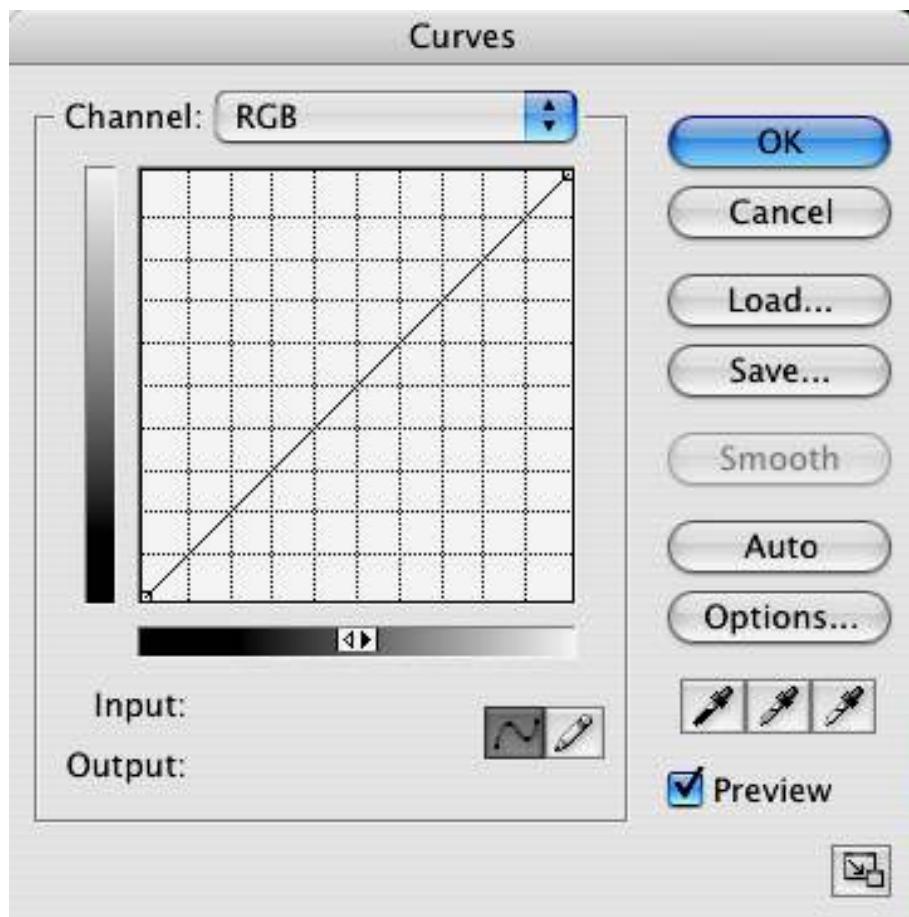
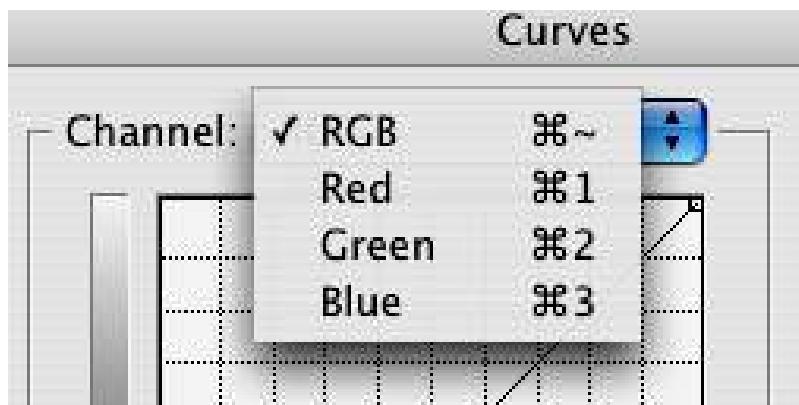


# Adjusting Color with Curves

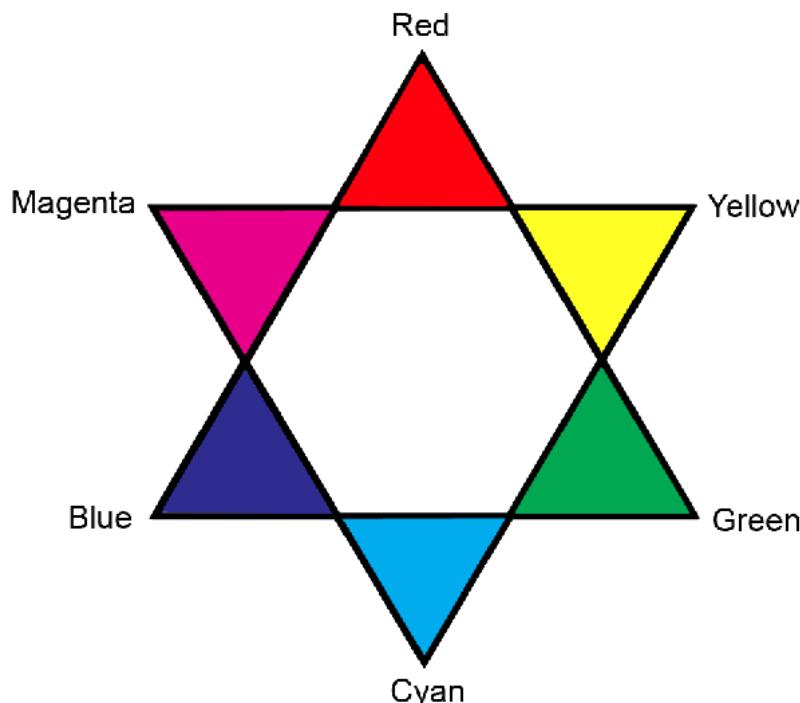


When the channel pop up is set to RGB, all of the channels will change equally and only the brightness of the image will be changed. When you choose a channel from the pop up menu, you will only change the information that is found in that specific channel.



Each channel represents a color and its opposite color.

In the red channel, you will be able to shift the overall color of the image towards red or away from red. When the image is less red it is more cyan, the opposite color of red. Each color has an opposite color. Here's how it works.



**Red** is equal parts of Magenta and Yellow – Red is opposite of Cyan

**Yellow** is equal parts of Red and Green – Yellow is opposite of Blue

**Green** is equal parts of Yellow and Cyan – Green is opposite of Magenta

**Cyan** is equal parts of Blue and Green – Cyan is opposite of Red

**Blue** is equal parts of Magenta and Cyan – Blue is opposite of Yellow

**Magenta** is equal parts of Red and Blue – Magenta is opposite of Green

Now that we have a little color theory down, let's color correct an image using the channels in the Curves dialogue box. Open the image called Haley.



Image: Haley

This image was taken in window light with fill flash. The skin tones are really red.

Open the image called Kodak Head Shot. This image has a really nice skin tone.

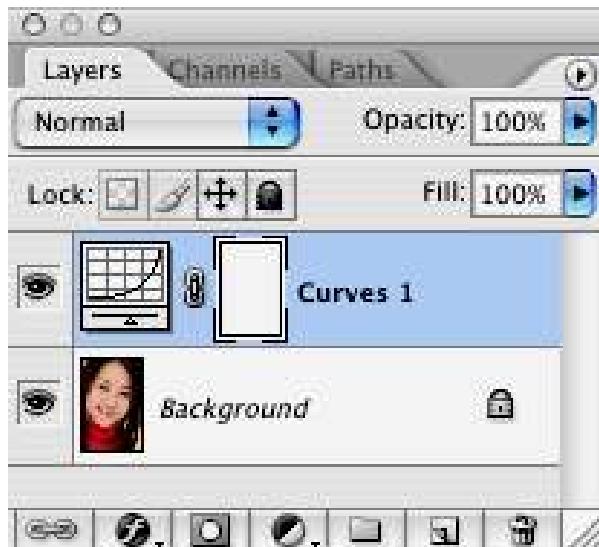


Image: Kodak Head Shot

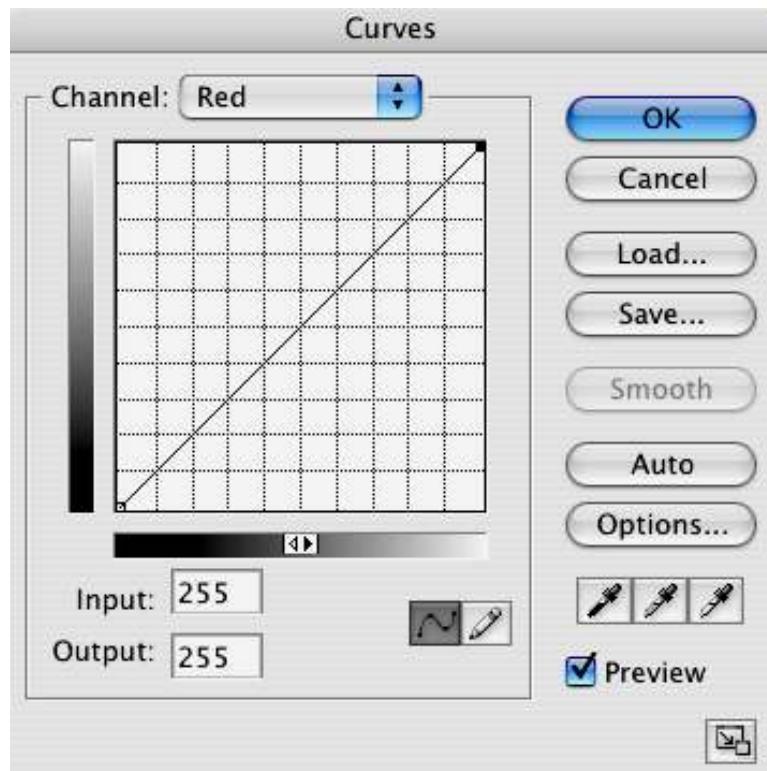
This technique will show how to take the RGB values from the good skin tone and apply them to the Haley image.

Make sure the Info palette is visible. If it isn't, choose: Window/Info.

Start by making a Curves adjustment layer.



Choose the specific channel you want to work on. This example has the red channel chosen.

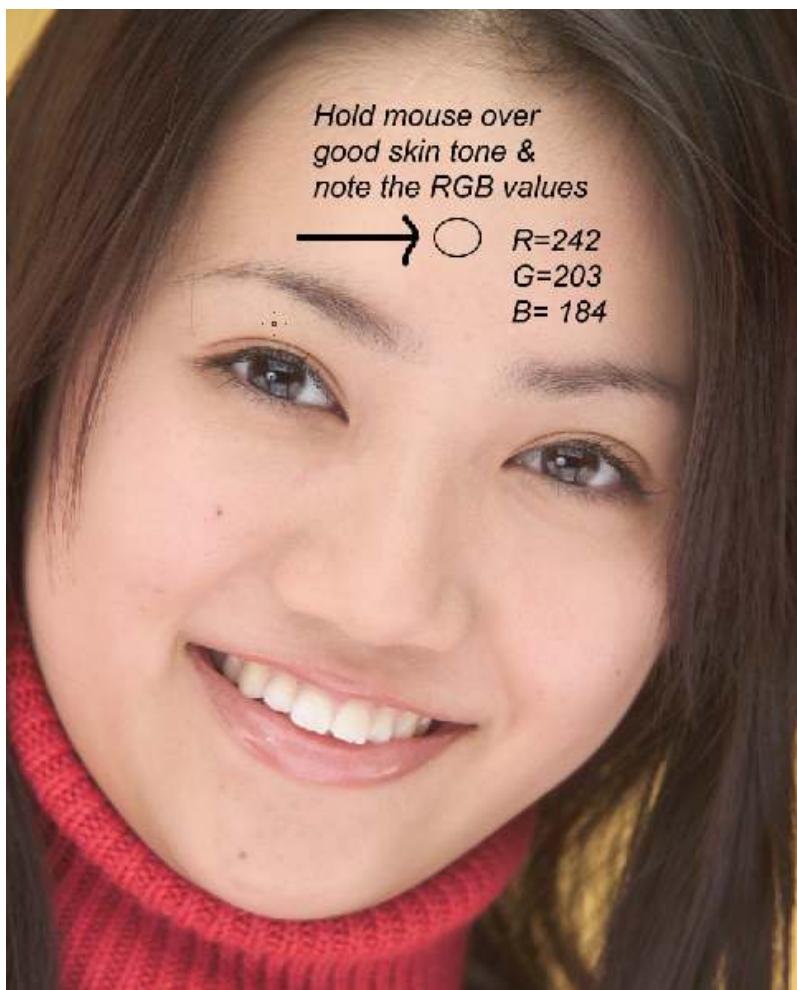


**Hold down the Control key (PC) or Command key (Mac) and click on an area of the good skin tone to set a point on the curve. Once the point has been made, use the up and down arrows on the keyboard to push the point up or down and shift the color of the area.**

This technique will work well if you have a good understanding of color theory. The problem is you might not know how much to shift the color. That's where the info palette comes in.

Reset the Curves box. Hold down Alt (PC) or Option (Mac) and click on the reset button (used to be cancel button).

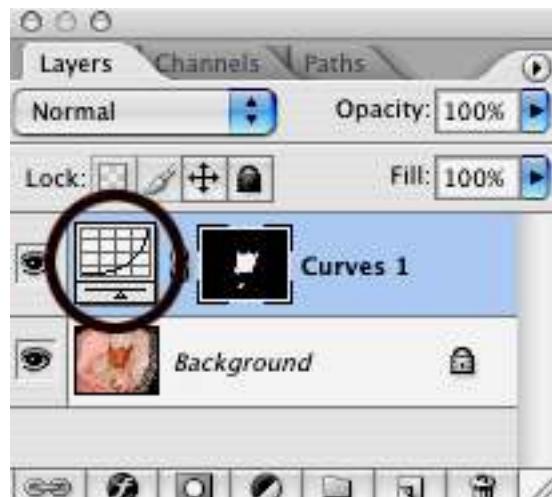
Move the mouse over a good part of the skin tone, the numbers that appear in the Info palette will give you the formula Photoshop uses to make the color that is under the cursor. Write down these RGB numbers. These numbers will be used to color correct the Haley image. Click OK to the Curves box.



Click on the Haley image to make it active and make a selection of Haley's face and hands. Feather the selection 1 pixel.



Click on the little black/white circle at the bottom of the layer palette to make a Curves adjustment layer of the selection. Don't worry if the selection isn't perfect. It can be modified later. The layer palette will look like this:

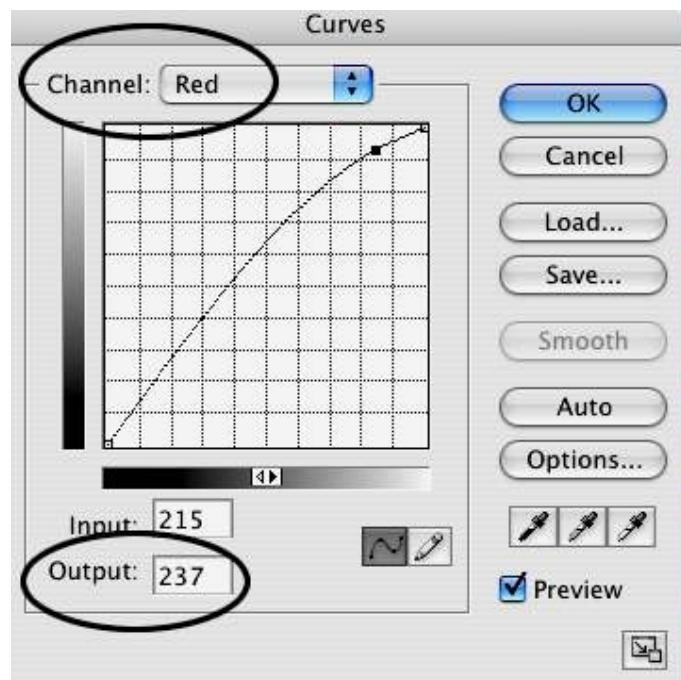


Double click on the Curves icon to bring up the Curves box.

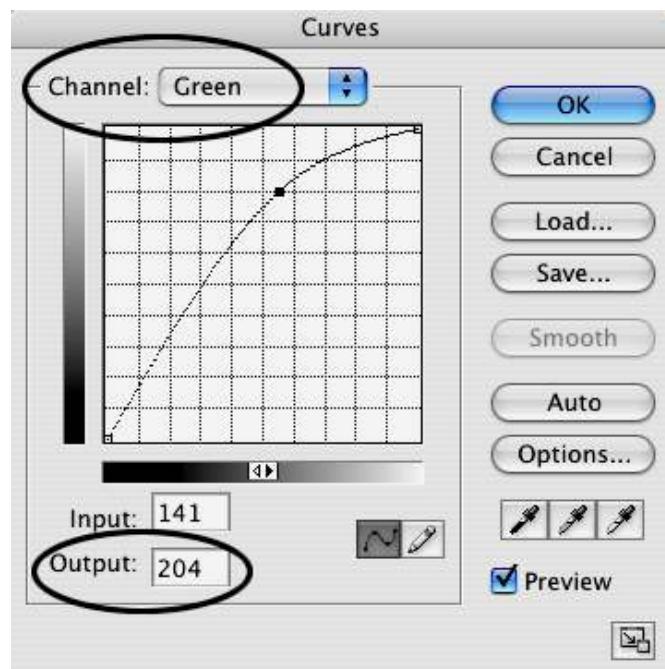
Hold down the Shift and Control keys (PC) or hold down the Shift and Command keys (Mac) and then click on a good area of Haley's skin tone. This will set a point on each of the color channels.



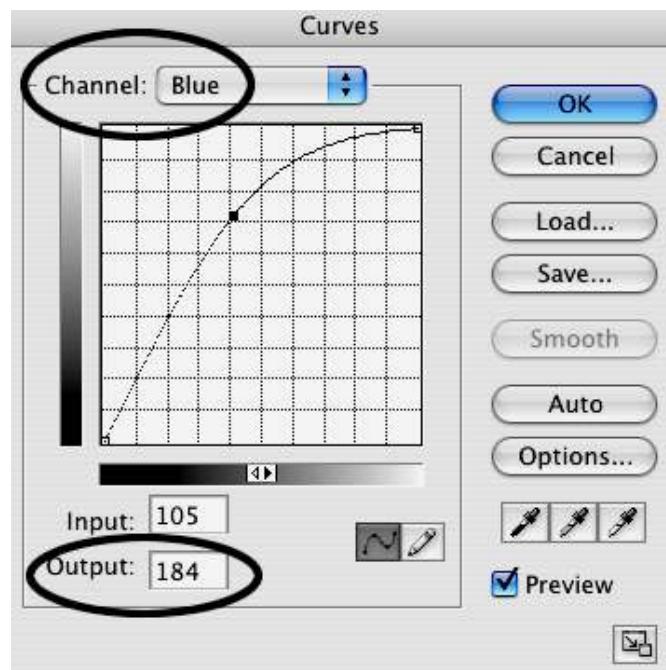
Change the Channel pop up box to the Red Channel. Then put in the Red value that you noted from the Kodak image that has the good skin tone. Put the value in the output box.



Change the Channel pop up box to the Green Channel. Then put in the Green value that you noted from the good Kodak image.

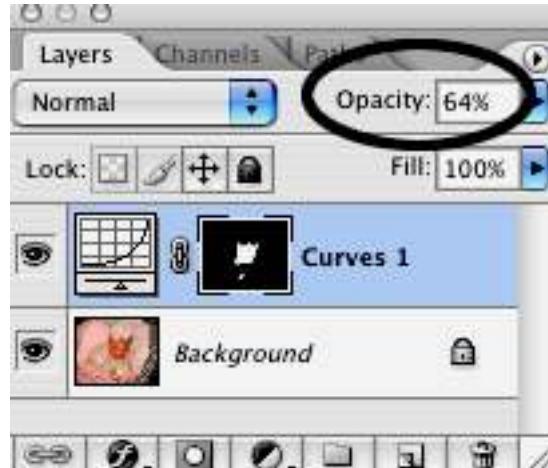


Change the Channel pop up box to the Blue Channel. Then put in the RGB values that you noted from the good Kodak Image.



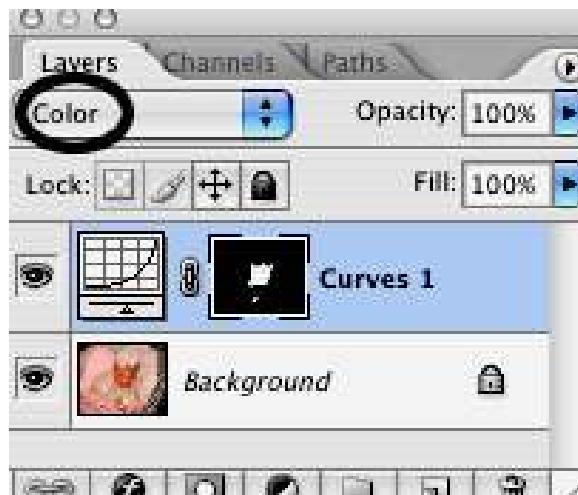
Click Ok.

If the change is too dramatic, change the opacity of the Curves adjustment layer.



If your selection wasn't very good, it can be fixed up by painting on the mask. Choose the Paintbrush tool and paint with white on areas that are lacking the correction. Paint with black on any areas that shifted color, but shouldn't have.

Sometimes shifting the color of an image will also change the brightness. If this happens, change the blending mode to Color.



This will cause the adjustment you made to only affect the colors in the image while not affecting the brightness or contrast.

Summary,

Open image with skin tone to be corrected.

Open image with good skin tone.

Take RGB reading of the good skin tone and jot down the numbers.

Click on image that needs color correction.

Make a selection of the skin tones.

Make a Curves Adjustment layer of the selection.

Move mouse out over skin tone to be corrected and hold shift/control.

(PC) or hold shift/Command (Mac) and then click on the skin tone.

Change the channel pop up to the Red channel and put in the red channel values from the good skin toned image.

Change the channel pop up to the Green channel and put in the green values from the good skin toned image.

Change the channel pop up to the Blue channel and put in the values from the good skin toned image.

Lower the opacity of the layer if necessary.

Change the blending mode to Color if necessary.

Paint with white on the mask to add to the corrected area.

Paint with black on the mask on any areas that shifted color but shouldn't have.