

## [Channel Mixing The Photo Filter](#)

### **Summary:**

In this tutorial we will be showing you how to use the Photo Filter and the Channel Mixer. With the Photo Filter it will allow you to add color overlays to an image. The Channel Mixer will allow you adjust the reds, greens, or blues. Finally, you will learn how to use the Channel Mixer and make a black and white image. Throughout the course we will give you definitions to some common terms such as, what is a Channel in Photoshop.

Currently we are using Windows Vista Home Premium 64 Bit and the Photoshop CS4 Extended 64 Bit version.

### **Knowledge You Need to Know:**

If you are unfamiliar with certain areas that are not covered in this tutorial, feel free check out other tutorials on our website. We have many different types of tutorials that can be downloaded (Video, PDF) or viewed online that will train you for **free!** Once you have the knowledge, feel free to come back and go through this tutorial again.

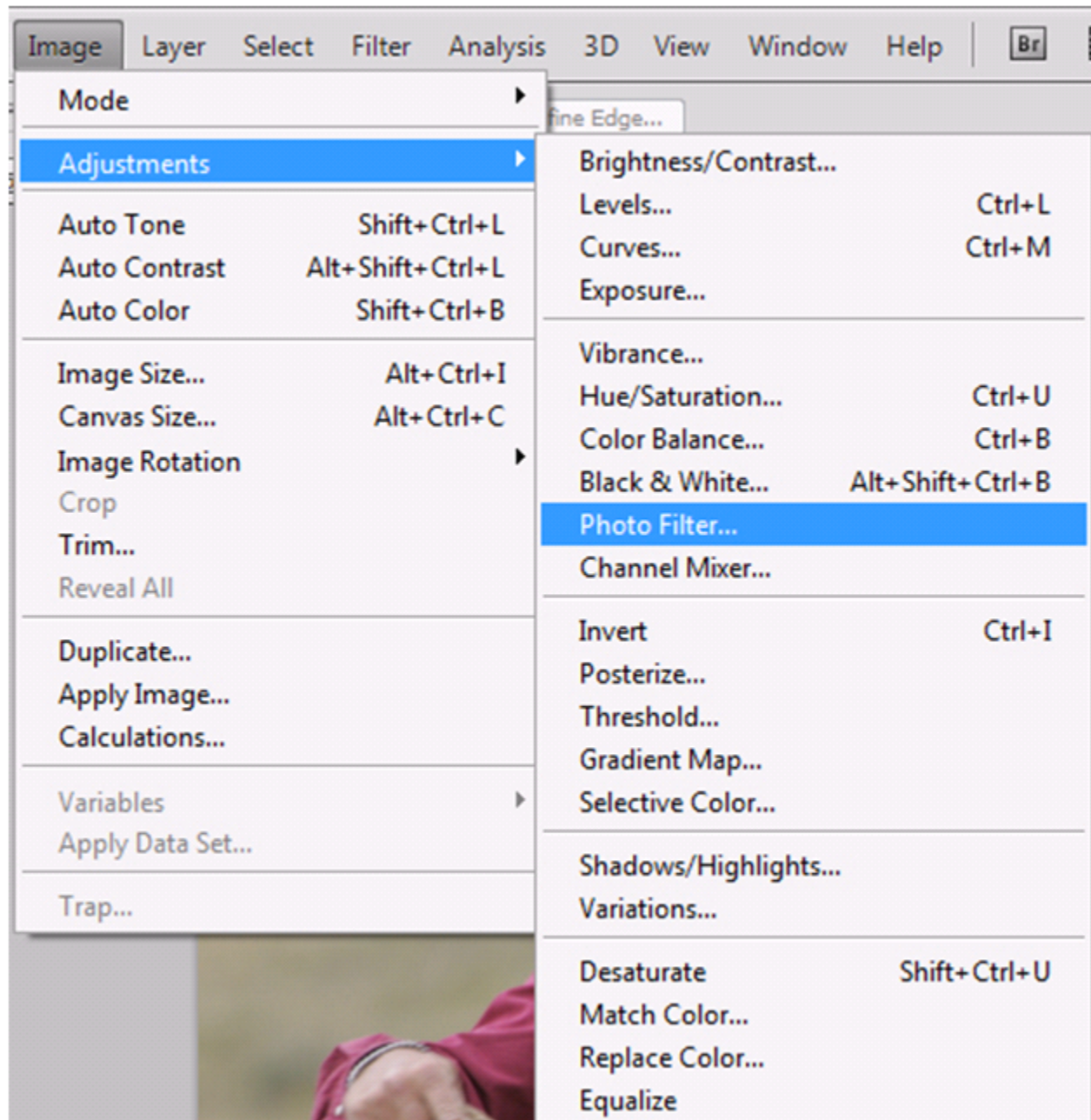
### **Preparing For This Tutorial:**

You will be using a picture of a cowboy on a horse. If you do not have this image, please scroll down to the image of “***Click Picture To Download Supporting Files***” and download the image. Please open the image PE-BWHORSE in the Photoshop Program. Duplicate the background layer and then hide the background layer.

### **Photo Filter:**

What is a photo filter in Photoshop? It is basically a color overlay and it is usually on the whole image, but not in the midtone or highlight areas. The nice feature of photo filter is that it has a lot of presets! The other benefit to photo filter is it is very easy to use. When would you use photo filter? You would use it when you want to make color or tonal changes of an image. Maybe you want the image to feel warmer, well there is a preset to make your image appear warmer.

To use the Photo Filter, Left click the “Image” menu and move the mouse pointer down to the “Adjustments” option. Now, Left click the “Photo Filter...” command from the sub-menu.

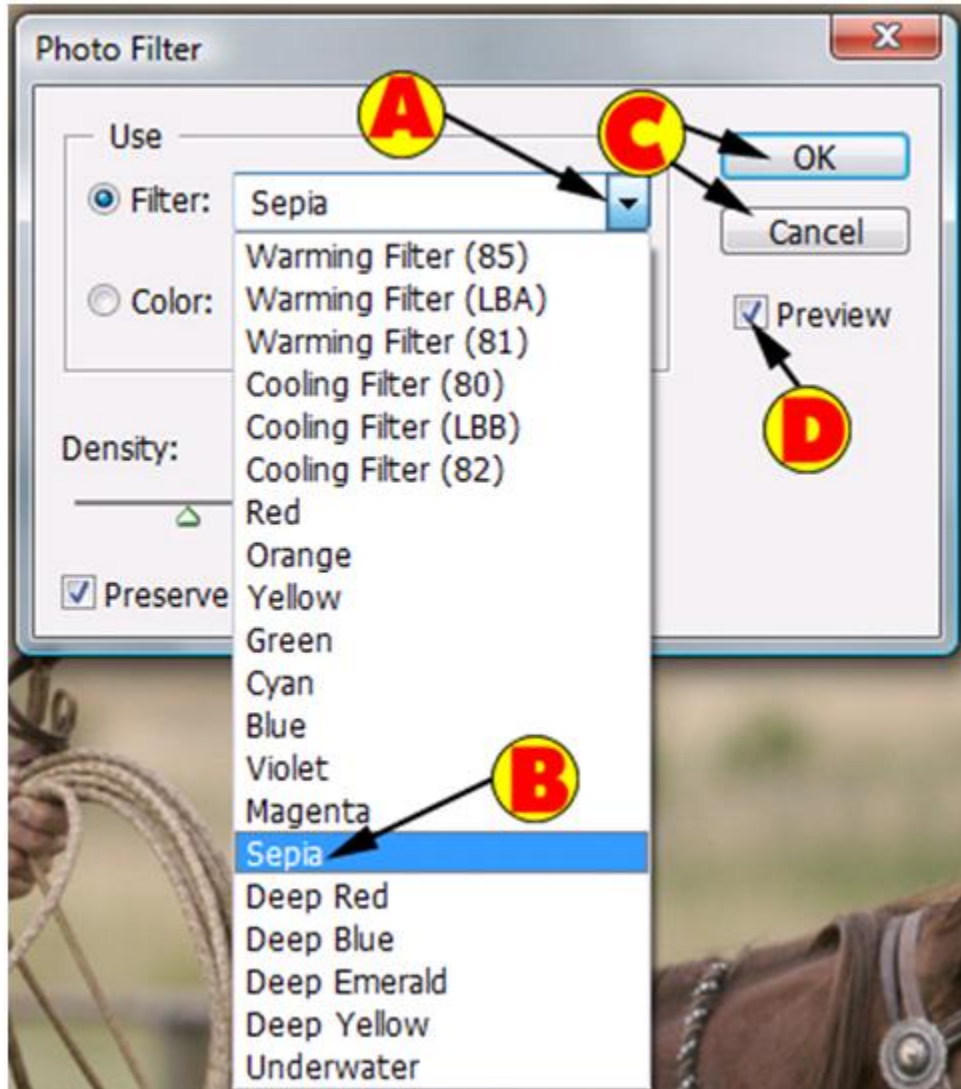


Here are the first few options of the photo filter screen.

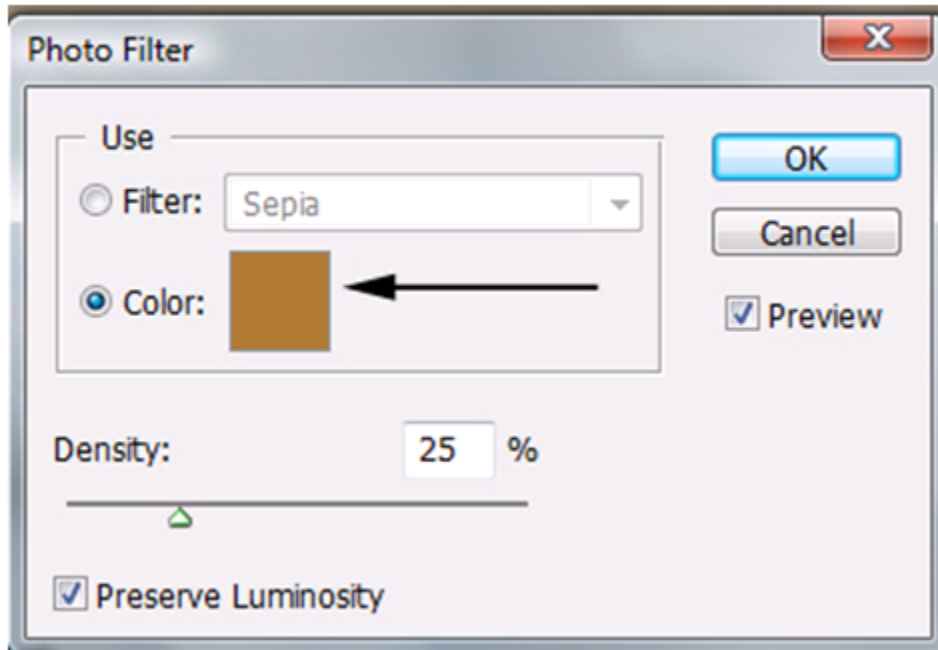
- A). The Filter option in the screen is your presets. Left click the drop down box arrow.
- B). Left click a Filter to use. On this example, Left click the “Sepia” option.

C). When you are happy with the changes, Left click the “OK” button or if you want to disregard the changes, Left click the “Cancel” button.

D). Make sure the “Preview” option is on (make sure there is a check in the box). This allows you to see the changes on the actual image as you make adjustments.



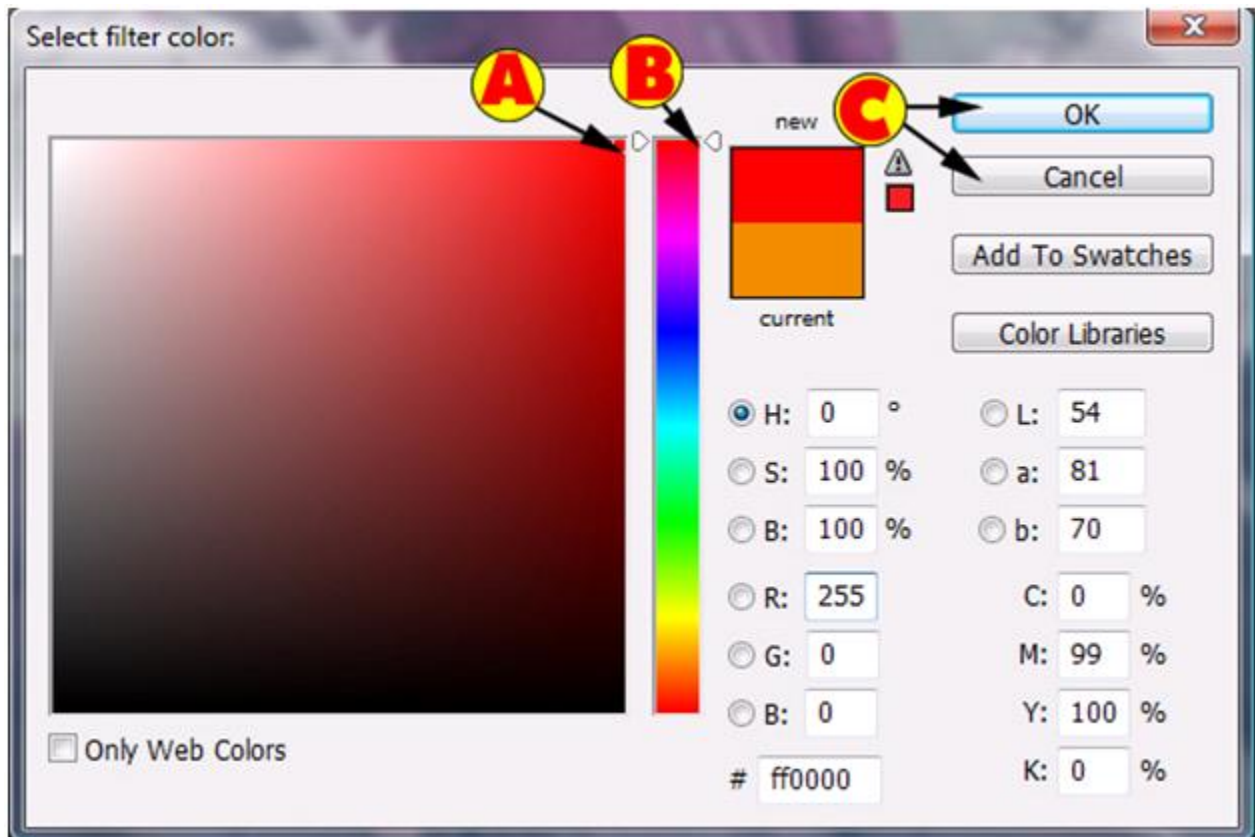
As you make changes, the color box below the Filter option will change to the updated color. When we changed it to Sepia, we saw a small change to the background of the image (photo filter makes small adjustments) and we realized we wanted to use a red overlay. Yes, you could go back into the Filters menu and select “Red” or “Deep Red” option, but we want to show you a better way to adjust the color. Adjusting the color by yourself versus selecting a preset will allow you fine tune your color. Left click the color box. You will notice the Color radio box will be selected and Photoshop will open a new dialog box that will allow you to select a new color.



One of the first tutorials we talked about was the color picker screen, so we are not going to go into full details of this dialog box. You will notice a few text boxes that are different than the previous color picker screen, but we will get into those details in a future tutorial.

\*\*On this example, change the color to a red.

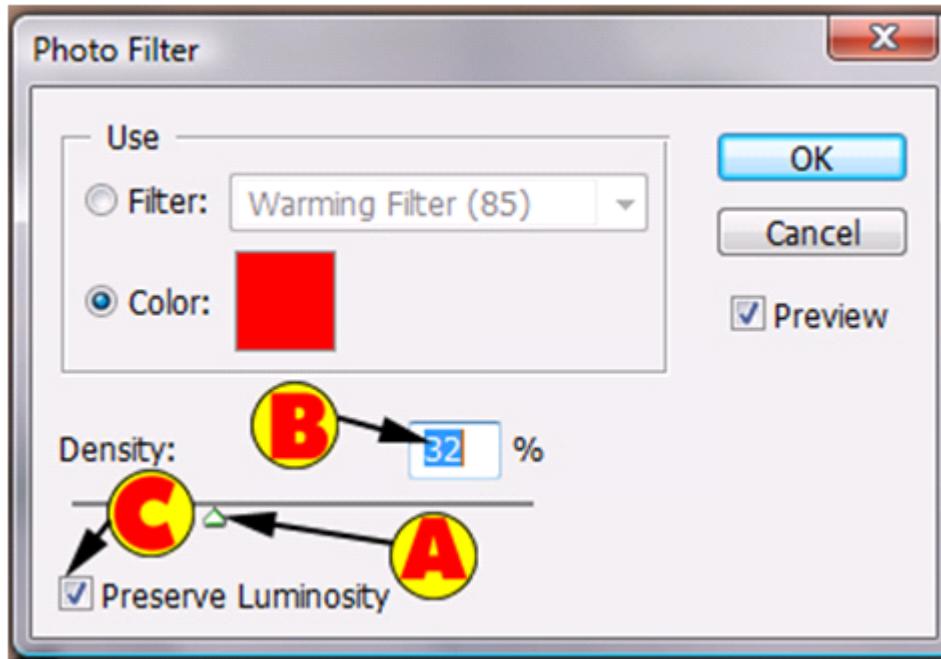
- A). By Left clicking the shade of a color, it will change the photo filter color.
- B). Left click at the top of this bar to change the base color to the reds.
- C). For this example, Left click the “OK” button to apply the changes. If you want to disregard and ignore the changes, Left click the “Cancel” button.



Here are the final options of the photo filter adjustment screen.

- A). The Density slider tells Photoshop how strong the color overlay will be on the image. Move the mouse pointer to the up arrow and hold down the Left mouse button. Drag the mouse to the right to make the color stronger. Drag the mouse to the left to make the color weaker. Release the Left mouse button when you are happy with the changes.
- B). You can also enter a numeric percentage for the Density. For this example, change the value to 32.
- C). So what is Preserve Luminosity. In the [Straight To Curves](#) tutorial we explained the highlights and midtones. When the “Preserve Luminosity” option is checked, it will NOT change the highlight or midtone areas of the image. If you uncheck the “Preserve Luminosity” option than the color overlay will affect all areas of the image. For this tutorial, please make sure this box has a check in it (Left click to turn it on or off).

Left click the “OK” button to apply the changes.



### Before And After:

Here is the before and after images. Notice how the After image has a redish tone to the non-highlight or midtone areas of the image.



Want to adjust a specific area with the photo filter? First make a selection around the area that you would like to adjust. Now apply the photo filter and it will only change that specific area of the photo. Why would you want to adjust a specific area only? There are a few reasons, such as maybe you want to use multiple Photo Filter effects in the image. Maybe you want the horse to

be more of a warmer tone, but the background you wanted to be more sepia tone and the cowboy a more red tone.

### **Channel Mixer:**

**\*\*Please use CTRL-“Z” to undo the changes or use the history palette to go back to the open state.**

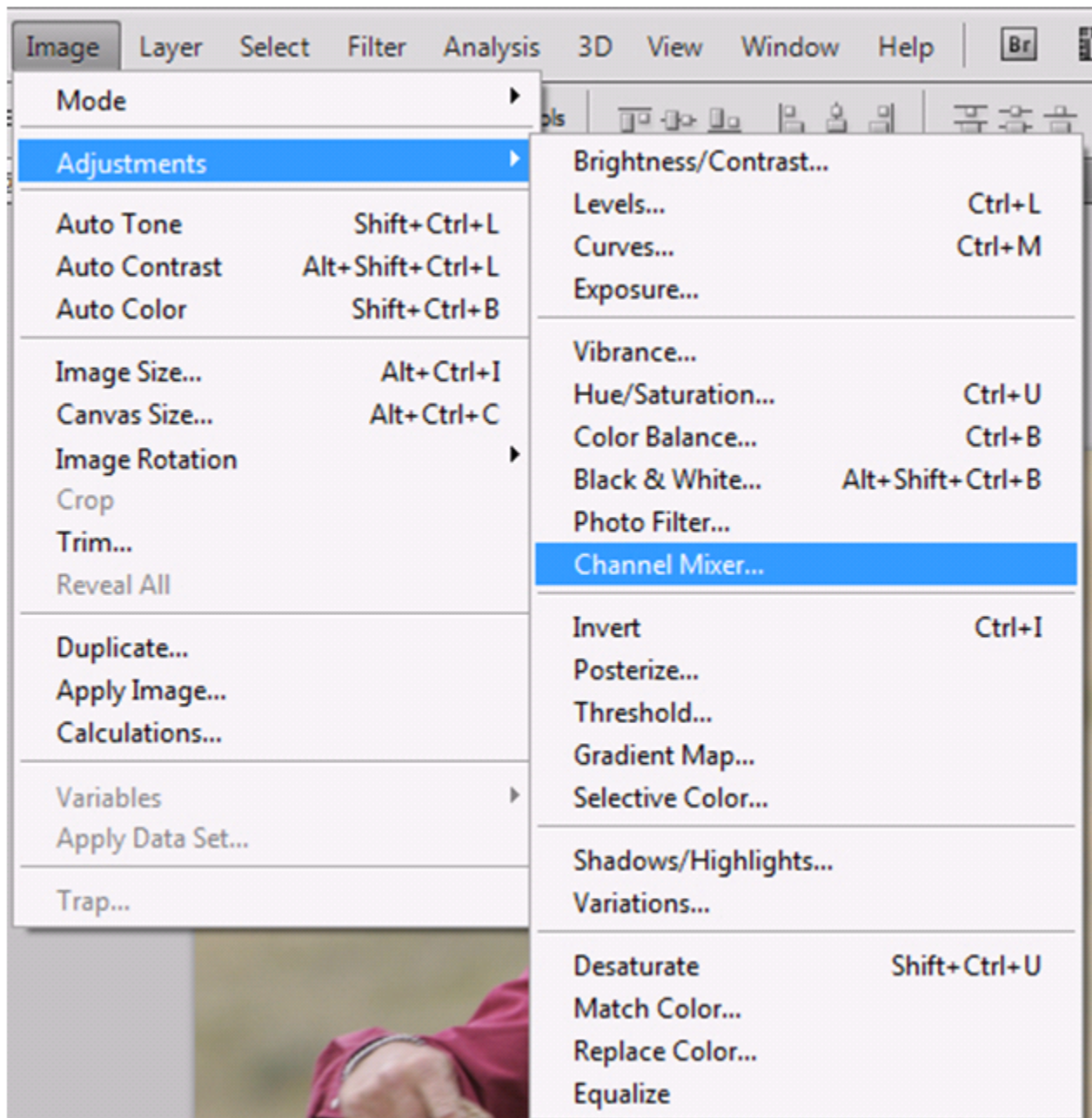
What is a Channel? The channels are made up of 3 primary colors. Red, Green, and Blue. Sometimes you will see it as RGB, but it still means Red, Green, and Blue. An image is made up of shades of those 3 colors. A channel is a specific primary color such as the red channel.

The previous tutorial ([Aging Photos, Black And White, Sepia](#)) we trained you on how to make a black and white image. Within the channel mixer, you can take a color image and convert it into black and white. Personally we find that the black and white adjustment tool gives you more flexibility with converting a color photo into a black and white image, but the channel mixer does a good job also.

Our goal is to take the magenta colored shirt and change the color to a more of a dark orange (brownish) color. The background will have a blue tint to it, but the horse color should not be changed. Then we will convert it into black and white.

So now that you understand what a channel is, let's proceed with the tutorial.

Left click the “Image” menu and move your mouse pointer down to the “Adjustment” option. Now Left click the “Channel Mixer...” command in the sub-menu.

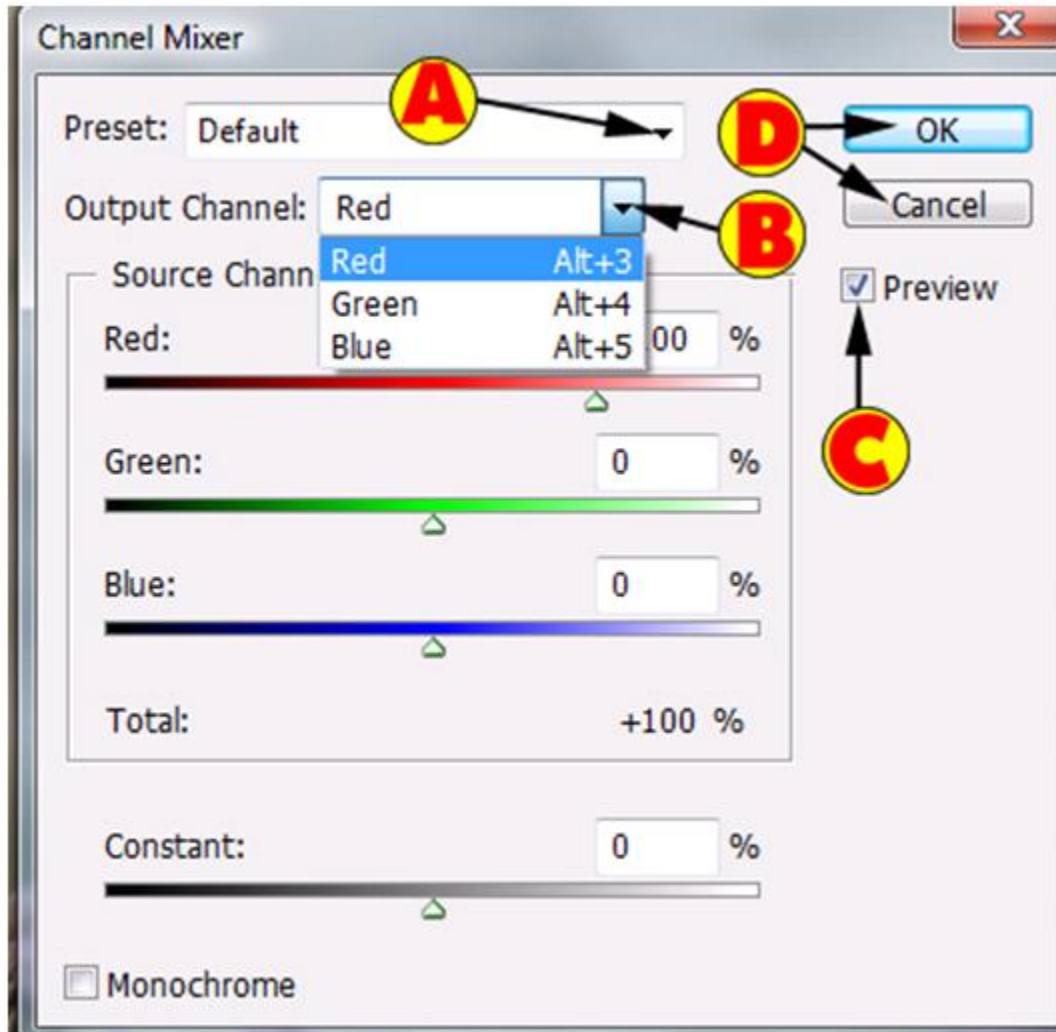


Here are the first few options of the channel mixer screen.

- A). Presets are predefined settings. Left click this drop down box and Left click a preset to use that setting.
- B). The Output Channel. As you make changes to the color settings, this is the channel that it will affect. Think of it as a selection channel. Remember the channels are the RGB. On this example, select “Red” as your starting channel.

C). Make sure this box is checked for the Preview option. This will allow you to see changes in the image as you adjust the settings.

D). Left click the “OK” button to apply the changes. Left click the “Cancel” button to disregard the changes.

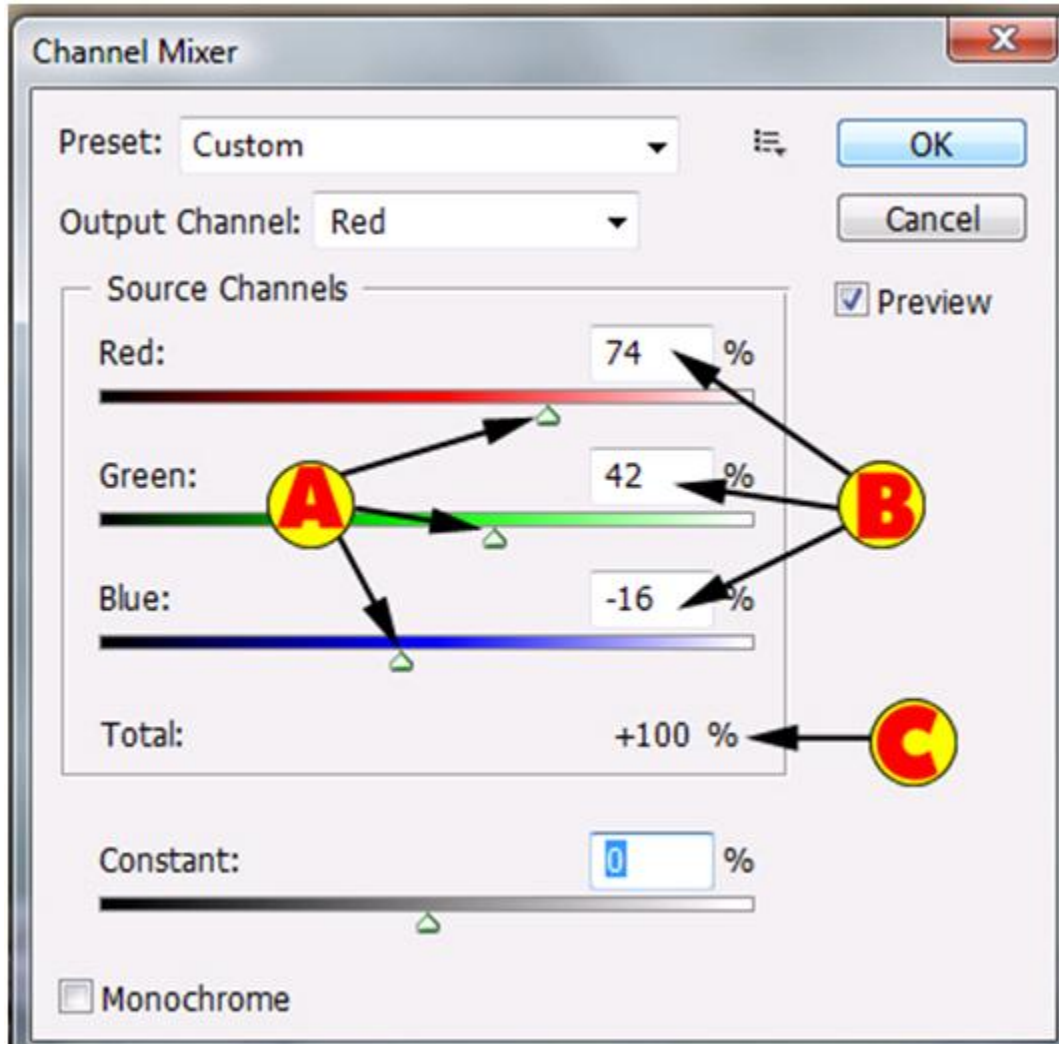


For this example, we will be adjusting the Red channel and the colors that you want it to be changed to. We have the 3 choices of colors to adjust (Red, Green, and Blue).

A). Move your mouse pointer to the up arrow and hold down the Left mouse button and drag it left or right. Release the Left mouse button when you are happy with the changes. Moving the shade slider to the left will darken that color and moving the mouse to the right will lighten that specific color.

B). Each color has a text box. If you know the numeric values or if you want to tweak the adjustment, than Left click in the text box and enter a value. To follow along with this tutorial, enter 74 for red, 42 for green and -16 for blue.

C). **This is the important area of the channel mixer screen!** To make an image look better, make sure the total is very close to 100%. If you have that percentage too high, the total image will be too light. Too low of a number and the whole image will be dark. Unless you want to create an artistic effect, make sure the percentage total is around 100%.



As you can see, if you adjust a color by darkening it, then you need to make another color lighter. This balances the colors out to the 100%. There is no one correct setting to get the image to look perfect. It is a lot of trial and error! After a while, you will learn what types of colors to adjust to get a certain result.

Remember, we are only working on the red channel. Let's proceed to the green channel. Change the output channel to green and use the following settings.

Set red to 21, green to 91 and Blue to -12.

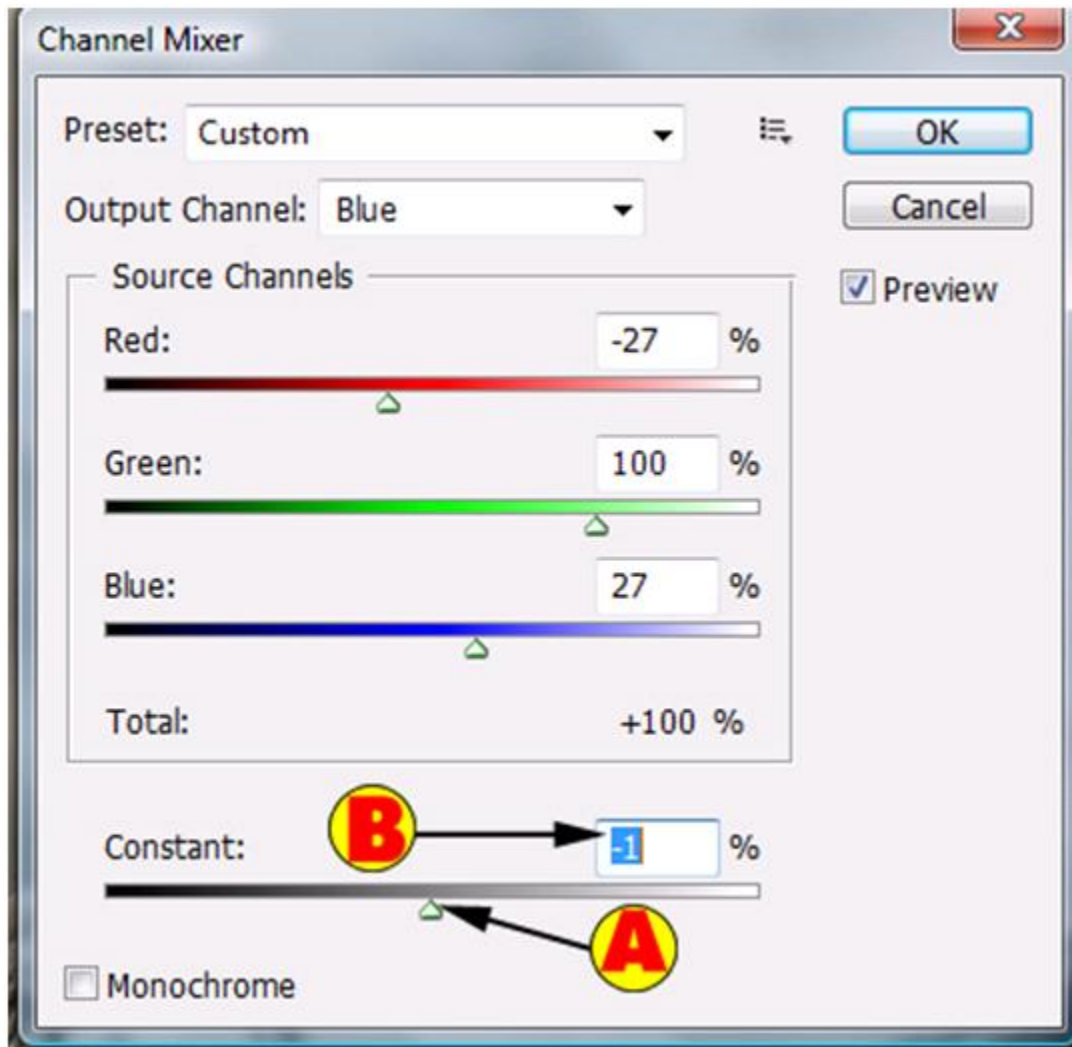
Proceed to the blue channel and use the following settings.

For the red, change it to -27 and set the green to 100 and finally the blue should be set to 27.

Let's explain what Constant is.

A). Constant is the brightness and darkness of that whole specific output channel. Move your mouse pointer to the up arrow and hold down the Left mouse button. Drag the mouse to the left to make the channel darker and to the right to make the channel lighter.

B). You can also enter a numeric value for the constant by Left clicking the text box. \*\*For this tutorial, please change the constant for the red, green and blue channels to -1.



### Before And After:

Let's look at the before and after images. Remember our goal at this stage was to make the shirt a darker orange (brownish) instead of a magenta color. You have to be careful with the adjustment, because you can see we changed the color in the background. To resolve this problem, you would lighten the blues and increase and darken the greens. You would need to play around with each channel to get it perfect.



## **Black And White**

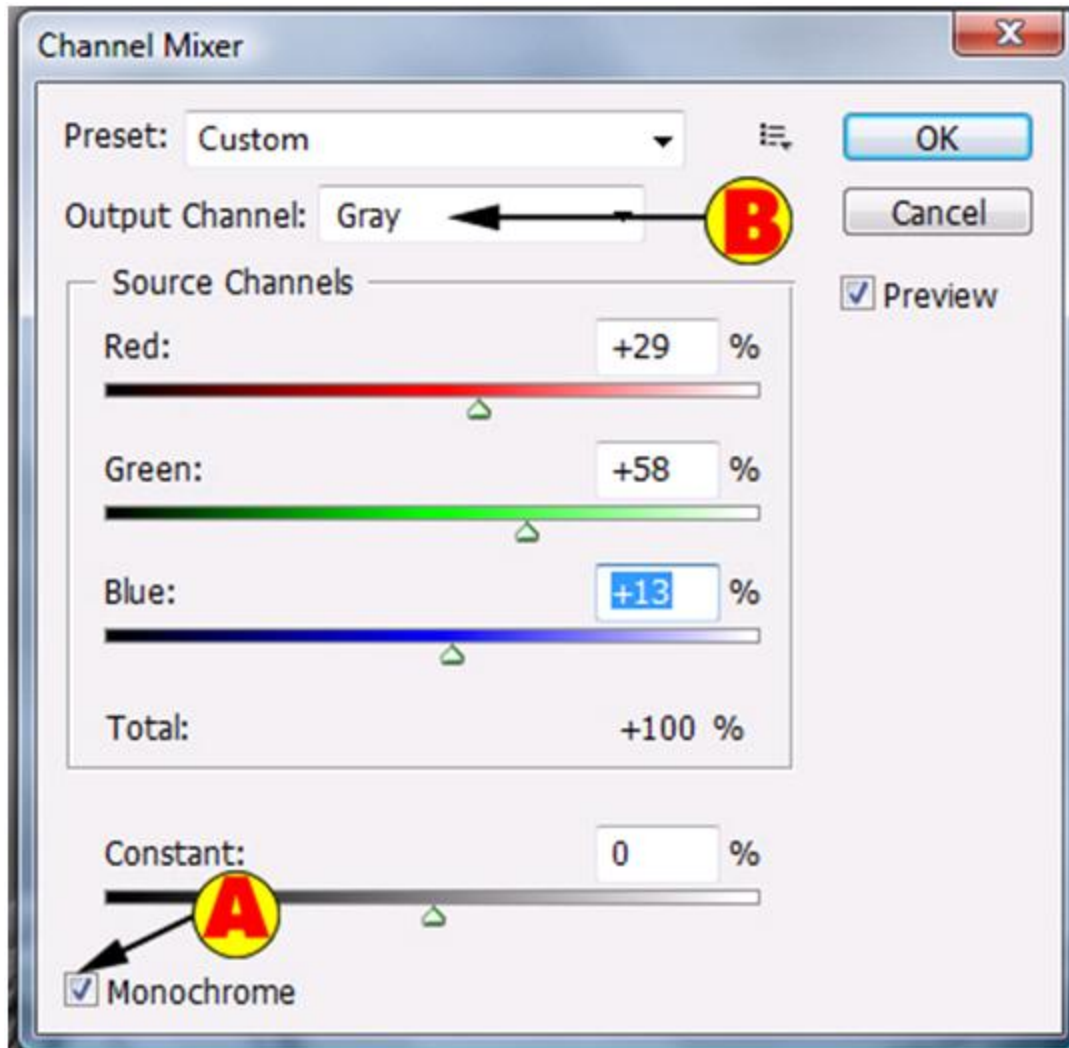
**\*\*Either re-open the image or use the history palette and go back to the open step.**

Within the channel mixer, you can easily make a black and white photo by Left clicking the “Monochrome” option in the bottom left hand corner of the screen.

A). Left click the Monochrome to convert it to a black and white image.

B). You will notice, Photoshop will change the Output Channels to “Gray”. This is because it is now considered a gray scale (red, green, and blue will not be displayed).

Use your color slider bars to adjust each color. To follow along with the tutorial, we used 29 for red, 58 for green and 13 for blue.



### Before And After:

Here is the before and after images.



To make a great looking black and white image, we will start off by using one of the black and white presets in the channel mixer after we have turned on the monochrome option. Once we have applied the preset, we then manually adjust the reds, greens and blues channels individually.

### **Conclusion:**

Over the last few tutorials, we have gone over a lot of the adjustments and by now you should know how to make an image look excellent. For this tutorial, you now know how to use the Photo Filter and the Channel Mixer. We explained the basic description on what a channel, constant, or even preserve luminosity is and what you should do with each area. Along the way, we showed you one way to convert the image into a sepia tone and another way to convert the color image into a black and white photo.