



QuikSeps

P R O F E S S I O N A L

*The Ultimate Screen Printing
Color Separation And
Photoshop Tool*

*Simulated Process Color Separations • CMYK Separations
Grayscale Separations • Index Separations • Spot Color Separations*

*Generate Accurate Custom Color Channels • Auto Reduce Colors For Output
Enhance Images • Generate Custom Blacks, Underbases & Highlights
Convert Photos To Dynamic Black & White Line Art
Ultimate Distress Image Filter • Generate Color Proof*

*Preview Halftones On Screen
Output Films Without A RIP • Incredible Flesh & Earthtones
Repair Low Resolution Images & Jpegs • And More!*

***QuikSeps Professional Does More, Does It Better and Costs Less.
Don't Go To Work Without It!***

About QuikSeps Professional

Thank you for purchasing or upgrading to QuikSeps Professional, the most powerful and affordable color separation solution available to screen printers!

QuikSeps Professional is the logical successor to the original QuikSeps which was the first truly affordable screen print specific color separation program and also one of the initial few applications of its kind available.

QuikSeps Professional reaches far beyond our original program in terms of scope, features and is also 100% cross-platform compatible. A single version copy will run on Windows or Macintosh and any version of Photoshop from CS 1 through the latest CS upgrades and beyond.

An extremely unique and valued feature of QuikSeps Professional is that we allow you to install the application on multiple computers for no additional charges such as being forced to buying expensive USB dongles to run the software elsewhere. We feel that after purchasing a product such as this, you should be allowed to work at home or on another computer at your shop and not be forced to pay extra for it.

Every form of color separation required by a screen printer is available using our product. Additionally, QuikSeps Professional is extremely easy to use. A very small learning curve is required and even Photoshop novices will be able to generate high quality separations the very first day of use

Please take the time to read the manual. We've tried to make it as brief and concise as possible while thoroughly documenting how to utilize QuikSeps Professional effectively. Also make sure to watch our extensive Instructional Video included on its own disk as we illustrate every aspect of using the program to create fabulous press friendly color separations and other images. The instructional video along with the software will jump start novices and also help experienced users gain an edge on the competition.

Happy Printing!

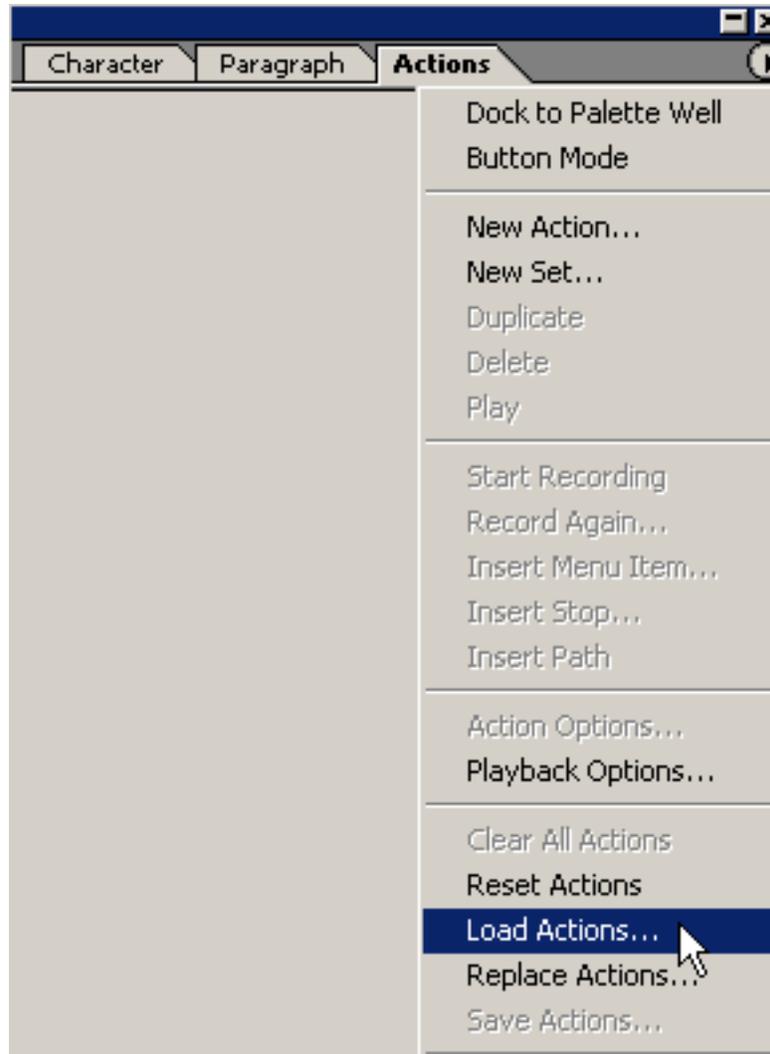
*Steve Roginski
QuikSeps Professional Developer*



Installing QuikSeps Professional

Windows or Macintosh Installation are identical

Copy the entire QuikSeps Professional Folder to your desktop, launch Photoshop and locate the “Actions Palette”. If not visible on your screen, go to the “Window” menu within Photoshop and check “Actions”. Now hold down the arrow at the top right corner of the actions palette and select “Load Actions” as illustrated below.



*Now locate the **QuikSeps Professional.atn** file from folder copied to your desktop and click the Load Button. After QuikSeps Professional has loaded into your actions palette, expand the folder to view its contents and it should appear similar to the graphic on the following page.*



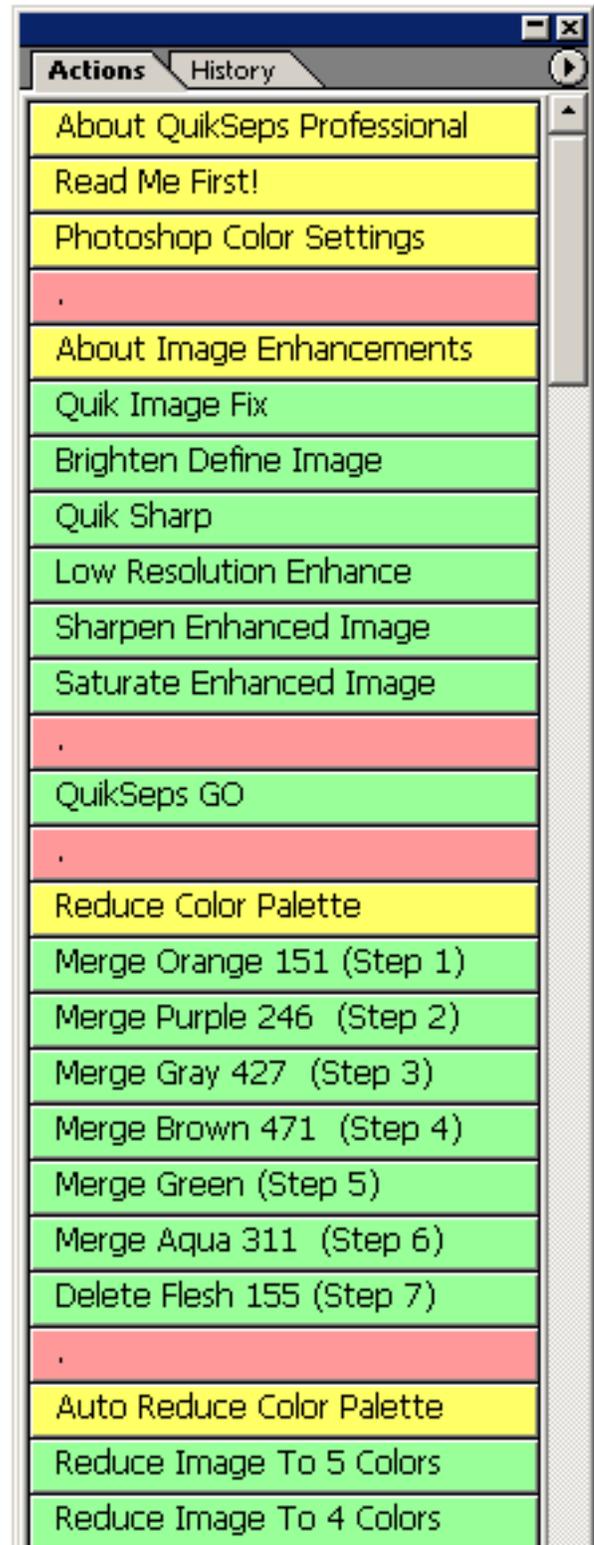
The graphic to the left shows a portion of the QuikSeps Professional Actions in "List View".

To avoid any potential errors, consider running the actions using "Button Mode". From the upper right arrow on the Actions Palette select "Button Mode". The Actions Palette containing the QuikSeps Professional Actions Set will appear similar to the graphic at right.

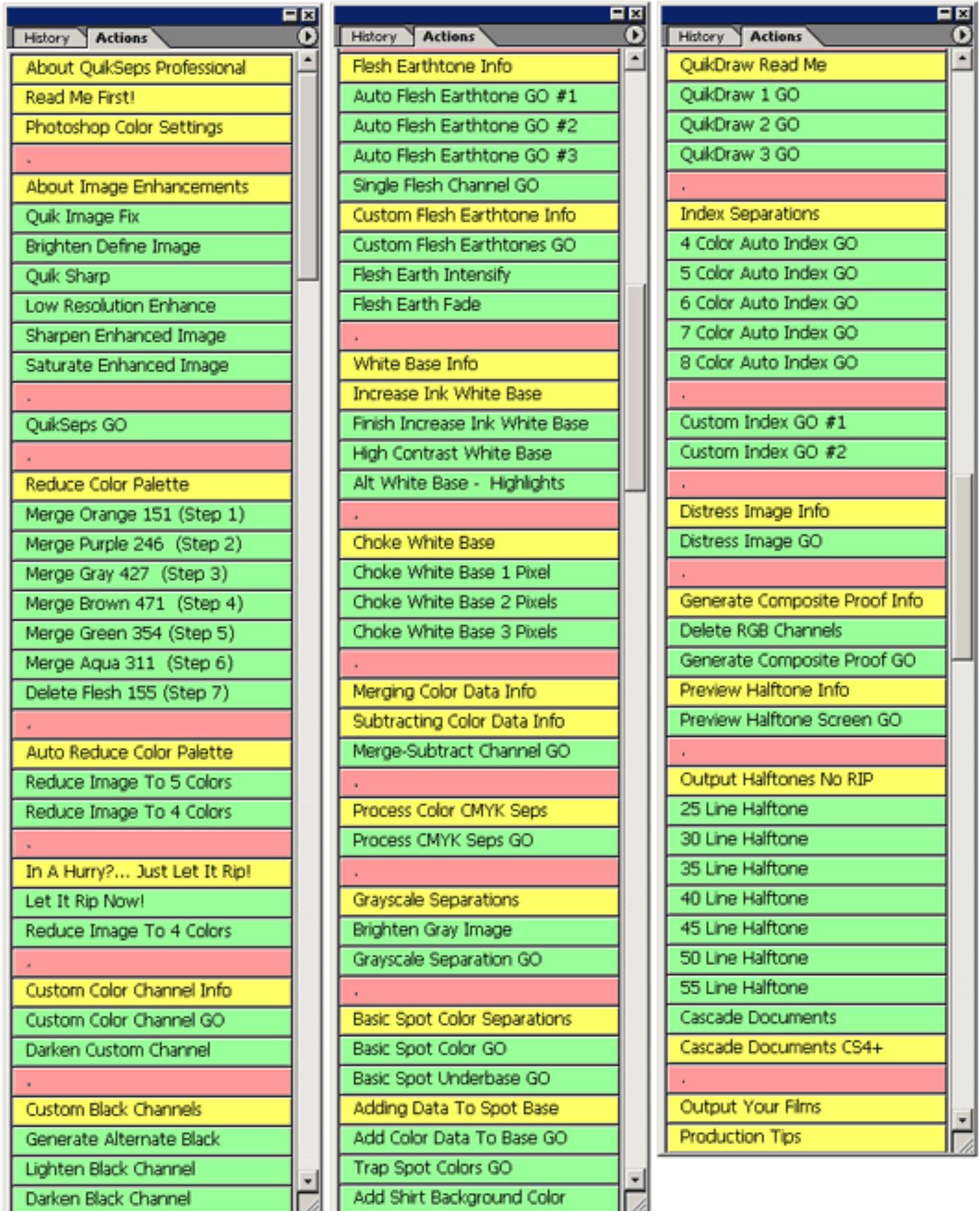
Using the Actions in Button Mode will avoid malfunctions resulting from clicking the modal boxes accidentally (these are the small icons and check marks next to the QuikSeps actions pictured in List View above.) These also appear within the actions themselves and will damage them if changed.

Rest assured if deciding button mode is not for you and for some reason the actions malfunction, simply delete the entire set and reload a fresh copy of QuikSeps Professional.

If many other actions are loaded into your Actions Palette in addition to QuikSeps Professional, then Button Mode may provide a confusing view. In that case, use List View and trigger an action by selecting it and clicking the Play Arrow at the bottom on the Actions Palette.



The Entire QuikSeps Professional Action Set



Loading The QuikSeps Color Setup File

The final step to installation is to configure Photoshop to function correctly when running QuikSeps. This step is required to generate color separations that will print accurately and also render properly on screen. Modifying Photoshop's Color Settings is very simple and only requires the loading of a file.

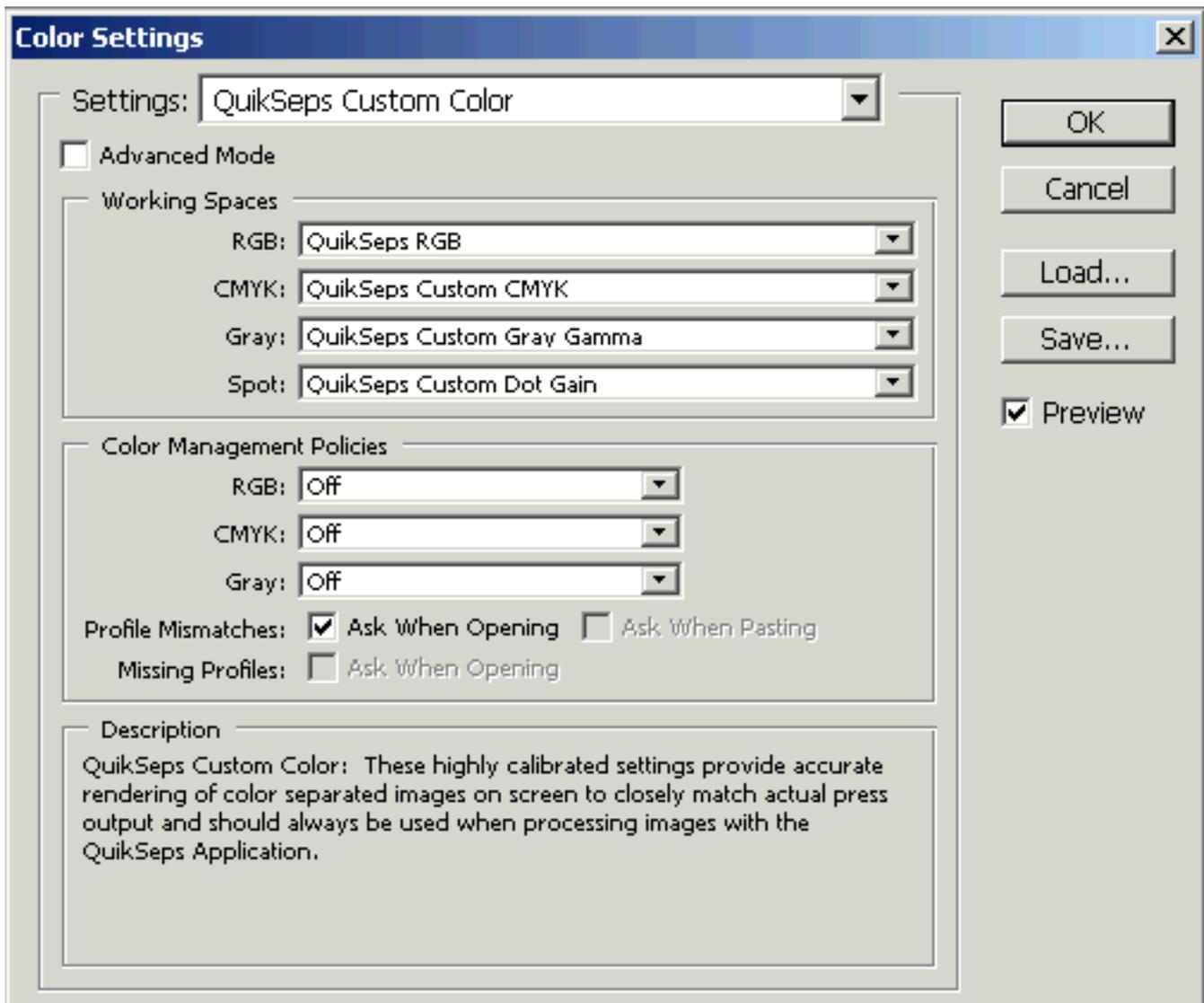
Step 1 From the Edit Menu choose Color Settings.

Step 2 Once the Color Settings Window appears click the Load Button.

Step 3 Navigate to the QuikSeps Folder on your desktop and select the file **QuikSeps Custom Color.csf**

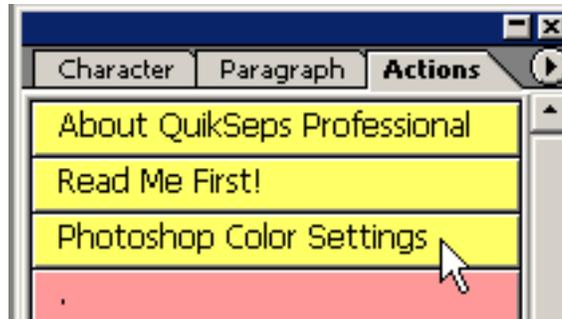
Step 4 Click the Load Button

Photoshop is now properly set up for use. When completed, the Color Settings Window should appear like the sample below.

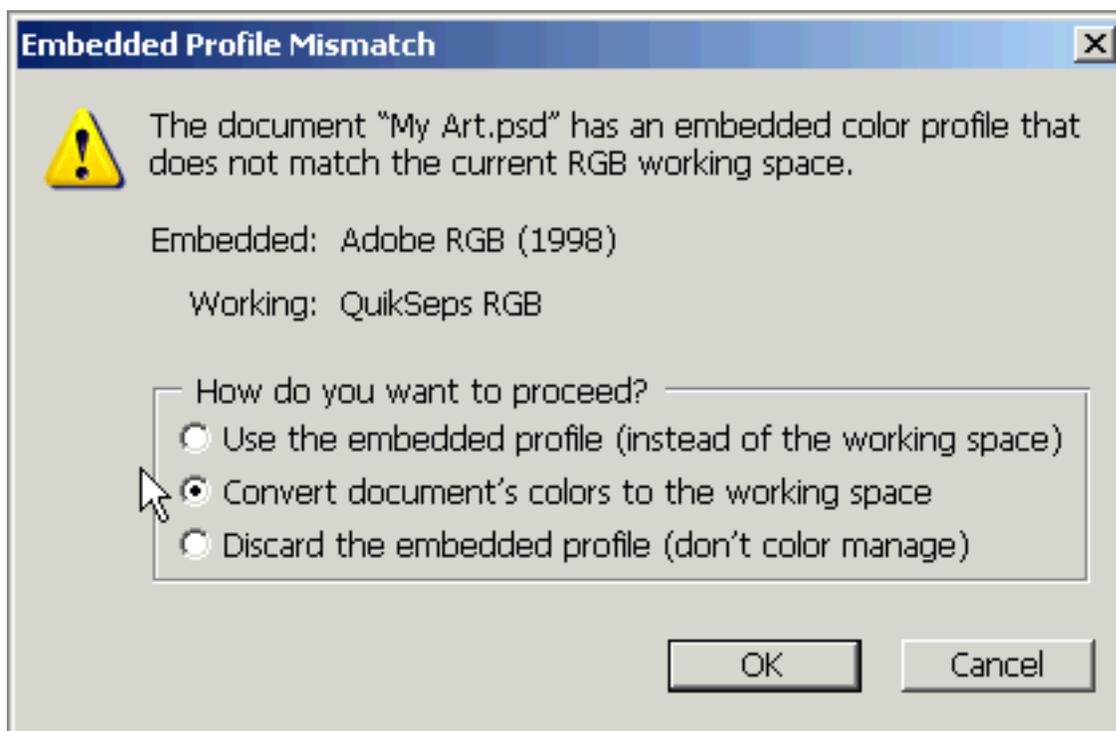


Remember, loading the “QuikSeps Custom Color.csf” file is vital to the operation of the program and cannot be omitted!

If you wish, the program can guide you through the process of loading this file by clicking the Photoshop Color Settings Button pictured below and following the on screen instructions.



*Its possible that art saved previously or files from other sources might generate a **Profile Mismatch Warning** when attempting to open while using the required QuikSeps Color Settings. This is nothing to be too concerned with. Simply check the Convert Document Color or the Discard button and click okay.*



Basic Rules Of Operation

Although the manual goes into detail on running every form of color separation, adjustment, enhancement, etc., here's a basic head start and what is expected from the end user.

To run any color separation procedure on your image, the file must contain only 1 Layer. No Background Layer or "Flattened Image" is allowed! All image data MUST reside on this Single Layer which is the ONLY Layer permitted to be contained within the Layers palette (visible or not).

This Layer must be named Layer 0.

Layer 0 must also be "transparent" (checkerboard background) and appear like the sample to the right.

The image must not include any other channels within the channels palette other than the RGB Channels.

For optimum results, image should be bright and colorful with adequate color saturation.

It can be named anything you desire.

Once happy with the appearance of the art save it and you're ready to go!

Make sure no other files are open within Photoshop.

Decide what kind of separation you'd like, Simulated Process, Index, CMYK, Grayscale, etc from the Actions and Click!

If you don't have a file ready to test, the CD contains images ready to separate.

When all on-screen activity stops, the separation process is complete.

Now continue with the manual for in depth instruction. The first few pages will help get you up-to-speed with file preparation. The remainder is constructed by starting with the top of the QuikSeps Professional Action Set and working our way down. By the time you're done, we guarantee you'll be ready to tackle demanding jobs, even those who are fairly new to Photoshop and color separation.

Enjoy yourself and Welcome to QuikSeps Professional!



*File Properly Formatted For QuikSeps
All Image Data On 1 Transparent Layer Named "Layer 0"
No Other Channels Than The R-G-B And Composite RGB*

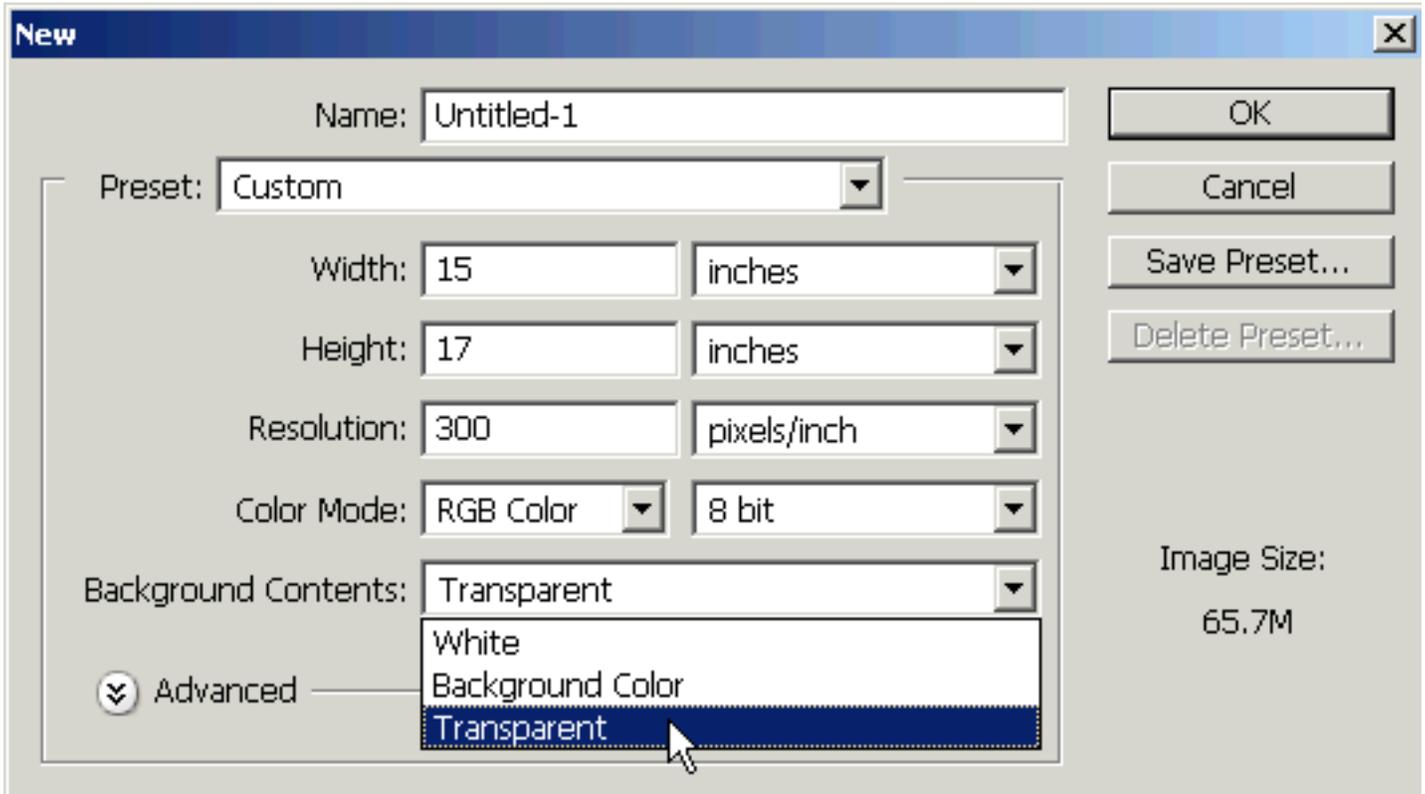


Many screen printers usually make the mistake of "Flattening" their files once the project is completed. This is a big mistake even for those who don't use QuikSeps since it makes future modifications, inclusions, subtractions or merging of your art with another element difficult since you're essentially placing your art on a white sheet of paper. In order to get the most out of your work, all non image areas should be transparent!

There are 2 methods to prepare your art in this manner. The first is to simply to do it correctly from the start if possible. The second is deleting all non-printing background area from the file to be separated. In all likelihood, most of your finished existing art is probably flattened on a white opaque background.

Preparing New Artwork For QuikSeeps

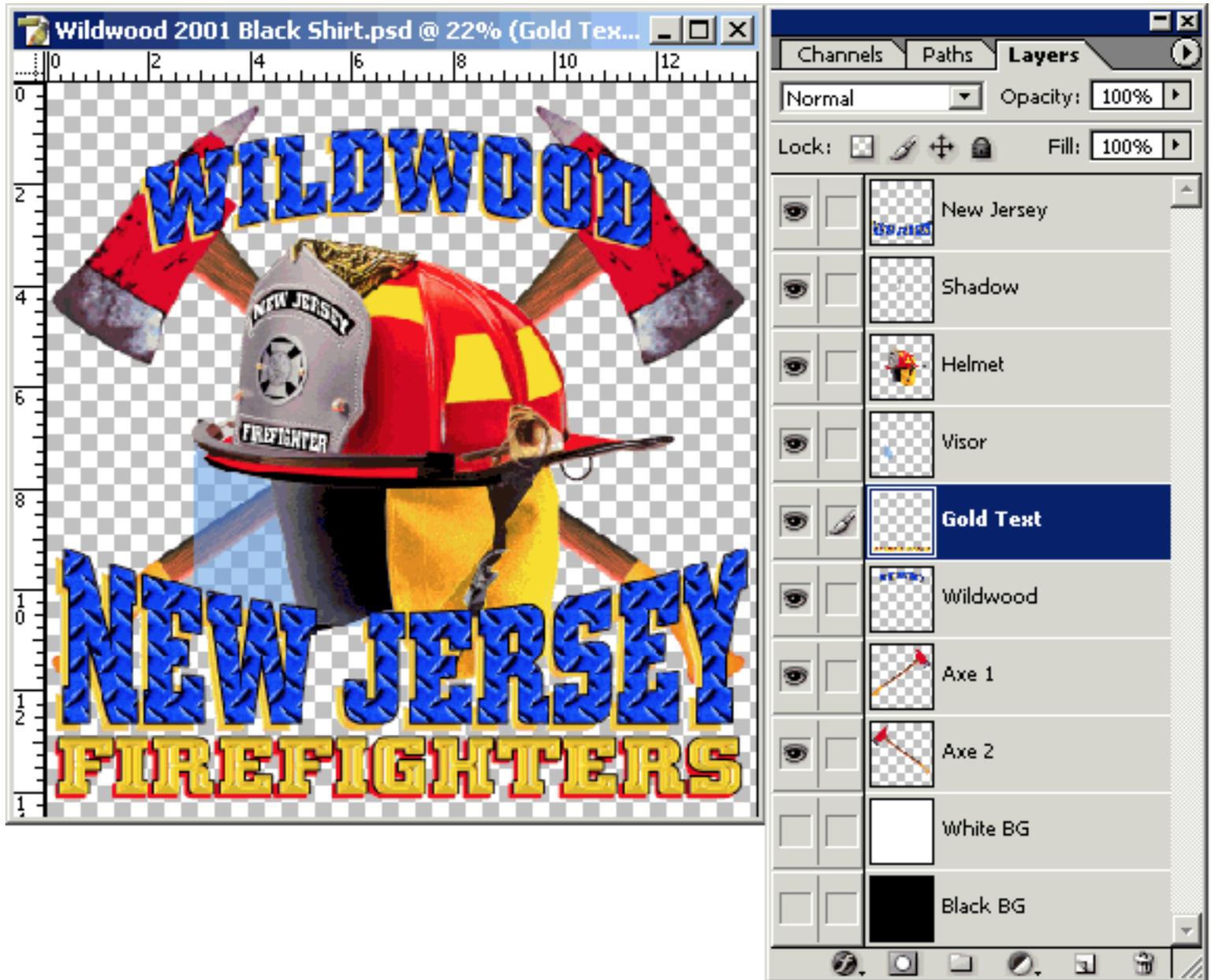
Create a new file at slightly larger dimensions that you intend your finished color separated file to be and make sure to select "Transparent" as its contents. Resolution should be 200 dpi minimum - 300 dpi maximum. Don't worry about it being the exact size as this can be adjusted or cropped later.



Now simply add your graphics / text / etc. to this transparent file. If you need to see your graphics on a white or black background while working, simply add a new layer to the bottom of the layers palette and fill this layer with white or black. You can add both a white and black layer if you wish and toggle them on and off. The sample on the following page illustrates how the firefighting artwork was constructed.

Notice the 2 layers shut off on the bottom named Wht BG and Black BG. This allows us to view the file on an opaque background of choice while working.

Typical Art File With All Data Layers Visible & Active

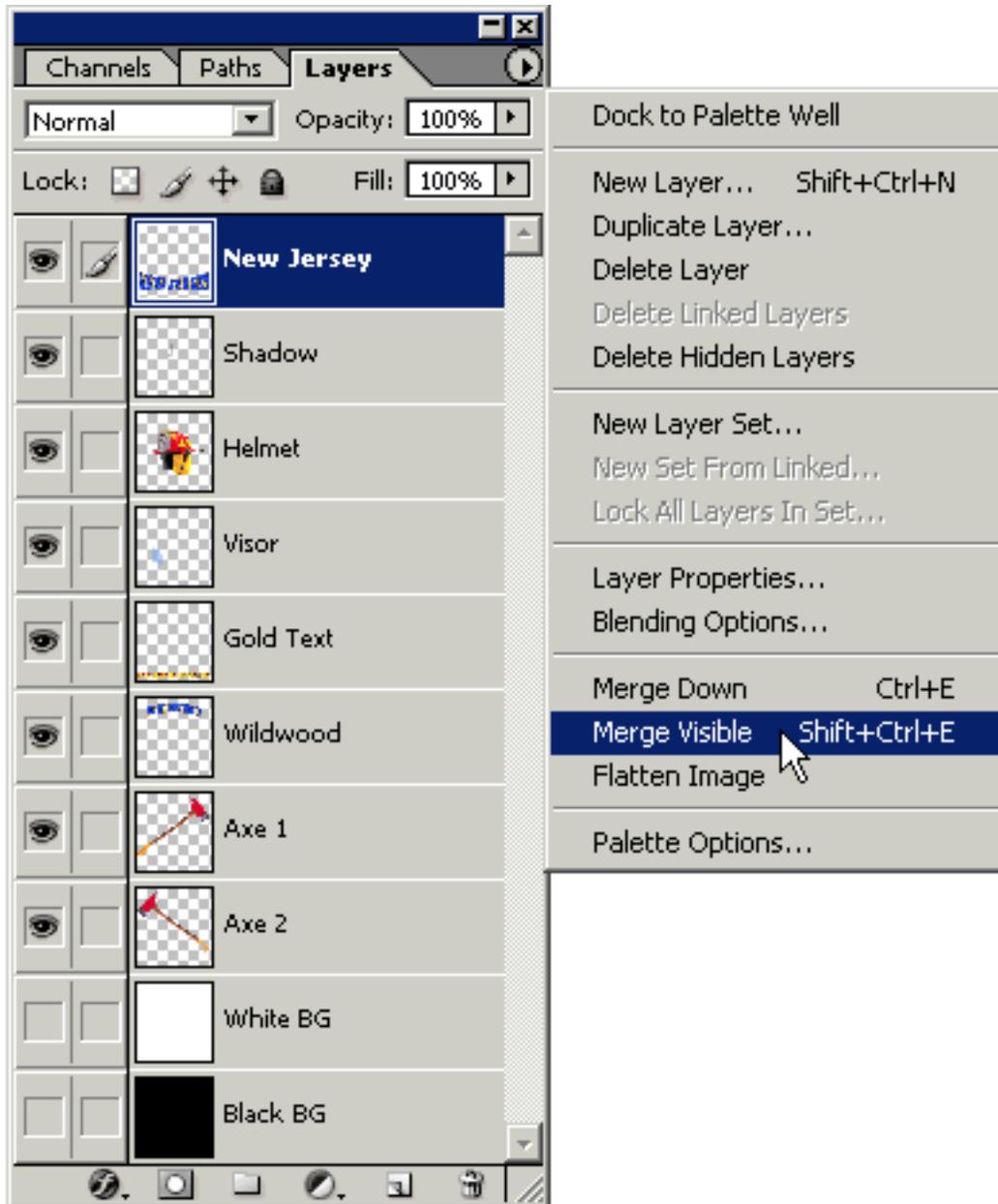


As you can see, the firefighting artwork above is completed and needs to be color separated with QuikSeps Professional. Obviously the layers need to be merged together with the exception of the White BG and Black BG layers but this needs to be done "without" flattening the image. **Here's how you do it.....**

Remember, its VERY IMPORTANT is to save the original file “AS IS” with all layers intact. You may need it in the future for modifications!

Now duplicate the file and close the original saved version. The duplicate version will be used with QuikSeps Professional.

Have all layers containing image data on the duplicate file visible (make sure the eye is next to each layer wanted) and delete any unneeded layers. If you decided to use a Black / White BG Layer for viewing, make sure to delete these also. Now select the arrow in the upper right corner of the Layers Palette and select “Merge Visible”.



This will merge all visible channels WITHOUT flattening the image thus leaving the background transparent. (A Good Thing!)

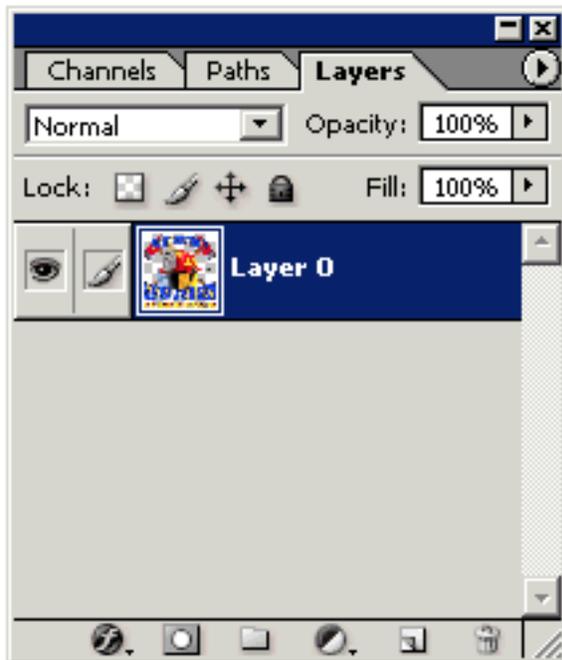
After merging all visible required layers we were left with one remaining layer called "New Jersey" which was the layer at the top of the layers palette. We simply selected "Layer Properties" by clicking on the Arrow in the top right corner of the Layers Palette to bring up the Layer Options dialog box and renamed New Jersey **Layer 0**.

The layer name itself can also be double-clicked and renamed **Layer 0**.



The Layers Palette should now resemble the sample below.

The Channels Palette must only contain the RGB Channels and nothing else!

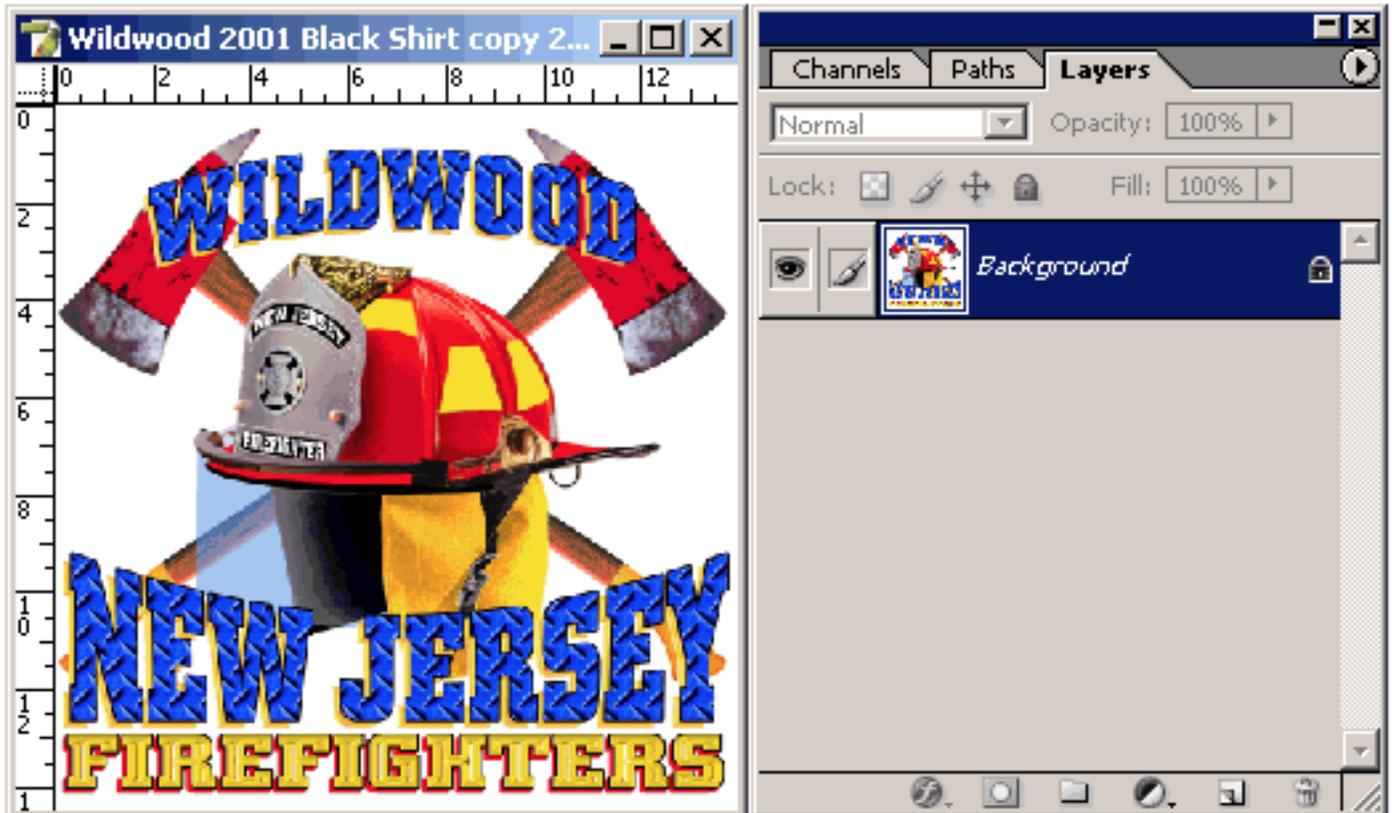


*This file is now ready to use with QuikSeps Professional.
Save using a name other than the original and close it.*

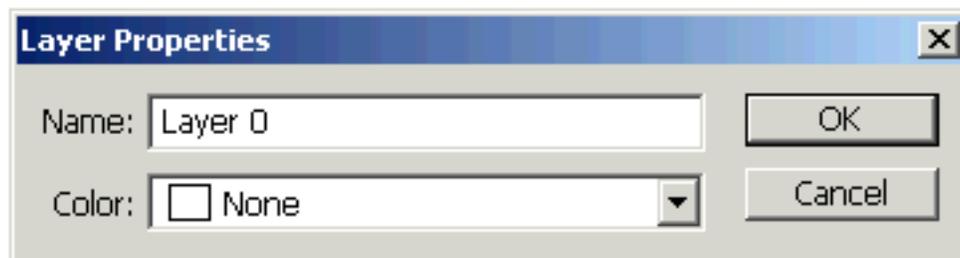
*The next few pages discuss modifying an existing file
not properly formatted for use with QuikSeps Professional.*

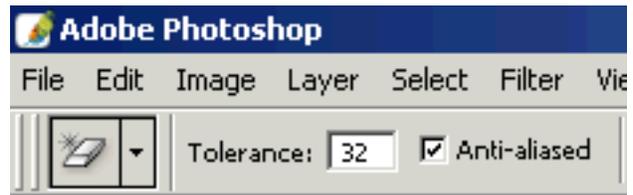
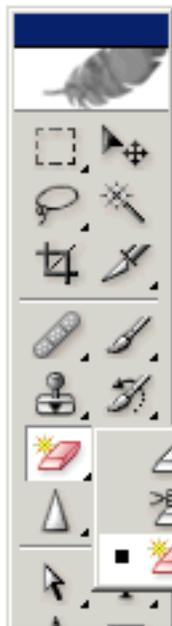
Deleting The White Background Or Color Surrounding An Image

In all likelihood, some of your (Pre-QuikSeps) art is flattened, containing only 1 layer named Background or the non-printing areas outside the image are opaque like the sample below.



*When confronted with this type of flattened image, the first thing to do is change the formatting and name of the Background Layer. To do this, double click on the background layer and when the layer dialog box appears, rename it **Layer 0**. Photoshop should have already selected this new name .*



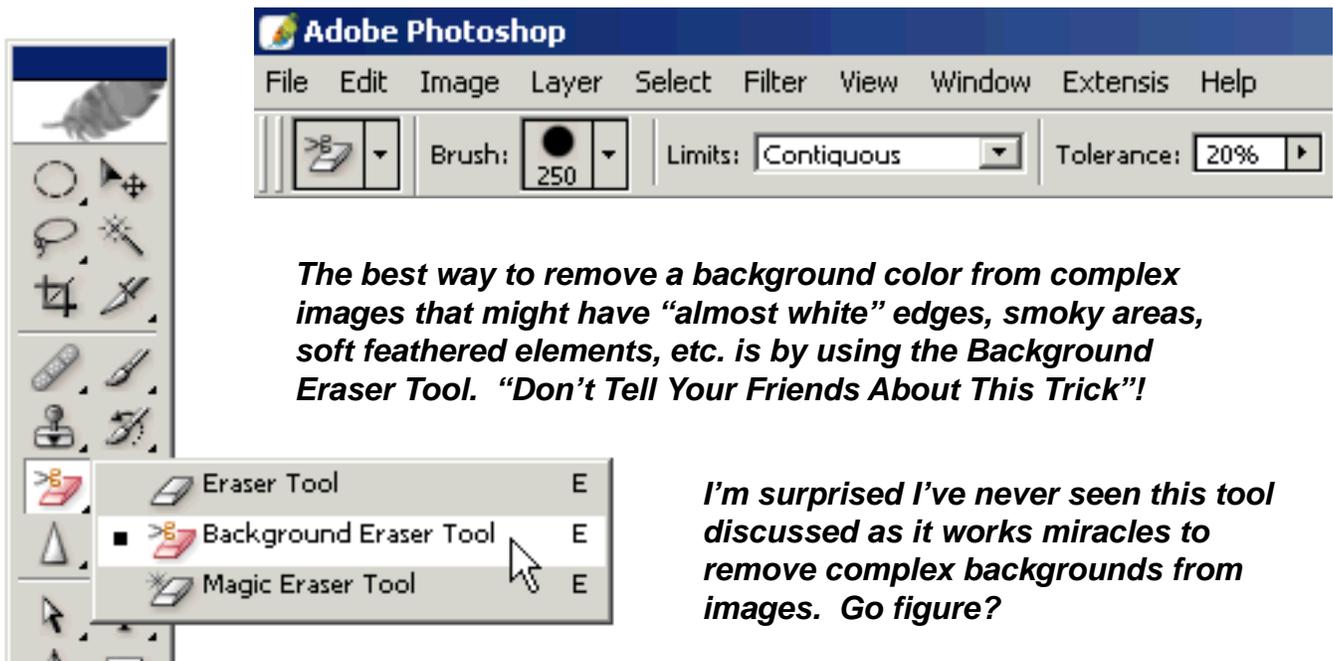


The easiest and most accurate way to remove a solid background color is with the Magic Eraser Tool. Unlike using the Magic Wand, it doesn't leave residual pixels behind and takes the color off cleanly. Truly an amazing tool!

After selecting it from the Tools Palette keep the Tolerance at 32, which is the default setting. Add a temporary layer under Layer 0 and fill it with Black. This will make viewing easier as non printing areas are deleted. Now simply click all opaque areas outside the image and within places where no ink should print. DO NOT delete any white from areas where white ink is required!

Once satisfied, delete the temporary layer filled with black and save. The file is now ready for use!



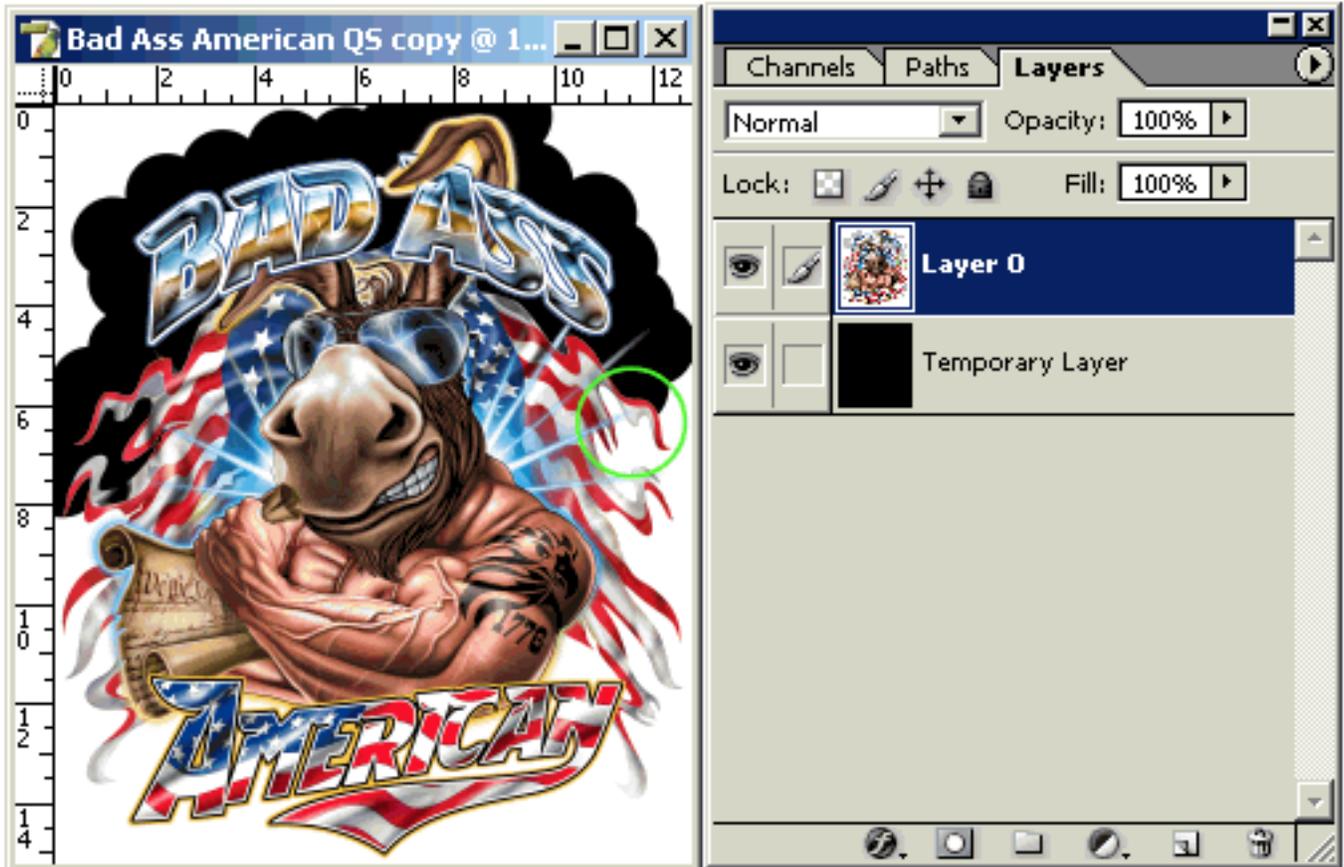


The best way to remove a background color from complex images that might have “almost white” edges, smoky areas, soft feathered elements, etc. is by using the Background Eraser Tool. “Don’t Tell Your Friends About This Trick!”

I’m surprised I’ve never seen this tool discussed as it works miracles to remove complex backgrounds from images. Go figure?

After selecting it from the Tools Palette set the Tolerance at 20%. Add a temporary layer under Layer 0 and fill it with Black. This will make viewing easier as non printing areas are deleted. Create a large “hard edge brush”, I’ve used a 250 setting here. Now simply click all opaque areas outside the image, overlapping the brush with each click. Once all non printing areas close to the image have been deleted, using the regular eraser or another selection tool such as the Magic Wand, lasso tool, etc., delete the remaining perimeter areas. DO NOT delete any white from areas where white ink is required!

Once satisfied, delete the temporary layer filled with black and save. The file is now ready for use!



Pre-Separation Image Enhancement

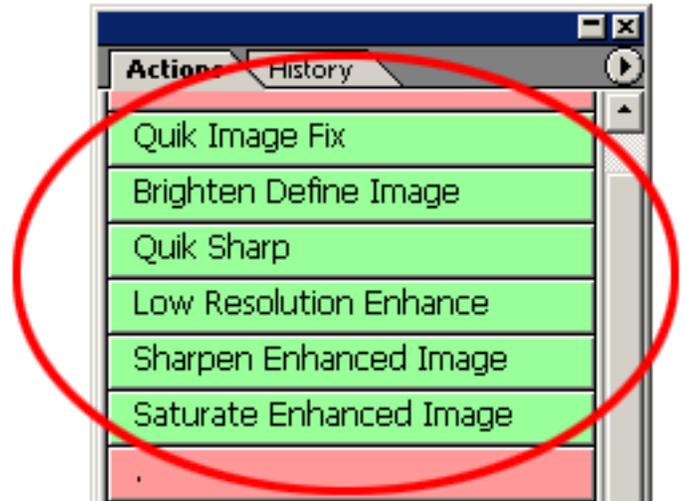
QuikSeps Professional includes 4 image enhancing Actions:

Quik Image Fix is a color enhancing sequence using highly calibrated preset values.

Brighten Define Image enhances the depth and helps find lost detail while reducing excessive shadows.

Quik Sharp is an Unsharp Mask using our preset values and sharpens quite accurately using a different approach.

Low Resolution Enhance can help clean up jpegs and other lower resolution photographic images.

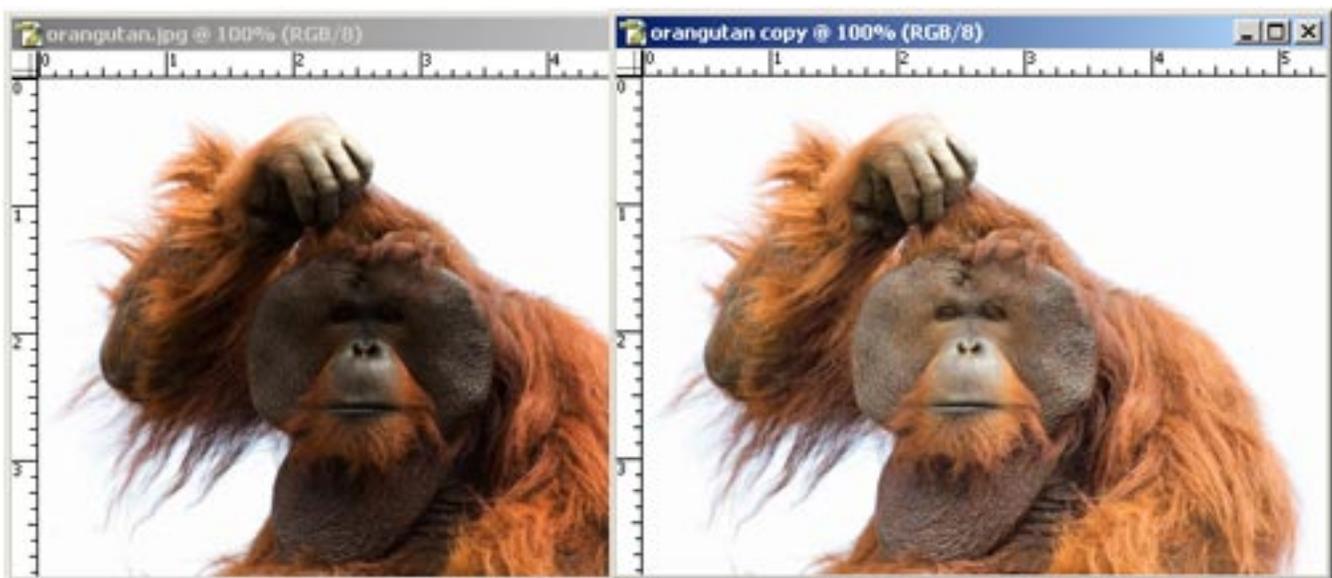
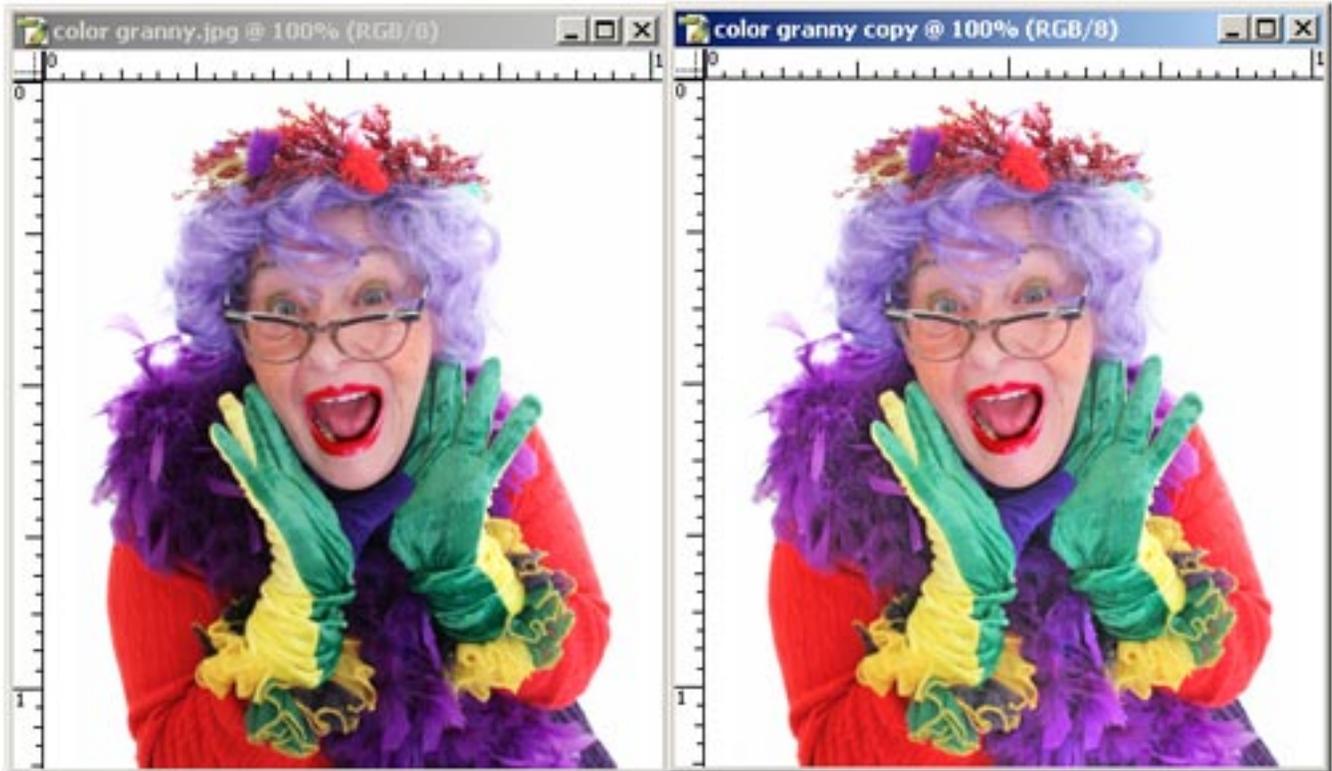


Below is a sample of before and after using **Quik Image Fix**. Quite A Difference! This particular image could be colorized further with **Brighten-Define Image**.



Brighten Define Image

This action works miracles digging out detail, highlights and hidden color within images. Notice the purple feather scarf on the colorful old lady, prior to adjustment the shadow is very dark and would have printed horribly and now its full of color. The face and hair in the orangutan has undergone major improvements. Unlike attempting to use a curve or levels adjustment, this process did not compromise the integrity of the file.



Increase Resolution Of Low Quality Images

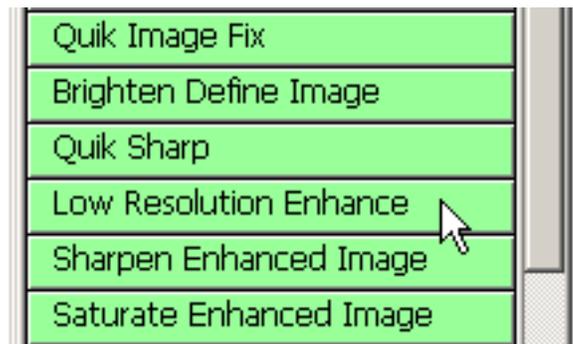
Sometimes you'll get an image that just isn't "quite" good enough to use. Or maybe you've bought some images online and really need the resolution and clarity higher. Then simply run **Low Resolution Enhance** on the file! This Action works better repairing low quality images that are physically larger to begin with. Please, don't expect to convert a matchbook size 72 dpi jpeg into perfect full chest sized artwork! "Nothing can offer that as its simply impossible".

The example below, zoomed in for display purposes began as a 96 dpi jpeg at about 60% final size. Low Resolution Enhance was able to increase the resolution and clarify the image substantially. This process can be used effectively on both photographic and hard-line style graphics.



After running Low Resolution Enhance on a file, it may be necessary to sharpen and/or saturate it a bit further using the 2 actions to follow.

NOTE! If using Quik Image Fix or the Brighten Define Image Action always run Low Resolution Enhance "first" for more satisfactory results.



Generating Simulated Process Color Separations

The good news is that running QuikSeps simulated process is the EASY part of the color separation process. In fact, if you run QuikSeps with a high quality file that is bright, clear and with sufficient color information there may be little need to adjust any of the color channels.

Even if adjustments are needed, it's usually only a modest bump of the Curves Function on a channel containing either too much or too little intensity or the simple deletion or merging of color channels that QuikSeps Professional can perform automatically.

Check List Prior To Running Any Type Of Color Separation:

QuikSeps automatically works on a duplicate of your image so there's no need to save another version as a "work file". Just remember to name the completed color separation differently.

I hate to beat a dead horse but we'll once again repeat the correct file setup method:

*Your file must be transparent (checkerboard background) with "all" of the image data located on one layer only. This layer MUST be named **Layer 0** and be the only layer contained within the file.*

Your file must be in RGB format with no additional channels other than the Red, Green, Blue and composite RGB channel visible or contained within the channels palette. No other spot or alpha channels are allowed!

For the best results, file resolution should be 200 dpi to 300 dpi. Although QuikSeps will produce adequate separations at slightly lower resolutions if the situation arises.

Avoid resolutions above 300 dpi since they only increase file size, slow down the separation process and do not improve quality in any way.

Prior to running QuikSeps for the first time, you MUST calibrate Photoshop's Color Settings. See the "QuikSeps Color Settings" on pages 5 & 6.

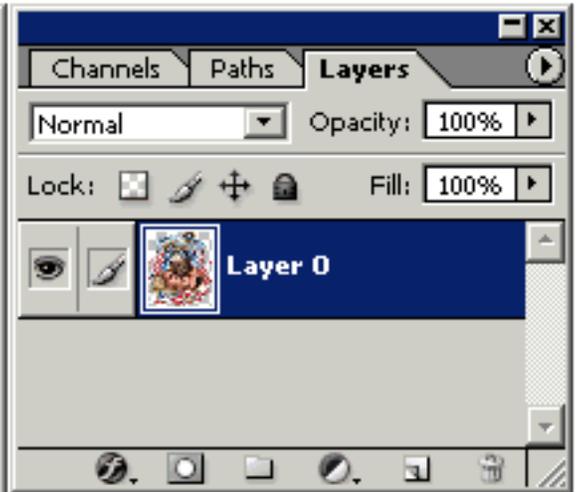
Do not have any other files open within Photoshop. The only file open should be the file to be separated.

If any color channels are filled with 100% solid black after separating, then add the Color Bar Target to your image and repeat the separation. We'll discuss this later.

If an error occurs such as "The Command Move Is Not Currently Available", your file is not formatted properly and is flattened.

Now lets do a simulated process separation.

Generating Simulated Process Color Separations



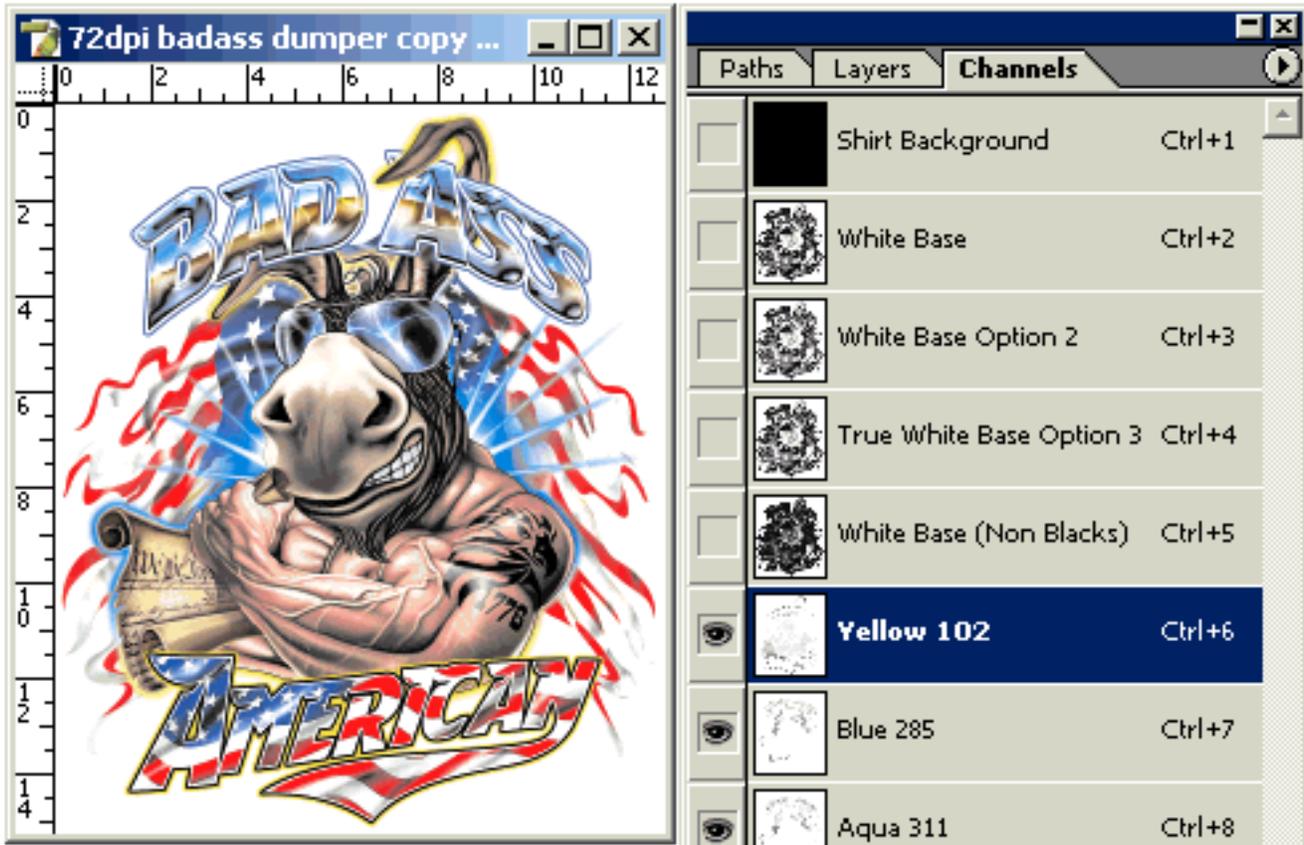
The proper setup for QuikSeps to run.

Make sure all other files are closed!

Click QuikSeps GO and within a minute or two when all on screen activity stops, the separation is complete.



Color Separation Process Is Now Complete



Once QuikSeps completes the separations, go to your channels palette and turn off the R-G-B channels, the Shirt Background channel, all 4 white base channels all 3 black channels and both red channels. You'll be left with only the top colors (less red) plus highlight white visible.

Now you'll have to decide which of the 3 black channels best suit your image, which of the 4 underbases (if any) you'll be using, what color channels can be deleted or combined into another and make a decision if the alternate Red Channel that we call "Soft Red 185" looks better than the standard Red 185 Channel.

If the image is to be printed on black, view it with the shirt background channel selected and do not select a black channel as this will make the image appear unnaturally dark. Make sure to select an underbase white and toggle between the 4 choices to view what effect they make on the file.

When printing on darks which are NOT black OR when deciding to run a black ink on black shirts to retain detail, use the "White Base (Non Blacks)" channel or see generating an Alternate White Base which removes less black from the white underbase. We'll discuss this later.

Even if you intend to let QuikSeps "Auto Reduce" the colors using the Actions, it's a good idea to examine the image first.

Consolidating The Color Channels Automatically

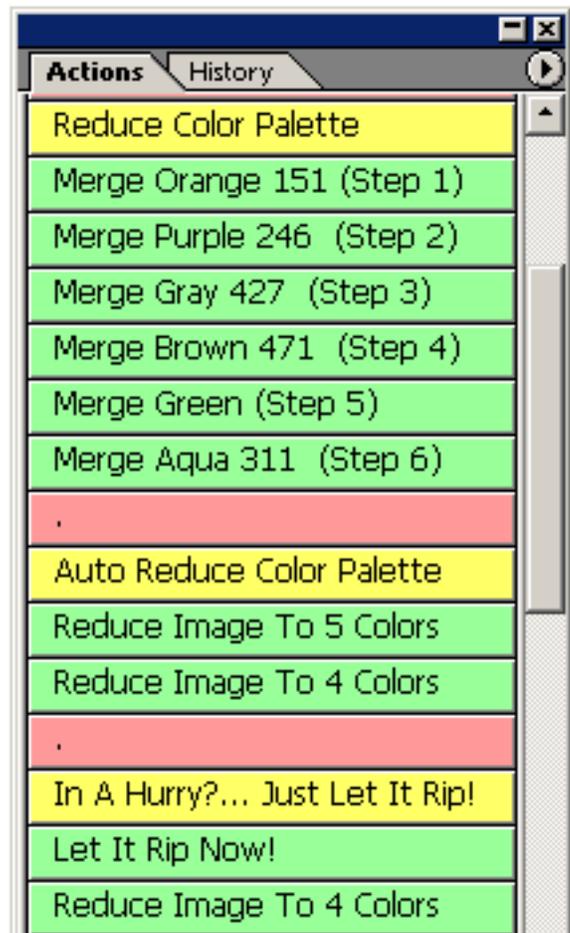
The great thing about QuikSeps is the ability to reduce a complicated 10 color image into 4 to 6 colors within seconds. And in many cases this does not compromise the quality or color of the original separation to a great extent. In fact, reducing the image to fewer colors using our techniques can sometimes improve upon the larger file. Believe it or not it's true!

I always subscribed to the less is more theory and try to apply this to the color separation software I develop. Most printers cannot simply pick up the phone and order a 12 or 14 color press although some color separation software developers think you can!

There are 3 methods to reduce the color palette using the QuikSeps Actions. The first being individually one color at a time and the second by running the Auto Reduce Action to reduce the image automatically to 5 colors. Choosing either of these methods will leave the 4 White Underbases and the 3 Black Channels intact for you to choose from.

*The third method is named “**Let It Rip Now!**” If I say so myself, this action is incredible and does a fabulous job of taking most of the guesswork out of reducing the color palette. What you're left with is a file containing 5 top colors, 2 underbases and 1 highlight white.*

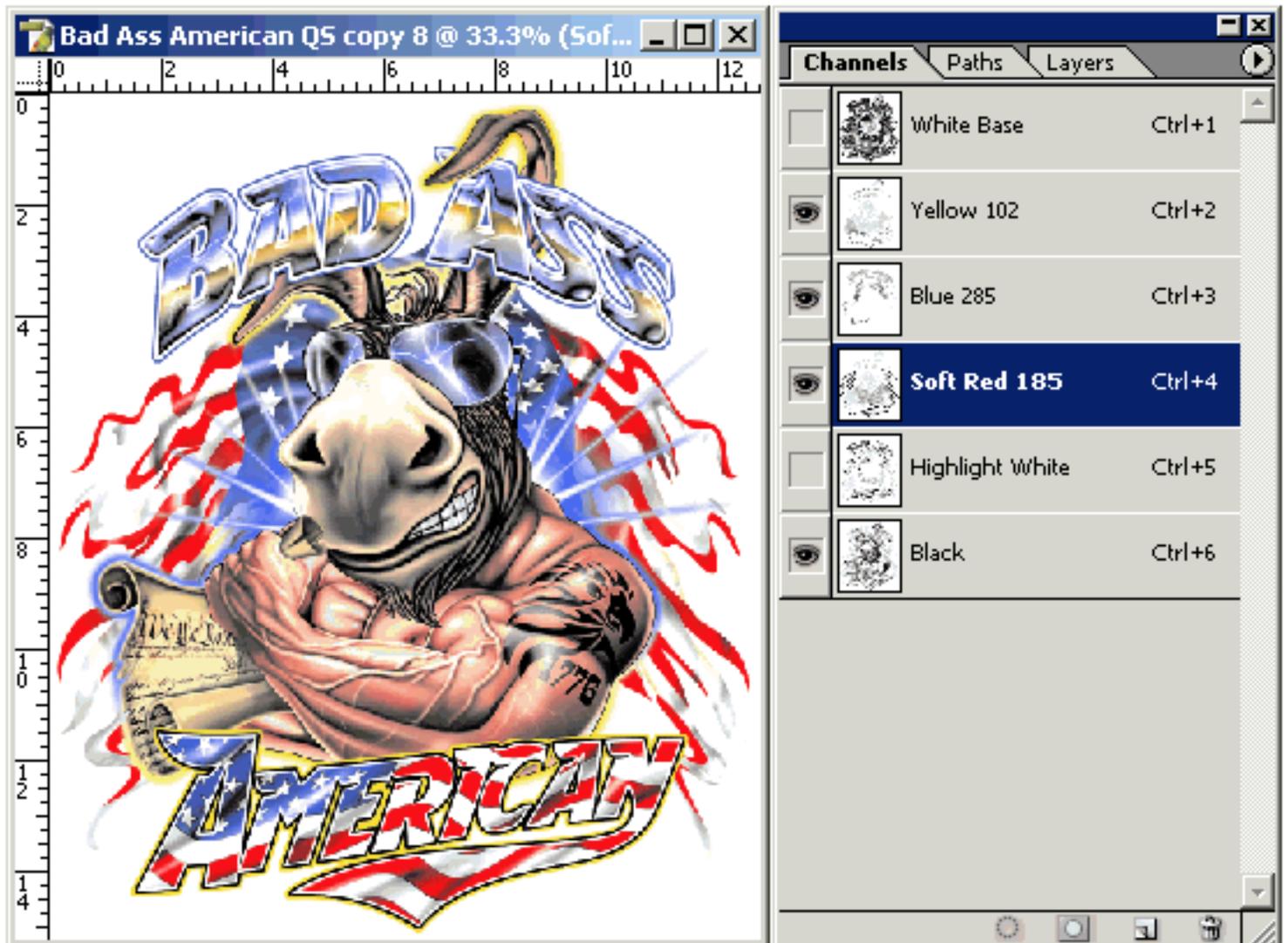
“Let It Rip Now Action” images can be effectively printed using a “total” of 5 colors and are meant to be small press friendly. This can be reduced further into 4 colors by merging the Aqua 311 channel into the Blue 285 using the “Reduce Image To 4 Colors” action. Some images won't absolutely require a highlight white. If it's being printed on white, the base could be eliminated. If it's printed on black, the black ink could be dropped. I think you get the picture. Reducing the colors drastically helps the small press owner with images that might require the addition of a special color like a metallic, neon, brown, fleshtone, etc.



Merging the Aqua channel could get a bit tricky especially if your image relies heavily on greens. If it does, it's probably best to not merge this channel. Also, if your image is "very" green intensive, you might want to keep the green channel itself then merge some of the Aqua 311 with the Blue 285.

At that point the Aqua can be deleted from the channels palette. In conclusion just remember that a combination of yellow and aqua will produce the best greens other than using green itself.

The subject of merging channels using varying opacity settings is covered in greater detail later on in the manual.



The graphic above reveals our test image after running "Let It Rip Now" and reducing the color palette to only 4 colors. Not bad for using only 4 inks. But lets make it a little better....**actually quite a bit better without much effort!**

Adding A Custom Color Channel To The Separation

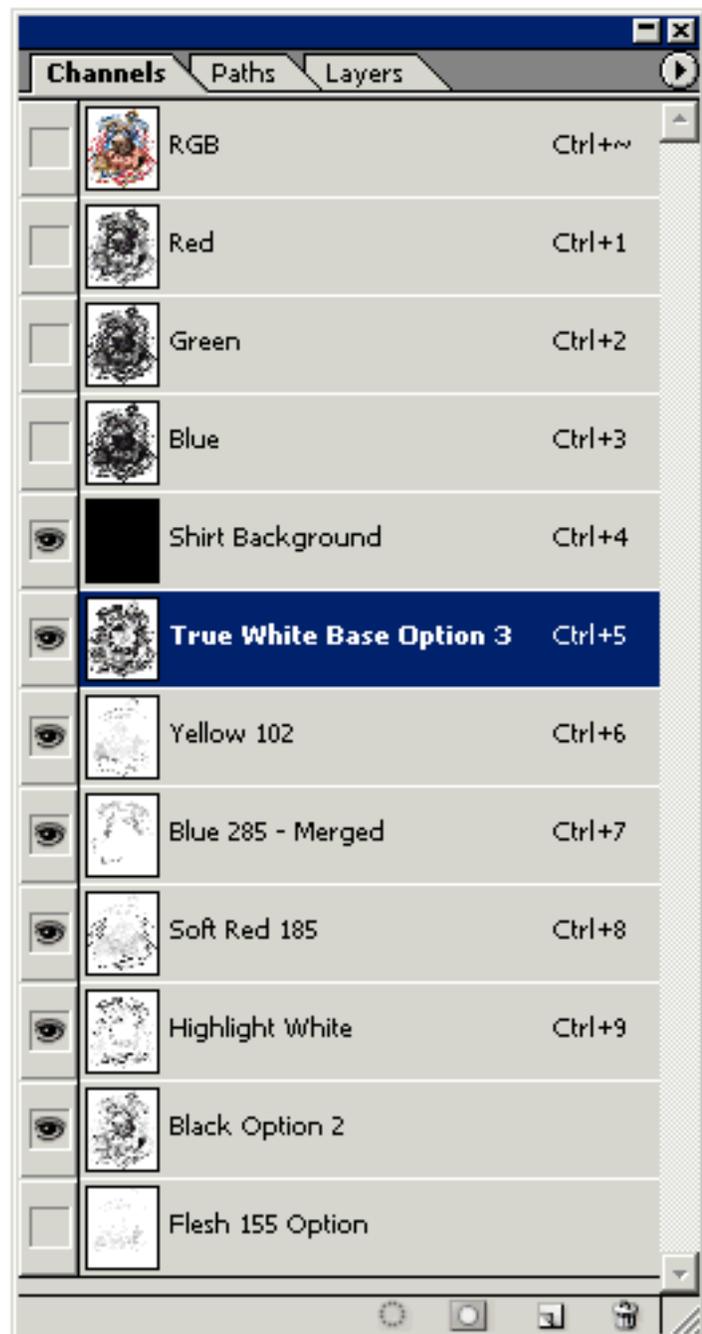
Okay, bringing a highly complex image such as this, (which would look incredible in 8 colors) down to 4 colors works well for those with small presses. Although most printers would probably want to add a custom brown channel to the separation since the art is very brown intensive. When a particular color dominates, in this case “brown”, its always best to include that color. Here’s how we do it with QuikSeps Professional along with a tip or two.

The first thing we did was reduce the image to 5 top colors using our Actions. Then I decided the Aqua 311 channel could be merged with the Blue 285 Channel by running the “reduce Image To 4 Colors” Action. I looked at the blacks and white underbases and selected the 2 which I thought worked the best. I also decided to go with the Soft Red 185 and deleted the other red.

To the right is what my Channels Palette looks like now following channel consolidation and manually deleting the extra black, white and red channels.

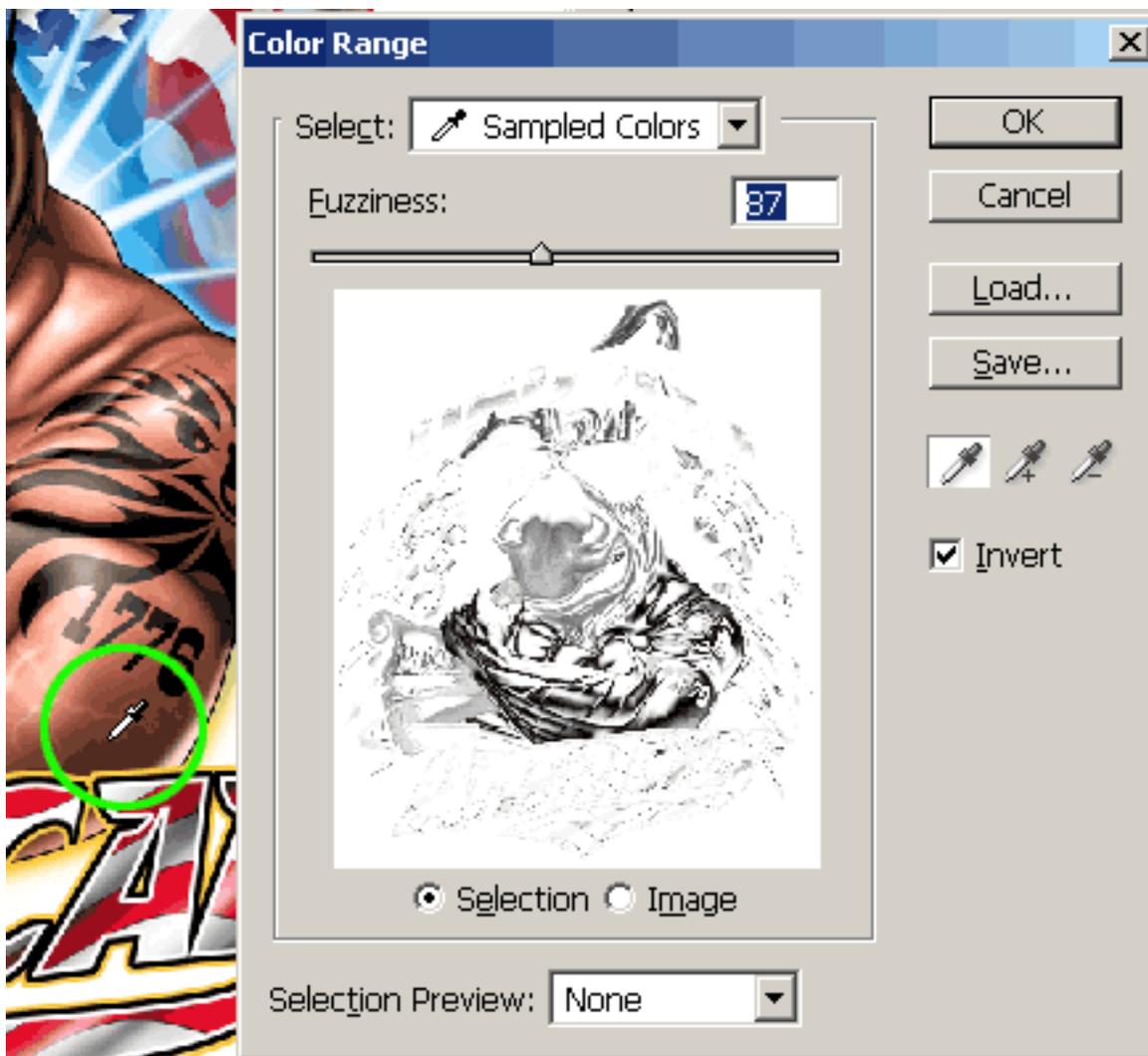
Next we’re going to use our “Custom Color Channel” Action to select and generate a specific brown channel. Notice we decided to hold onto the Flesh Channel (since its close to brown) as we’ll be using data from it later.

Note: Although QuikSeps does generate a Brown and Flesh Channel which could be used, darkened and merged together to make a single brown, I decided its best to cover exactly how to establish a custom color channel since the brown within this image is quite dominant and an excellent example of when to consider pulling a custom channel.



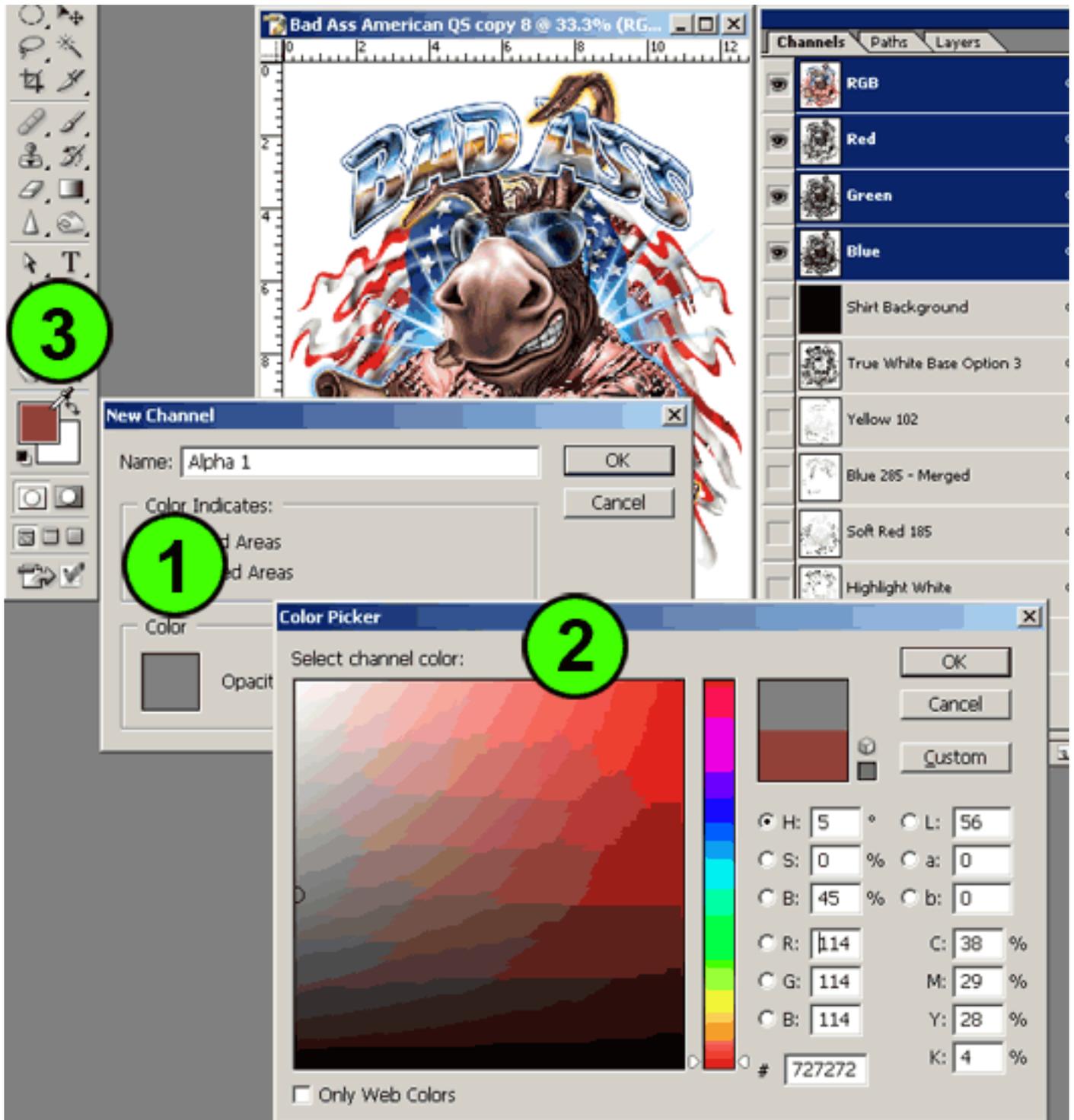
Click the **“Custom Color Channel GO”** Action and follow the instructions on screen. It will guide you through the selection and automatically generate the custom spot channel.

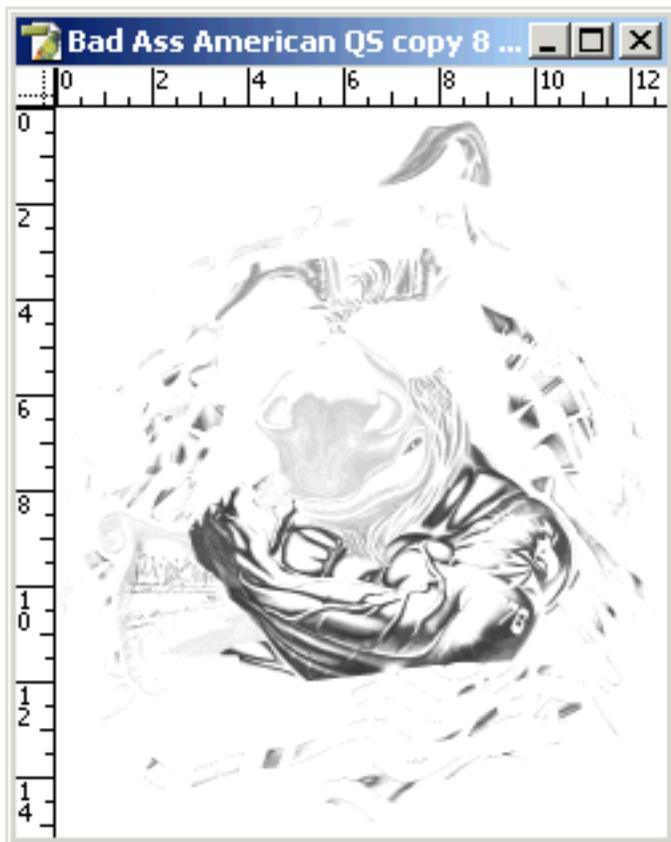
When Color Range opens, select your custom color using the eyedropper, adjust "Fuzziness" to select the proper amount of color and make sure the Invert Box is checked. The sample below shows us selecting a medium brown and adjusting the slider to what appears to be the right amount of color data.



After clicking Okay, the New Channel Window appears. Now click the “Color Box” (1) and when the “Color Picker” Opens (2) select the Foreground Color in Photoshop’s Tools Palette (3). In this example we’re clicking the Brown Square. Click Okay, then Okay again. Your new spot channel is created and is named Spot Color 1.

The name may be changed to reflect its color. The absolute color of the channel may also be changed to better match the artwork.

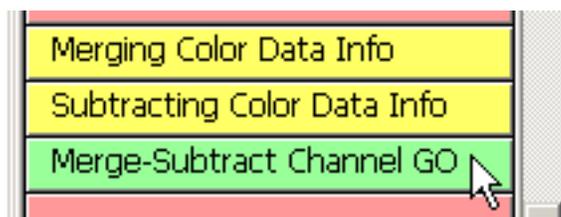




A full view plus close-up of the newly generated channel. Notice how smooth it is? Our techniques can image virtually any odd color accurately and cleanly to a new channel, much unlike other methods.

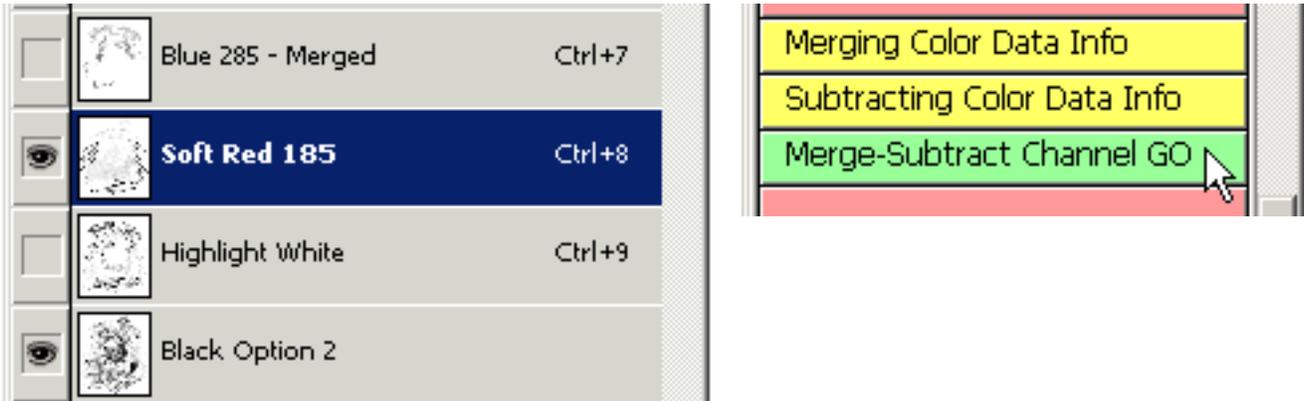
Do not attempt to pull vital color channels such as blacks, reds, yellows, whites, true blues, etc. using this technique. Always use the vital color channels automatically generated by QuikSeps.

When turning on all our channels, we've noticed how much better it looks with the Flesh Channel included. However that would be an extra color and could prove impossible for some. We'd also like to remove some of the new Brown Channel from the Red Channel to cut back on total ink and to diminish the reddish cast from the Brown. So how is this done? Well, we're going to use the Merge-Subtract Channel Action to remove the Brown data from the red and to add the Flesh data to our new Brown!

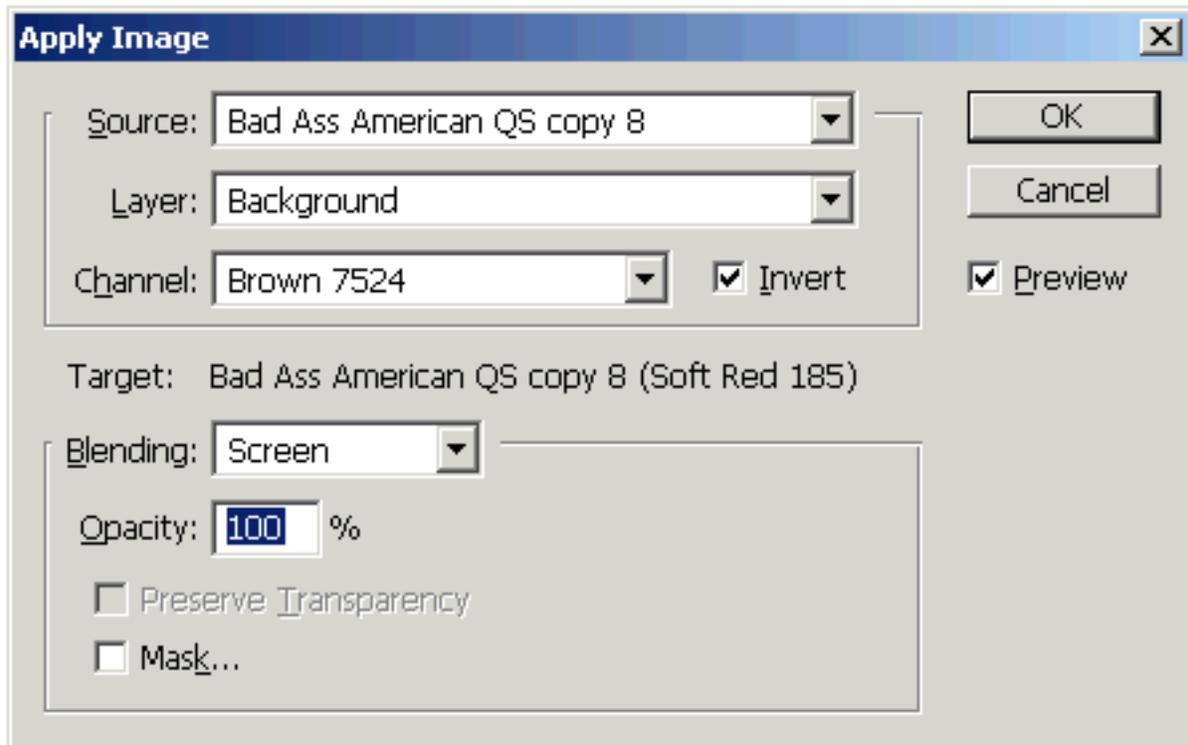


Deleting One Channel Data From Another

We selected the Soft Red Channel in the Channels Palette and clicked the Merge-Subtract Channel GO Action.

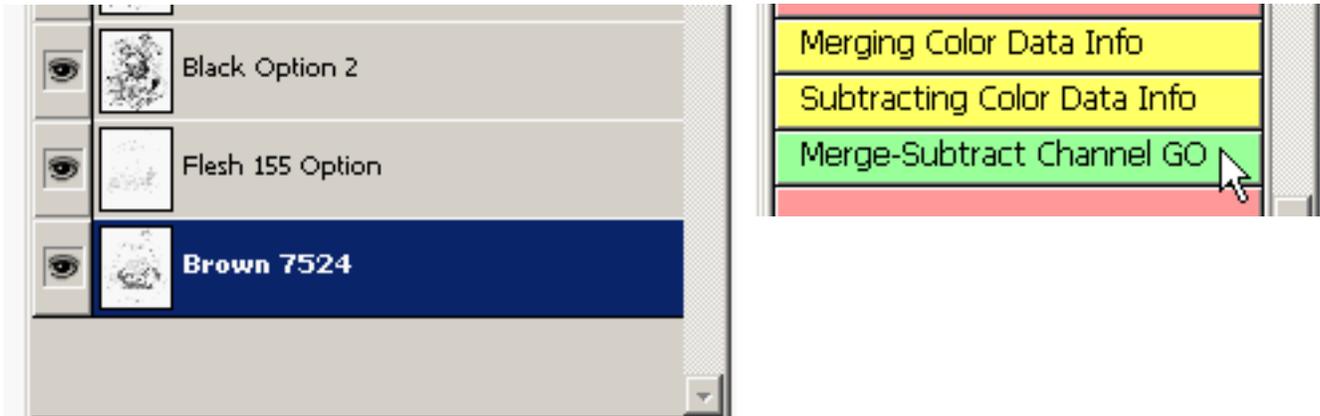


When the below window opens, change the Blending Mode to Screen, check the Invert Box and select the new Brown Channel. We've named it Brown 7524 in our example file. Click Okay. The Brown data has now been removed almost entirely from the Soft Red Channel. **Note, some of the brown information will remain within the red. This is okay and won't adversely affect printing.**

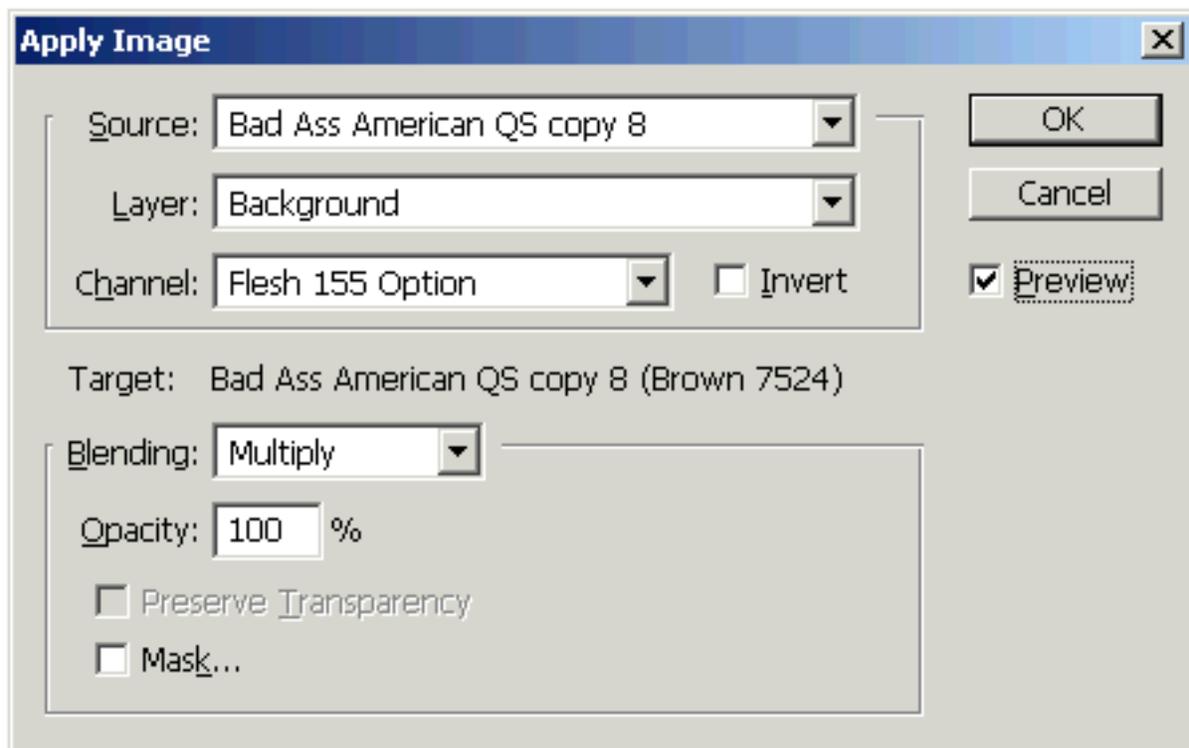


Adding One Channel Data To Another

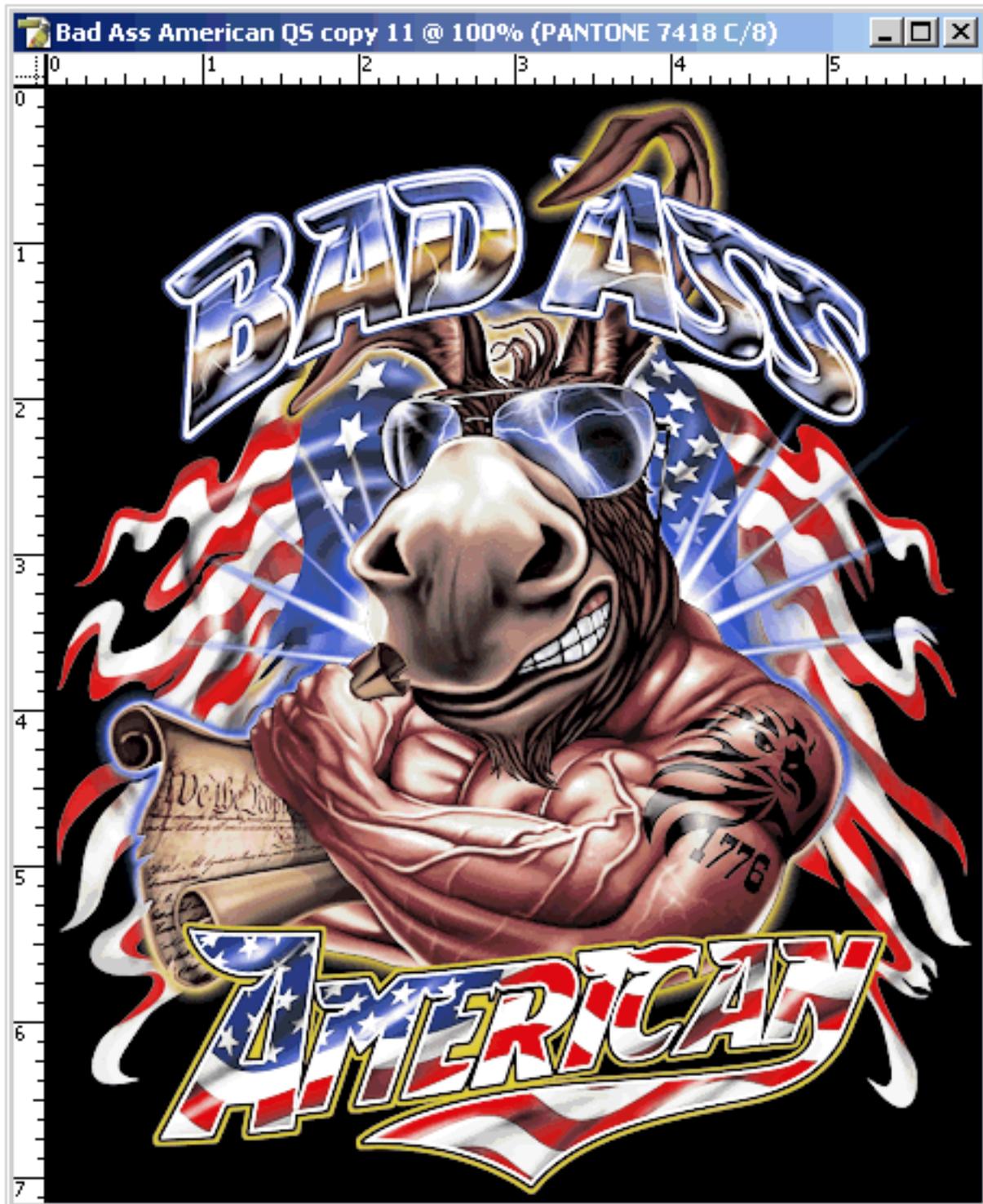
Now we're going to add the flesh channel data to the brown. We selected the Brown Channel in the Channels Palette and clicked the Merge-Subtract Channel GO Action.



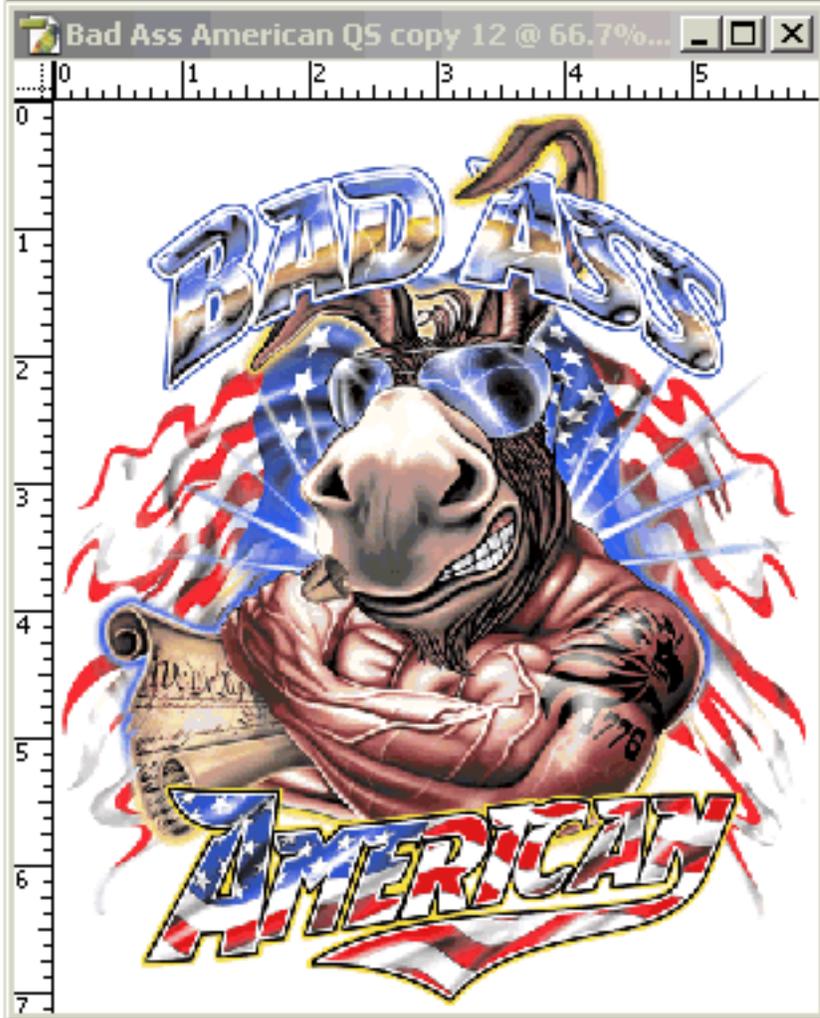
When the below window opens, change the Blending Mode to Multiply, UNCHECK the Invert Box and select the Flesh 155 Channel. Click Okay. The Flesh data has now been added entirely to the Brown 7524 Channel.



*A Truly Amazing Separation With Limited Colors
Only With QuikSePs Professional Is This Possible*



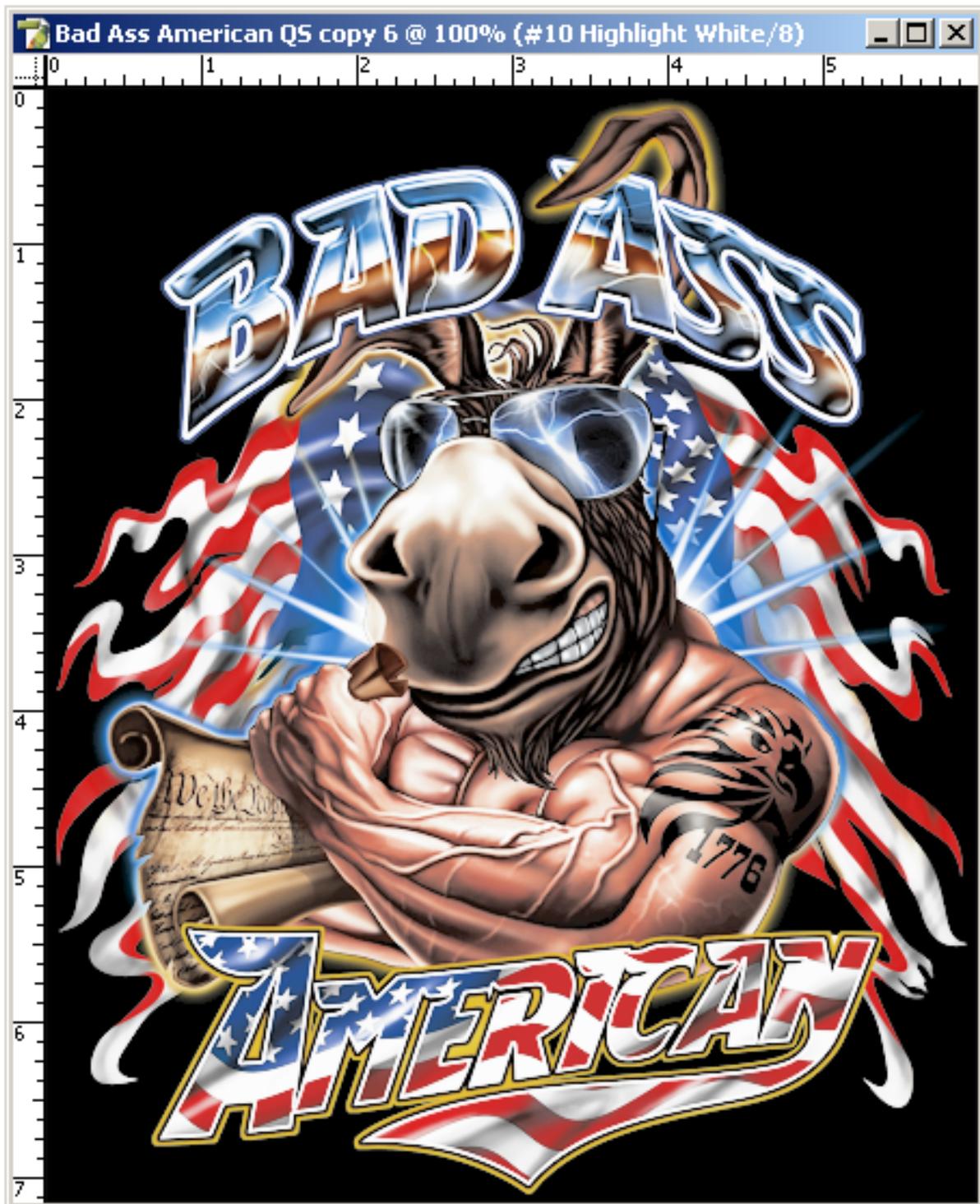
The next page displays the Channels Palette of the separation. On a black shirt, we've made it possible to print a dramatic image using only 4 top colors and 2 whites. We've also generated a difficult to image custom channel quite easily. All this can be accomplished within 15 minutes or so.



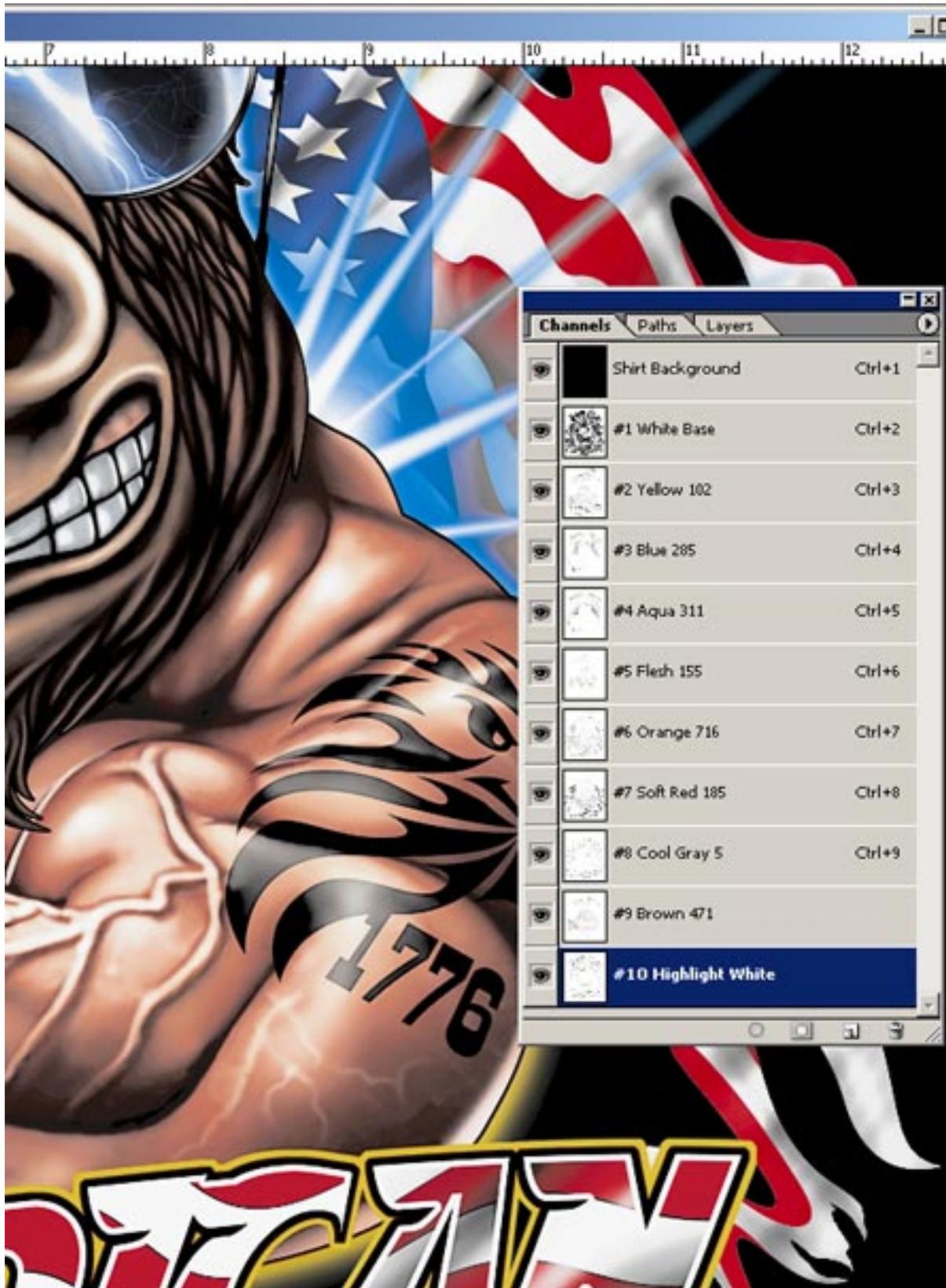
File shown on both white and black backgrounds. We changed the Brown Channel to Pantone 7418 to more closely match the original.

Next we'll showcase a high-end 10 color separation and exactly how easily its created. It requires no end-user intervention and makes exclusive use of channels automatically generated.

*An Ultra High-End 10 Color Separation
For Those With Large Machines, A Fully Blown QuikSeps Masterpiece!*



This separation was finished by hand selecting channels generated by QuikSeps Professional and deleting those not required. Click one button and instant high-end 10 color separation! Although we could cut back on the channels, the example simply displays the power of QuikSeps! The next page shows the Channels Palette and a close-up.



A file such as this with light, medium and dark tans and browns is among the most difficult to separate. Some printers, including myself might prefer to print a black ink, even with a black shirt. Therefore we could effectively merge some of the orange and flesh into the red and brown channels, add a black and wind up with a high-end 9 color file. We could also play with the blues a little and merge into one cutting it further to 8 colors. We'll talk about running black ink on black shirts and other cool stuff later!

QuikSeps Full Simulated Process Color Palette

Pictured here is what you'll see when QuikSeps Professional completes running the simulated process action named "QuikSeps GO". As previously mentioned, at this point the colors can be automatically reduced by using the various actions included or the end user can simply look at each channel and decide which should be kept, deleted or merged / subtracted from another.

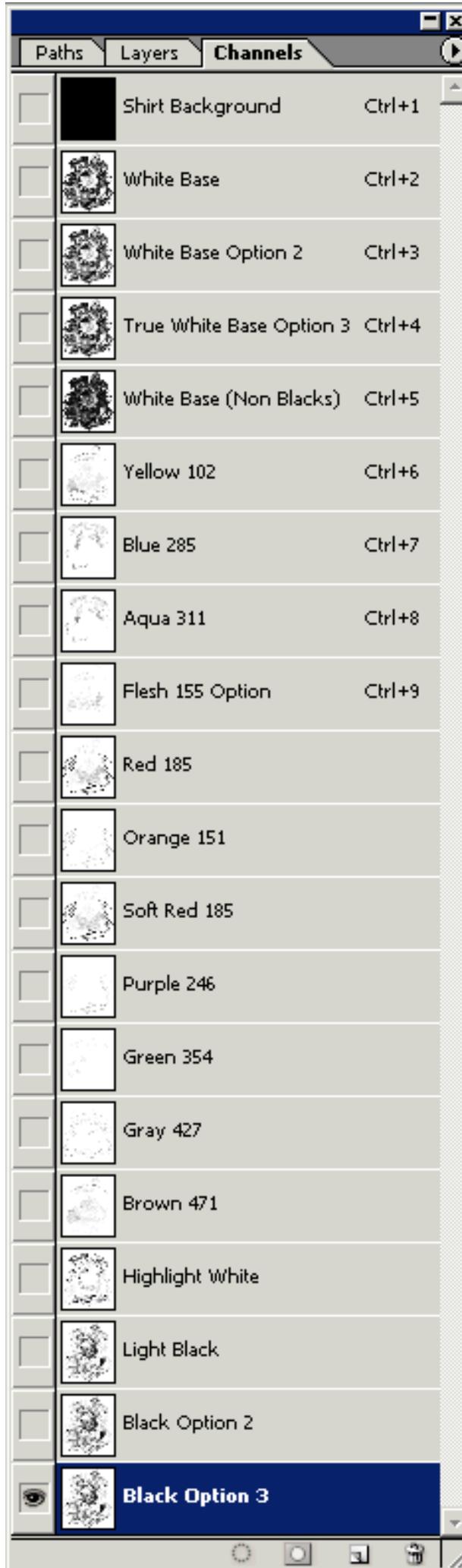
The action pulls multiple whites, blacks and reds. Select which looks best for the art and discard the remainder.

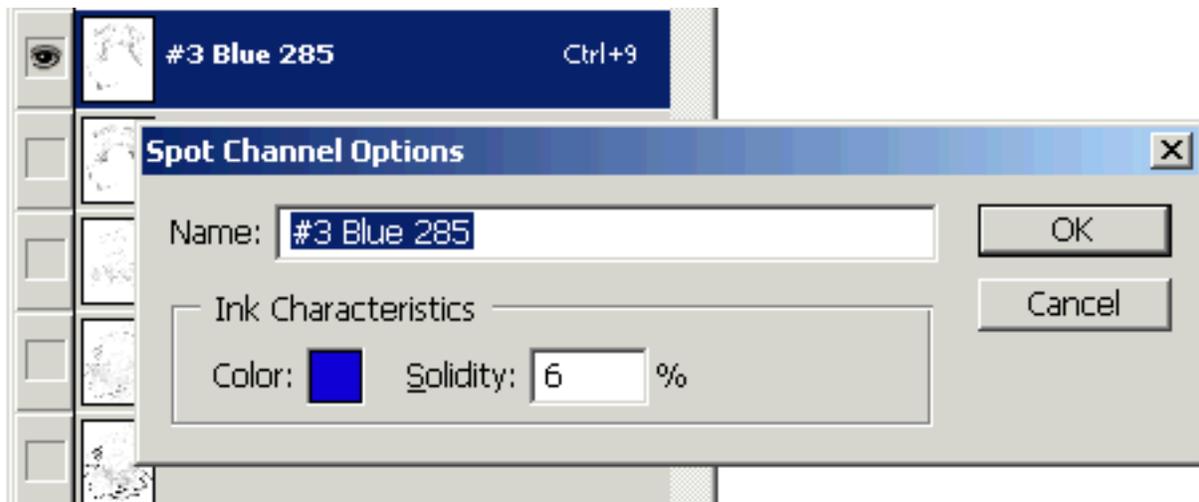
Since QuikSeps pulls many colors and options which are not obviously used in every job, the automatic numbering of the channels for print order (#1, #2, #3 etc) is not possible: **So Remember, Light Colors First, Dark Colors Last!** Except the Gray, put that in later.

Use caution with the orange as it repeats certain red data. Its useful on some files although not all.

To the right is an example of suggested printing order. Its also okay to move channels up or down to obtain desired results. Gray 427 has been changed to Cool Gray 5 within a few examples.. Changing this to a darker gray is sometimes helpful.

When double-clicking a channel to bring up its properties you'll notice a "Solidity Setting". These settings allow the channels to display correctly on-screen and does not affect the output.





“Solidity” settings for white channels have been set at 85% , black 100% and other colors between 5% and 25%. Its best to leave our settings intact.

The material covered so far on simulated process color separations showcases how easy it is to generate high quality, press-friendly files using very few colors and most screen printers will appreciate this. However, the QuikSeps GO Action generates many other colors to consider such as purples, greens, grays, etc. It also provides multiple underbases, blacks and reds to choose from.

Therefore, we encourage you to not only employ our automated techniques but to also consider hand selecting the colors QuikSeps generates, merging and deleting channels on your own and mixing in custom channels with the help of QuikSeps Professional.

With a little practice, you’ll develop the ability and confidence to produce ultra high-end separations using exotic colors and tweaks you’ll learn with each job.

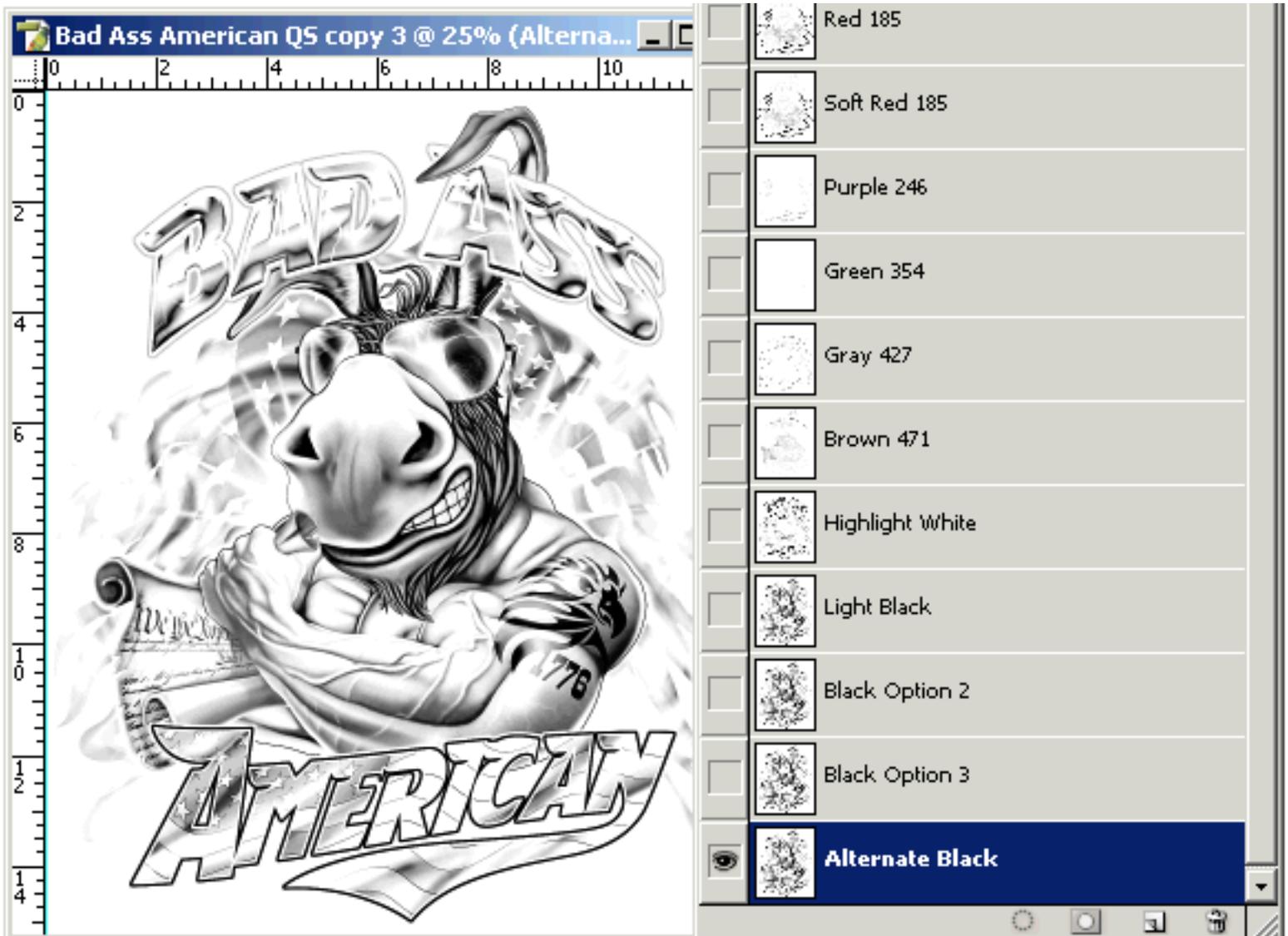
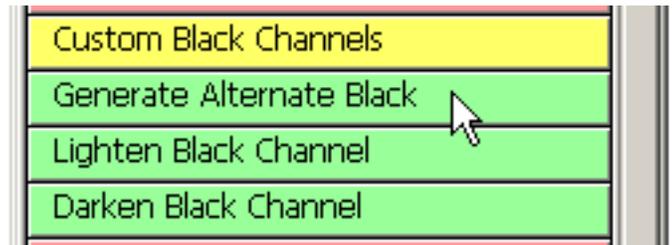
Generate Alternate Black Channel

Custom Black Channels

QuikSeps generates 3 different black channels. The channel labeled “Light Black” is best suited for art with very little black shadow or when trying to avoid excessive black data. The other two blacks labeled “Black Option 2” - “Black Option 3” contain substantially more (and different) shadow detail.

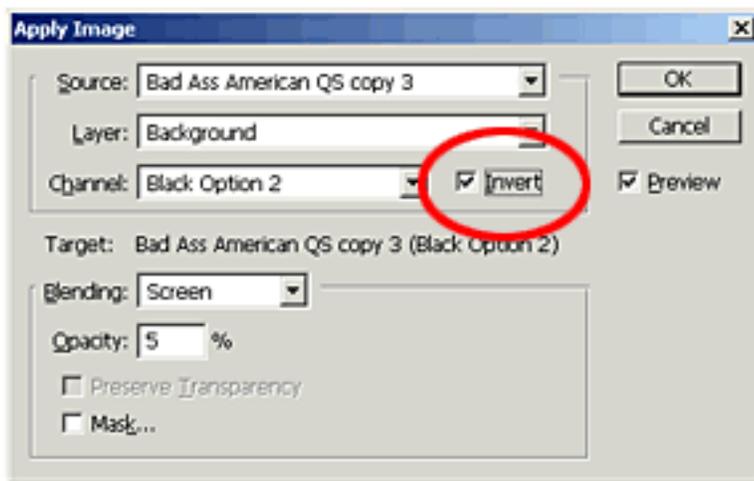
The “Black Option 2” is probably the black of choice for the majority of images and is most likely the best all around black channel to “load” when subtracting black pixel data from the white underbase to improve contrast.

QuikSeps also generates an “Alternate Black Channel” by running the Action at right. This channel is somewhat different from the other 3 black channels and is sometimes the correct black for your image. Your file must have the original 3 QuikSeps black channels and the RGB channel intact to function.



Lighten / Darken Black Channel (Or ANY Other Top Color)

Aside from using a simple “curve”, try using Photoshop’s “Apply Image Function” to evenly decrease or intensify the density of a channel. By following the on-screen instructions when clicking the actions below, QuikSeps will guide the user through the process.



Lighten Channel

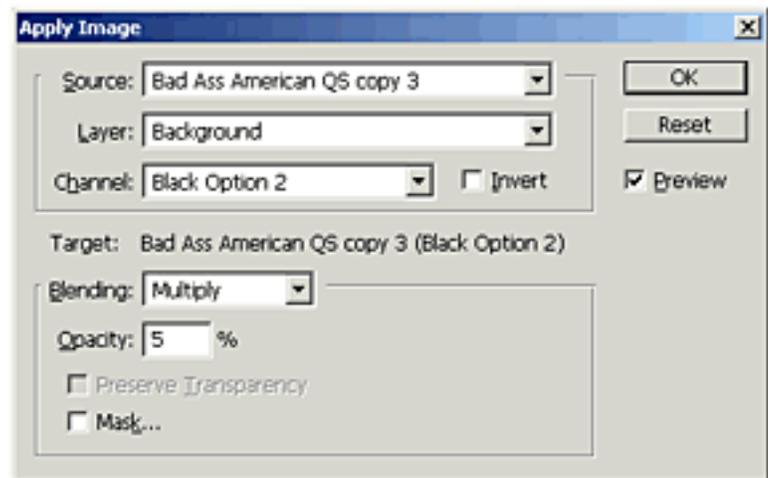
Select the Channel you wish to lighten in the Channels Palette. When the Apply Image Window opens choose this same Channel and Screen as the Blending Mode. Make sure Invert **IS** checked.

Now experiment with different opacity settings to adjust the intensity of the channel. Start with 5% Opacity and work up. This method can also be used with the other channels.

Darken Channel

Select the Channel you wish to darken in the Channels Palette. When the Apply Image Window opens choose this same Channel and Multiply as the Blending Mode. Make sure Invert is **NOT** checked.

Now experiment with different opacity settings to adjust the intensity of the channel. Start with 5% Opacity and work up. This method can also be used with the other channels.



Generate Alternate White Underbase

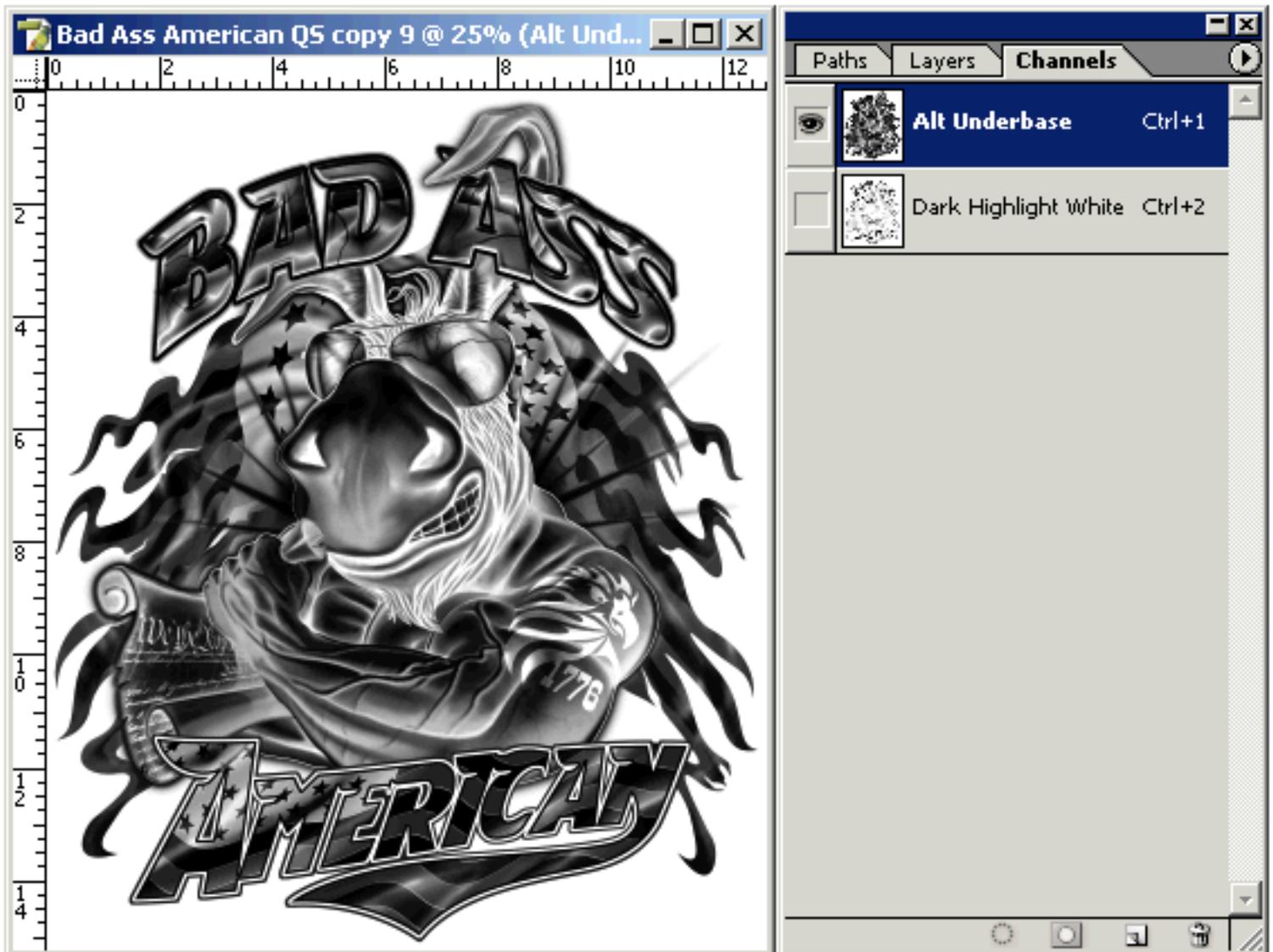
Although QuikSeps Professional generates 4 different white underbases, sometimes none are quite right. QuikSeps removes much of the black ink data from the 1-2-3 underbases so these are primarily used for blacks if no black ink is used. When working with a red, royal, bright green etc., dark background on screen, you'll see a color cast in many areas due to the complete void of white within non 100% solid black areas with these underbases therefore the **White Base (Non Blacks)** channel should be used along with black ink.

So just to offer yet something else along with the ability to generate an excellent base without running a full separation we've included the "Alt White Base - Highlights" Action.

To use this, open the original art file, the one with all image data on "Layer 0" and run the action at right.



Upon completion you'll have a file like the sample below.



If not dark enough simply run the “Finish Increase Ink White Base” Action. Its okay to run multiple times if required.

To add the new white underbase to your separation, select the channel in the palette, hold down the shift key and drag it to window of the separated file. Holding down the shift key will align the new channel with your other colors perfectly.



What we did here was change the background color of our separation to an awful shade of green.

The top image is with one of the 1-2-3 white underbases, the bottom with our new Alternate Underbase. Notice the green cast is now gone. The cast will also be gone using the White Base (Non Blacks) channel.

When running non-black shirts, you MUST have some white ink within shadow areas as the black tints and other darker top colors such as reds, blues and browns are not strong enough without that little extra ink within key areas.

I personally use this base quite frequently and always do when deciding to run black on a black shirt to improve definition and overall clarity.

Dark Highlight White

This action also pulls a darker highlight white which can be added to your original separation in the same way as the alternate underbase.

The darker highlight may be useful in muting designs on-press such as fleshtone intensive images when dedicated flesh channels can't be used or when it simply looks better on screen when compared to our standard highlight.

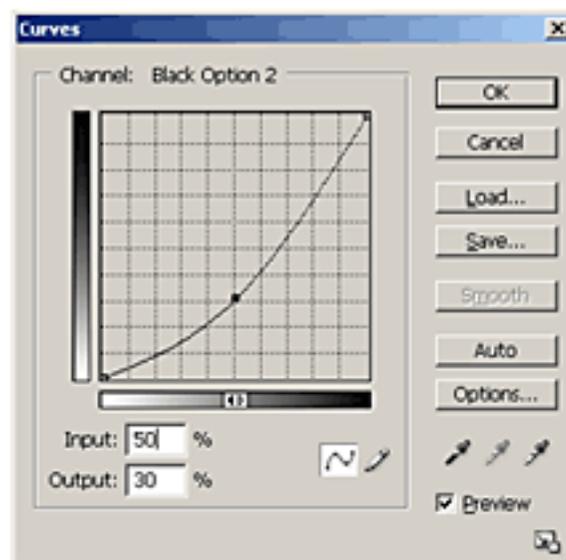
High Contrast White Base

Contrary to what our Alternate White Base delivers, many users with smaller presses have asked to remove the black even further from an existing QuikSeps underbase to guarantee a black ink is not required when running black shirts. If this sounds interesting, then try running the "High Contrast White Base" Action and follow the on-screen instructions. The action further defines the base and permits efficient use of the black substrate color.

Running Black Ink On Black Shirts

When running black ink on black shirts to achieve maximum quality, its a MUST to reduce the total amount of black ink within shadow areas. If not, the image will print dark. Make use of the Lighten Black Channel Action and experiment with various opacity settings or try using a curve similar to the example below to lighten the black as you'll want the black channel to appear somewhat washed out.

Its also helpful although not absolutely required to run the black ink on 330 - 355 mesh as opposed to 280 or 305 on black shirts. The higher mesh count controls the ink deposit more effectively than constantly adjusting squeegee/floodbar pressure and speed throughout the run. Whenever possible, I always run a black ink on black tees as it simply looks better.

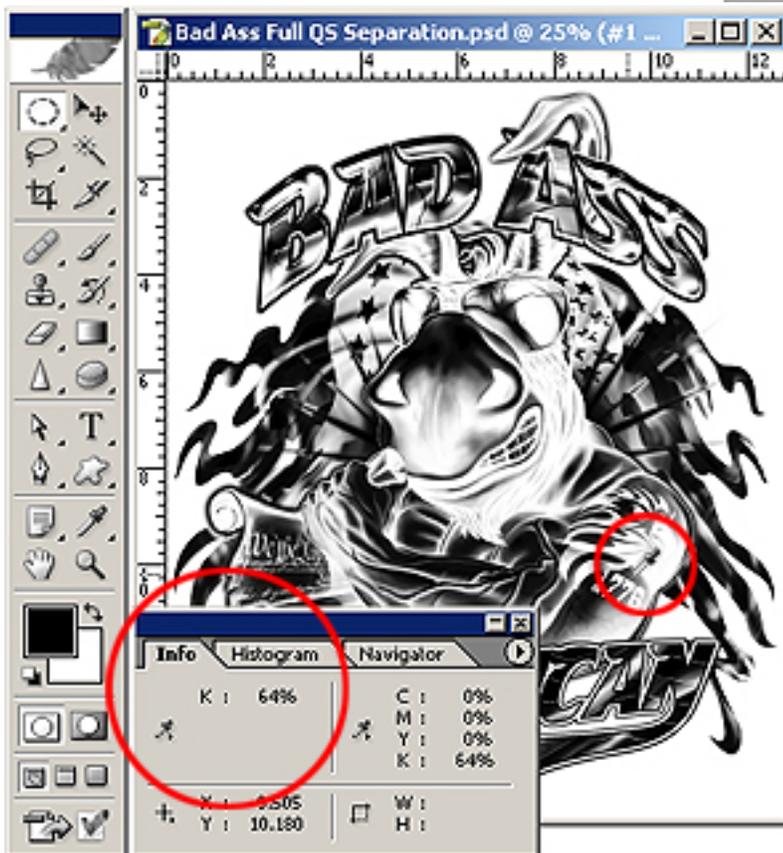
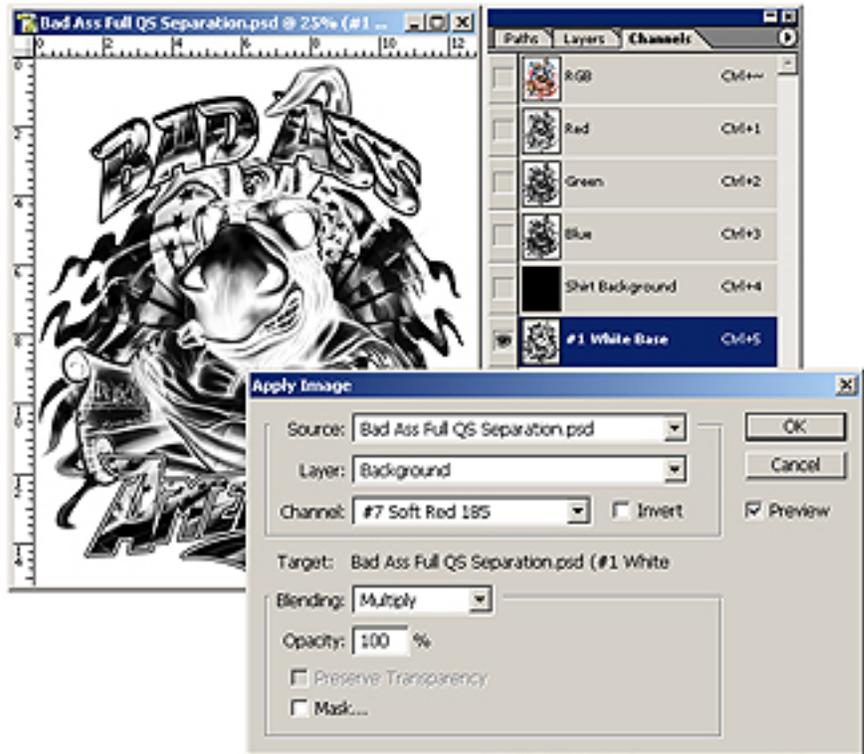


Selectively Modifying The White Base

Many times its needed to selectively modify the white underbase and usually this means darkening areas under a specific ink such as red or blue for example. This is best accomplished by using the Merge-Subtract Channel GO Action which invokes Photoshop's Apply Image Function. We've discussed the use of this previously although its vital to review it again here as it relates to the underbase.

In our example we're going to add the Soft Red 185 Channel to the White Base to help brighten the reds further on the shirt. Start by selecting an underbase channel and then click the Merge-Subtract Channel action. Set the Blending to Multiply and Opacity at 100% to apply all the data and click okay.

Obviously if less pixel data is required, use a lower opacity setting. If more is needed simply repeat the process.



Become An Opacity Junkie!

After doing some jobs, you'll get to know what works for you and one of the most powerful tools in Photoshop is the built-in densitometer. Its not only helpful for taking readings on the base, but every other channel also. If 80% white for example works well under solid red, just shoot for that number on the next job. In fact, I never do a separation without extensive use of this on every channel.

Don't image your films blindly...be a pro and use that Info Palette!

Choking The White Underbase

We've designed each QuikSeps underbase to be as accurate as possible and made adjustments that help in decreasing excessive intensity of the outer edges. So, most of the time "choking" the underbase may not be required.

At times you may find it necessary to choke the white underbase a bit to avoid any white image data from spreading beyond the borders of your image. This could be more of a factor when utilizing a coarse mesh (less than 156) for the white underbase or when dealing with less than ideal printing conditions.

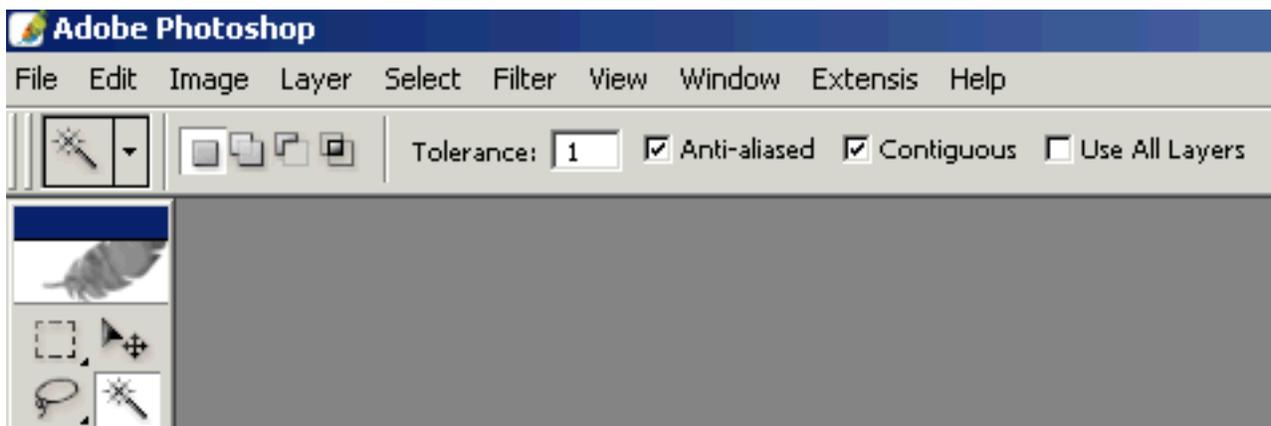
Choking the base is more important with images that are comprised of mostly hard, clearly defined boundaries which are to be printed on a dark substrate as opposed to a photographic style image.

The best way to decide if your white underbase of choice needs a touch of shrinkage is to closely examine the edges at a magnification of 200% with the white underbase, all color channels you intend on using, in addition to the black shirt background channel selected within the channels palette.

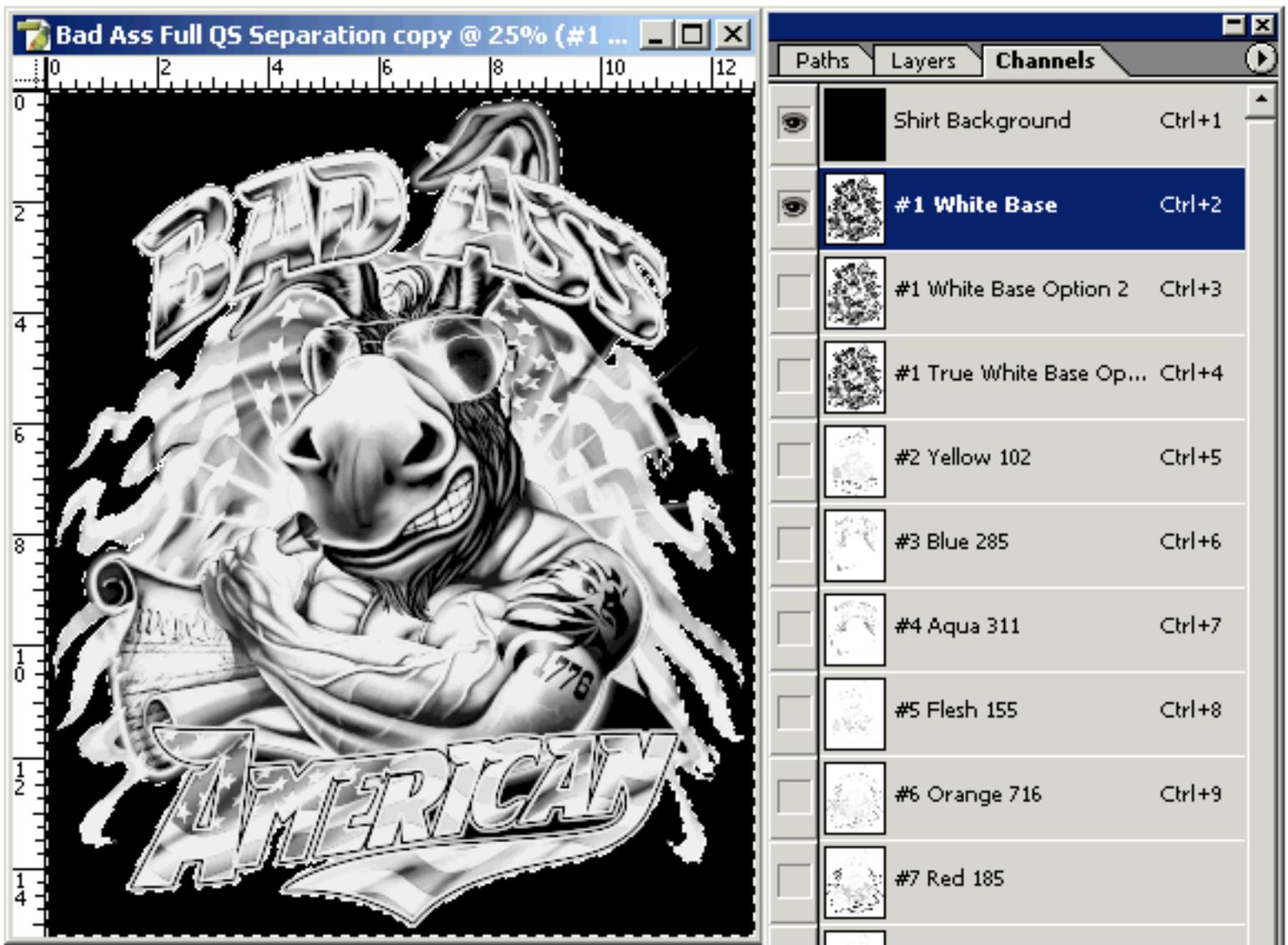
If it's "clearly apparent" that unwanted white ink is creeping beyond your top colors, QuikSeps has an action to remedy the problem and will choke the white underbase by 1, 2 or 3 pixels. If you attempt to test or use these on a low resolution file of say 100 dpi, the effect will be greatly exaggerated.

Choking the white base cannot be totally automated and requires you to select the canvas surrounding the white underbase along with isolated inner areas using the magic wand tool.

First, select the magic wand tool and lower the tolerance to a factor of 1.



Now turn off all channels except the white underbase and the shirt background. Make the white underbase the active channel by selecting it. With the magic wand tool shift-click on all background (non-image) areas within the underbase channel. Don't forget to include isolated, trapped areas which are not initially selected by clicking outside the image.

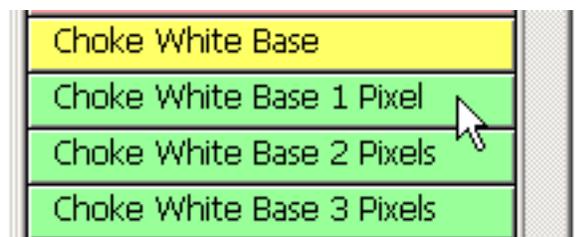


After selecting all non image areas, the next step is to finish the task by using one of QuikSeps actions to choke the underbase by 1,2 or 3 pixels. Usually 1 or 2 pixels work best with most jobs if needed.

Click one of the QuikSeps actions pictured at the right then take a look at your underbase at 200% magnification with your top colors visible.

If it looks as though a higher setting is needed, either undo the action and try 2 pixels or apply the 1 pixel action for a second time.

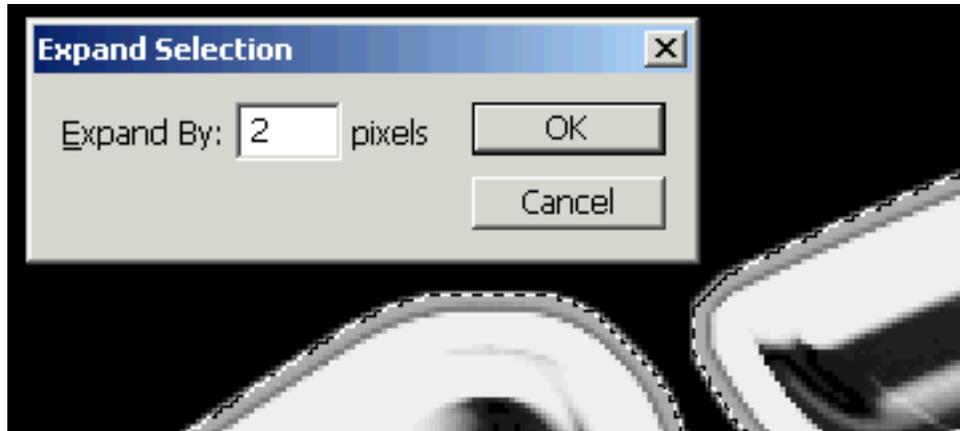
It's important not to overdue this. Too much of a good thing will begin to deteriorate the underbase. If just a touch of underbase is visible beyond the top colors, most likely it will not affect the actual print as the top colors will have a natural tendency to expand on press and will cover minor flaws.



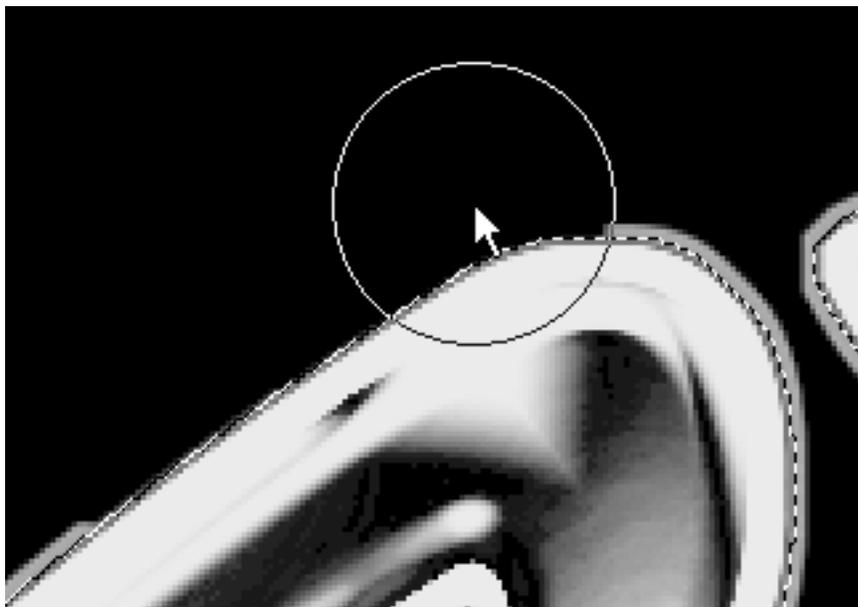
Choking Portions Of The Underbase Only

Certain images can contain both hard and soft faded edges thus making auto choking somewhat difficult. When presented with such an image, here's a great method to only choke the "hard areas" while leaving softer parts, which could be damaged untouched.

Start again with the Magic Wand tool and a Tolerance of 1. As before, shift-click outside the underbase and within any confined areas. Now from Photoshop's "Select Menu" choose Modify - Expand and enter 1 or 2 pixels.



Next select the Eraser Tool with a hard edge brush and 100% Opacity Setting and manually erase along the edges that require choking. Don't worry about erasing into the image area since its protected by our selection. Only the outer 2 pixels in the example are "live" and can be erased. Pretty cool!



We employed the manual method described here when choking our sample design since it contained both hard and soft edge elements.

Generate Flesh And Earth Tones

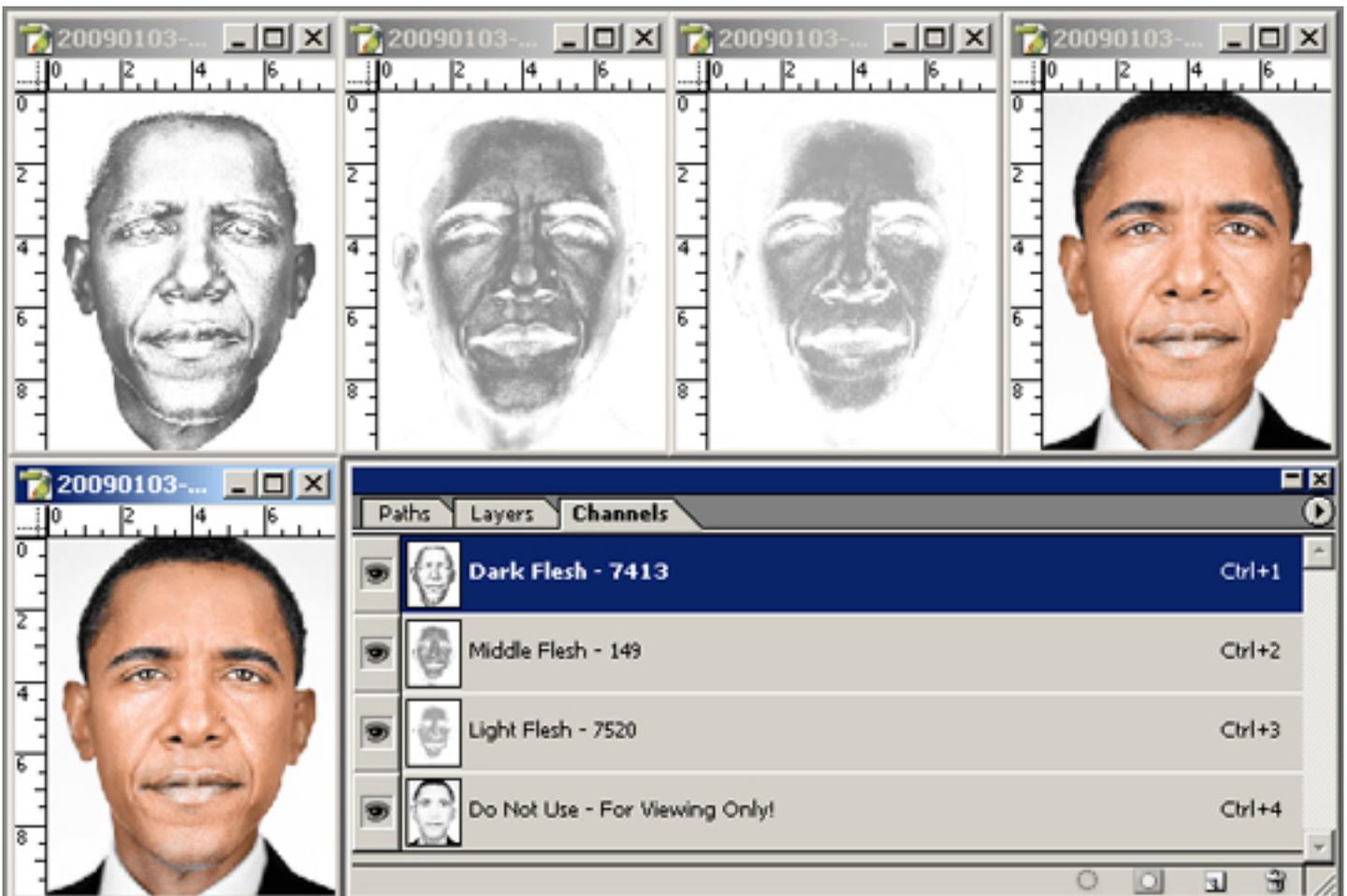
We'll spend some time on this since no other program gets it right!

Sometimes you'll need specific inks to image flesh and earthtones very accurately. Especially when the job is primarily focused on those colors and must look great. You wouldn't want to print an image that's 75% "face" and not use at least some actual flesh inks!

We've included 4 different methods to pull these colors, the first 3 are completely automated and called Auto Flesh Earthtone GO #1, #2 & #3. Most files respond well to these and provide excellent results.

The other method guides the user through "picking" a dark, medium and light flesh. Quik-Seps then makes use of your selection and generates smooth, precise custom channels.

Below are results of running the automated #1 action. We also generate a very basic (not for use) black channel within the action to assist in viewing. The #1 Flesh Action works on files with deep, colorful fleshtones and can produce great results with little masking required.



Below is the same automated action on a completely different image with nothing changed or colors adjusted. Believe-it-or-not, it uses the identical colors from the previous image. This time however, we copied our new flesh/earthtone channels into a QuikSeps separation. The ONLY adjustment made was removing the flesh data within girls body from the red 185 channel which is quite simple using our Subtract Color Data action or using a mask (discussed in detail later).

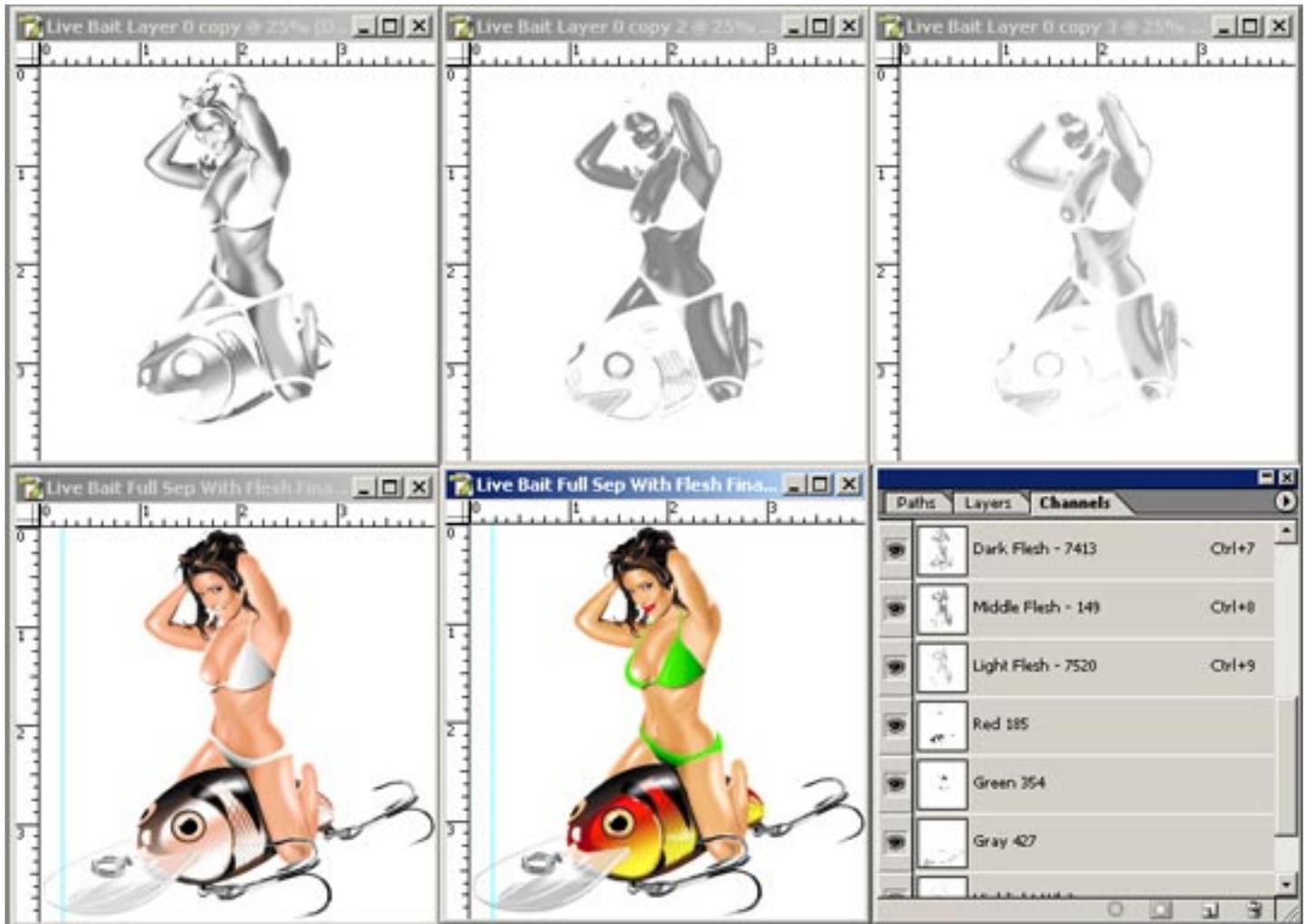
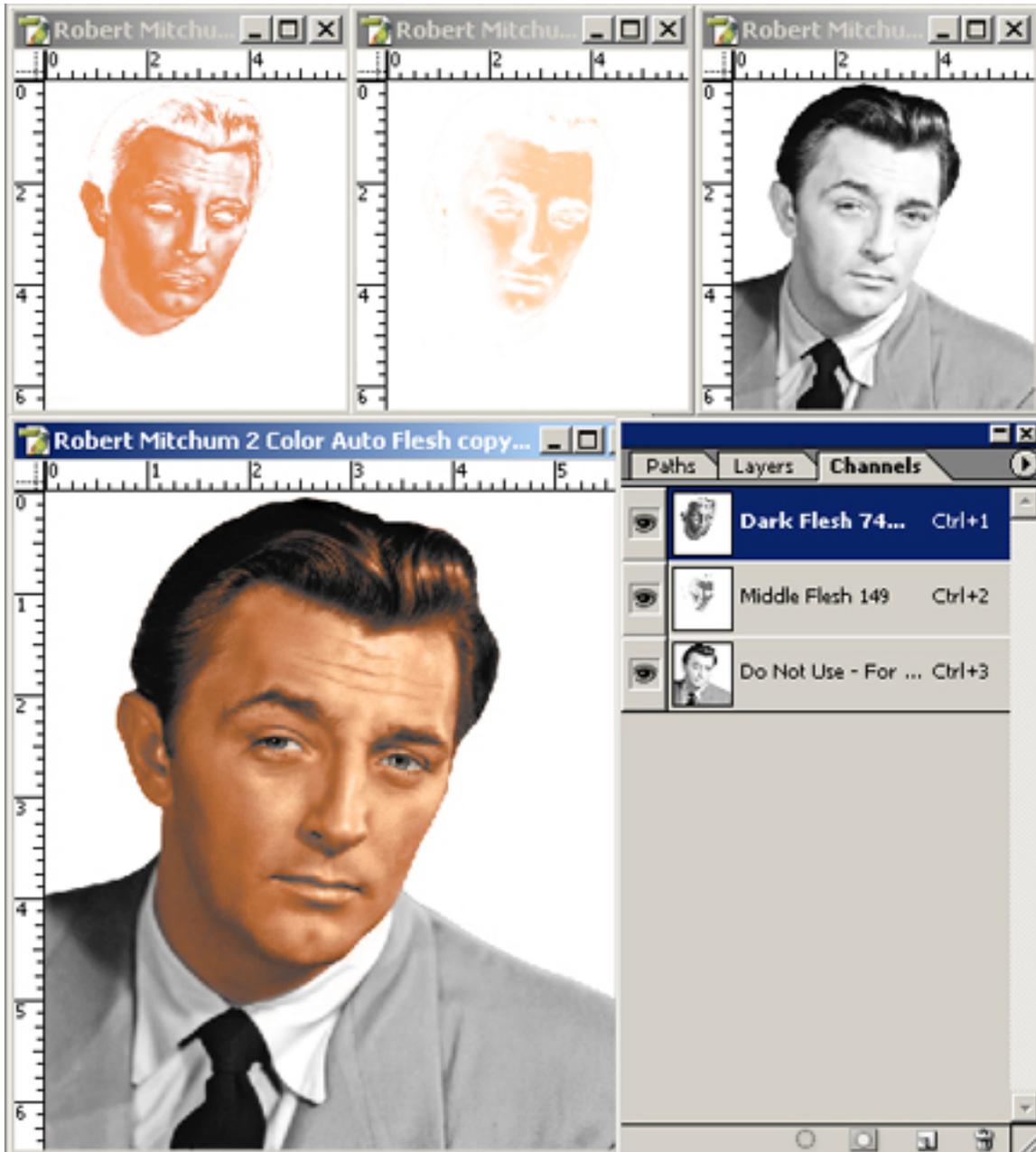


Image Copyright © Jason Patterson

This action works best on images containing flesh / earthtones that have sufficient color information and is not a good candidate for washed out whiteish and pinkish flesh tones. So if not quite right, run the #2 or #3 Action or the Custom Action. Remember, its okay to change the color of the channels to better match your image in addition to bumping them up or down using the Intensify or Fade.

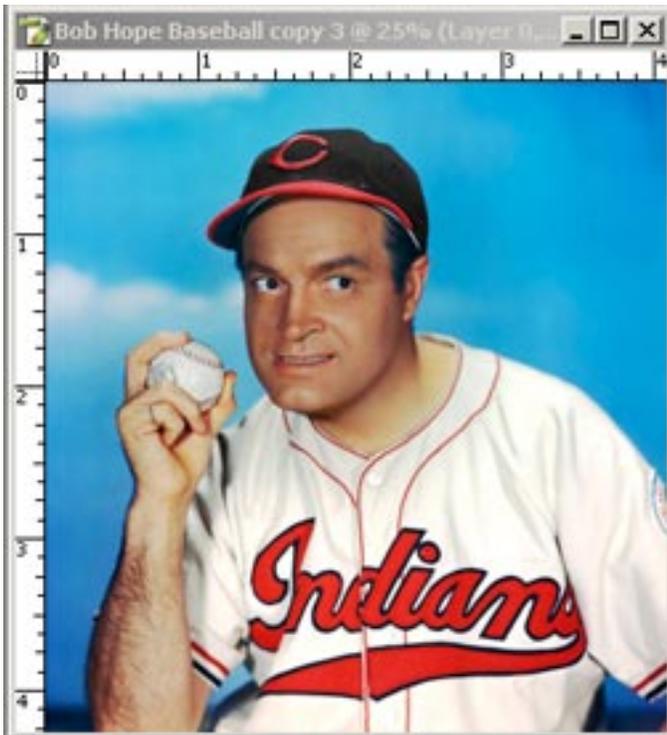


The #1 auto flesh and earthtone action looks for absolute color data and is great for images meeting that criteria although some lack these values, especially low quality files. So if results are unsatisfactory, run the Auto Flesh #2 or #3 Action. **These generate 2 and 3 flesh - earthtone channels with inventive calculations to identify "all" data. It will work for any job although does require a bit more deleting of unwanted ink extending beyond the flesh areas.**

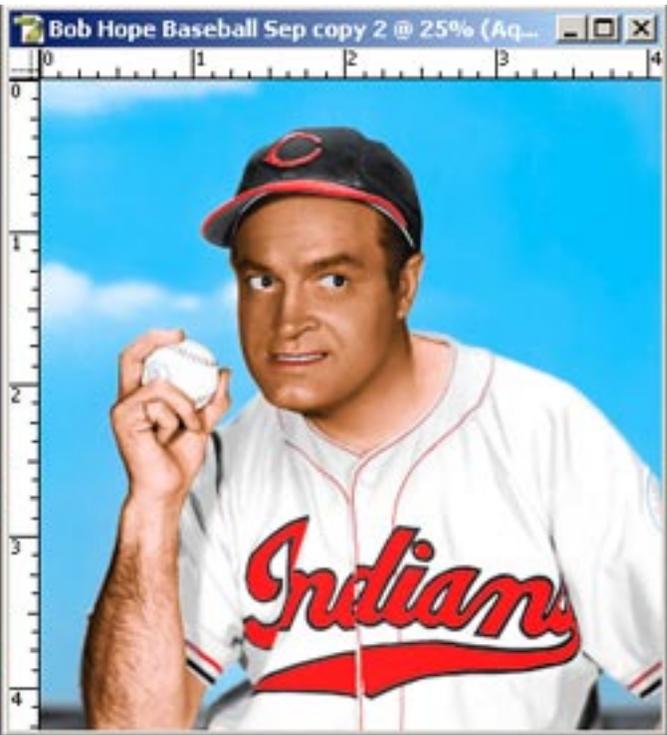


Above is the output from the auto flesh #2 action. As you can see, the results are excellent for only 2 channels and a black for viewing. These channels can now be Shift-Dragged into the color separation for inclusion. Any unwanted ink that may be found within the jacket for example can be deleted with the use of the eraser tool or drawing a path and deleting. We'll discuss that later and also demonstrate techniques on the full video included with QuikSeps Professional.

The Auto Flesh #3 Action: Below is a separation by QuikSeps Professional. Try this one yourself as its great for getting comfortable with flesh channels. In fact, QuikSeps improved upon the color so the print itself will be a bit more attractive than the original.



Original RGB Image

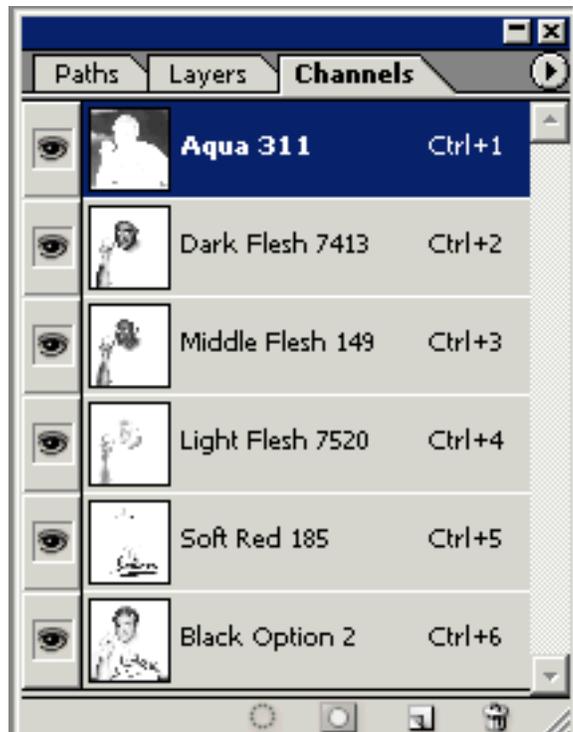


Color Separation

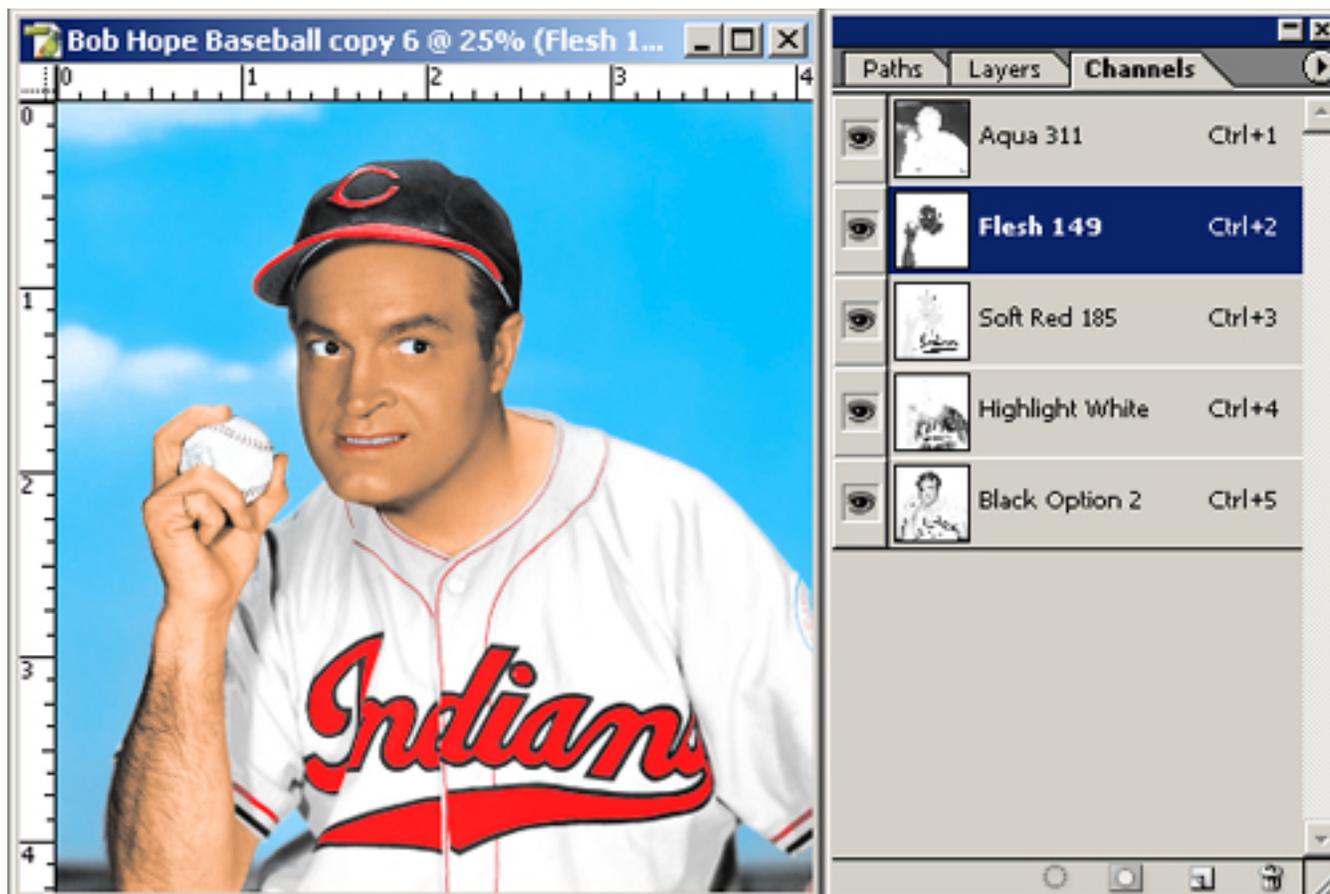
Of course the user could adjust the flesh channels to more closely match the original if desired by simply double-clicking the channels, bringing up the color picker and changing them.

The key however to making this excellent separation possible using the #3 action is creating a "mask" of the flesh ink areas surrounding the face and arm. Once the mask is created, which is just a fancy word for a "path", all flesh ink outside its intended range can be deleted. Additionally this mask is used to remove flesh within the red channel and yellow if needed.

We'll get to that after discussing the single channel flesh action.



The Single Flesh Color Action: For those requiring the use of fewer colors, we've included an action that generates a single flesh channel while still covering the entire flesh range so no areas are left without ink. This action uses a series of RGB calculations to "grab it all" in one shot.



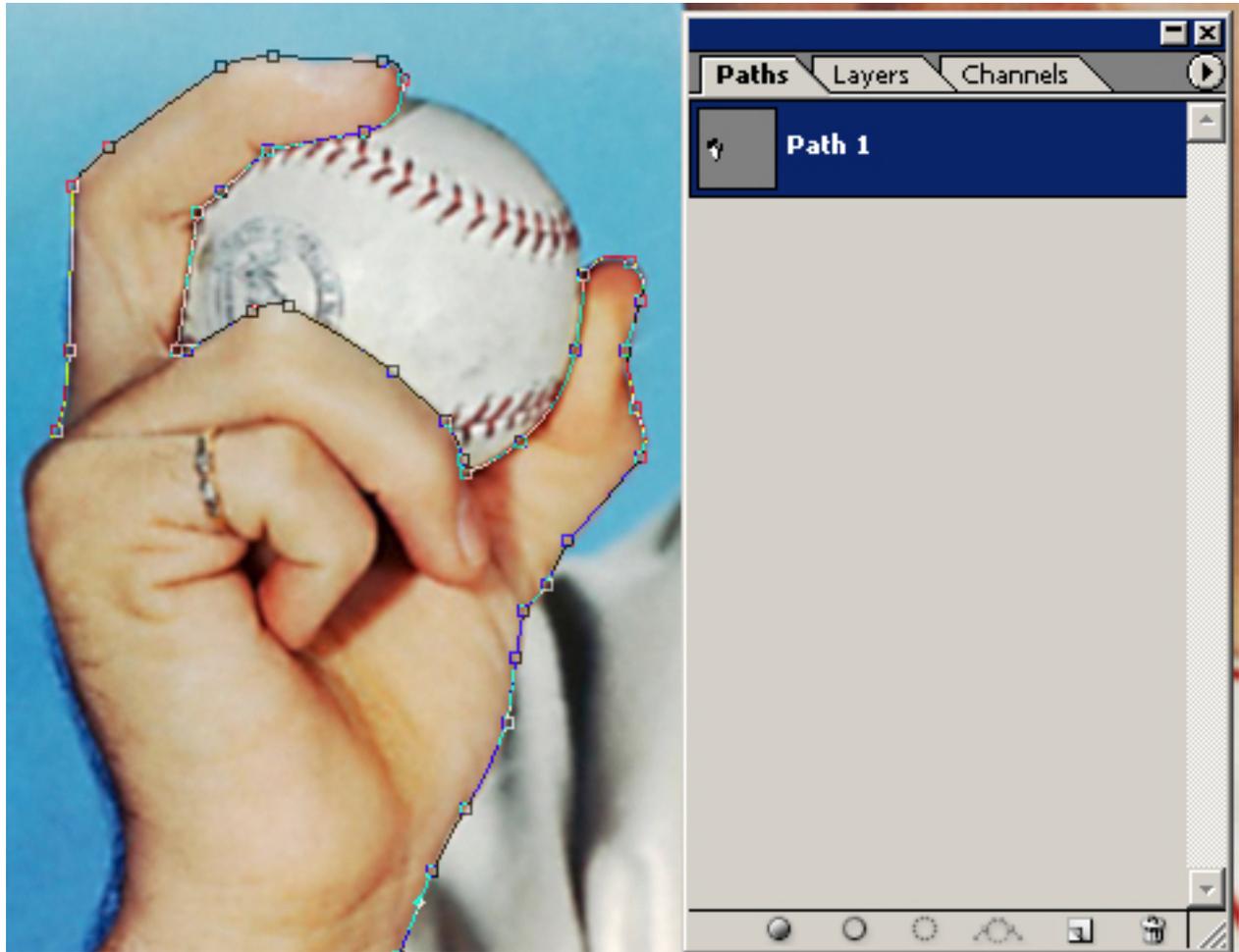
When using only 1 channel to generate all fleshtones, its probably even more important to adjust the color of the flesh channel for the image. And since we're only working with 1 ink, that should be an easy task! A few pages later we'll discuss changing the color of a flesh channel.

Some people also like to retain some of the yellow and red ink data under that single flesh channel to help achieve a wider tonal range but be careful with that red as its a flesh killer! Red is an intense color.....the strongest of all and even a little bit can destroy fleshtones.

Although I'll discuss this several times throughout the manual its worth repeating:

These actions pull flesh and earthtones only. The channels they generate must be "added" to the simulated process separation. This is easy, just select the channel, hold down the shift-key and "drag it" into the destination file (the color separation). They'll align perfectly!

Deleting Unwanted Fleshtone Ink



Unfortunately with all this automation must come a little work and the ONLY way we're going to remove flesh ink from outside the boundaries of where its needed is by making some form of "selection" and deleting it. The most accurate way is by drawing a "Path" surrounding the flesh areas and turning that path into a Channel to allow easy selection and deletion.

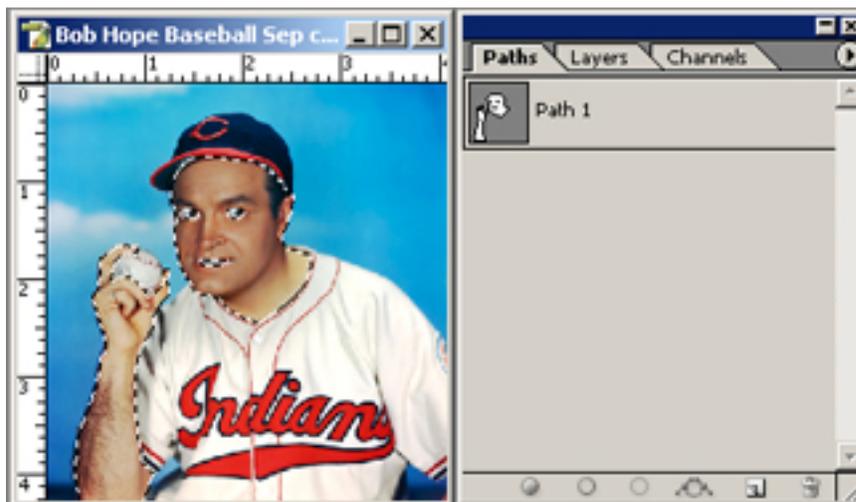
First open your Path Palette and choose "New Path" from the small arrow in the right corner. Next grab the Pen Tool and start outlining the flesh areas to retain. More than one path can be drawn as it will all be saved within the single path named Path 1 here.

Don't get all stressed out with this. If you make a mistake while drawing just take the pen tool, click on the point just placed and hit delete. You can delete as many points back as needed. You can also move any individual point to better conform to the image by holding down the CTRL key which converts the Pen into the Direct Selection Tool to allow moving or adjusting any individual point.

I'll review and demonstrate this process on the full instructional video included with the software. Its really not that difficult.

Completed Path

When the path(s) are complete, CTRL-Click the path to select it. Marching ants will immediately surround the selection.

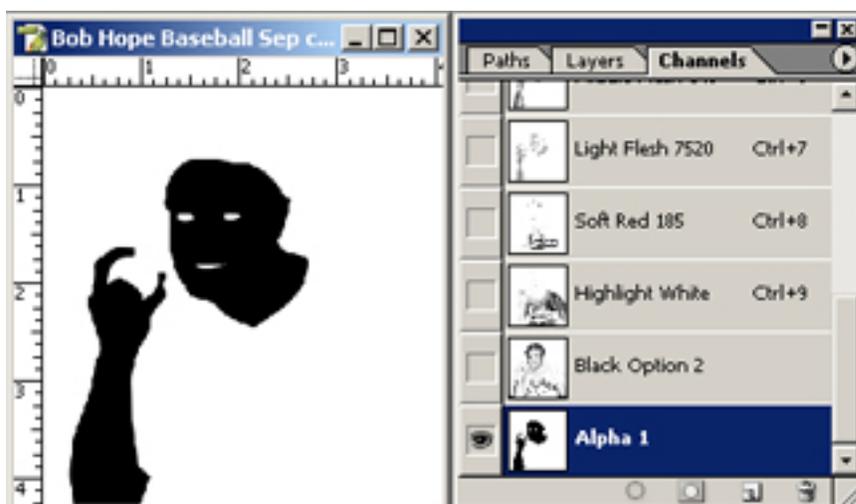


Make New Channel

Go back to the channels palette and choose New Channel from the upper right arrow and make certain "Selected Areas" is checked. Don't worry about the color or opacity and click OK.

Fill New Channel

A new channel named Alpha 1 has been created with the original selection still intact. Now just Fill with black and we're ready to start deleting.





Wow, That Looks Bad!

Here's our separation PRIOR to using our newly created Alpha Channel to delete excess fleshtones.

CTRL-Click the Alpha 1 Channel to select it. Next choose "INVERSE" from Photoshop's Select Menu. Doing so targets all areas "outside" the selection.

Looking Better!

Simply choose each flesh channel and hit the delete key. All excess ink is now gone and the flesh channels are ready to go. Hit CTRL-D to deselect the area.

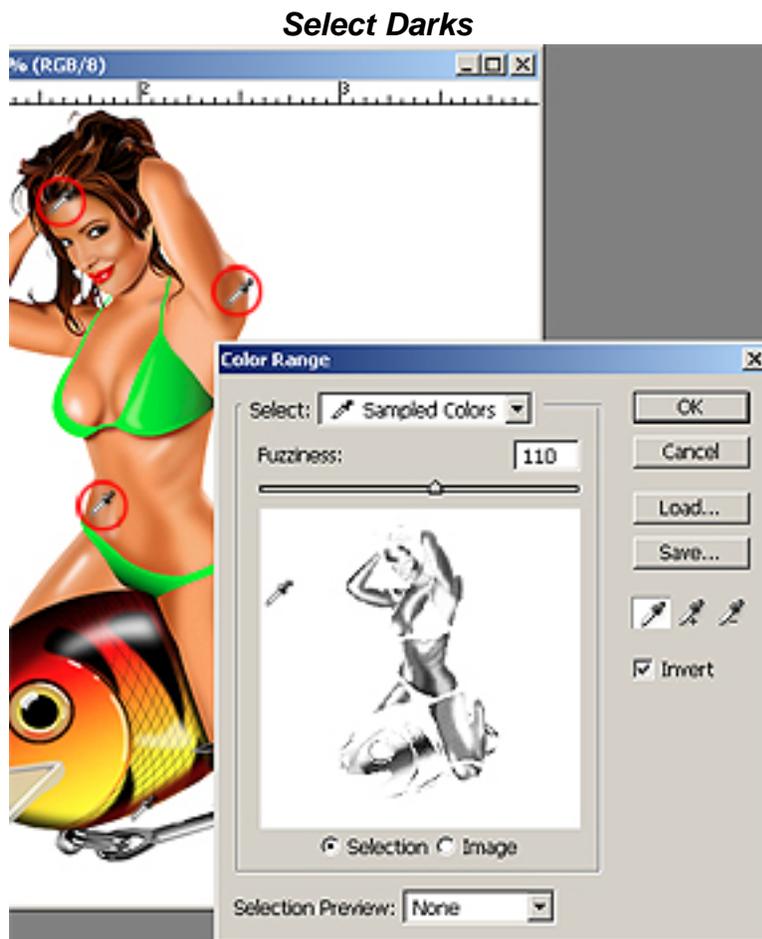


Modify The Red Channel

CTRL-Click the Alpha 1 channel again but DO NOT use INVERSE since we now want to target the active flesh area itself. Pick the Soft Red 185 Channel and hit delete to remove all that nasty red from within the flesh range. Done! Ready to output films and print.

Okay, so you've run all the auto flesh actions and would like to try something else....face it, you're a pro looking for perfection and don't like masking that much! So, lets give our "Custom Flesh Earthtone GO" action a whirl!

This action will prompt the user 3 times to select a color using Color Range. QuikSeps will calculate the color information and generate the channels. Its important to pay attention to the on-screen instructions as to which color to select and to make certain the "invert box" is checked.



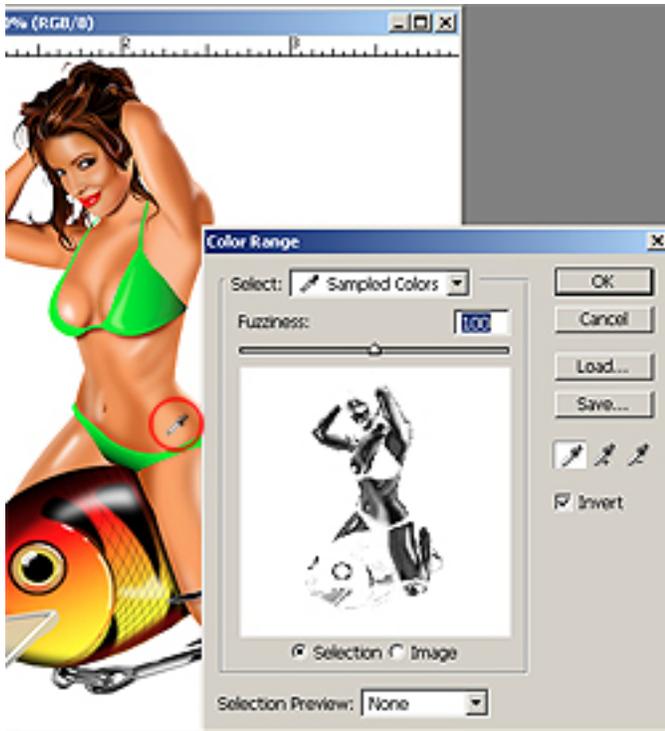
When prompted the first color to select is the darkest & reddish brown which is the most difficult to select (usually). At first try and get it with one selection and use the Fuzziness Slider to adjust for more or less of the color. Another method is making use of the eyedropper with a (+) next to it which allows you to add another color to the selection. The video goes into detail on selecting colors effectively.

The key here is not selecting too much. You'll want to see some tonal definition within the color range window as pictured here and not a dark, massive blob of ink. A little practice goes a long way!

Our "Custom Color Channel" Action described earlier in the manual can also be used for pulling flesh & earthtone channels or any other odd color. The only difference here is we provide suggested color values to the channels (which might be helpful) and also a non-printing black to help view the work.

The next colors on the agenda are the Middle and Light Flesh. These are easier to get right. As previously stated, make effective use of the Fuzziness Slider to select the proper amount of color. Pay special attention when adjusting the light flesh as to not have the selection contaminate any white areas.

Select Middle Flesh



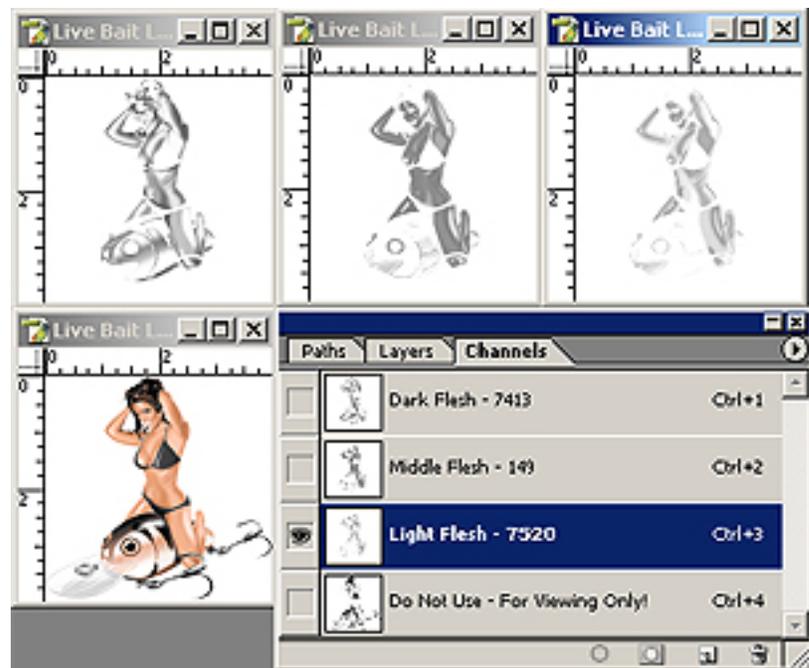
Select Light Flesh



Once completed a file will remain featuring 3 flesh / earth channels and a non-printing black to help judge the results. Notice the non-printing black is not accurate and has black data where green should be. This is normal....as I said, its a "non-printing channel".

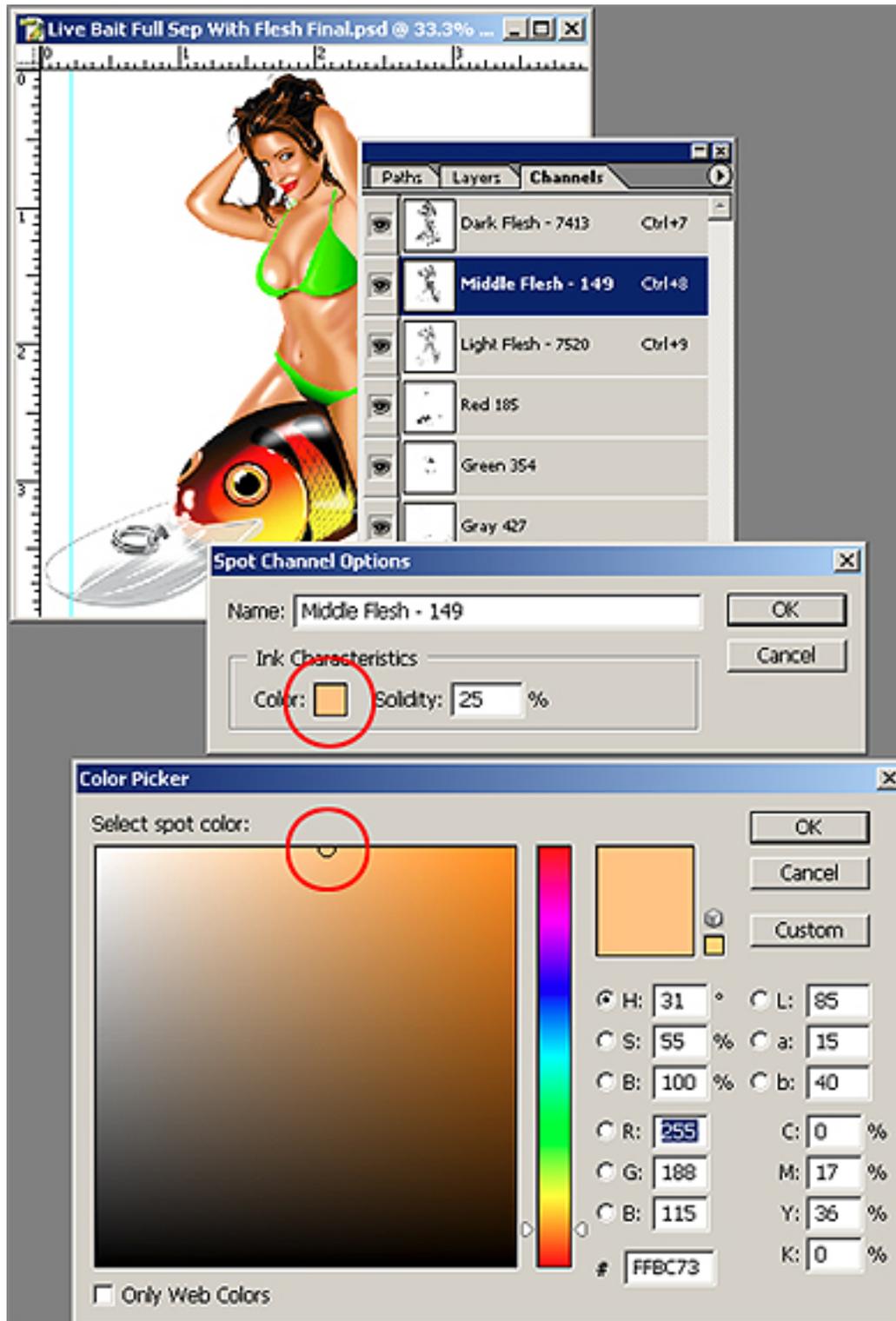
Although both auto and custom flesh / earthtone examples involved using faces and human form to illustrate their capabilities, these actions can just as easily be called upon when attempting to separate any image that is flesh, tan and brown intensive.

Unfortunately I cannot include the sample file used here of the girl. However it can be purchased at <http://mysptubes.com/> at only a few dollars for those wanting to experiment with it. Other files are on the CD for testing purposes.



It might be necessary to adjust a channel color to match the image. To accomplish this double-click on a channel, click on the small Color Box within the Spot Channel Options Window which in turn launches the Color Picker. Simply move the circle within the color picker to modify color. As its moved, the image will respond to the changes in real-time. Now simply rename the channel with the appropriate PMS color match name.

Clicking the “Custom” Box will launch the PMS custom colors window where an actual pms number can be chosen although we normally use that only for reference and mix a pure version of a referenced pms color within the picker



Process Color CMYK Separations

Although somewhat forgotten by many printers, true process (cmyk) separations should have a place in your shop. They're easy to deal with since the same basic set of inks are used on all jobs in addition to being very small press friendly.

The major downside to process color is limitation to white and light pastel shirts. Darks are virtually impossible without exotic basing techniques and better off left to those who specialize doing so.

All CMYK separations MUST start with an RGB file configured for QuikSeps. Do not use an existing CMYK file. Also avoid using files saved as CMYK and reverted back to RGB if possible.

We recommend a white underbase at all times when printing CMYK, including white shirts as this helps control ink deposit and always provides a better looking print. Since process inks are transparent, not using a base will always result in faded images after a few washings due to fabric fibrillation which is fibers from the substrate working their way through the ink.

Process color works best with busy photographic style images, soft pastel graphics, animals, people, etc.. We don't recommend cmyk on art with large solid areas of a specific color(s), especially if the integrity of that hard color is vital.

As with all files processed with QuikSeps Professional, make certain its bright and colorful prior to running the cmyk action. If in doubt, run Quik Image Fix and/or Brighten Define Image on a copy of the original and compare. Or just experiment with a curve, bumping up saturation, etc. to improve the art.

Since we have converted the composite CMYK to multichannel and have made radical adjustments to help the image print correctly, it might appear a bit off and dull on screen. This is normal, so just trust the separation. Remember, CMYK separations for screen printing are quite different from those used in offset paper printing. By merely converting to CMYK in Photoshop, doing nothing else to the file and then outputting films, your first shirt might look okay although a few shirts later its a complete disaster.

Process printing is fairly straightforward and you'll simply output the films and go. Therefore we won't spend too much time on it here aside from an example of an ideal file (included with QuikSeps Professional) for process and the correct angles and LPI for film output.

The end of the manual also reviews outputting films within Photoshop for all types of QuikSeps color separations.

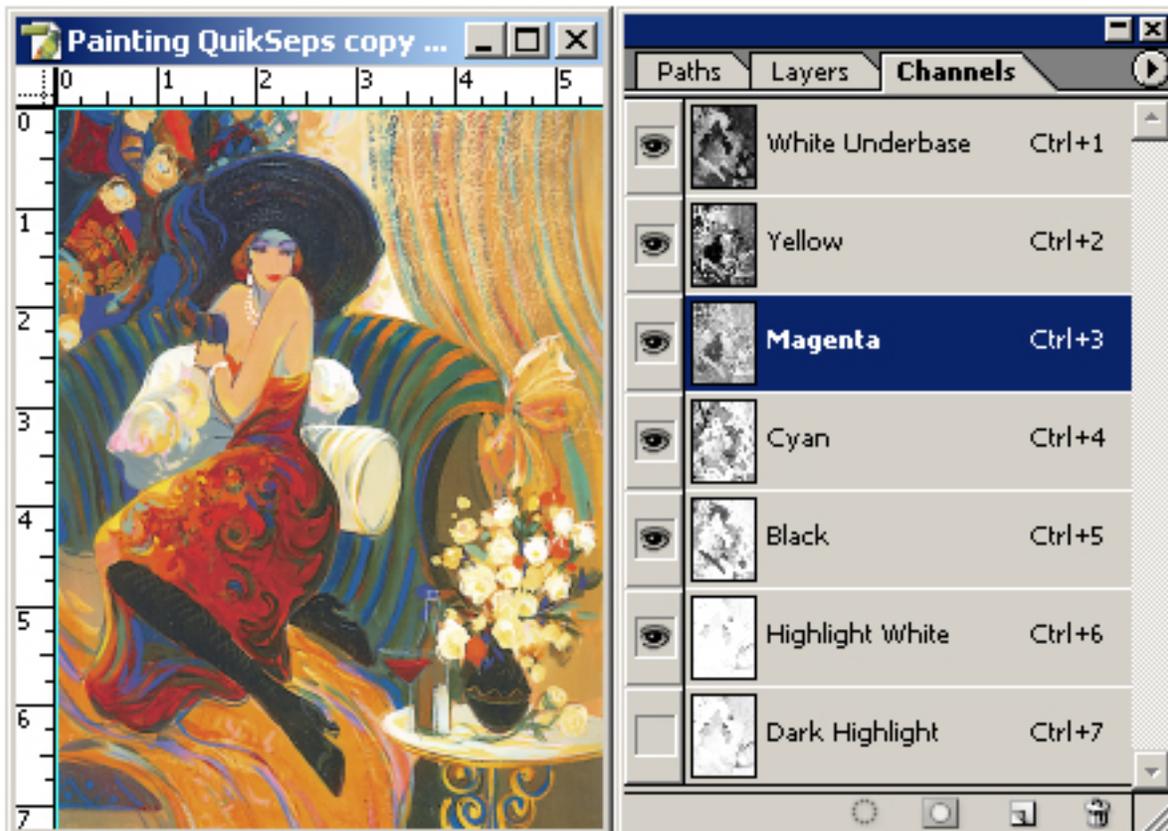


A file like this is ideal for cmyk process color. Its extremely busy with many soft blended pastel shades and no absolute reference colors, such as a company logo. Plus if any slight color shift occurs during the run which is common with process, its probably not an issue.

Screenshot of original RGB file shown at right.



Below is the process separation. Notice its slightly faded and muted when compared to the RGB file above. This is normal. If the separation closely matched the original, it would print dark, muddy and be impossible to control.



Outputting CMYK separations:

Dot Shape - Elliptical

All films should be 22.5 Degrees at 60 LPI.

Mesh count 305 - 330 Top Colors.

Mesh count 156 - 230 Underbase White.

Mesh count 230 Highlight White.

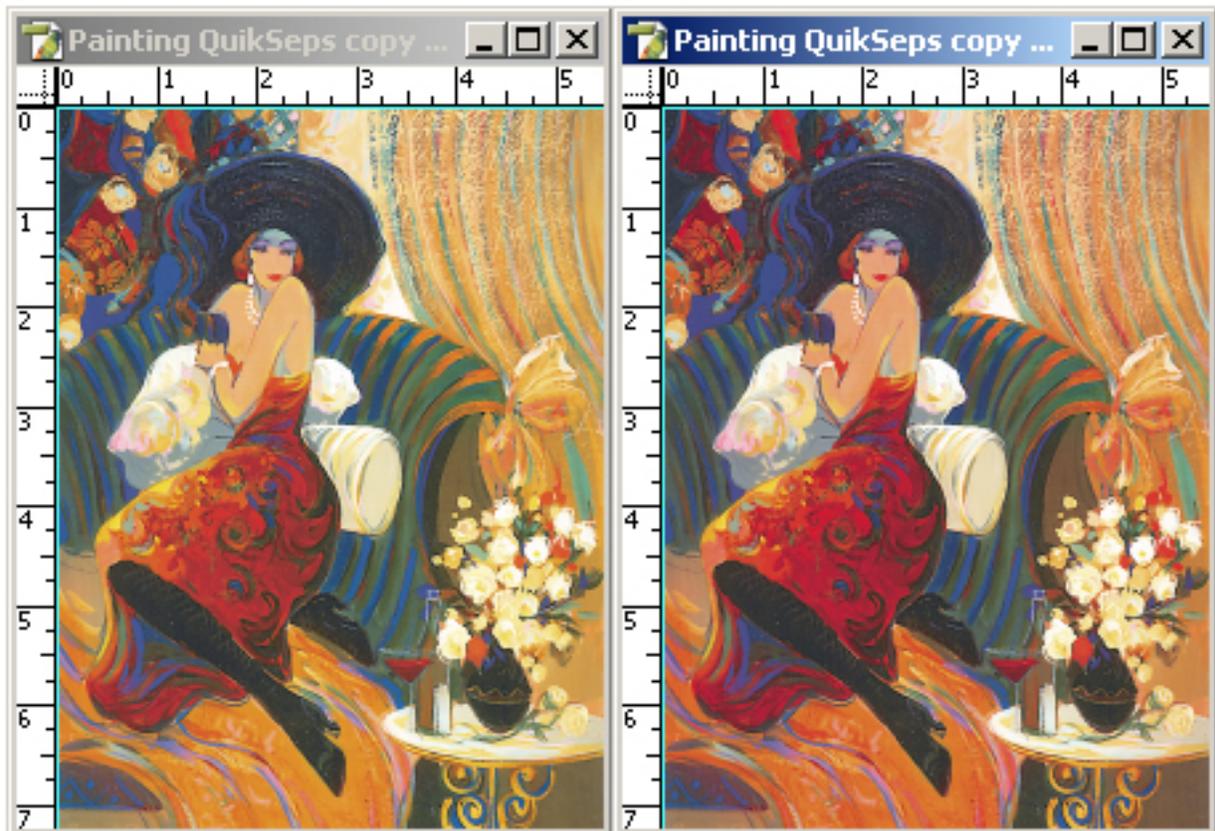
Print Order: Base - Yellow - Magenta - Cyan - Highlight - Black

You can also try printing the White Highlight last.

For those having difficulty controlling an image, the dark highlight may help.

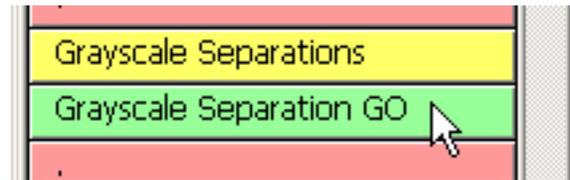
It might be helpful to image the base and highlight at 50 - 55 LPI due to the lower mesh count required.

On the left is our separation. To the right is how the image will most likely print.



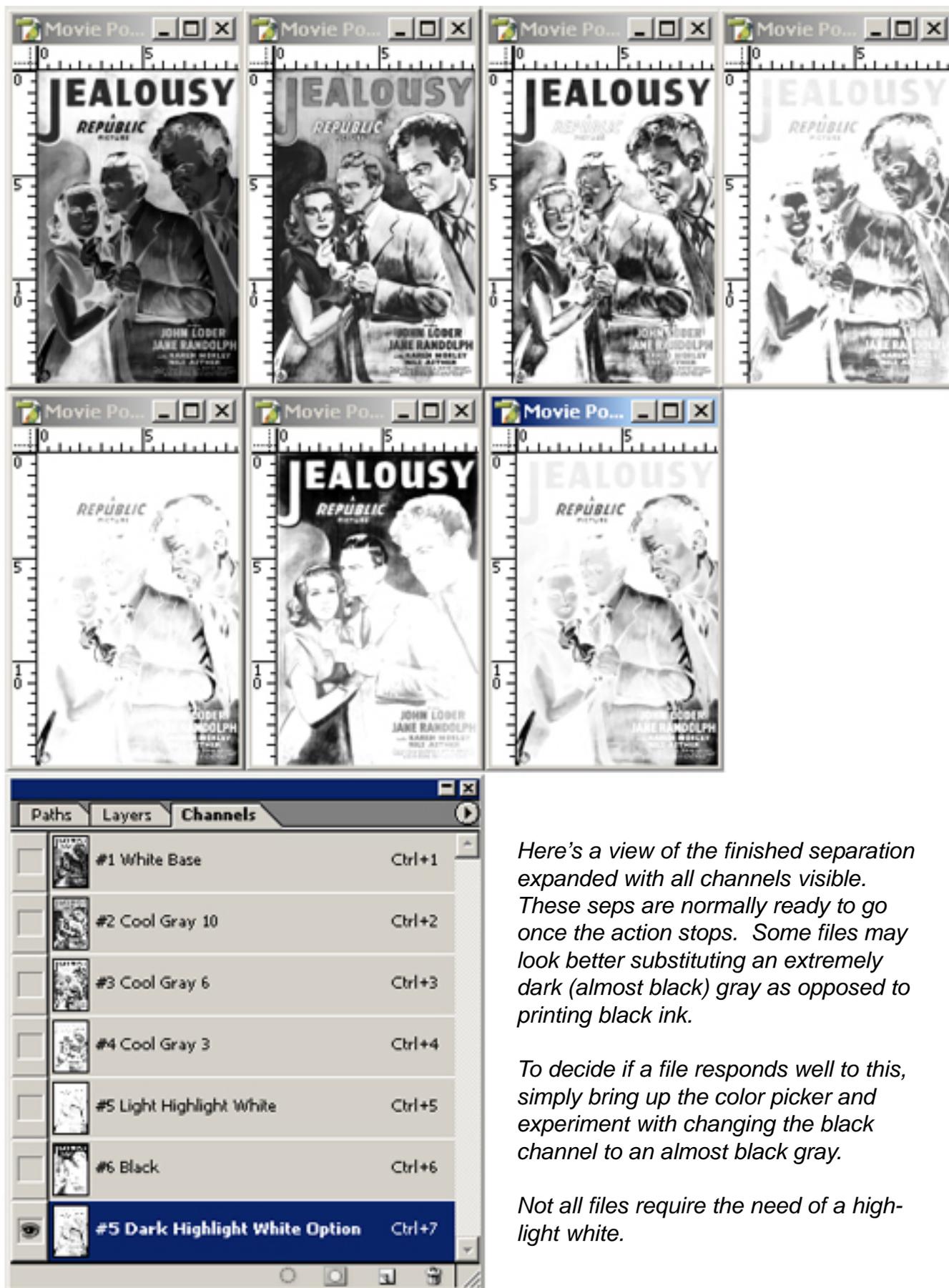
Grayscale Separations

This is one of my favorite types of separations and I've done many shirts using it. Show a sample job to your client and I bet they'll love it! Our grayscale action needs to begin with an RGB color file. If the art is already gray, then convert to RGB and add the "Color Bar Target" outside the image and just delete it prior to outputting films. I'll discuss the color bar target at the end of this section.



Below is the original file (included with QuikSeps) and the finished separation using an underbase, 3 grays, a highlight white and black. The action also pulls a dark highlight as an option. Those with smaller presses can experiment with merging 2 of the 3 grays.





Here's a view of the finished separation expanded with all channels visible. These seps are normally ready to go once the action stops. Some files may look better substituting an extremely dark (almost black) gray as opposed to printing black ink.

To decide if a file responds well to this, simply bring up the color picker and experiment with changing the black channel to an almost black gray.

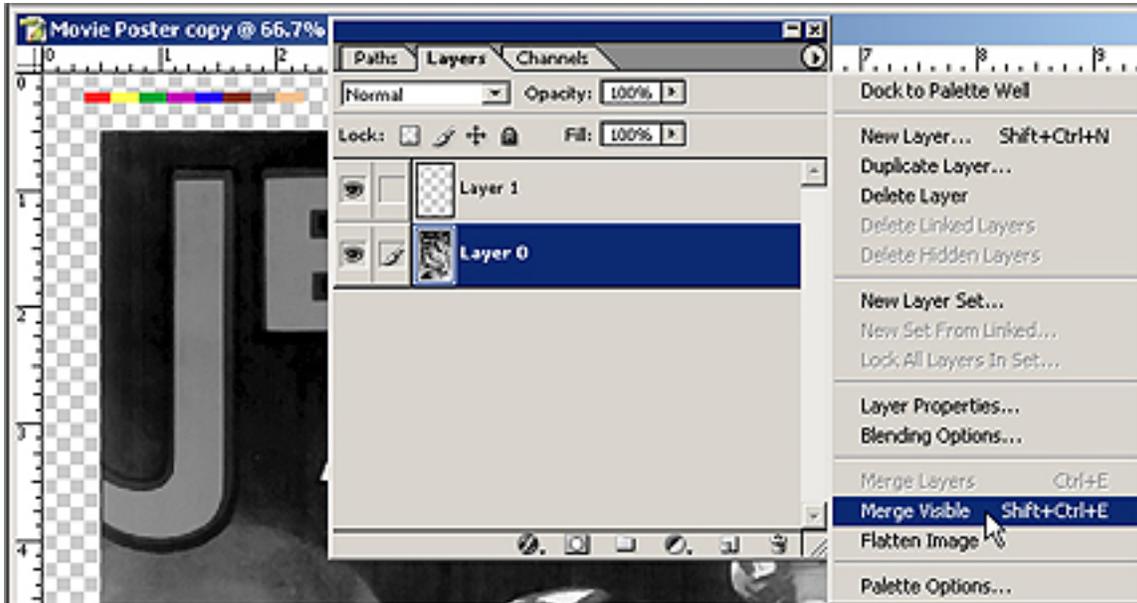
Not all files require the need of a high-light white.

Color Bar Target

If your image starts as a grayscale file, it must be converted to RGB.

Select Image - Mode - RGB from Photoshop to convert file. Now either find a non-printing area in the corner or if not available make the “canvas” a little larger and add the “Color Bar Target” included on disk to it.

Doing so creates another layer so afterwards select “merge visible layers” and make sure its named “Layer 0”. The separation can now begin. Once complete just crop the file to remove color bar data from the channels or manually delete from each.



Outputting Grayscale Separations:

Dot Shape - Elliptical

All films should be 56 Degrees at 55 LPI.

Mesh count 280 - 305 Top Colors.

Mesh count 156 - 200 Underbase White.

Mesh count 200 - 230 Highlight White.

Print Order: As specified on channels palette.

If you encounter any problems such as mesh interference patterns on press, then output the white base using 50 LPI at 26 degrees.

Grayscale files may be more tolerant to lower mesh counts such as 200 - 230 for top colors using a lower line screen such as 45 - 50 LPI.

Index Separations

Index Separations do not use traditional halftones. They are comprised of square pixels of a given size determined by the image resolution.

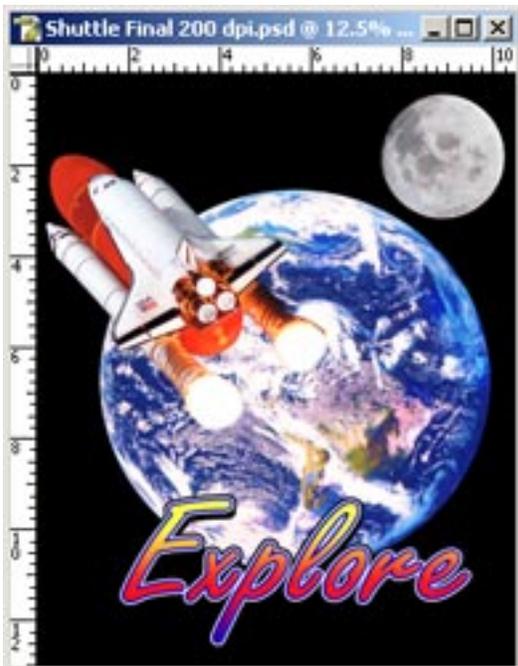
All files need to be in RGB format from 150 to 200 dpi. Resolutions below 150 dpi generate a "hand stippled effect" and are normally undesired although can look cool with the right art. Do NOT use files above 200 dpi.

The original MUST begin at final output size. Index Separations can not be up or downsized. When outputting the film, screen frequency or angles are not required as Index Files are a bitmap and not halftones.

Although Indexing has been associated with high-end designs printed in 10 or more colors, you might be surprised how well a 4 or 5 color job prints.

The Automated Actions provided do an excellent job on most files and generate separations using 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 colors in addition to an underbase and highlight white. However sometimes its preferable to hand select the colors so we've also provided Actions and instructions here on how to accomplish this.

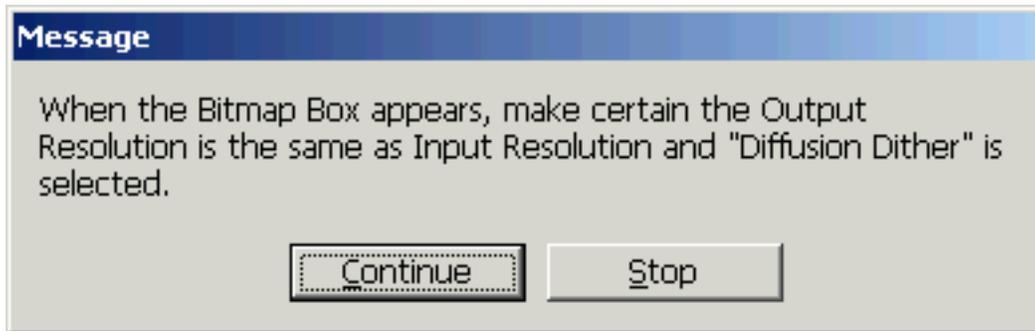
Index seps can offer a fresh, different new look to your work and are very easy to print. Try out several Actions on your file to see what looks best. Just don't run one of the Actions and go with it. Experimentation is key.



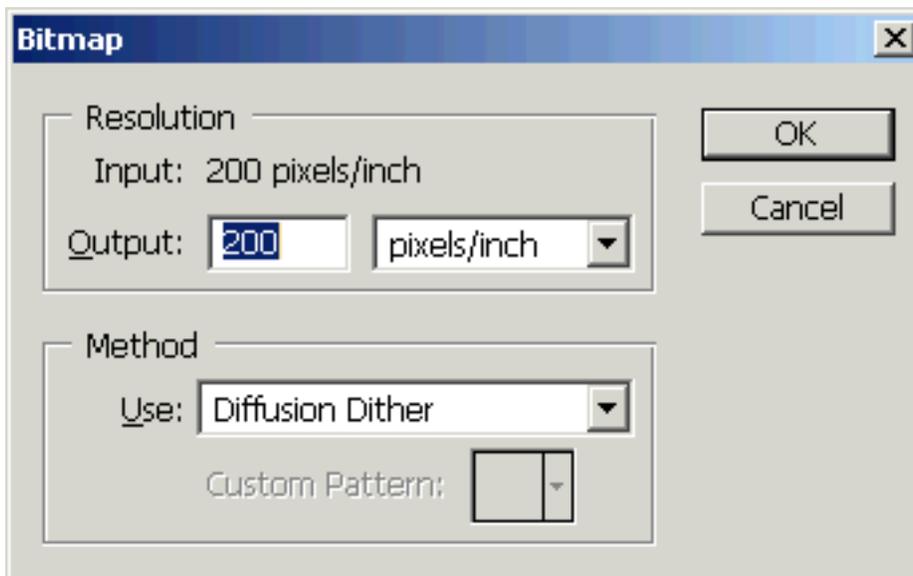
We'll go through running an automated 5 color Index separation on the graphic at left which is included on the CD. Indexing with QuikSeps Professional prompts the user several times during the process to assure certain critical settings are correct while the calculations are running.

Aside from that, once completed the seps are press ready as index files can not be adjusted using curves, levels, etc.

A short while after initiating any of the Automated Index Actions you'll be presented with the following message:



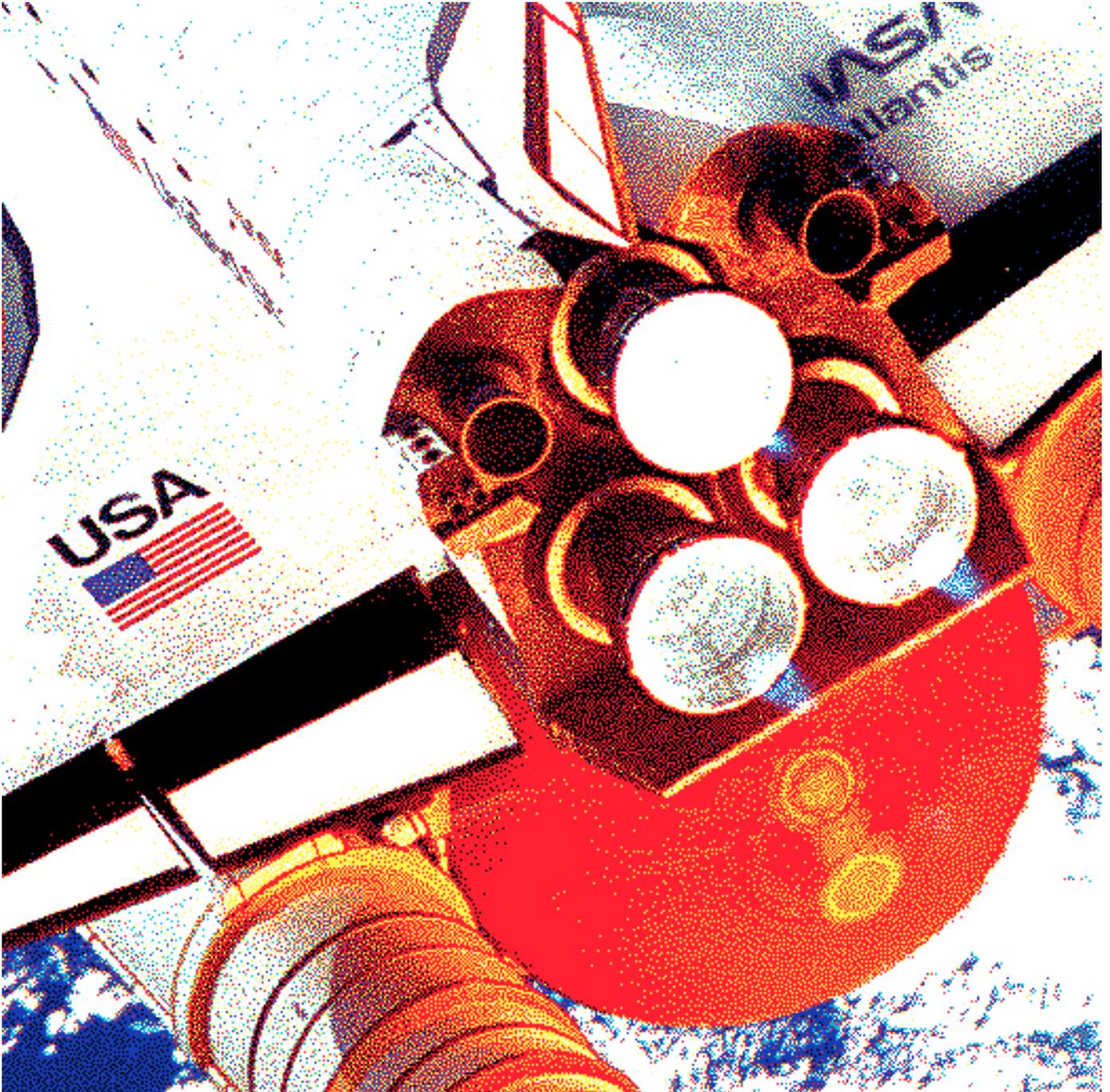
After clicking Continue, the Bitmap Box will open and here is where a few settings must be checked. The original resolution of the file is shown as the Input. Make certain Output Resolution is identical. If not, change it. You must also make sure "Diffusion Dither" is selected. Now click okay. You'll be prompted to repeat this sequence twice more.



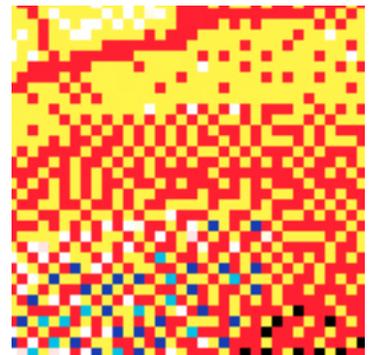
If an index separation was never attempted with the installed version of Photoshop, you'll most likely be presented with the below "Discard Other Channels" warning. Check "Don't Show Again" and click okay.

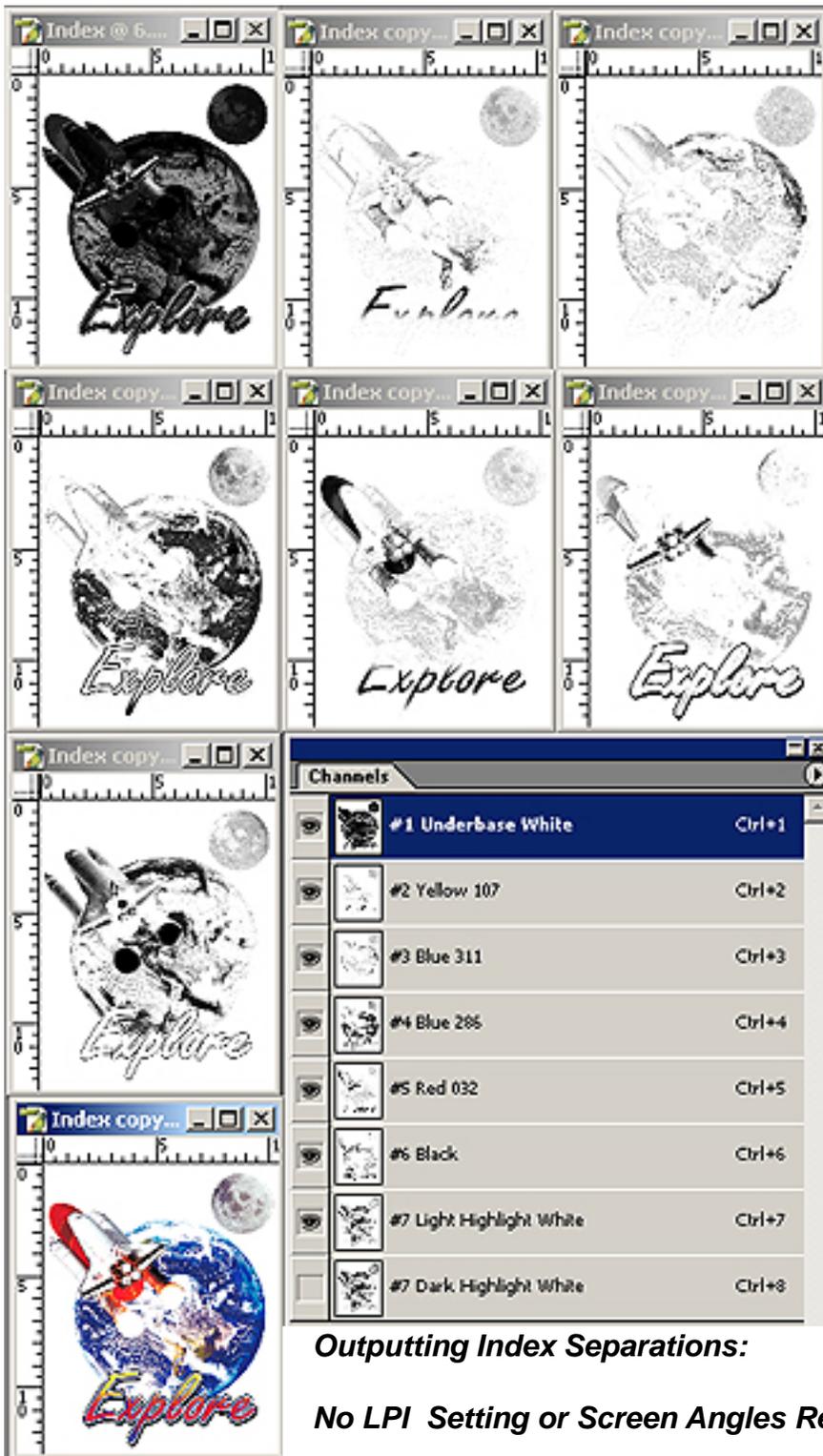


When all on-screen activity stops the separation is complete. To get a detailed look at the file, turn off the optional Dark Highlight channel, turn on all others and zoom in.



The small sample at right clearly shows at an extreme zoom the makeup of an index separation which are basically small squares that sit next to each other. Index files actually print very smooth and clean so don't get concerned when zooming in on screen.





A view of the channels palette following an automated Index run. Much thought has gone into selecting the color palettes our Index Actions utilize and for most jobs they should work well.

When printing Index, its sometimes advisable to not print the black last. If your designs are not printing as well as expected, try running the black one or two stations earlier .

Although index files with an enormous number of colors look great, for many jobs sometimes less is more.

Outputting Index Separations:

No LPI Setting or Screen Angles Required.

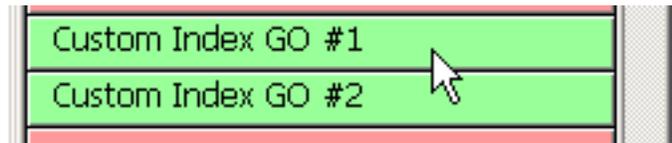
Mesh count: 305 All Top Colors. 280 can be used on files 175 dpi or lower.

Mesh count: 156 - 200 Underbase White.

Mesh count: 230 - 280 Highlight White.

Print Order: As specified on channels palette.

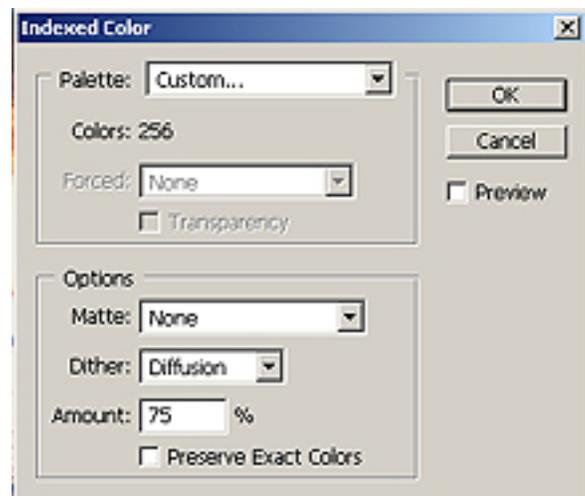
If your art includes many odd or absolute colors which must be matched such as corporate logos, etc. then run our **Custom Index GO** Action that guides the end user through selecting all top colors within the design. The custom index action is actually a set of two. The first being an automated action which generates the base and highlight white and prompts the user to select the number of colors within the design. The amount of colors is entirely up to you. The second is a short action which generates the index color channels and must be repeated for every color chosen. The entire process shouldn't take more than 5 minutes to complete.



Follow the simple on-screen message box instructions and when the Indexed Color Box at right appears, make certain your settings match our example here.

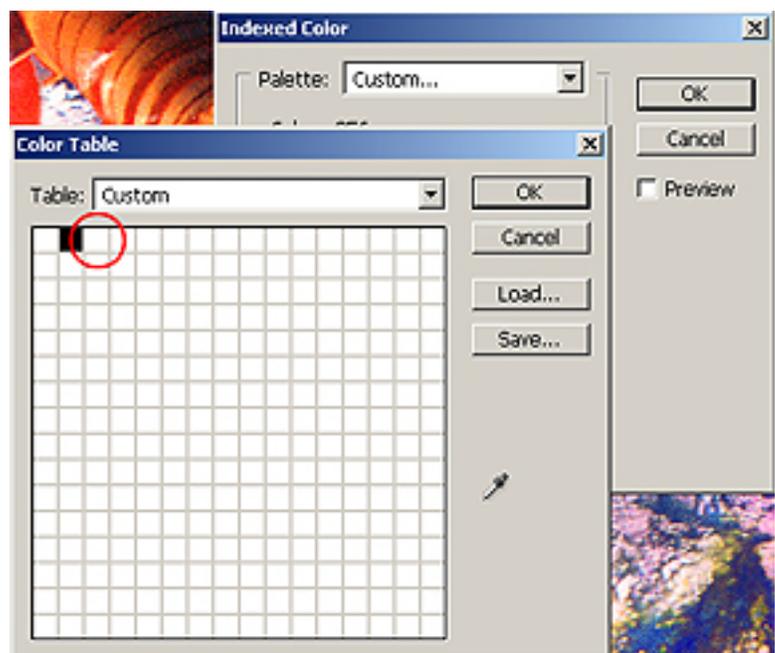
Palette: Custom
 Matte: None
 Dither: Diffusion
 Amount: 75%

Make sure Preserve Exact Colors and Preview Boxes are **unchecked** and click okay.

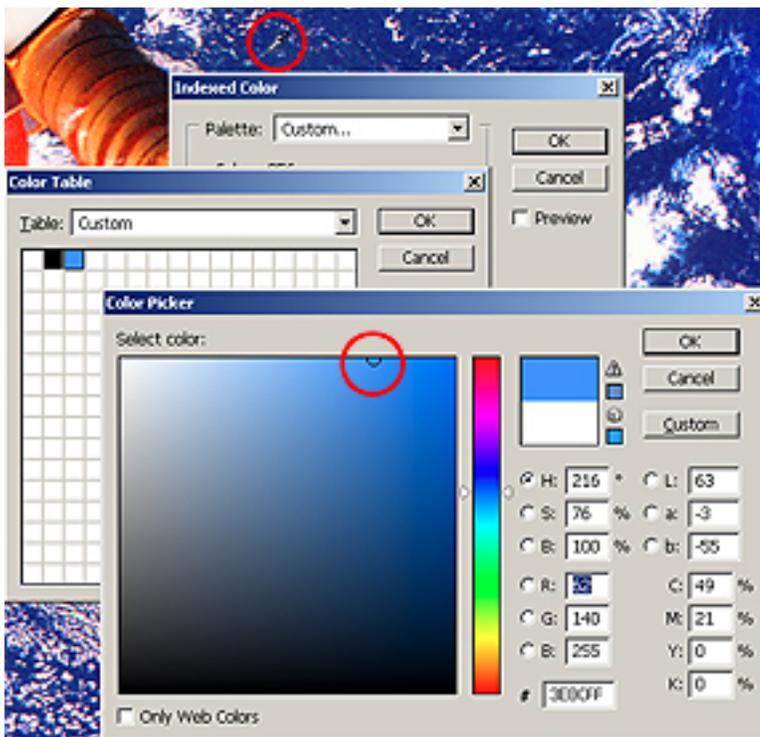


When the Color Table box appears, click the white box next to the black.

NOTE: In the unlikely event your art is completely void of black, absolutely NO black ink whatsoever, then start the custom index separation by clicking the Black Square to begin selecting individual colors. Doing so will eliminate black being chosen.

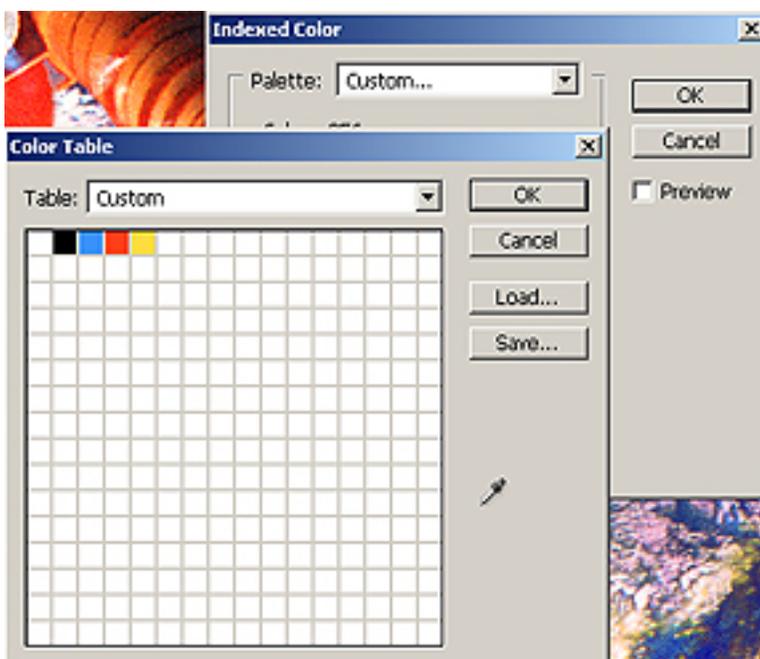


When the Color Picker appears, zoom in on the art and use the eyedropper to select a color. In the example we've selected a blue. If the color is not critical such as a logo pms match, I suggest to move the circle around within the color picker to choose the most "pure" version of the color in question. Here we wanted a bright blue although getting a "pure" sample with the eyedropper is almost impossible. Choosing clean, pure colors is paramount for a bright and eye pleasing index separation.



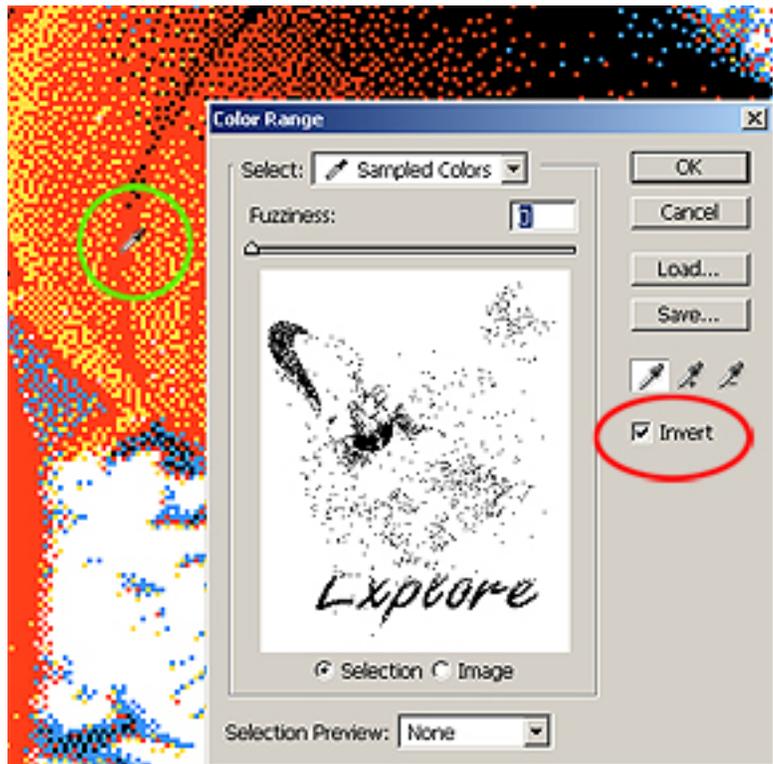
Repeat this process for each color desired and when satisfied click okay. For our example here we've selected a blue, slightly orangey red and yellow. As mentioned previously black and white have been chosen.

Tip: Stay away from selecting deep scarlet reds (unless an absolute) and choose a more orangey red as this provides a brighter image. Same applies to blues and yellows, (the vital colors). Remember..."Pure Colors"!

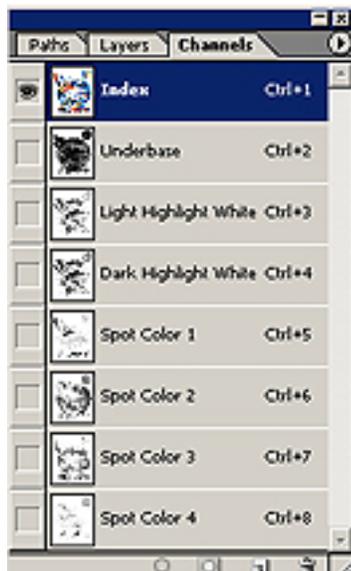
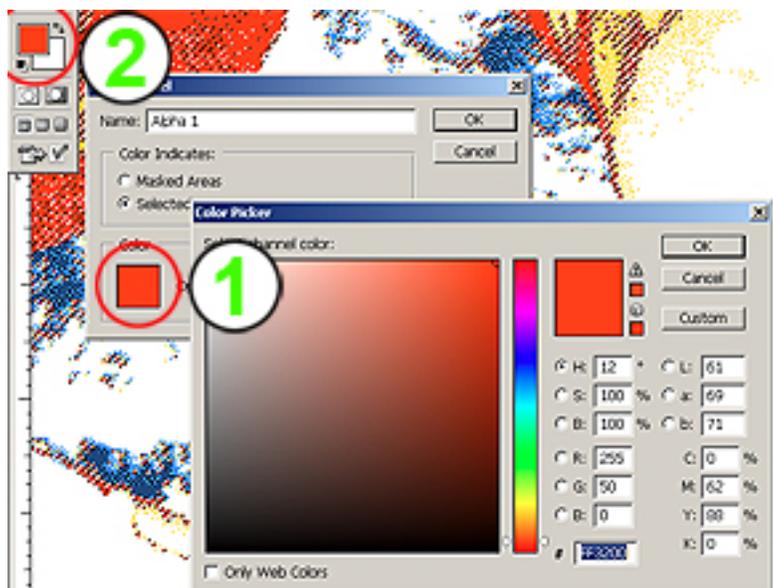


At this point you'll be presented with a channels palette containing an Index Channel, an underbase and two highlight whites. The Index channel will look distorted and grainy although this is normal, the final separation will look fine. Just zoom in to get a clear view. Make sure the only channel visible is the Index and now run the **Custom Index GO #2 Action**.

When the Color Range window appears, zoom in on the artwork. Make sure Invert is checked, move the Fuzziness Slider to 0 and using the eyedropper select one of the colors within the design and click okay.



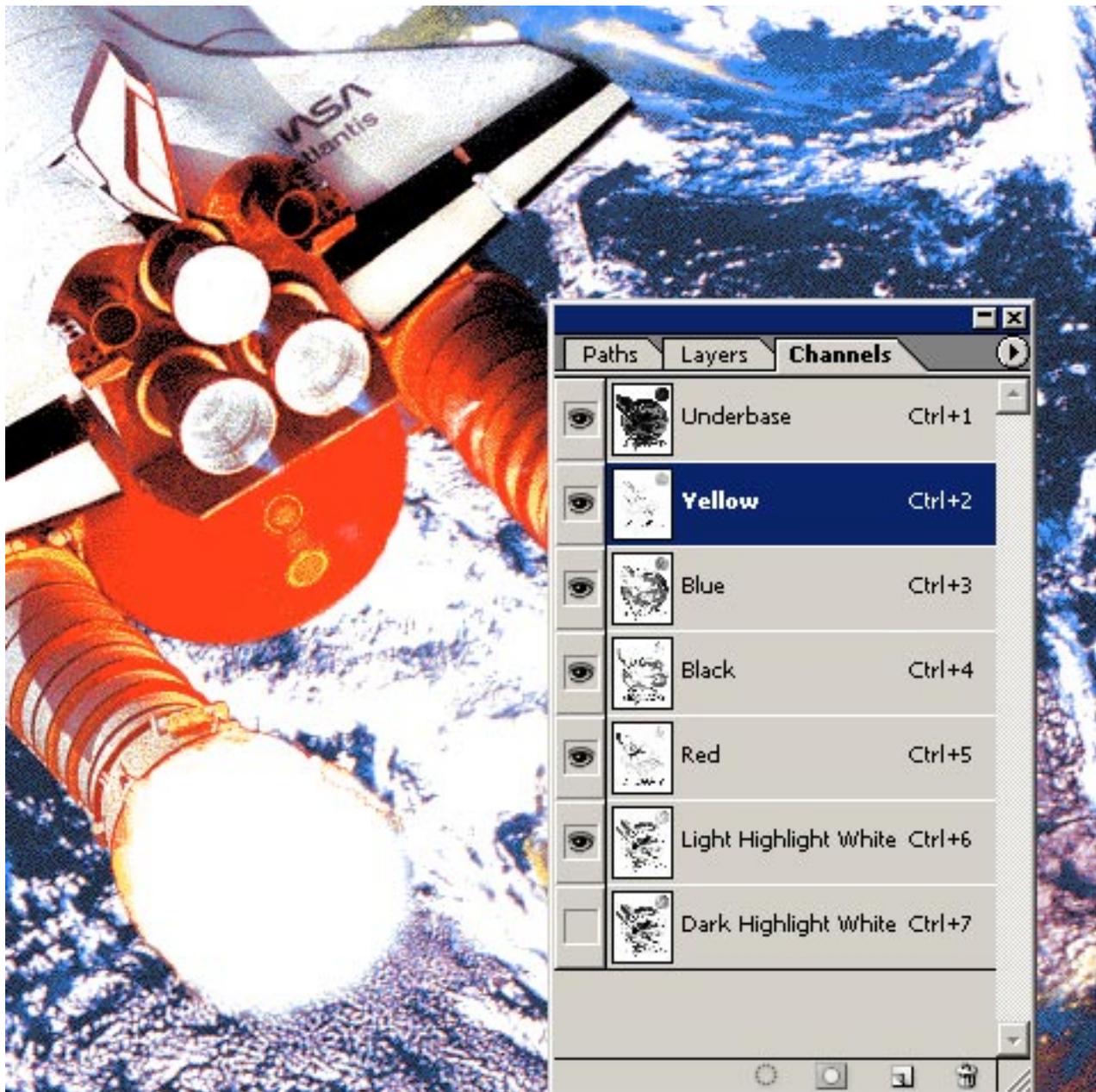
When the New Channel window opens click the Color Box (1) then click the Foreground Color within Photoshop's Tools Palette (2) and click okay then okay again. A new index spot channel has now been created using that color.



Repeat this procedure with all colors in the design (including the Black). Upon completion your channels palette will contain every selected color and the original composite Index Channel.

Rename the index spot channels to reflect their color contents, delete the composite index channel, arrange the channels for correct viewing, output the films and you're finished! Below is the custom index separation and is quite accurate while using very few colors. Notice we placed the Black ahead of the Red....sometimes this is a good idea.

For those new to indexing I encourage you to experiment with the same file as its on the CD.

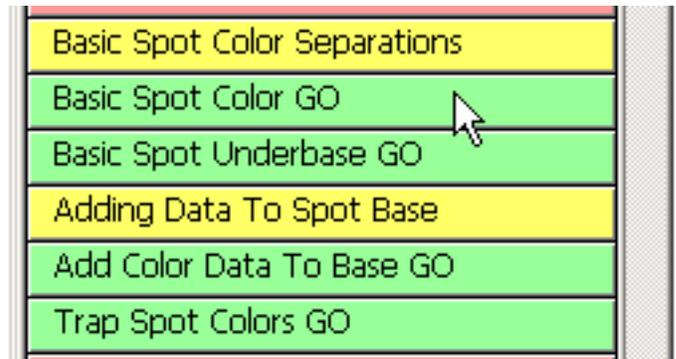


Don't worry, its actually quite easy and after a few separations you'll be doing these custom index files in minutes. Watch the demonstration video since the procedure is easier to get comfortable with by viewing as opposed to reading.

Basic Spot Color Separations

For years I've been asked if QuikSeps does basic spot color and for years I've responded with: "No, since a program really isn't needed to do basic spot color".

Well, the popular response to this many times has been: "But I don't know how to do them"! So I've finally decided with the development of QuikSeps Professional to add this feature and also include some advanced techniques on making the most of spot color selection.



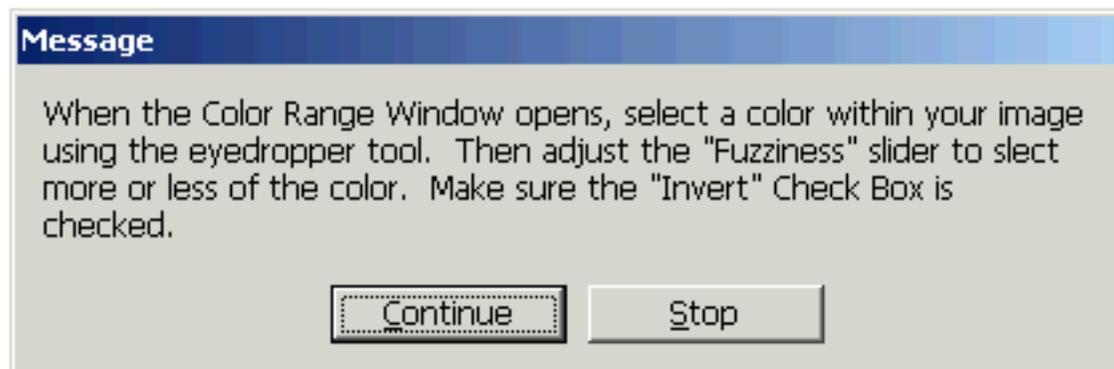
The file at right is an excellent example of basic spot color as it represents 4 solid colors with no tints or gradients.

If your spot color art contains "excessive" tints (fades, blends, etc.) then try running QuikSeps Simulated Process (QuikSeps GO Action) on the file and picking and choosing final colors.

Running a custom Index separation is another choice for spot color seps that contain excessive tints.



Since QuikSeps can't obviously "see" what hard spot colors are contained within your art, it asks the user to select each color using Color Range and once again to define the color itself. After clicking the Basic Spot Color Action, you'll be presented with the below message:



When Color Range opens, select the first color within the design and adjust the Fuzziness for more or less of the color and make certain Invert is checked. Once satisfied with the selection click okay.



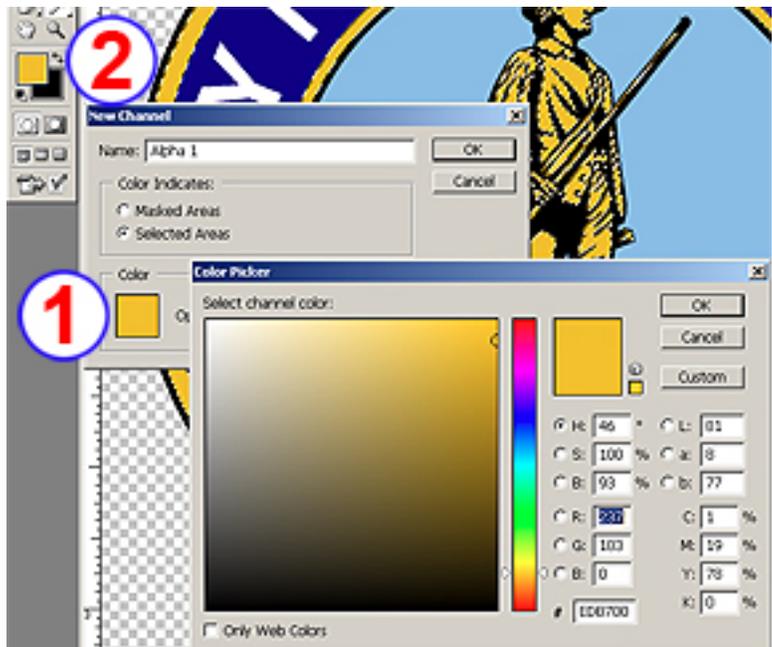
The following message box appears.



When the New Channel window opens, first make certain "Selected Areas" is checked!

Next click the Color Box (1) then click the Foreground Color within Photoshop's Tools Palette (2) and click okay then okay again. A new spot channel has now been created using that color.

Repeat this procedure with all colors in the design. Upon completion your channels palette will contain every selected color and the original composite RGB Channel.





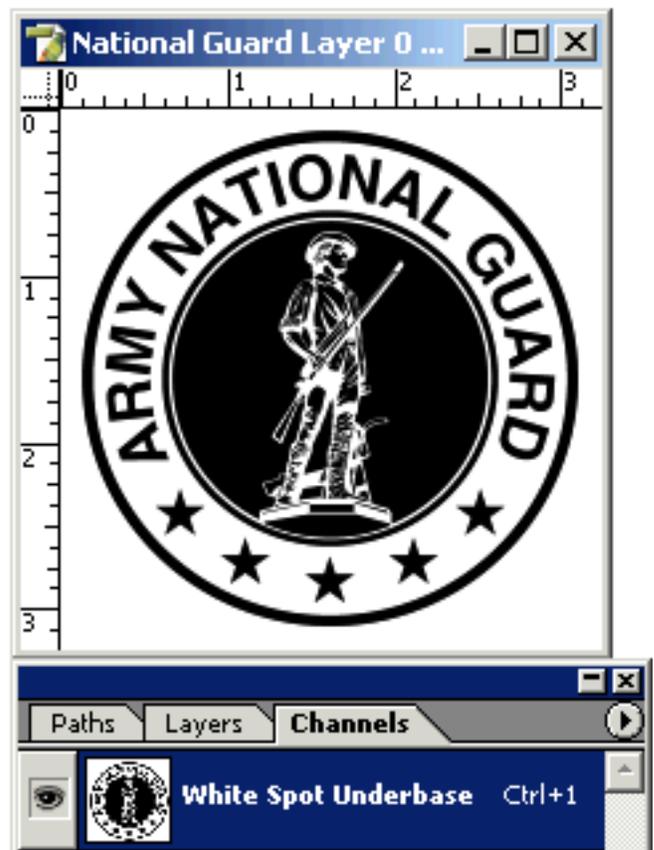
A completed spot color separation. QuikSeps will name each spot channel selected Spot Color 1,2,3,4, etc. These should be renamed to reflect their actual color. The RGB channels can also be deleted

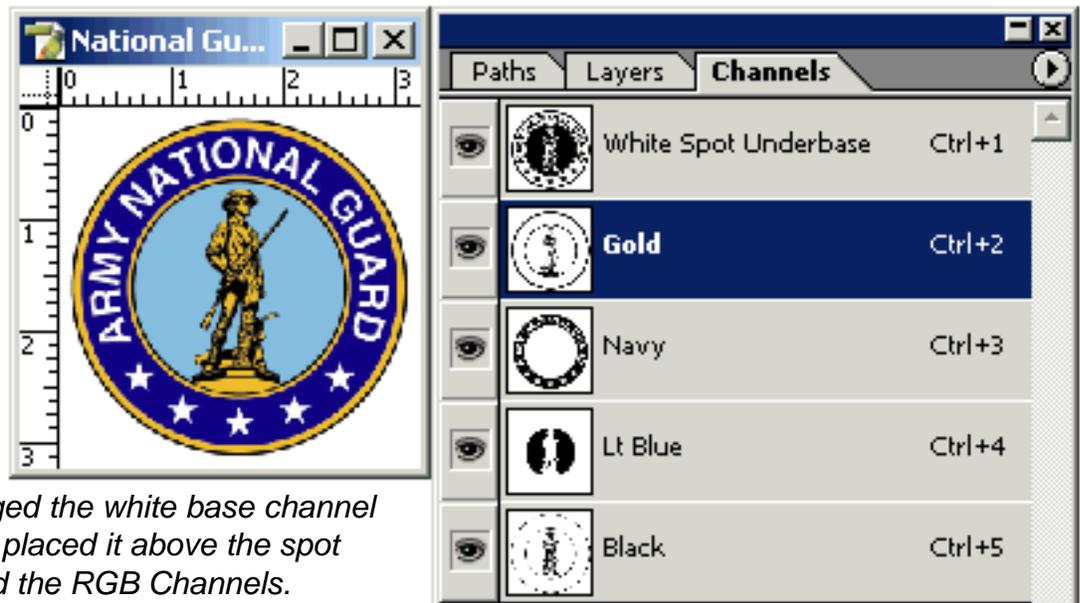
Spot Underbase Channel

If running on darks, you'll obviously need an underbase. If so open a copy of the original and run the **"Basic Spot Underbase GO"** action.

Upon completion you'll have a new file with only 1 channel containing the underbase. Select that channel and "Shift-Drag" it to the window of the color separation. (Shift-Dragging aligns it properly with the other file).

Note: Do not change the name of the underbase channel yet since QuikSeps may need to modify it.





We've Shift-Dragged the white base channel to the separation, placed it above the spot colors and deleted the RGB Channels.

If this image were to be printed on black or another dark color, white ink would be needed under the navy blue.

To accomplish this do the following:

- 1.) Click the Add Color Data To Base GO Action
- 2.) When prompted CTRL-Click the Navy Channel
- 3.) Click the Action Button again (Now Highlighted Red)



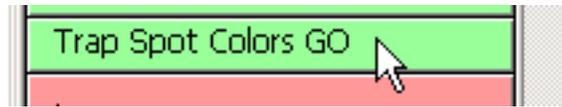
Before and After adding the navy channel data to the white base.



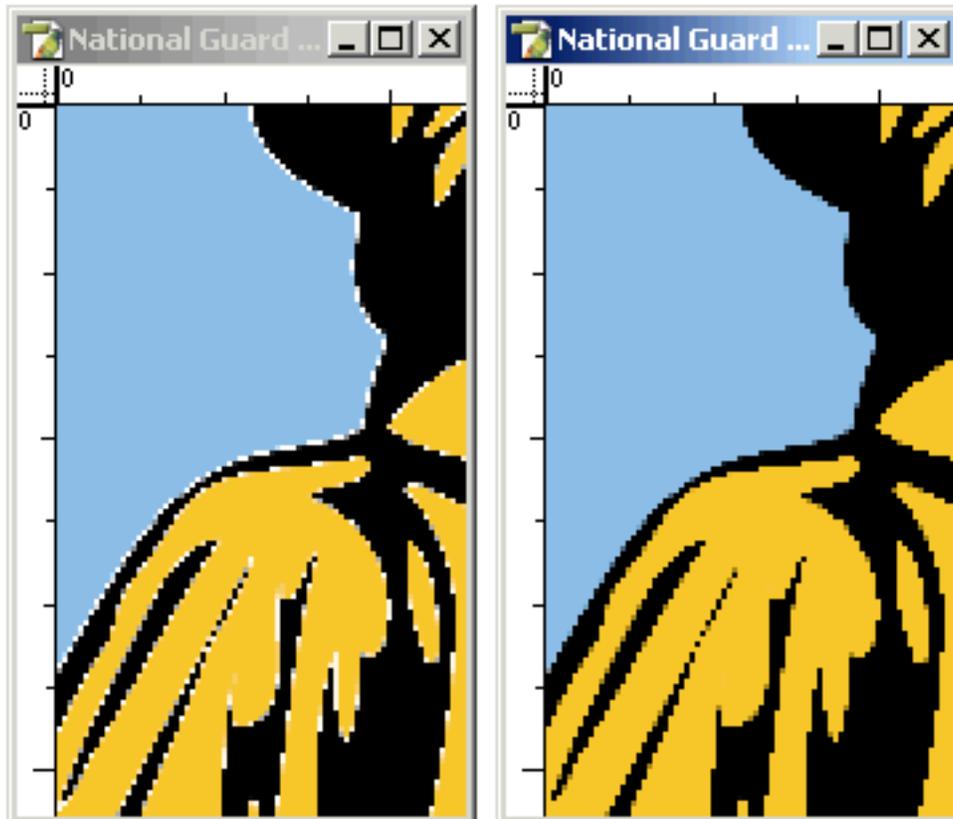
If any white ink is "peeking" from behind the colors, a small "Choke" of the underbase is probably needed. See Choking The White Underbase covered previously.

When pulling spot colors, retaining a very small gap between colors is unavoidable. So, if you think the gap could be an issue on-press, a small trap is then needed on some or all colors (except black). QuikSepts Professional includes an action named "Trap Spot Colors GO" to assist in closing these gaps.

Select a spot channel to be trapped and run the action. Repeat for each spot channel needing a trap.



An extreme close-up view of before and after trapping the spot channels.



Outputting Spot Separations:

Dot Shape - Elliptical

All films should be 45 Degrees at 300 LPI (Absolutely No Tints or Gradients).

All films should be 56 Degrees at 45 LPI (With Moderate Tints or Gradients).

Mesh count 156 - 200 (designs using no white base).

Mesh count 200- 305 Top Colors (designs with base).

Mesh count 125 - 200 Underbase White.

Print Order: Light to Dark.

QuikDraw

QuikDraw is a set of 3 actions which convert any photograph or continuous-tone image into pure black & white art printable using 1 screen. The original art should be 200 dpi minimum. QuikDraw will increase the resolution to 300 dpi. If the image is a small left chest graphic, start with an oversize file then reduce the physical size following conversion for best results.

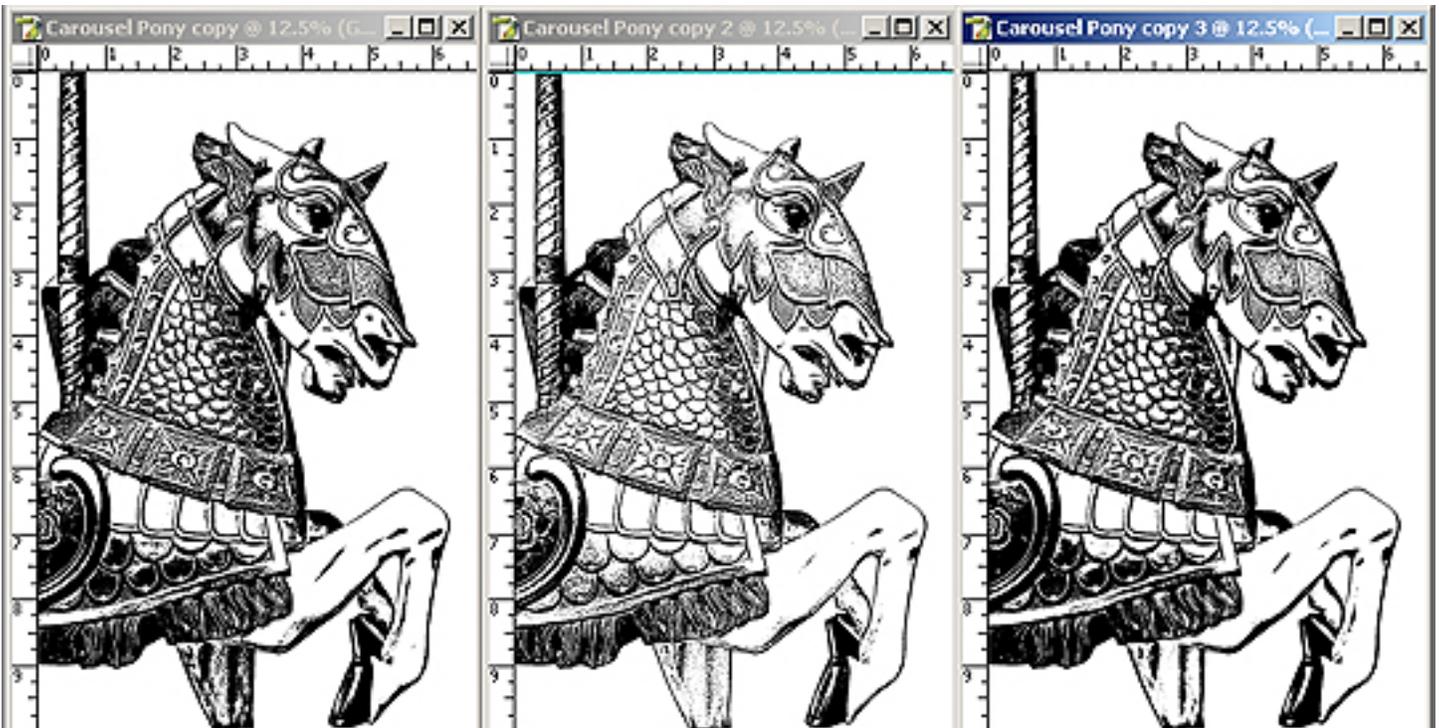
We suggest trying all 3 QuikDraw actions then deciding which looks best. Files that convert well using QuikDraw have excellent definition and clarity. If results are unsatisfactory, consider running Quik Image Fix and/or Brighten Define Image first, then attempt QuikDraw 1-2-3 again.



An interesting effect is using the output from QuikDraw and applying it to an RGB color file. What this does is give the photo a hand-stippled "cartoon effect" and can really look cool. The original must be 300 dpi (exactly) to experiment with this.

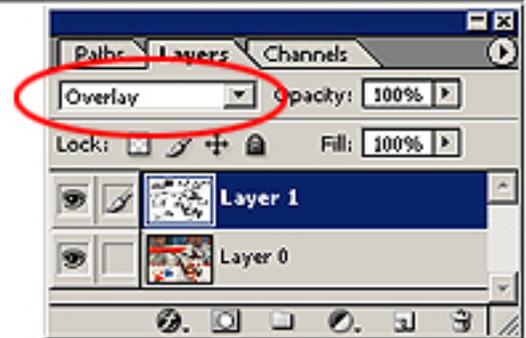
Below is the result of running QuikDraw 1-2-3 on the same color file. Although 1 and 3 appear very similar here, when viewed at full size the similarities diminish. Dramatic divergences are apparent with other types of files so again, try all three.

Output QuikDraw files at 300 LPI to retain sharpness and edge definition.



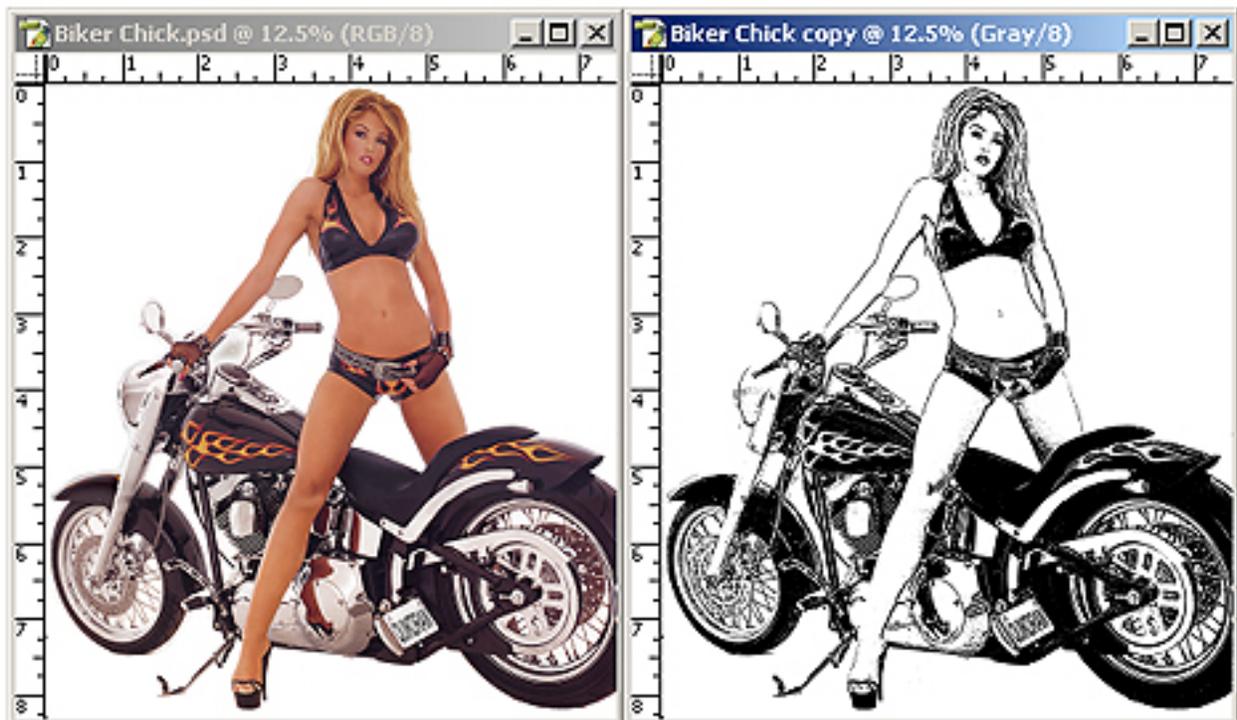


Here's something interesting to try. After running QuikDraw 2 on the RGB image we then Shift-Draged the QuikDraw Layer into the original RGB file and set the Layer Blending Mode to "Overlay". Following that I selected the color layer and bumped it up using the Curves to intensify the color.



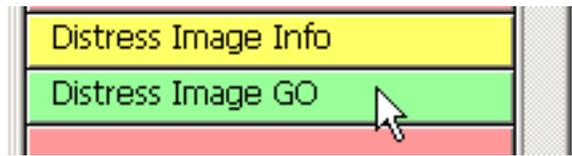
The effect is a hand-stippled cartoon look and is something worth experimenting with. Some shadows and color will be lost due to the blending mode of the QuikDraw channel. The layers would then be merged, (merge visible) into one layer named "Layer 0". QuikSeps Simulated Process or an Index Separation would separate the file.

QuikDraw....simple....versatile....useful...amazing!



Distress Image

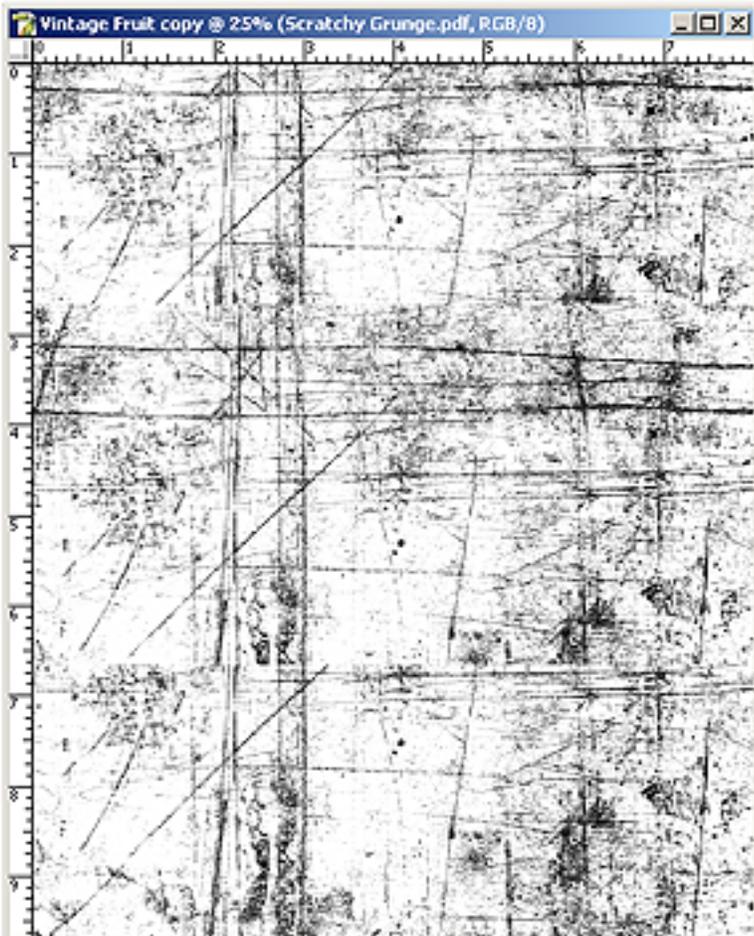
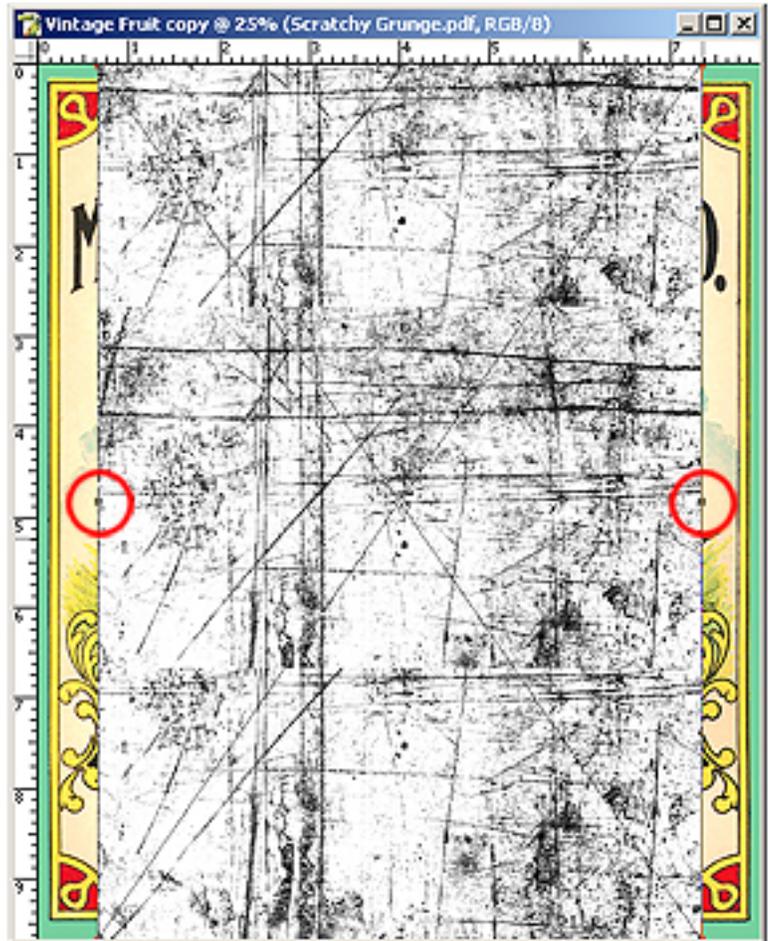
A distress image action is included that we think surpasses all others. No only is it very simple to use but its also quite unique since it allows the distress effect to be adjusted, removed and turned on or off. Plus, with the use of QuikDraw you can search the internet for any kind of textured image such as stone, bricks, gravel, wood, or whatever and make your own distress patterns in seconds!



After clicking the distress action, you'll be prompted to locate a distress filter. Locate the Distress Textures folder included with QuikSeps and select a filter, 10 are included and click Place.



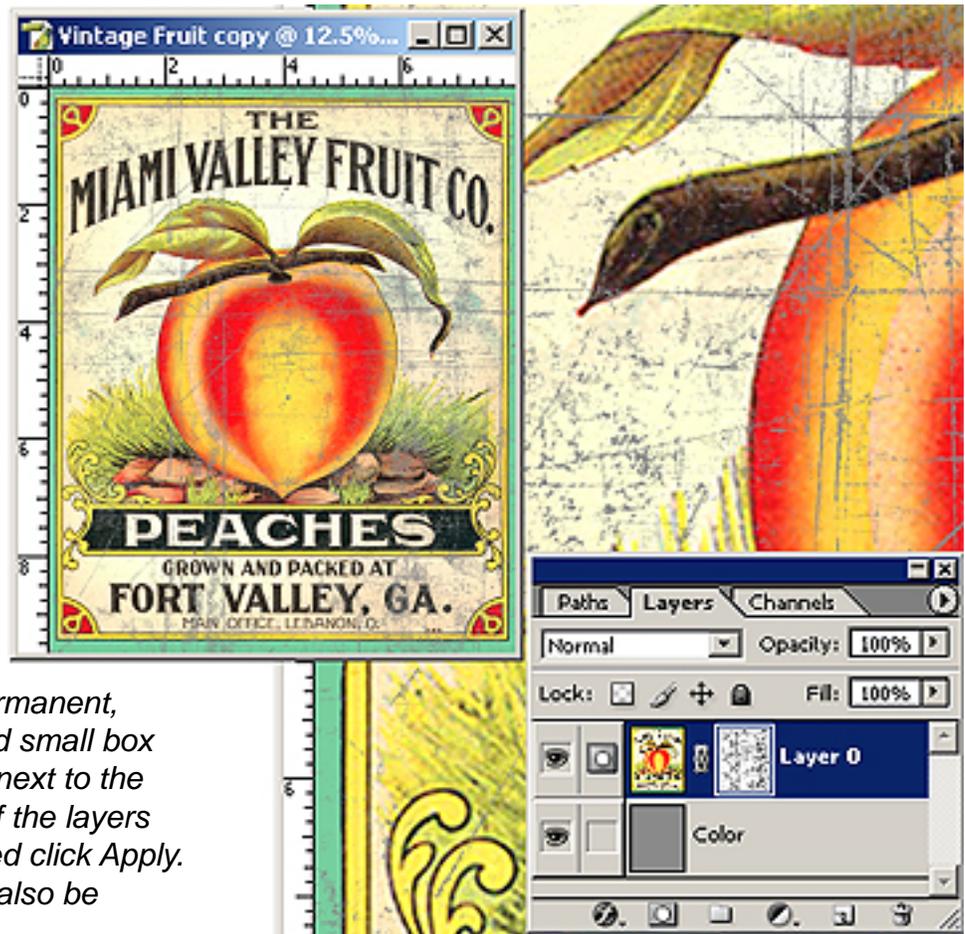
Once the distress filter PDF file has been placed, drag the handles to cover your graphic completely if not already blanketing the art entirely.



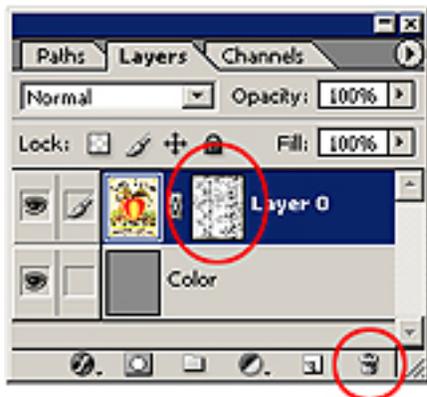
When the art appears as pictured here, hit the enter key to complete the process.

The result of running our Scratchy Grunge Filter.

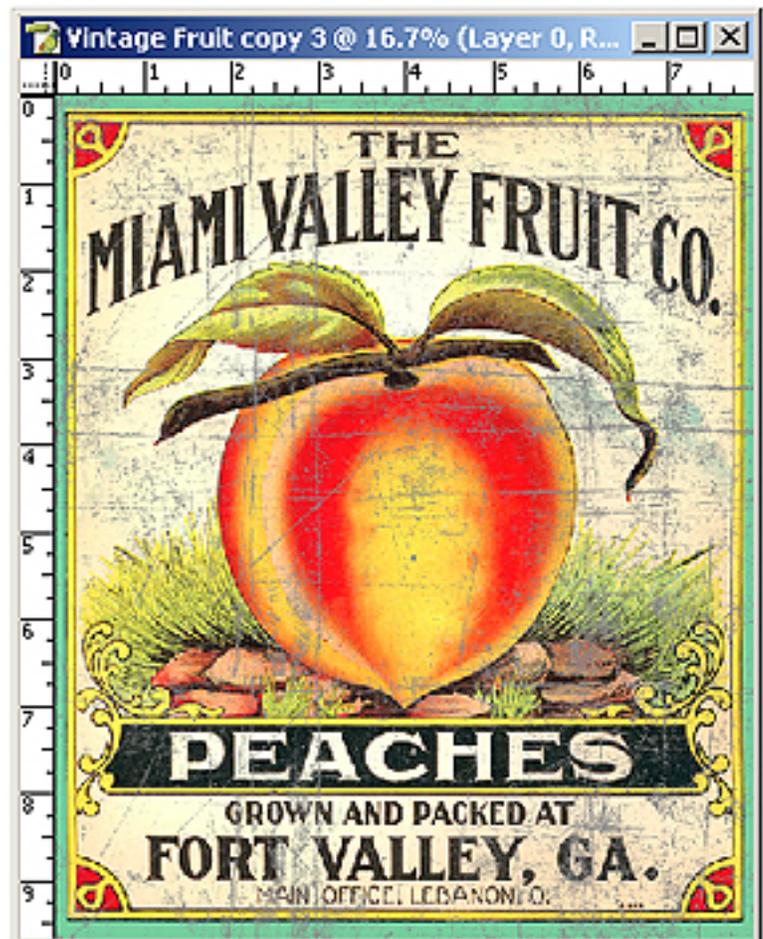
To try another filter, go to Photoshop's History Palette and click the image at top. This will revert the file back to its original state and permit the distress action to run again using another filter.



To make the effect permanent, drag the newly created small box on your artwork layer next to the image into the trash of the layers palette, when prompted click Apply. The "Color" layer can also be deleted now.



To turn the distress effect on or off, Shift-Click the box. To modify the distress effect, click on the box and use virtually any Photoshop Tool such as Levels, Curves, Rubber Stamp, Eraser, etc. to make changes to or lessen/intensify the effect.



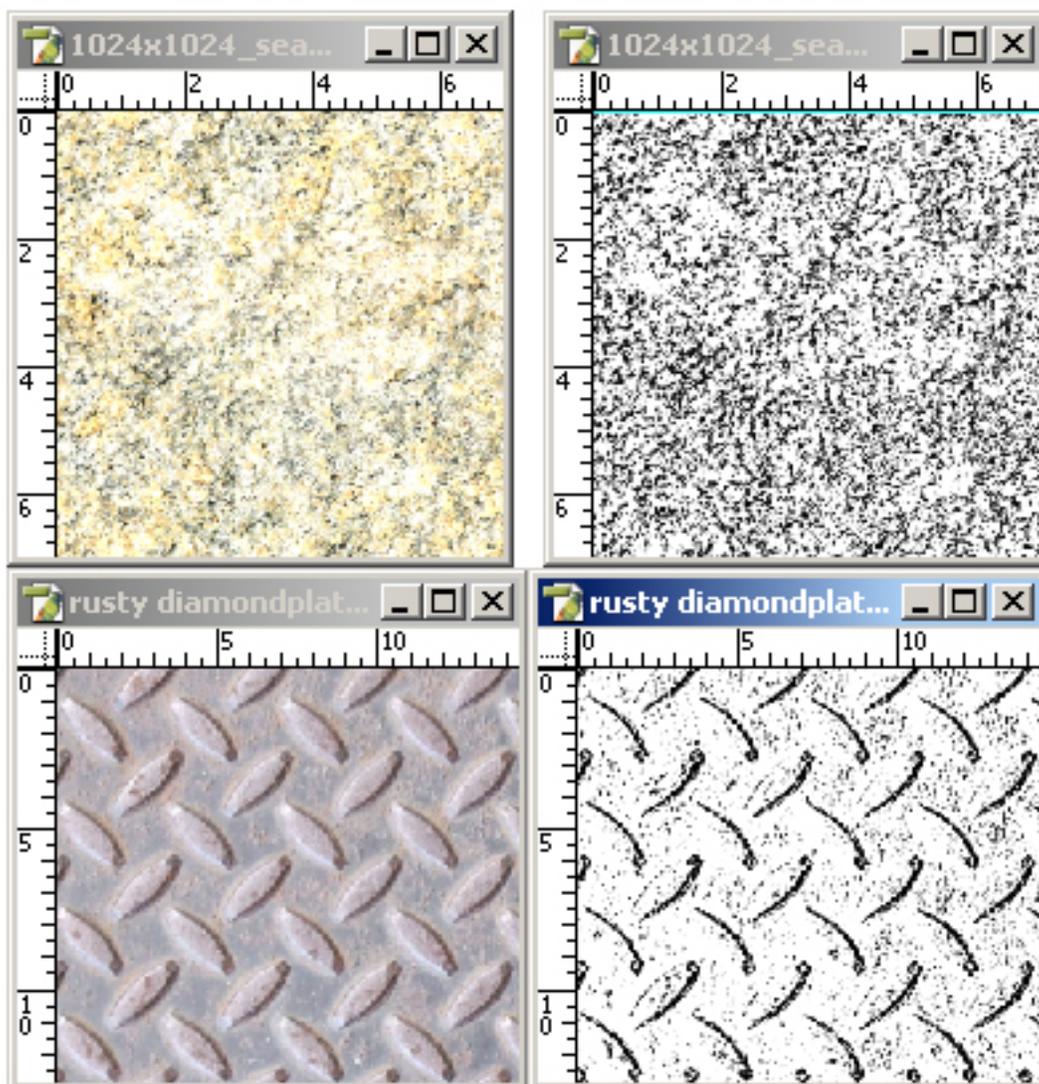
The file can now be separated using whatever method desired. Remember this technique is also great for simple 1 color graphics. Our distress image action can be used with distress textures you may already own. All that's required is to save them as PDF Files at 300 dpi.

The vintage fruit graphic is included on disk for evaluation purposes.

Making You Own Distress Filters

Owners of QuikSeps Professional can easily make their own distress filters with the help of QuikDraw. Just about any texture can be used and many can be found by searching the internet.

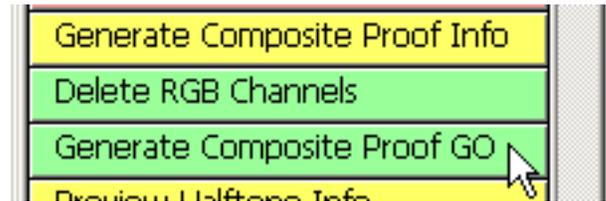
Below are examples of running QuikDraw 2 on a few color textures. QuikDraw converted them to black and white hard line art at 300 dpi. Now just save in PDF Format and you're ready to go! Just add your newly created custom textures to the QuikSeps Distress Textures Folder for easy access.



Generate Composite Proof

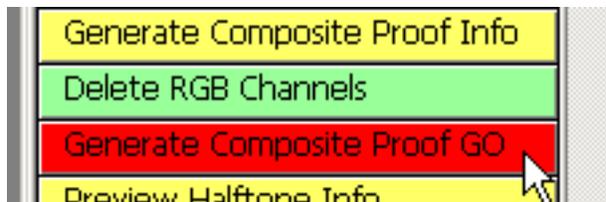
QuikSeps contains a simple action that generates a single layer RGB file from your multichannel separation (simulated, grayscale, index or process) to output on a color inkjet. This comes in handy as it better represents how the separation will print in most cases. I believe a few other software vendors have actually attempted to “elaborate” on this basic process and market a commercial stand-alone product which primarily does the same thing!

If your separation still has the RGB channels, click the Delete RGB Channels action. Next run the Generate Composite Proof action. In a few seconds the below message box instructs the user to Shift-Chick each remaining channel to select all.



Channels Palette with only color channels selected by shift-clicking.

Finish by clicking the now “red” colored action button.



Completed color proof and how the channels palette should now appear.



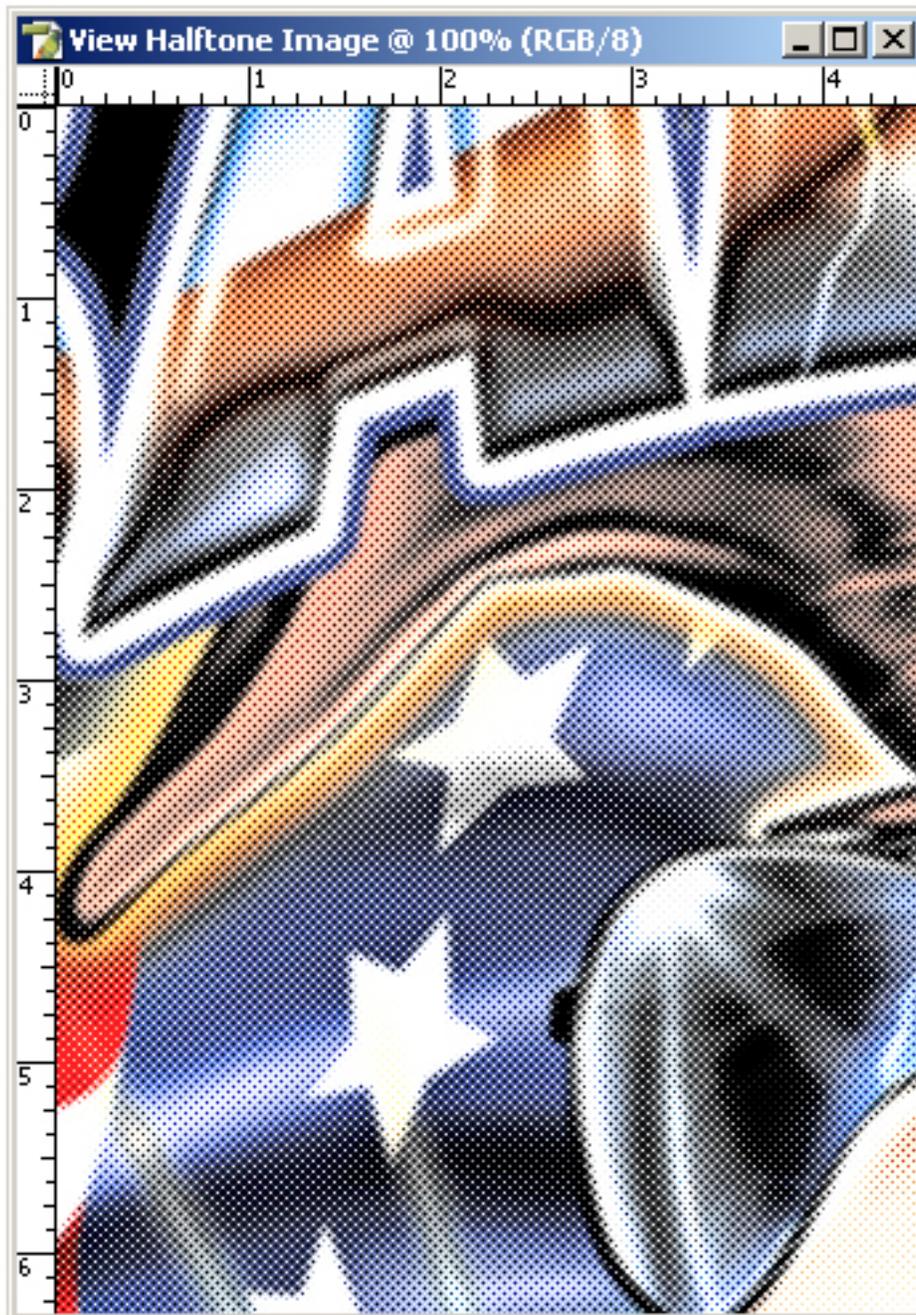
The color proof now containing only composite RGB channels can be output on any color inkjet printer.

Preview Halftone On Screen

This is a silly little action some may find interesting as it allows the viewing of the color proof on-screen as a halftone. The action works on a duplicate of the proof and increases the resolution. Once complete which takes from 15 to 45 seconds depending on computer speed and file size, simply zoom in until the halftone becomes visible and clear. Do not use on index separations.



NOTE! The sample below “might” have a “square pattern” within it. Your image on screen will look perfectly normal. This type of file may not display correctly within PDF files at certain magnification settings.

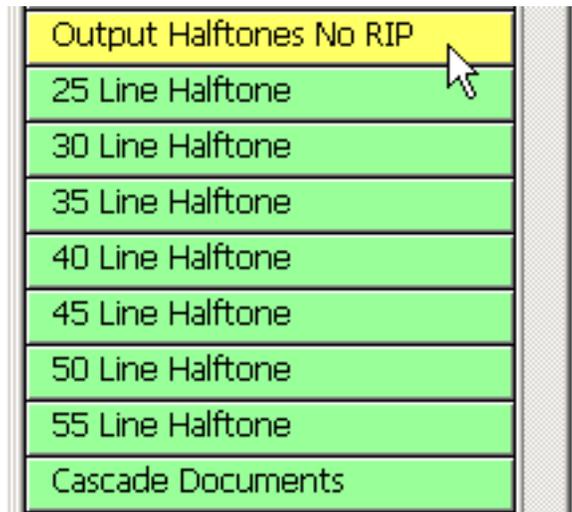


Output Halftones No RIP

For those without a RIP, this method does a good job of applying a halftone screen within Photoshop for film output. It's also a great "go to" in the event of software problems or a new printer or backup printer not being compatible with your software RIP.

By no means are these intended to replace the use of an actual software RIP program.

Some basic guidelines and rules for use:



Once satisfied with the color separation, delete all channels including the RGB and shirt background leaving the color channels only and do not save it.

Make sure no other documents are open in Photoshop! *Run one of the Halftone Actions which works on a duplicate and closes the original.*

*Once all channels have been converted, a message box will pop up stating **(The Object "Previous Document" Is Not Currently Available)**. This indicates the conversion process is complete on all channels. Click Stop.*

The screen will now contain a document for each color within your separation. Each new document must be printed separately as a stand alone file.

Make certain to check registration marks when outputting each file and do not attempt to resize. Make sure the separation is the correct final dimensions prior to running these actions.

The Actions generate single channel files therefore its impossible to add "Labels" to each for color identification. So just make certain to look at the original separation and manually label each film for ink color.

To get an idea of how the halftones will image to film, zoom in on a converted channel several times until the dots appear clearly formed. The files will appear distorted at lower zoom levels.

Do not specify an LPI setting, screen angle or dot shape when outputting these films as that information is already imbedded. Just output as you would line artwork at default printer resolution.

Best results are achieved using waterproof / water-resistant film. Also consider using lower LPI Actions such as 40 and 45 LPI if higher LPI settings do not provide anticipated on-press results. This technique is the only output process available for those lacking an actual RIP.

Output No RIP Continued

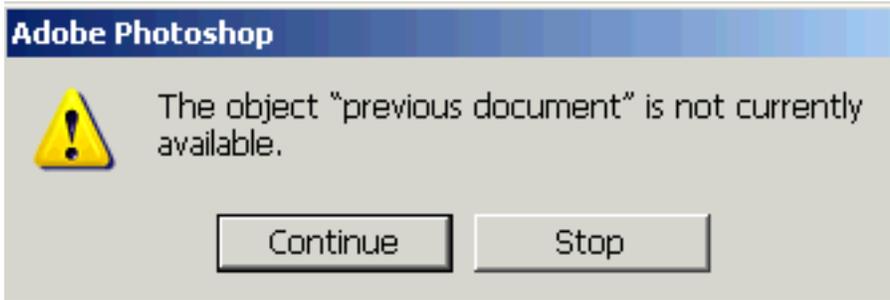
The finished separation should appear like the sample here.

Color channels only and void of the Shirt Background and RGB channels.

Now select which halftone action to run.



A short while after initiating the action, the below message box will appear unless there's 12 colors in the separation. Once this box appears, the conversion to halftones is complete. Hit the Stop Button.



If your separation contains 6 colors, a total of 6 documents will now be open on screen. To view them all and to make selection of each easier, click the Cascade Documents action. The open files will stack evenly on screen.



Screen shot displaying 6 individual halftone channels following Cascade Documents.

To Cascade Documents for final output with Photoshop CS4 (or higher) choose "Float All In Windows" from the Arrange Documents Icon found in the CS4 menu bar (top right).

NOTE! The sample below “might” have a “square pattern” within it. Your image on screen will look perfectly normal. This type of file may not display correctly within PDF files at certain magnification settings.

A close-up of a 40 LPI halftone underbase channel created within Photoshop.



As discussed previously, do not specify an LPI setting, screen angle or dot shape when outputting these films as that information is already imbedded within the file. Just output as you would line artwork at default printer resolution. Don't forget to check registration marks prior to outputting each film.

Printing Films From Photoshop

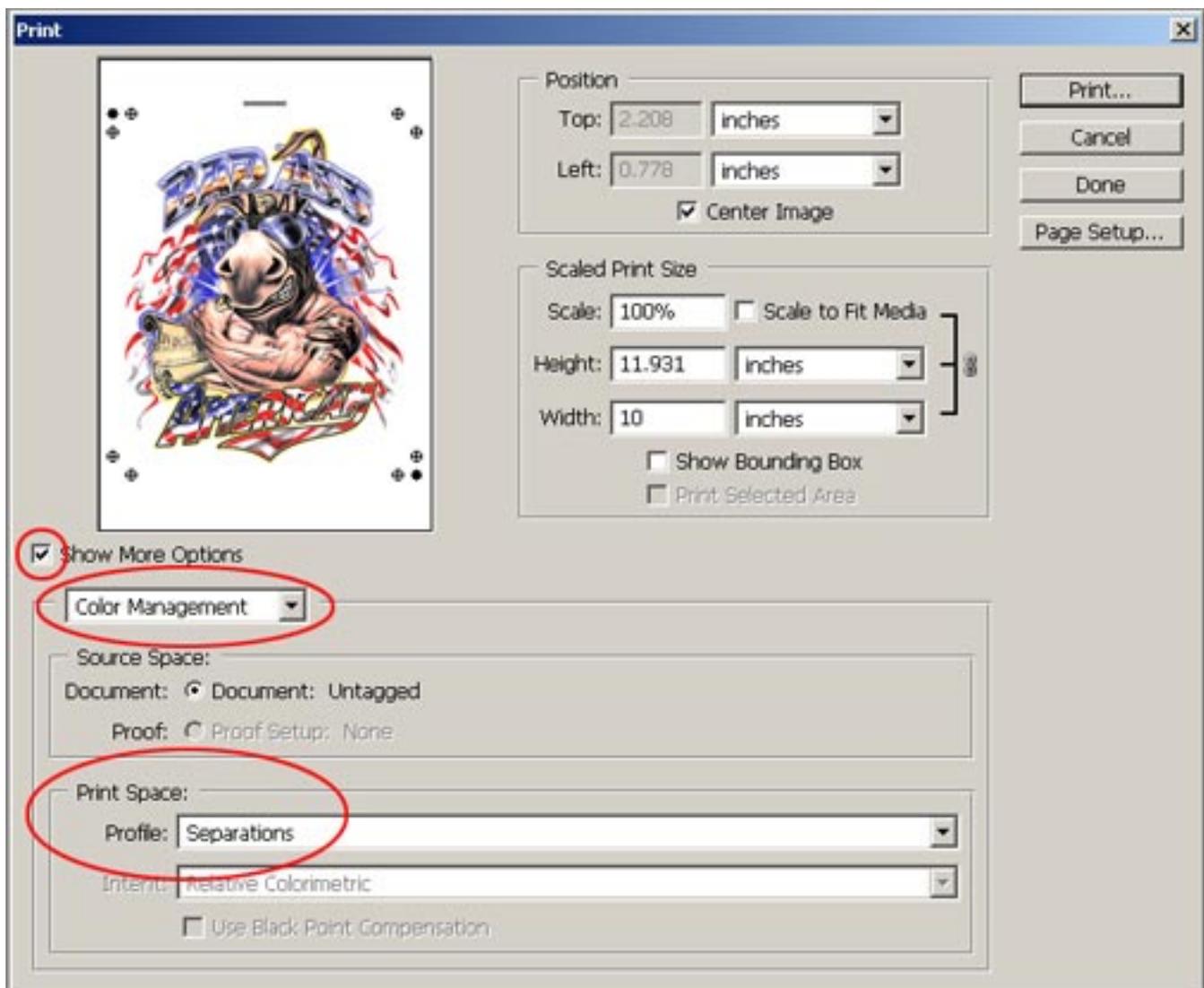
Many years ago I suggested files to be exported in DCS format and to be printed from Illustrator or a page layout program. This is no longer needed as all files should be printed directly from Photoshop. I'm certain most of you are well aware of the procedure but for the new guys, I thought it best to briefly review the process.

To avoid any potential issue, its a good idea to delete the RGB channels from the file prior to output.

The following is the correct method to output films which require an LPI setting, screen angle and dot shape to be chosen. These include simulated process, cmyk, grayscale separations and any other file that contains tints and gradients.

Select "Print With Preview" from the File Menu in Photoshop and click "Page Setup". Select the destination printer, film size, etc. and click OK.

Now back at the Print With Preview screen, check "Show More Options" and then choose "Color Management". Now make certain "Separations" is chosen within the Print Space Profile.

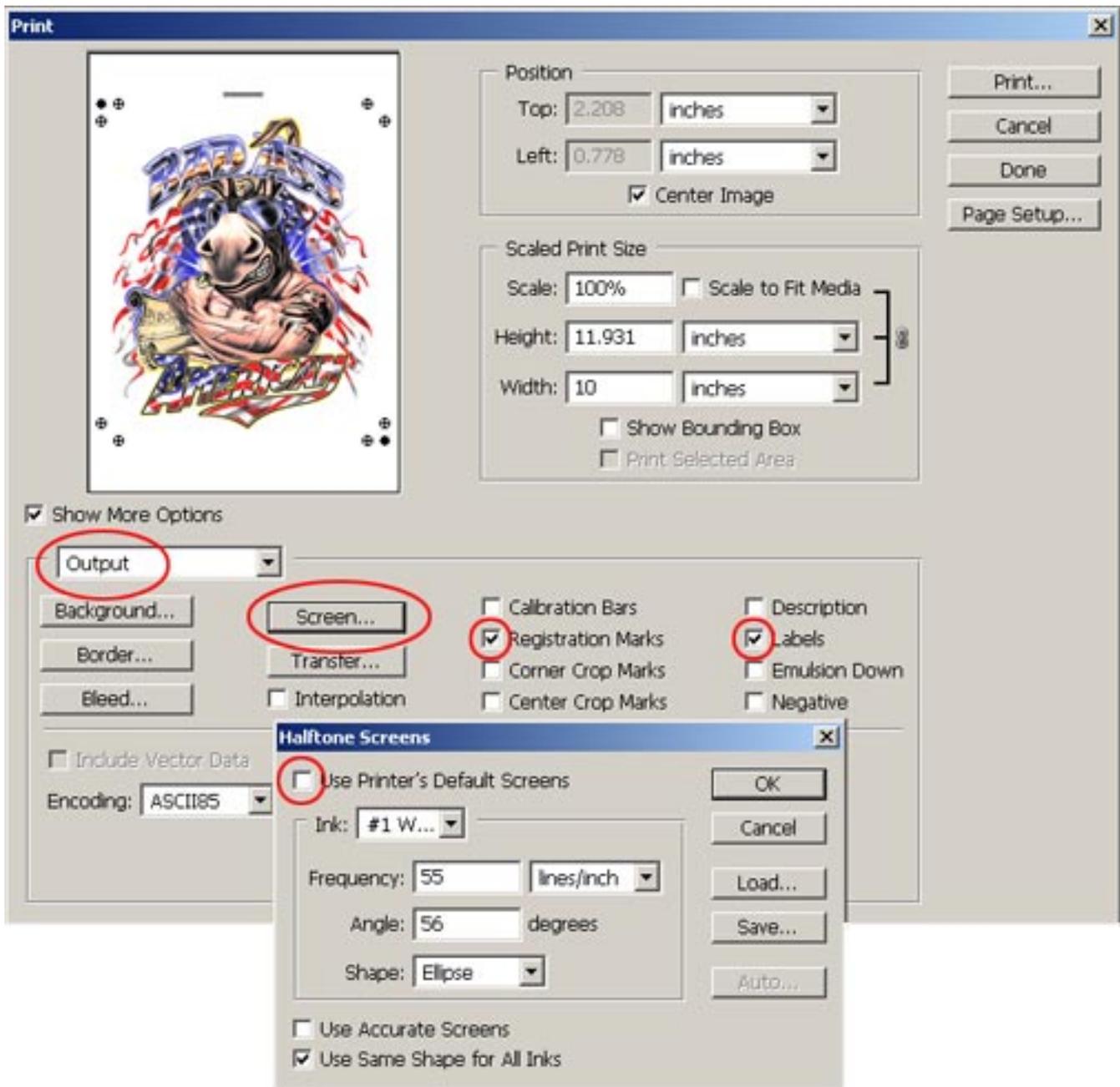


Now select "Output" and check Registration Marks and Labels. Click the "Screen" Button to engage the Halftone Screens parameter box and uncheck "Use Printer's Default Screens".

Select each ink and apply the correct Frequency, Angle and Dot Shape.

Once everything has been set, click OK and print.

At the end of each section within the manual we discussed the correct settings although I've listed them for quick reference on the next few pages.



When outputting Index Separations, follow the same procedure although omit the selection regarding halftone screens. Screens, LPI, Dot Shape and Angles are not used with index as these are bitmap files.

When outputting hard spot color separations with no tints or gradients, you can either omit the selection of screens, etc. OR decide to employ the screens parameter settings and apply the following to all channels:

Frequency: 300

Angle: 45

Dot: Round

To guarantee the highest quality line when outputting a QuikDraw image, always set the screens parameter to the following:

Frequency: 300

Angle: 45

Dot: Round

When outputting a file without a RIP using a halftone generated within QuikSeps, no halftone screen settings are required.

Outputting Simulated Process Separations:

Dot Shape - Elliptical

All films should be 56 Degrees at 55 LPI.

Mesh count 280 - 305 Top Colors.

Mesh count 156 - 200 Underbase White.

Mesh count 200 - 230 Highlight White.

Print Order: Light Colors First - Darks Last. See channel palette for suggested print order.

If you encounter any problems such as mesh interference patterns on press, then output the white base using 50 LPI at 26 degrees.

Manual shops and those doing simpler work may want to experiment with heavier line screens such as 45 lpi when outputting the positives and not to use mesh counts above 280. Very basic jobs can be effectively printed using 230 mesh with excellent results.

Outputting CMYK separations:

Dot Shape - Elliptical

All films should be 22.5 Degrees at 60 LPI.

Mesh count 305 - 330 Top Colors.

Mesh count 200 - 230 Underbase White.

Mesh count 230 Highlight White.

Print Order: Base - Yellow - Magenta - Cyan - Highlight - Black

You can also try printing the White Highlight last.

For those having difficulty controlling an image, the dark highlight may help.

It might be helpful however to image the base and highlight at 50 - 55 LPI due to the lower mesh count required.

Outputting Index Separations:

No LPI Setting or Screen Angles Required.

Mesh count: 305 All Top Colors. 280 can be used on files 175 dpi or lower.

Mesh count: 156 - 200 Underbase White.

Mesh count: 230 - 280 Highlight White.

Print Order: As specified on channels palette although certain jobs might printer better by moving the black a few channels up or prior to the red.

Outputting Spot Separations:

Dot Shape - Elliptical

All films should be 45 Degrees at 300 LPI (*Absolutely No Tints or Gradients*).

All films should be 56 Degrees at 45 LPI (*With Moderate Tints or Gradients*).

Mesh count 156 - 200 (designs using no white base).

Mesh count 200- 305 Top Colors (designs with base).

Mesh count 125 - 200 Underbase White.

Print Order: Light to Dark.

QuikSeps Professional For Advanced Users

We've placed instructions within the actions set to assist the user and recommend that everyone use them for a while. However, after getting comfortable with QuikSeps Professional, you might find these message box instructions quite annoying. Therefore, we've included another action set named QSP.atn and have removed all but the most needed messages. This action can be found within the Advanced Users folder.



QSP

Troubleshooting

Answers To Our Most Common Questions

After running a separation I have several channels which are filled with black.

This is the result of running a separation on a file completely void of vital colors such as red or yellow or running a grayscale separation on a file already in grayscale mode. To remedy this, add the "Color Bar Target" included on disk to a non printing corner of the image and run again. Complete information on the Color Bar Target can be found in the Grayscale Separation section of the manual.

I need to stop an action already in progress. Hit the Escape Key (Esc). Then reset the action by clicking any "Red Bar" in the actions palette. If running the actions palette in "list mode", click the square stop button at the bottom of the actions palette then reset by clicking the small arrow next to the action to once again collapse it. If actions have been forcibly stopped many times, it might be a good idea to reload a fresh set.

The command "Move" is not available. You're attempting to run QuikSeps on a "flattened" file containing a background layer only which cannot be processed. Refer to the manual for proper file formatting.

I'm getting a message that "Changing Modes Will Affect Layer Composting". You're attempting to run QuikSeps on a file containing more than 1 Layer. The only layer allowed is "Layer 0" and must contain the entire image.

During a separation a message notes a channel is not currently available. This indicates your original file contains additional channels other than the RGB channels. Stop the action, delete the extra channel(s) and start again. If you must run a separation while retaining additional channels that have been created such as masks, make sure they're NOT named Alpha 1,2,3,4,5 etc.

The action keeps prompting to click OK or doesn't complete the function. The action set has been damaged. Delete the actions and reload a fresh copy.

When double-clicking a channel, there's different "solidity" settings such as 6%, 25%, 85%, etc. These settings have no affect on the density of the films and even if they're changed, the film output will not be altered. We use these "solidity" settings to allow separations to render properly on screen to closely match on press characteristics.. Its recommended not to change them.

The separations look extremely light and washed out. The QuikSeps Custom Color Settings File was not loaded into Photoshop to allow the seps to render properly on screen. QuikSeps compensates for the excessive dot gain screen printers experience and requires the color settings file to be used. See loading the color settings near the beginning of the manual. If you still think a channel is too light, please don't hesitate to adjust it with a simple Curve. **Also be aware some LCD monitors are extremely bright and could give a false view. So make use of Photoshop's Info Palette for actual ink density readings.**

When deleting the white area around the art, its still white and no checkerboard pattern can be seen. You're either attempting to delete the white area on a flattened image, in that case double-click the background layer to change it to Layer 0. Or the Transparency Settings in Photoshop need to be changed. Under the Preferences menu choose "Transparency & Gamut". Next to "Grid Size" select Small, Medium or Large.

While running an action, other files pop up on screen and nothing works. Make certain the only file open in Photoshop is the file being processed.

When auto merging color channels I get messages that channels are unavailable. You have manually deleted channels prior to running the action.

I have a small press and cannot use flesh inks. The flesh tones are too red. Well, there's one guaranteed way to print fleshtones, and that's by using flesh inks. If impossible to do so, make sure the Soft Red channel is used which is the preferred red channel. Try increasing the yellow ink within the flesh range slightly. Consider using the optional "Dark Highlight White" channel to mute the image especially within the flesh. (See the Alt White Base - Highlights Action) Finally, ink the red screen with a more orangey red, cut a little red ink back within the flesh areas and attempt printing the yellow following the red. Also remember that deep scarlet (blood) reds never work well within simulated process color.

The shirt color is visible through parts of my white base. Run the Alt White Base - Highlights Action on the file and use that underbase or simply use the (Non Blacks) underbase channel.

Can I change the color of the channels. Sure! Just double-click a channel then click the small color square to bring up the color picker. From there you can either use the picker to change colors or select the "custom" button and type in a pms number.

Using both the red and orange make the image too dark. Orange is very close to red and therefore will contain much of the same data thus resulting in excess ink. The orange channel is there for certain files that take advantage of it. If it doesn't work for a particular image, just delete it.

My Index separations look awful on screen. Zoom in to view them correctly. Also make certain to not up or downsample index files. If an Index separation was run on a 150dpi file at 10"x12", the final separation must remain that size! If any dimensional changes are required, you must resize the original and generate a new separation.

The separations seem to lack color. This is due to poor quality originals without sufficient color data. Run our image enhancing actions to give the art some "pop" prior to separating.

Technical Support

Questions or request for technical support need to be directed to
support@quikseps.com

Include within the email the name or company the copy of QuikSeps Professional is registered to and your phone number. We'll respond to the question within 24 hours. If the issue can't be resolved via email, we'll call. At times we respond to technical support with a "voice email" as a file attachment to answer complex matters. These audio replies play within any standard media player such as Windows Media Player, iTunes, Real Player, etc.

If you receive a voice email, just double-click the file as that will launch whatever media player is installed on your computer.

*If the issue is an absolute emergency or for those who need an answer immediately, refer to our website for support phone numbers. We'll answer inquires **free-of-charge** during regular business hours. All technical support is addressed by the developer himself to guarantee an accurate solution.*

Thank You!

As the developer of QuikSeps Professional, I'd like to convey my deepest thanks for your trust in my product. Hopefully it will enhance the capabilities of your artistic endeavors, streamline your art department and make your life a little easier.

*Steve Roginski
QuikSeps Developer*



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