

Ultimate Makeup

When you create sellable portraits your goal is to create a flattering image of the client. Many things in such portrait depend on the lighting, pose and other factors, such as props or the environment. Though with some lighting techniques you can reduce or even disguise various imperfections (e.g. blemishes, disproportions and etc.), you can push the limit even further. In this article I want to describe what could be done in Photoshop in order to make the person younger and even add some tan and glow to the skin. And here are the steps:

- Rejuvenate
- Add glow
- Apply tan

Here is the original image and the final one. I intentionally used the effects moderately, so the final image looked natural. But farther in the article you will find what options and parameters to change "to change the volume" of every effect.

Before:



After:

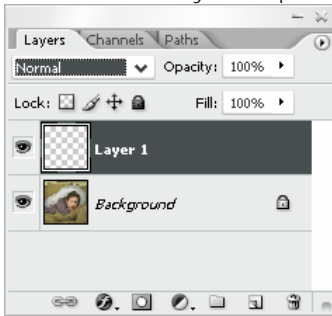


Rejuvenate

Our first step would be to remove visible blemishes and wrinkles. Photoshop CS2 (and CS) has a very useful tool for such manipulations - Healing Brush. So let's start:

1. To select the tool press "J" button on your keyboard.

2. Create a new layer atop the image - Ctrl-Shift-N



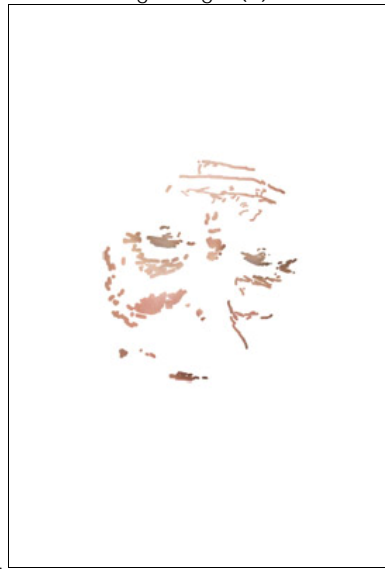
3. In toolbar on top of the working area check the last option for the tool - Sample All Layers



4. Make sure that you work with the new (empty) layer
5. Apply the healing brush to remove the blemishes and wrinkles

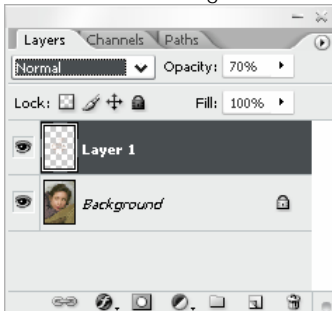
Usage: First click on the area of the skin with the least amount imperfections. Then hold Alt key, hold left mouse button and drag the mouse pointer to the area, which you want to correct, and release the buttons.
Note: Apply the healing brush in small regions (I prefer brush size of 6-10 pixels). Draw the mouse along the wrinkles. And try to match the type of skin - cheeks and forehead usually have rougher skin than chin or nose.

6. As the result of such manipulations I got the following image (a) and the layer I worked in (b):



a. The layer shows where I applied the healing brush

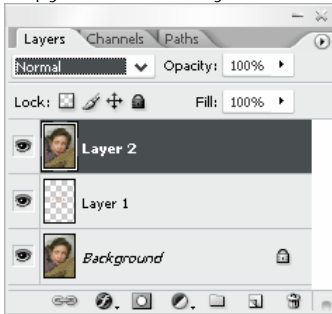
7. To make the image more realistic, I change opacity of the layer to 70% (use your own judgment):



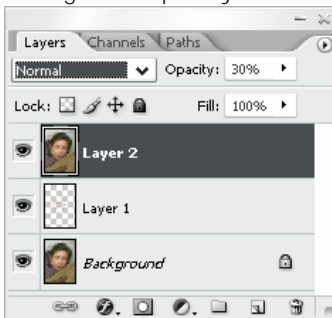
Add glow

Your portrait (especially of people with light skin color) may benefit from a certain amount of “glow”. It’s not the glow effect by itself, but rather a combination of Gaussian Blur and Curves. Here are the steps:

1. Create a new layer - Ctrl-Shift-N
2. Copy all visible layers into the newly created layer - Alt-Ctrl-Shift-E



3. Change the opacity of this layer to 20-30%

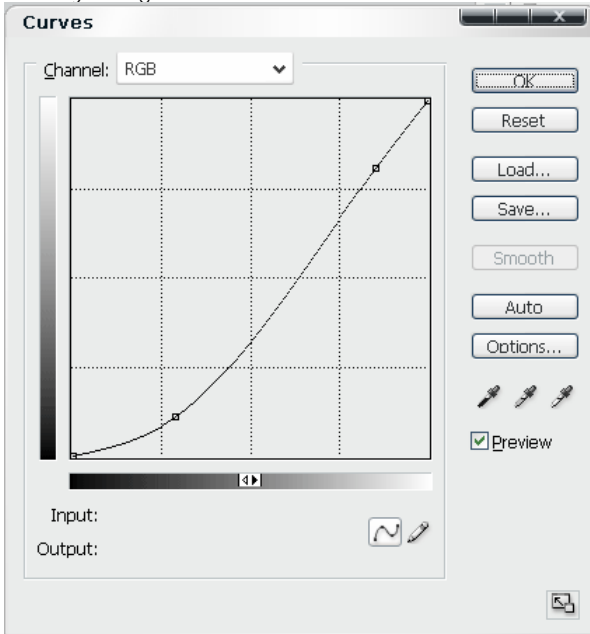


4. Apply Gaussian Blur to the layer (my choice of radius was 3%)
5. The image will look softer, like this:



6. Apply curves to the layer with blur effect.
Note: The point here is to increase the contrast and make shadows deeper, so the face would have stronger 3D look.

For my image I used the curves as shown in the dialog below:

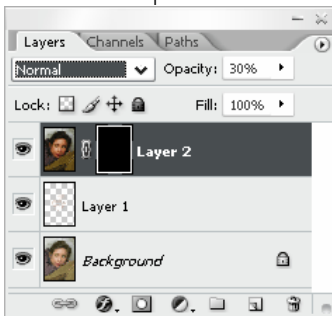


7. After that the image looks as follows:



Note that the skin becomes darker and the three dimensional look is more prominent.

8. Our next step is to create a layer mask for the blur effect and fill it with black:



Note: To fill the mask with black, press "D" to reset your colors (black will be your foreground color) and press Alt-Backspace (while the mask is selected).

9. Then use white brush (100% opacity) to let the effect through the mask:

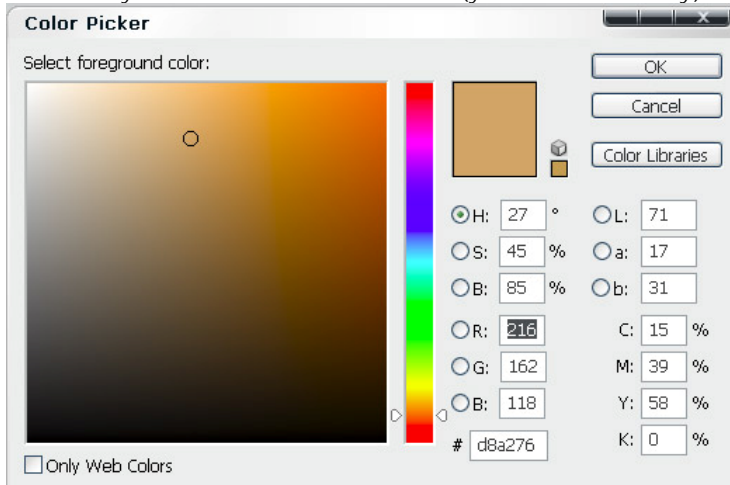


Note: The effect should be applied to the skin. All sharp edged elements (e.g. eyes, mouth) should be untouched to prevent the soft look of the entire face. This is for the skin!

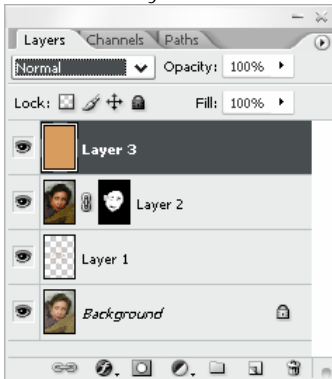
Apply tan

Our final makeup application is about tan. We will try to make the person look like she just returned from a beach. To do so we will follow the steps:

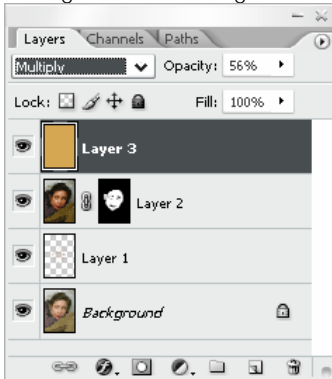
1. Create one more new layer - Ctrl-Shift-N
2. Fill the layer with the brownish color (your choice mostly). I used the following:



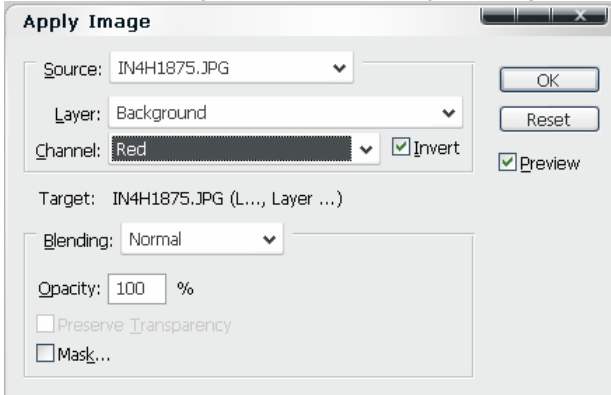
- When the layer is created and filled with your color:



change the blending mode to "Multiply":



- Then create a layer mask for the layer and go to menu: Image, Apply Image (while the mask is selected):



Note: In my case the effect of the mask with parameters above looked better than the others. For your particular image it could be different - play with the parameters and see yourself.

5. The portrait would look something like below. Overall colors would get this brownish cast.



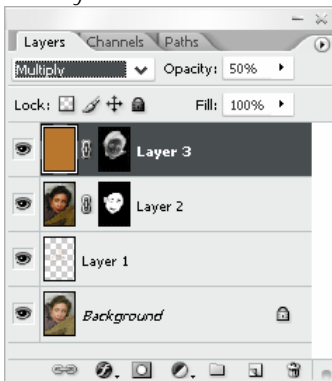
6. To get rid of unwanted cast on the image - apply black brush on the layer mask (something like below):



7. And then the image would look similar to the following:



8. For my taste this effect is too strong, so I reduced the opacity of this layer:



9. And finally get the image, which I wanted:

