities in skin – particularly good for toning down dark blemishes, eye bags and unwanted shadows. I always make a **test patch** first, applying the adjustment to the test patch in order to see how it affects the area that I want to adjust – as well as the area surrounding it. Sometimes, quite surprisingly the areas surrounding the patch and was going to adjust can also benefit from the adjustment. See also [p.81-84](#).

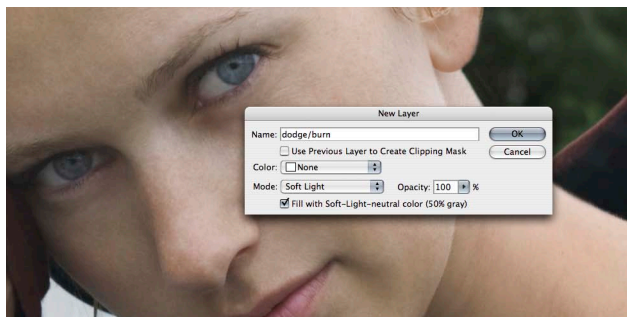


HUE SATURATION

I find that the following method tends to matte down the skin, and if that's the result you desire – fine. It's perfect for this image, where the skin is quite dry. Draw a **tight selection** around a dark spot and make **Hue Saturation adjustment layer**. Drag up the **Lightness** slider to match the area surrounding it, perhaps even a bit brighter. Add a couple of points of **Saturation** to compensate for the greying that may occur, and adjust **Hue** if you feel it needs it. **Edit>Fill** the layer-mask with **black**. Pick a small soft brush tool, and use 30% opacity, white. **Zoom** in so you don't strain your eyes. Aim to get a **regular pattern**, swiftly dabbing over the darkest patches, trying to avoid the rest of the skin.



Some retouchers like to work in Quickmask with a black brush, then invert the mask, go to selection mode, and apply the adjustment. That does not work for me. I like to work visually, seeing the effect of what I'm doing straight away, without any guesswork. Having worked for years with film photography, I used to have to view my work upside down, back to front and mirrored, see my results as a negative with an orange overlay. You bet I appreciate an immediate result these days!



USING A SCREEN LAYER FOR DODGING

I generally find myself dodging much more often than burning, and this is definitely one of my favorite ways to dodge. By simply making a **blank layer**, and blending it to **Screen mode**, you can **sample the color of the skin nearby** and use this color to dodge with. Just find the right brush opacity, and it's really intuitive. If you have a pink blemish (or area) and you want to **drive it more towards yellow as you lighten it**, you simply sample a more yellow area of skin and brush over the pink. For this we work with very low opacities.

SOFT LIGHT LAYER FOR DODGING/BURNING

This is another way of separating the dodging/burning from the image layers, and is done with a **'neutral layer'** which can be lightened and darkened. I use this kind of layer for detailed skin work, but also for shading, as on [p.92](#). Go to **Layer>New>Layer**. In the dialog you set the following: Scroll from **Normal** to **Soft Light**. Then **tick the box** at the bottom of the dialog **Fill with soft-light-neutral color 50% gray**. For dodging I use a **white** brush at a low opacity. For burning I often make a slightly **warm dark color** to avoid greyness in the skin. A layer like this should sit on **top of the layer stack** to not interfere with any underlying cloning or healing. You also need to be aware of its impact if you continue to work on underlying layers.

DRIVING A COLOR WITH HUE

For red ears, noses, and other extremities, we can use a quick trick which is not strictly dodging or burning, but I'll include it here anyway. On a pixel layer, grab a **soft edged Brush tool** and set it to **30/30 opacity/flow**. Scroll the mode to **Hue** in the options bar. For pink'ish skin, **sample a more yellow skin color**, by **Alt-clicking**, and then **brush over the pink zones**. This drives the pink color towards a more golden hue, making the skin color also more uniform. Here I used it on the nose, the ear, and below the eyes.

SCREEN
LAYER in fore-
head

CURVES on
eyes & some
of the skin

NEUTRAL
LAYER on
hand & detail

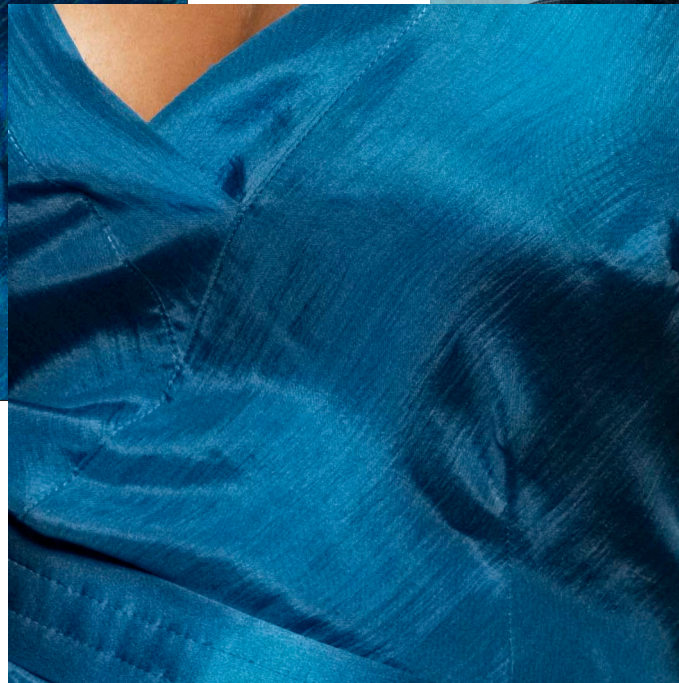
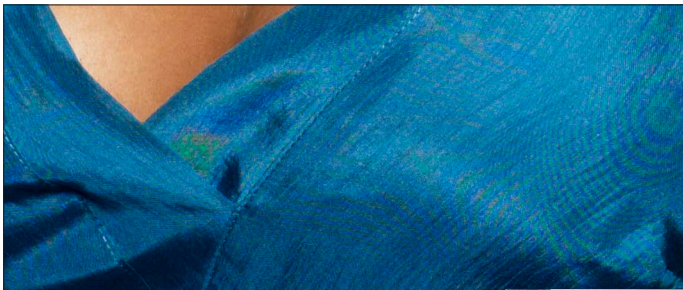
HUE
SATURATION
on skin marks

DODGE &
BURN tools
on chin

HUE BRUSH
on nose, ear
& below eyes

Moiré can occur in fabrics when the pattern in the subject itself matches the pattern of the imaging chip. It usually happens when subject is shot in very sharp focus, and sometimes, just a change of angle in the shoot may help avoid it. Usually it comes as a surprise when you open the images after the shoot. Lets look at how we reduce this interference pattern.

REDUCING MOIRE patterns



1. MAKE A LAYER VIA COPY OF THE FABRIC

Make a selection of the whole garment. You need to select the whole garment because you may have to use some of the effect in places where it's strictly not needed, in order to achieve a uniform effect. Press **Command + J** to make a Layer via Copy.

2. BLUR HARD TO ELIMINATE COLOR AND PATTERNS

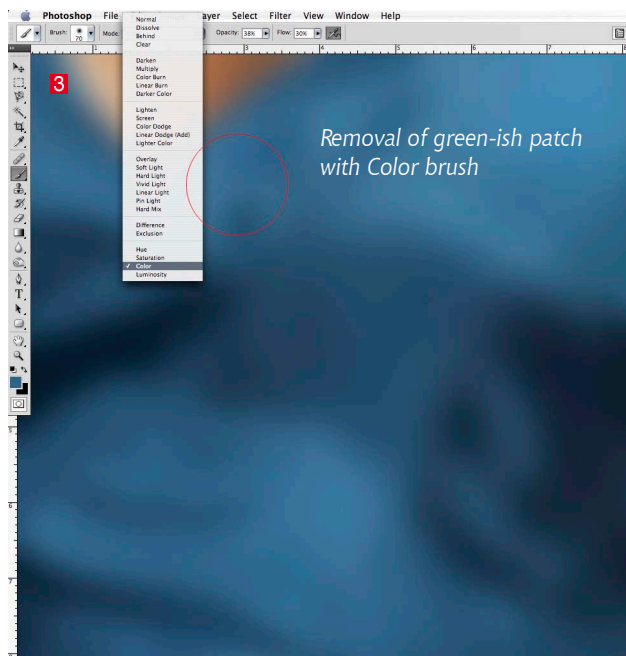
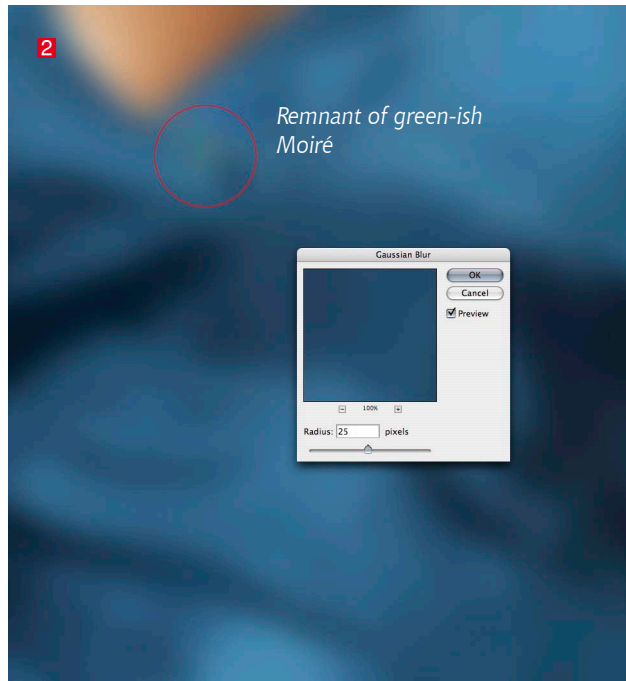
The new layer must be blurred enough to eliminate the bands of color, using **Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur**. On this document I used as setting all of **25 px**, and as you can see the blur is really powerful, yet retains some of the shape of the garment. We also need to put a small amount of noise into the blurred layer. Go to **Filter > Noise > Add Noise**, using **0.75 px, Gaussian**, and non-monochromatic.

3. USE A COLOR BRUSH

There may still be some evidence of the unwanted color in the blurred layer. Choose the **Brush tool**, at a setting of **30/30 opacity/flow**, using the **mode Color**. Use the same blue color as the dress, sampling nearby. This can be brushed with a few light strokes over the area, and the unwanted colors should disappear.

4. BLEND AND MATCH THE COLOR

We now **blend the layer itself to Color mode**, through the blending mode drop-down in the **LAYERS** panel. When we apply such a great amount of blurring, it can dull down the rich color of the dress, and the Color mode isn't always faithful. To compensate, we can make Curves layer, which is given a little bit of midtone contrast – in other words, an **S-curve**. Do this in the following way: Make a **Curves adjustment layer**, and before you do the actual S-curve, press **Alt + Command + G** to create a **Clipping Group**. Make the S-adjustment, and compare with the underlying layer by clicking the **eyeball** of the anti-moire layer off – and then back on.



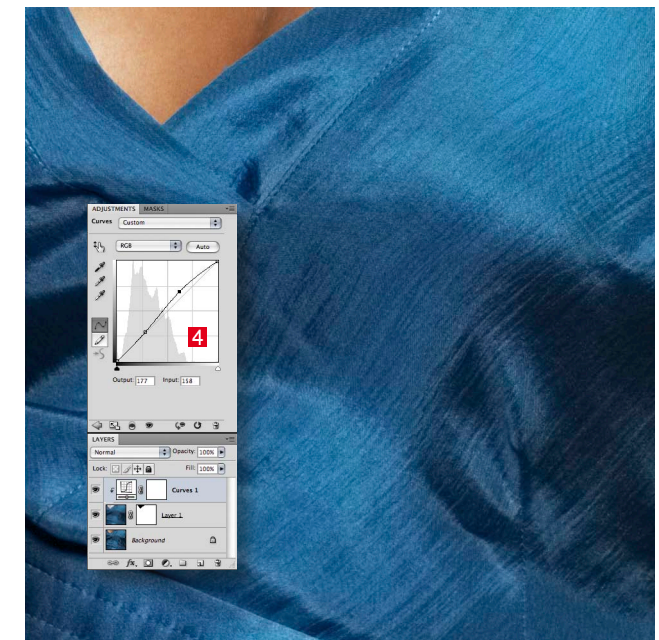
5. MASK THE LAYER

You can add a blank white **layer-mask**, and brush away any spill with a **100% opacity black brush**. Alternatively you can use **Layer > Layer Mask > Hide All**, and pick a **white big soft Brush** tool to reveal the layer – just where it's needed. Make sure none of the color spills onto the skin, and that there's no visible difference in texture to the surrounding fabric.

The result doesn't remove 100% of the interference, but it is a great improvement – completely removing the bands of color. There may be some residue of the banding – possibly leaving some dark rings, which you may have to lighten selectively.

Top Left: The blur does its best to get rid of unwanted color but there still remains a resistant spot. This is removed in the screenshot bottom Left.

Below: The finished result, and the S-curve.



GRAFTING – the art of borrowing

Grafting is simply borrowing a piece of the image, and placing it over an area where you use it as a 'patch'. This method has more control and flexibility than cloning or patching. It can be used to repair backgrounds and virtually anything else. We can combine it with masking and blending modes, but let's start with a quick no-frills hair graft.

The gaps in the hair were really distracting to this image. This can easily happen when hair is scraped back after being styled and re-styled all day, full of product and completely uncooperative. With grafting it's fairly easy to fix.



1. MAKE THE SELECTION

Make a generous **Freehand Lasso** selection around the area you want to borrow from. Don't even bother feathering. Here I wanted to borrow a chunk of hair from slightly above the thin patch.

2. COPY IT ONTO A LAYER

Hit **Edit>Copy Merged** followed by **Edit>Paste**. In this way you will avoid layer conflicts if you have several layers. Press the **V** key to select the **Move tool**. Get used to this little sequence because you'll be doing it often. Move the patch to the area you need to cover. You might have to **transform** the patch in its new location. Quite often a small rotate is needed to make it fit. **Command+T** gives you **Free Transform**, where you can **rotate** or **scale** the layer directly.

3. WARP IF NECESSARY

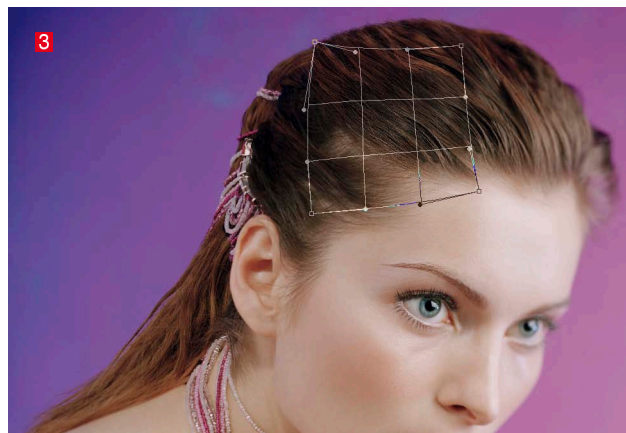
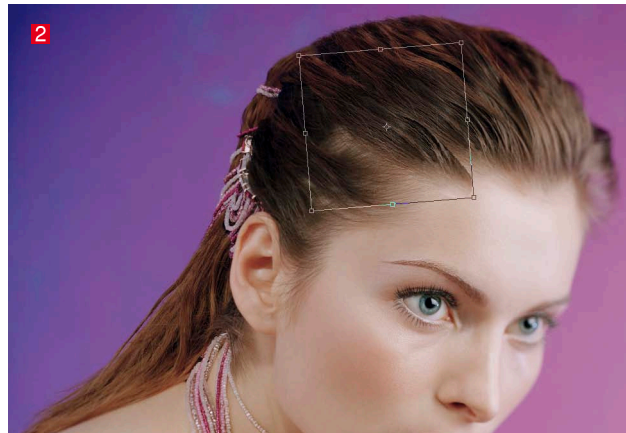
If you need to match the direction of the hair, you can access the **Warp** button before you commit the transform. See [p.152](#). for more on Warp. It's a wonderful feature for this kind of thing, as it lets you shape the hair in the right direction, matching the surrounding hair. Here it worked beautifully.

4. MASK AND REVEAL THE PATCH

Go to **Layer>Add Layer Mask>Hide All**. This creates a black mask, hiding the patch. Grab the **Brush tool** and a **soft brush**. Set the opacity to 100%, **white**, and reveal the hair patch with the brush – only where you need it. Nudge position if necessary. If you go too far in revealing, press **X** on the keyboard to reverse the foreground color to **black**, and hide more of the patch again.

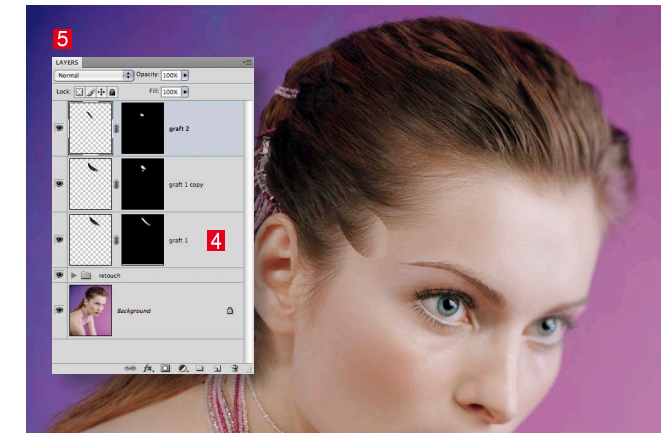
5. REPEAT FOR THE NEXT PATCH

You can sometimes use a graft twice, but do transform it slightly to avoid repetition, and later clone away any obvious repeating patterns. The best thing however, is to make a completely new graft.



In many cases you might find it more practical to choose a layer-mask that reveals the whole patch, and then brush away the parts of the layer that you don't need. It's your choice, and it also depends on the size of the grafted patch. Try to be logical and flexible in the way you work with layer-masking – not getting stuck in a rut.

Grafting can also be used to repair backgrounds, edges of clothing where the edge has a particular texture you need to preserve, and also within fabrics/clothing. I use grafting all the time. Sometimes I merge it down to the Retouch layer. Other times I leave it on a separate layer.



OPTIONAL COLOR CORRECTION:

If color adjustments are needed in order to match the surrounding areas, do the following:

Make a **Curves** adjustment layer and before you make any changes, press **Alt+Command+G**. This creates a **Clipping Group**, allowing the Curves adjustment to only affect the layer-graft you just made. Now you can **edit the Curve** so that the color of the edge blends with the surroundings as much as possible. In some cases you may need to draw a **Gradient** on the Curves layer-mask, to make it blend better all around. This is quite a workaround, so the graft better be worth it!