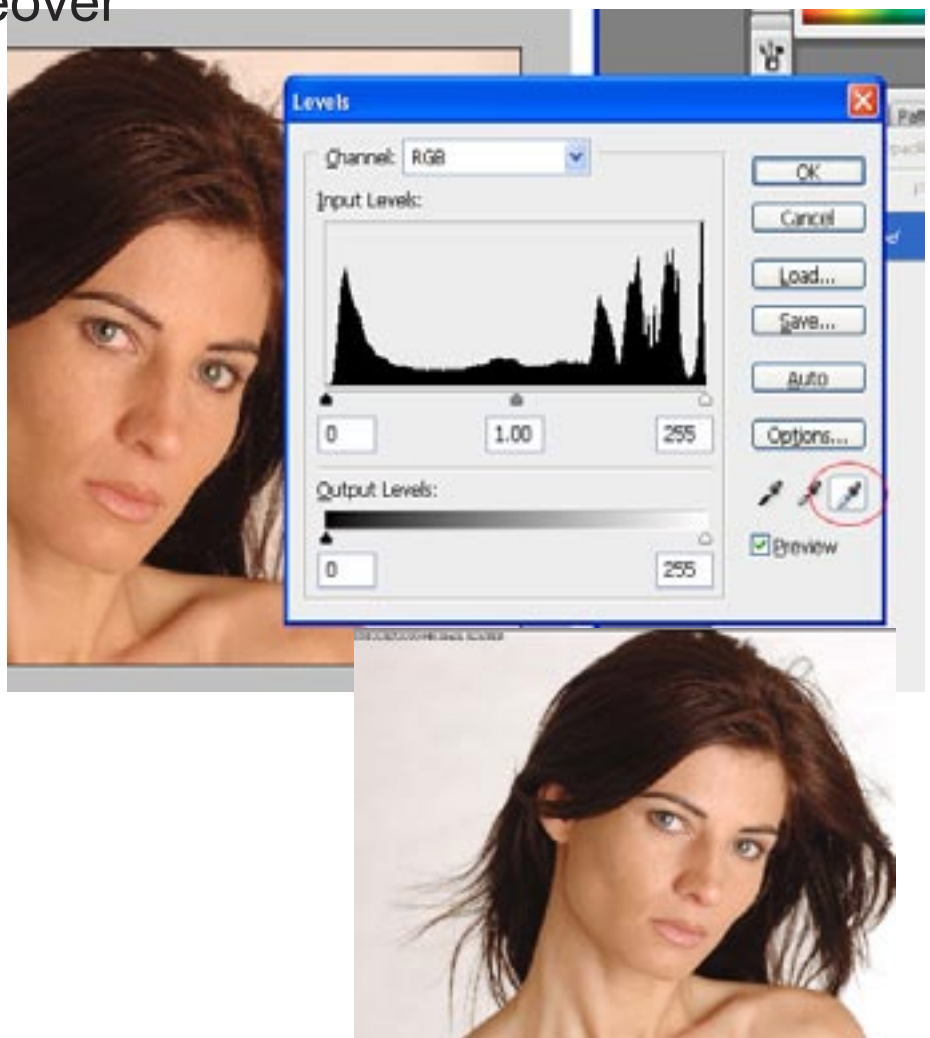
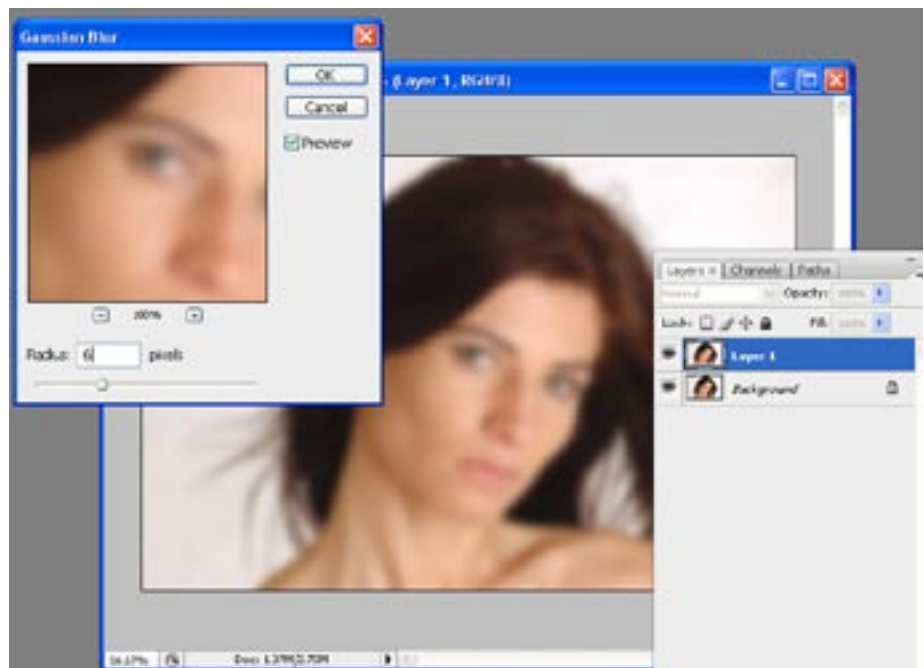


The Five-Minute Makeover

STEP 1: Open your image and let's begin by getting a better overall balance of color in the photo. Open the Levels (Ctrl = L) and get the Set White Point, aka the highlight eyedropper, and click it once on the image background to remove the overall color cast.



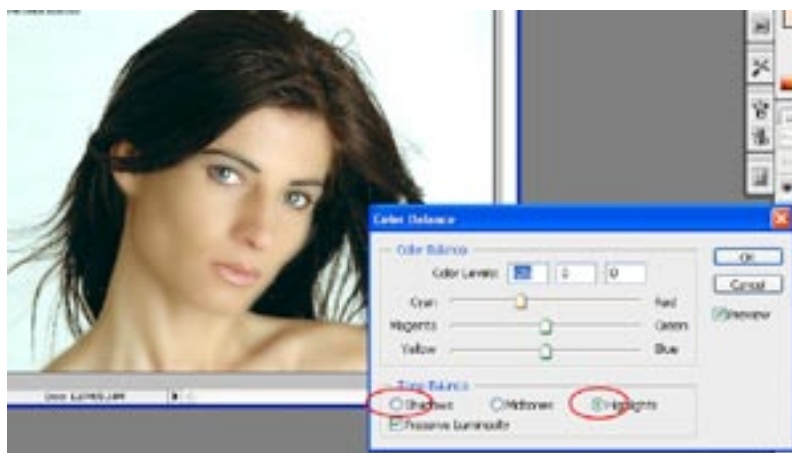
STEP 2: Duplicate the Background Layer. Then go under the Filter Menu and choose Blur > Gaussian Blur and enter a Radius of 6 pixels. A larger resolution file would require adjusting the amount of blur.



STEP 3: Hold the Alt key (Mac: Option) and add a Layer Mask by clicking the Add Layer Mask icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. This puts a black mask over your blurry layer and hides the blurriness behind that mask. Now set your foreground color to white, get a medium sized, soft edge brush (set the opacity of the brush to 50%) and paint over her skin while avoiding any detail areas like her eyes, lips, eyebrows, nostrils or anything with edges.



STEP 4: Now we need to change her hair color which has a lot of red and we want brown. Click on the create New Adjustment Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette and choose Color Balance from the pop-up menu. In the dialog that appears, click on the Shadows button, then drag the top slider to the left, away from red (-26) toward Cyan until the hair turns brown. There will be some red left so select the highlights button and the same thing, drag away from Red towards Cyan until the red in her hair turns brown and click OK.



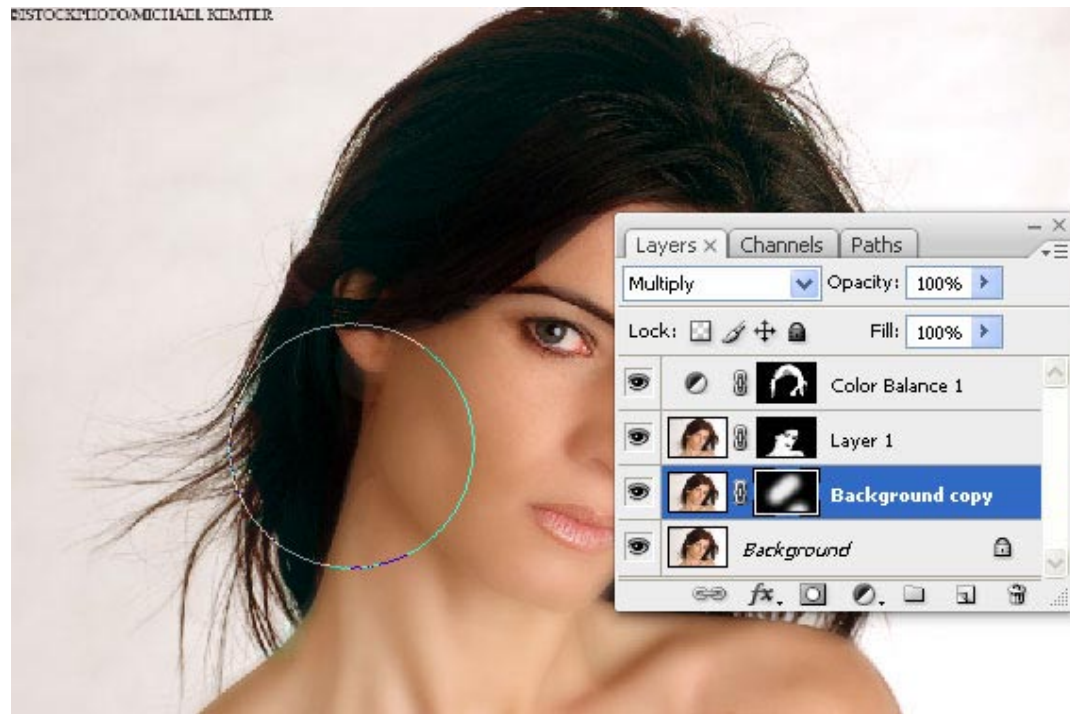
STEP 5: Now everything has a bluish cast and that's the advantage of using an Adjustment Layer. Press Ctrl + I (Mac: Command + I) and this inverts the adjustment layer's mask and fills it with black, hiding the bluish-cyan adjustment behind the mask. Now get the Brush tool and paint in white over her hair to reveal the brown version of her hair without revealing too much of the cyan from the Color Balance adjustment layer.



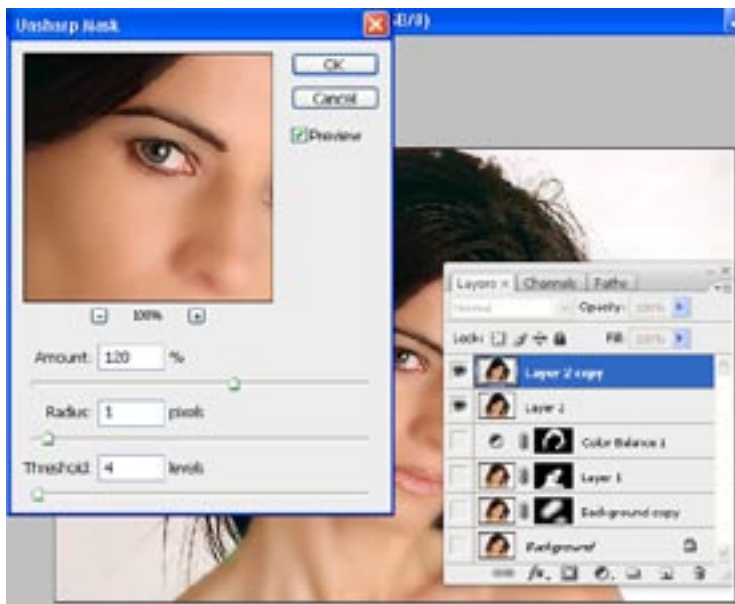
STEP 6: Now let's dramatize her face by changing the lighting. We are going to darken the photo then we'll use a large, soft brush to reveal two subtle diagonal beams of light. Start by duplicating the Background layer, then change the blend mode of this layer from Normal in Multiply, which makes this photo significantly darker.



STEP 7 : Hold the Alt key (Mac: Option) and click on the Add Layer Mask icon to hide this darker version of the photo behind a black mask. With white as your foreground color, choose a large, soft-edge brush like the one shown here and paint a stroke from the top right corner of the image diagonally across her right eye ending where the cursor is shown here. Then do the same thing over her shoulder. Go from right to left. Darkening these two areas leaves part of her face lighter, making the lighting a little more dramatic.



STEP 9: The last thing we do is to sharpen the image but do so only affecting her eyes. First we will merge all of our layers onto one while keeping our original work available. Hold down Ctrl + shift + alt and click on the layer pop-up menu and choose merge visible. This will combine all of your visible layers on to one leaving your original layers. Duplicate this layer (Ctrl + J) the go to Filter > Sharpen >Unsharp Mask. The settings used are Amount 120%, Radius 1.0, Threshold 4. Click the OK button.



STEP 10: With that layer active hold the Alt key and add a layer mask to hide this sharpened layer behind a black mask. Get the Brush tool and choose a small soft-edge brush just slightly larger than her eye and paint with white over each eye. This reveals the sharpened version of her eyes while all other features remain soft.



Before



After

This effect is from Photoshop User magazine September 2006 from editors Scott Kelby and Felix Nelson.