

Photoshop 2b

Easy Black & White Conversions

Part One: Camera Raw

I. Open the file you want to convert in Camera Raw

A. Black & White

1. Click on the Snapshots tab all the way to the right and click the snapshot button in the bottom right corner; or press Ctrl+Shift+S to create a snapshot of the image. Name the snapshot “Color”
2. Click on the HSL/Grayscale tab (fourth from left)
 - a. Click the “Convert to Grayscale” box
 - b. Go crazy with the color sliders
3. You may need to go back to the “Basic” tab (first on the left) and adjust black point, white balance, exposure and clarity
4. When you’re satisfied that you have a good black & white image click the Snapshots tab again or press Ctrl+Shift+S and name the new snapshot Black & White

B. Sepia

1. With your newly minted black & white image properly stored in a snapshot, click on the Split Toning tab (fifth from left)
 - a. Set the Hue and Saturation boxes on both the Shadows and Highlights to 42; leave the Balance at 0
 - b. Adjust the Hue settings first to achieve a suitable balance between green and magenta
 - c. Adjust the Saturation settings until you like what you see
 - d. You might choose to play with balance
2. Once you’re happy with your sepia settings, click on the Snapshots tab or press Ctrl+Shift+S and name it Sepia

You can toggle between the three snapshots to view the image in its different versions. If you want to use the image outside of a Photoshop environment, click on the “Save Image” button at the bottom left of Camera Raw and save a copy to your hard drive. You can even save all three versions if you want.

Part Two: Photoshop

- I. Open the file you want to convert; if it opens in Camera Raw, hold the Shift key and click “Open Object”

A. Black & White

1. In the Adjustments Panel click the Black & White button to create a Black & White adjustment layer
2. Go crazy with the color sliders
3. When you’re satisfied that you have a good black & white image you can “Save As” and name it something different

B. Sepia

1. With your fresh, new black & white image in hand
 - a. In the Adjustments Panel, click the “Tint” check box
 - b. Click the color swatch to the right of the word “Tint”
 - c. Move the circle around in the color picker until you get the tone you want.
 1. Upward increases saturation
 2. Left increases green, right increases magenta
 3. Good luck
2. When you like what you see, “Save As” and give it a new name

When working with black & white and toned images, it is wise to keep a master image saved as a layered psd. This will allow you to go back to the adjustment layer later and edit it if you need to. In the sepia color picker you can directly dial the green and magenta up and down as well to have more control over the tone. You can always “save as” a jpg from your psd, but if all you have is a jpg; if you need to edit it later, you’ll have to start over. I prefer Camera Raw for black & white and sepia conversions. When I have to work with an image that is not compatible with Camera Raw, like a psd; I open it in Photoshop and save it as a tif. I can then open it in Camera Raw just like a raw file, make my conversion, and create snapshots to save for later if necessary. These conversions are far better than anything you can get in-camera. That’s why I never shoot black & white for my originals. Of course, if you shoot black & white raw files, you can turn the color back on in Camera Raw. You can’t do that with jpg’s.

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