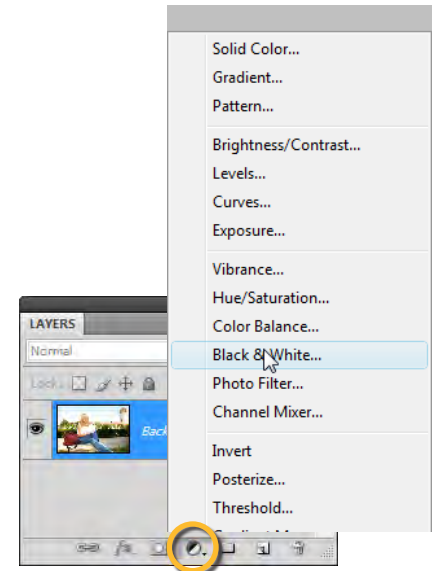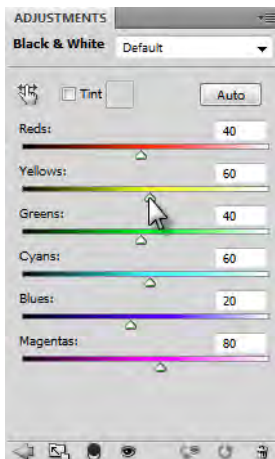# COLOR SPLASH

One technique for adding visual interest and drawing attention to the subject of a photo is to render the focal point of the shot in full color while the rest of the image appears monochrome. This effect is easy to achieve using adjustment layers and layer masks in Photoshop.
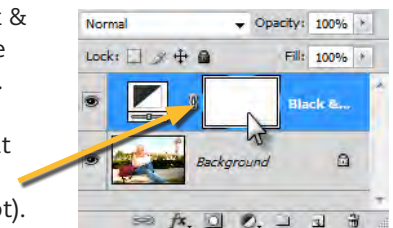
STEP 1: Open the image you wish to use. Open the Layers panel by going to Window > Layers, or by clicking on the Layers panel in the docked panels along the right-hand side of the screen. Unless the image has been previously edited, you should see only one layer called "Background."

STEP 2: Add a Black & White adjustment layer to the image by clicking on the Adjustment Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers panel (see screenshot above). A new adjustment layer will be added to the Layers panel, and the image will appear as black and white.
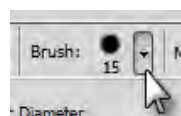
STEP 3: Experiment with the color sliders in the Adjustment panel. Each image will respond differently to the settings applied here. Play around with the color sliders until you achieve the black and white look that you desire.

STEP 4: Now use the layer mask on the Black & White adjustment layer to hide portions of the layer and reveal the full color version beneath. To achieve this, you must first target the layer mask located on the Black & White adjustment layer. It will appear as a white rectangle on the right-hand side of the layer (see screenshot). Click on the layer mask thumbnail to target it. A thin black box should appear around the mask thumbnail to indicate it is targeted.

Layer mask on right of layer

Above: Black & White Adjustment panel. At Right: Click here to open the Brushes panel in the Options bar.

STEP 5: Select the brush tool from the Tools panel. Then go to the Brush tool options bar at the top of the screen. Click on the downward arrow (see screenshot) to open the Brushes panel. From the brush types that appear, choose a round brush tip and then adjust the Master Diameter slider to about 60 pixels as a starting place. The size of brush you use will depend on the size of your image and the type of area you are trying to mask. For more information on using brushes, see *Tips & Tricks: Brush Up.*

STEP 6: Set the foreground and background color in the Tool panel to their defaults by pressing the D key on the keyboard. The foreground color should be white, and the background should be black. Then press the X key to swap the foreground and background colors. This will make the foreground black and the background white. These are great keyboard shortcuts to become accustomed to using.
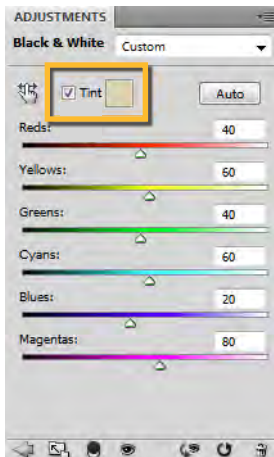

Paint with Black to "mask" the Black & White layer and reveal the color layer beneath. Paint with white to correct any areas you did not wish to reveal.

STEP 7: With black set as the foreground color (step 6) and the layer mask targeted (step 4), you will now begin to paint in the areas of the image that you wish to be in color. As you paint you will reveal the color version of the image beneath. If you reveal a portion of the color image that you did not wish to, you can hide it again by painting in the same area with white. Simply switch the foreground color to white by hitting the X key. Then paint over the area of color that you wish to hide again. When you have corrected the problem, hit X again to switch back to black and begin revealing other areas.

Tip 1: You can adjust the brush size as you paint by returning to the brush options in the Options bar at the top of the screen, or you can right-click to access the brush options on the fly. If you choose the right-click method, hit the Enter/Return key to close the brush dialog box after you have adjusted your settings.

Tip 2: Your brush diameter can be adjusted as you paint by using the right bracket key 🔲 to make the brush larger and the left bracket key 🔲 to make the brush smaller.

Tip 3: If you want your image background to have a colorized effect (rather than just black & white), open the Black & White adjustment layer by double-clicking on the icon on the left of the layer. This will open the Adjustments panel again. Then click on the Tint check box and experiment with the settings.

Save Native File: When you have completed a project, it is always a good idea to save a version as a native Photoshop file (PSD) in case you want to come back and tweak the settings later.

Save for Use: Then you will want to save a JPEG version for use in eDesign or a TIFF version for use in InDesign. For more information on saving and file formats, see *Tips & Tricks: Saving Files*.