



Curves for Color: Part 2

Curves for Color: Part 2

This is the second lesson on the topic of using Curves for color. In the first lesson, we covered the basics. Now, we're going to dive a little deeper. If you have not yet watched the first lesson, I recommend doing so before getting into this one.

To demonstrate some new techniques, we're going to work through a few images. In the first image, the subject is a lion. When I work through an image, I look to see what bothers me most about the image and then I correct for it. I then look at the image again to see what bothers me, and I correct for it. I continue this process until I see no more problems with the image.

In this image, the first thing I notice is that the eyes need to pop out a little more. Before creating a Curves adjustment layer, I'm going to make a selection of the eyes. You can use any selection tool you'd like to do this, but I usually use the Quick Mask Mode method. I'll tap the Q key to enter Quick Mask Mode. The image will not visibly change because there is not yet an active selection. I will need to use the Brush Tool to paint on the image in order to define the selection. I'll activate the Brush Tool, make sure that I'm painting with black using a soft brush and then I'll paint on the eyes. This will add a red overlay in the areas where I paint. In Quick Mask Mode, the red overlay represents areas that are NOT selected so I really need the opposite of what I have. I'll use the keyboard shortcut Command+I (Ctrl+I on Win) to invert the selection so that only the eyes are selected. I'll tap the Q key again to exit Quick Mask Mode and you'll see the "marching ants" selection appear around the eyes.



LEFT: In Quick Mask Mode, I painted over the eyes with black to add the red overlay.

CENTER: I inverted the mask so that only the eyes were selected.

RIGHT: I exited Quick Mask Mode and you can see the "marching ants" selection.

Now I'll add the Curves adjustment layer. To do this, you could click on the adjustment layer icon at the bottom of the Layers panel and choose Curves from the pop-up menu. In Part 1 of this lesson, I set up a custom keyboard shortcut to create the Curves adjustment layer. If you have not already set up this shortcut, you can learn how by referring to that lesson video or handbook. I'll type in that shortcut, Shift+Command+M (Shift+Ctrl+M on Win) and a little New Layer dialog will appear. Here, I'll name the layer "Eyes" and click OK. The adjustment layer will appear in the Layers panel above the original image layer. Because there was an active selection, that selection was automatically applied to the layer mask, with all selected areas being the white part of the mask. The white parts of the mask are the areas that will be visible in the layer, so the adjustment will only be visible in the area where I made the selection (the lion's eyes).



With the selection active, I created a Curves adjustment layer and the selection of the eyes was automatically applied to the layer mask. The eyes are the white part of the mask and the rest is black.

Now I want to add some contrast and pop to the eyes. Whenever I want to do this using a Curves adjustment layer, I will start by placing two dots on the curve: one dot for the dark area and one dot for the bright area. I'll make sure the targeted adjustment tool is active (It's the hand icon on the left side of the Properties panel). Then I'll use the tool to click on the darkest part of the lion's eye, which is the pupil in this case. This will lock in the brightness of the dark areas so they can't be lightened or darkened by the second dot.

I'll target the bright part of the lion's eye to place a second dot on the curve for the bright areas. When I click on this bright area, I will click and drag upward. This will place a dot on the curve and move it up, lightening the bright areas even further. This will add contrast and pop to the eyes.



A Curves adjustment layer is being used to add pop to the eyes. One point was placed on the curve to lock the dark areas in place. Here, a second point is being added for the bright areas and that point is being moved up, lightening those areas.

Now the eye on the left is looking pretty good, but I want to add even more brightness to the eye on the right. I'll create a second Curves adjustment layer to do this.

If you don't select an area before creating an adjustment layer, the mask will start off as completely white, where the entire layer will be visible. To manually paint in a selection, tap the backslash key (\) while the mask is active to get a view that's similar to Quick Mask Mode. You won't see a change at first because the entire layer is visible/selected. Use the Brush Tool to paint with black in the areas you want selected. This will place the red overlay in those areas. Then, you will need to invert the mask by using the keyboard shortcut Command+I (Ctrl+I on Win) so that the red overlay is covering everything you DON'T want masked. Tap the backslash key again to remove the overlay.

Remember, if you are working with a selection that is not a layer mask, you would enter Quick Mask Mode by tapping the Q key. If you instead want that similar red overlay view while working on a mask, then you'll tap the backslash key instead.

I mentioned that I created a new Curves adjustment layer to lighten the right eye even further. When I created the adjustment layer, I had no active selection so the mask started out completely white. I will tap the backslash key while the layer mask is active so that I can manually paint in the area of the mask I want to be visible. I'll activate the Brush Tool and use a soft brush to paint with black over the eye on the right side. This places a red overlay on the eye. Then, I will invert the mask by using the keyboard shortcut Command+I (Ctrl+I on Win). Now the red overlay covers the entire image except the eye. Finally, I'll tap the Backslash key again to remove the overlay. The layer mask is now completely black except for the area where the eye is, which means that the Curves adjustment will only be visible on the eye and no other part of the layer.

In the Curves properties panel, I'll make sure that the targeted adjustment tool is active and I will place two points on the curve by clicking in two parts of the eye: the darkest area and the brightest area. When I click on the brightest area, I will click and drag upward to move the curve point up. This is brightening those areas that are already light, adding a little more pop to the eye. The dark areas will stay dark because the first curve dot is locking those areas in place. I like how both eyes are looking at this point.



A second Curves adjustment layer is being used to add more pop to just the right eye. Here, I am clicking and dragging up on the bright part of the eye, therefore brightening it further.



Here is a before and after view of the eyes. You can see that in the “after” version on the right, the eyes have more contrast and pop.

Looking at the image as a whole, I’ll decide what now bothers me the most. I want to take some of the individual parts of the lion and make them stand out from each other a little more. I find that with straight photography, so many areas of an image can tend to look similar to each other, whether they all look yellowish or blueish, or similar in some other way. The more I isolate individual areas and then shift them, the more the colors really start separating.

I’ll start by working on the dark portion of the mane. I don’t want it to blend in with the upper portion quite as much.

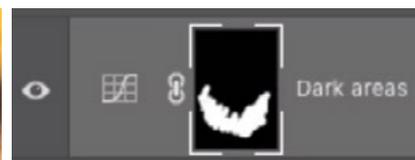
I first need to isolate the dark part of the mane so that I don’t affect the rest of the image. I’ll do this in Quick Mask Mode, before creating the Curves Adjustment Layer. I’ll tap the Q key to enter Quick Mask Mode and I’ll make sure the Brush Tool is active and that I’m using a soft brush to paint with black. I’ll paint over the dark part of the mane so that it becomes covered with the red overlay. The red overlay represents areas that are NOT selected, so I need to invert the selection by using the keyboard



LEFT: In Quick Mask Mode, I am painting with black over the dark part of the mane. RIGHT: I inverted the mask so that the mane is the only area that’s selected.

shortcut Command+I (Ctrl+I on Win). If I have any overspray, I can always paint with white to remove the red overlay and therefore deselect the area. I'll tap the Q key to exit Quick Mask Mode and the "marching ants" selection will appear around the dark part of the mane.

Now, I'll create a Curves adjustment layer. The active selection will automatically be applied to the layer mask, where the selected area will be the white part of the mask and the area that was not selected will be the black part of the mask. The white part of the mask is the area that will be visible, which means that the curves adjustment will only be visible in the dark part of the lion's mane.



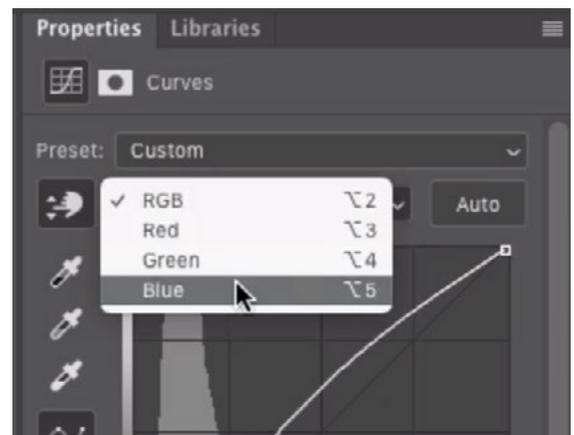
LEFT: After exiting Quick Mask Mode, you can see the active selection of the mane. ABOVE: A Curves adjustment layer was created and that selection was applied to the layer mask.

I will start adjusting the curve to add contrast and make the detail pop out more. The same two-dot technique will be used. I will use the targeted adjustment tool to click within the dark area, placing a point on a curve and therefore locking that tonal range in place so that it can't be lightened or darkened. Then I will click and drag up on a light part of the mane. This will place a point on the curve and move it up, making those light areas even brighter.



One point was added to the curve to lock in the dark areas. Here, I am clicking on a light area and dragging up. This is placing another point on the curve and moving it up, lightening those bright areas even further.

Now the area has some more contrast, but I also want the color to separate from the surrounding area. Right now, the area is very yellow and so is the surrounding area. I want to work on a color curve now so I'll click on the color menu at the top of the Curves Properties panel and choose Blue. If you remember from the Part One lesson, yellow is the opposite of blue so we will be able to use this curve to remove some yellow. I'll use the targeted adjustment tool to click and drag up just a small amount. This will increase the blues, therefore absorbing some of the yellow.



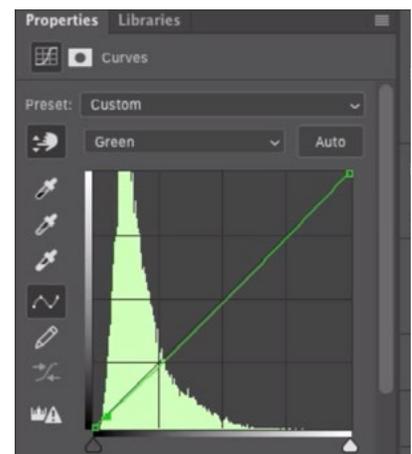
I am changing the color menu to Blue so that I can work on the blues and yellows (yellow is blue's opposite.).



Working on the blue curve, I am clicking and dragging up just a small amount. This is adding some blue to the mane, and also absorbing some of the yellow.

I also want to experiment and see what the area will look like if I add a little magenta. Magenta is the opposite of green so I will set the color menu in the Curves Properties panel to Green. Then I'll use the targeted adjustment tool to click within the dark part of the mane and drag down. By dragging down, I am lessening the amount of green and therefore increasing the amount of magenta.

If you watch me do this in the video, you will see that by moving the dot up even the slightest amount, I am getting a big shift toward magenta. This has to do with what color space the image is using.



Working on the green curve, I am clicking on the mane and dragging down, making it more magenta.

A note about color space When you move a color curve up or down, the amount of change you see will be dependent on the image's color space. Some examples of color spaces are sRGB, AdobeRGB and ProPhoto RGB. If you are working in sRGB, you will be able to move the curve dot up and down quite a bit before you see a huge shift in color. If you are working in ProPhoto RGB, then even a tiny change in Curves is going to be rather dramatic on screen. That means the adjustment will take a lot of finessing in ProPhoto RGB because you're going to be making huge changes by moving a curve point up and down. Adobe RGB will fall somewhere in the middle.

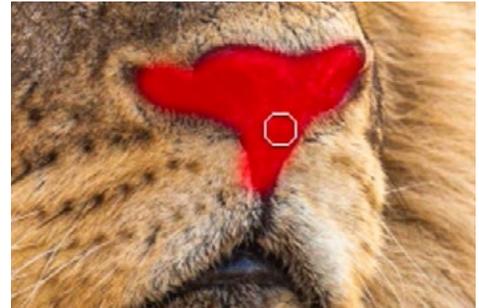
I will also experiment with the reds, so I'll set the color menu to Red. Then, I'll click and drag up and down within the dark mane to see how it affects the image. When I move the dot up, I'll be adding red. When I move the dot down, I'll be removing red and therefore be adding cyan (red's opposite). I find that moving the dot down slightly creates more of a separation between the dark part of the mane and the surrounding area.



Working on the red curve, I am clicking on the mane and dragging down. This is absorbing some of the red by adding cyan.

Know that you can see how an adjustment layer is affecting the image by toggling its visibility on and off. Toggle a layer's visibility by clicking on the eyeball icon to the left of the layer's thumbnail in the Layers panel.

Now I want to improve the look of the nose. I can see that there is some color variation in the nose and I would like that to pop out and become more prominent. I'll isolate the area in Quick Mask Mode so I'll tap the Q key to enter this mode. I'll make sure the Brush Tool is active and I'll paint with black, using a soft-edged brush, to paint over the nose. The red overlay will appear in the area where I paint. Because red represents the areas that are NOT selected, I will invert the selection by using the keyboard shortcut Command+I (Ctrl+I on Win). Now the entire image has a red overlay EXCEPT the nose. I'll tap the Q key to exit Quick Mask Mode and the selection will be visible around the nose.



In Quick Mask Mode, I am painting on the nose with black to add the red overlay.

I'll create a new Curves adjustment layer and the active selection will automatically be applied to the mask. The only white part of the mask will be the nose, which means it's the only area that will receive the adjustment I'm about to make. I'll use the targeted adjustment tool to click on a dark part of the nose, locking that shade in place. Then I'll click on a light area and drag up in order to further lighten those light tones.



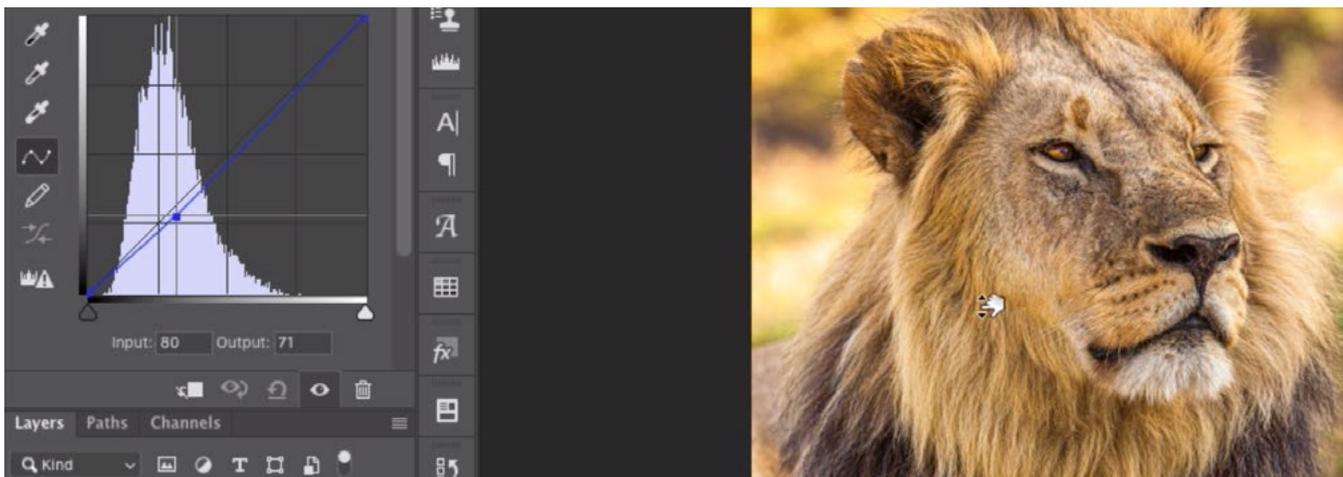
Using the targeted adjustment tool, I clicked on a light part of the nose and am dragging up, therefore making those light areas even lighter.

Looking at the image, I notice that the fuzziest part of the ears look really yellow and this directs a lot of attention to that area. The lion's mane, directly beneath his face, is not as yellow and I would like to make it match the ears a little more so that it all blends in. I'll follow the same selection technique as before, tapping the Q key to enter Quick Mask Mode and then painting with black over the part of the mane under the lion's face. I'll then invert the mask (Command+I, Ctrl+I on Win) so that the mane is the only part that is selected and not covered with the red overlay. I'll tap the Q key again to exit Quick Mask Mode.



In Quick Mask Mode, I painted on part of the mane with black to add the red overlay. I then inverted the mask so that the mane is the only area that is selected.

I'll create a Curves adjustment layer and the selection will automatically be applied to the layer mask. I want to make the mane more yellow so I will set the color menu at the top of the Properties panel to Blue. Blue's opposite is yellow so it is this curve that will allow me to introduce more yellow. I'll click within the mane and then drag down until I think the mane becomes yellow enough to match the ears. By dragging the blue curve down, I am adding more yellow.



With the blue curve active, I'm clicking on the mane and dragging down, adding more yellow.

While I'm here, I'll also play with the other color curves to see how they affect the targeted mane area. I'll set the color menu to red and then click and drag up and down in the image. I find that I actually like how it looks when I add a little red. After making this color adjustment, I can use the Brush Tool to paint on the mask if I would like the adjustment to affect other parts of the lion as well.

I'm now looking at the lion's face and I can see that there are bright areas around his forehead and dark areas closer to his nose. Since we can use Curves to adjust the bright and dark areas independently of each other, I am going to create another adjustment layer to do just that. Often times, when I make these adjustments, I'm not sure whether I'll like the results. I just like to experiment to see what happens.

I'll isolate that face area in Quick Mask Mode, making sure that I don't accidentally select the eyes as well. When I have my active selection, I'll create a Curves adjustment layer so that the selection is applied to the mask. Now I'll just experiment with the different color curves. I'll set the color menu to Blue first and then I'll click on the bright area, dragging up and down to change the amount of blue in the bright part of the lion's face. Then, I'll click and drag up and down within the dark area. I ended up adding a little blue to the bright areas and then removing some blue from the dark areas, therefore adding yellow. I'll do the same thing with the green and red curves, simply experimenting by adding colors to the light and dark areas of the lion's face.

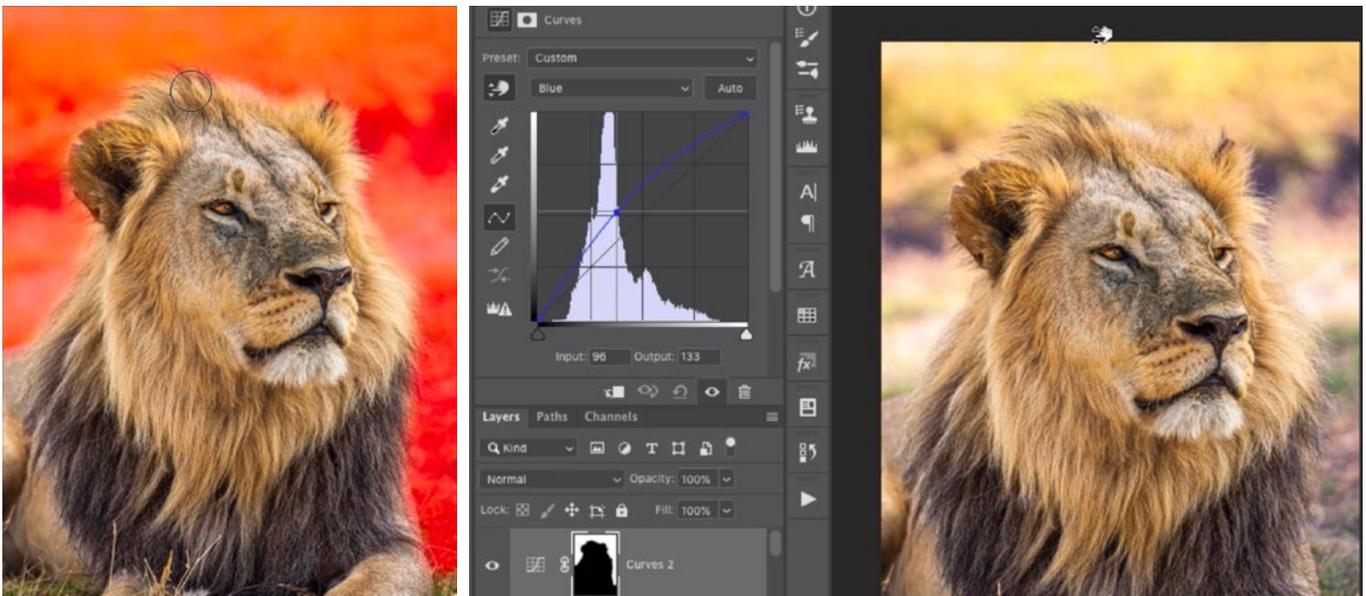


I am isolating part of the face while working in Quick Mask Mode.

When evaluating the image, if you ever find that one of the adjustments is too strong, you can always lower the opacity of that adjustment layer by using the Opacity slider at the top of the Layers panel.

The lion is looking pretty good now so I'm directing my eyes around the rest of the image. The background is very yellow and I feel that it draws attention away from the lion. Before creating another Curves adjustment layer, I will isolate that background area by painting in Quick Mask Mode. I'll paint with black over the background and then invert the mask so that the background is the area that is selected. I'll tap Q to exit Quick Mask Mode and then I'll create the Curves adjustment layer. The selection will automatically be applied to the layer mask.

I'll set the color menu in the Properties panel to blue. I want to affect the yellows and yellow is the opposite of blue. I'll click on a bright part of that yellow background and drag upward. This will place a dot on the blue curve and move it up in order to add more blue. If I had moved the dot down instead, I would be adding more yellow. I'll move the dot up until that vibrant yellow color becomes a little more mellow.



LEFT: In Quick Mask Mode, I a painting with black to isolate the background of the image.
RIGHT: Working on the blue curve, I am clicking on the background and dragging up, therefore adding more blue and making the area less yellow.

After correcting the yellow, I find that the dark areas of the background started to look a little odd in color. That's because they did not need a lessening of yellow tones. I'll click on that dark area and drag down. This will place another point on the curve for the dark areas and it will move that dot down, making the area less blue and more yellow.

While I'm here, I will use the color menu to switch between the color curves to see how they affect the background area I have targeted. Using the green curves, I'll make the bright areas a little more green and the dark areas a little less green.



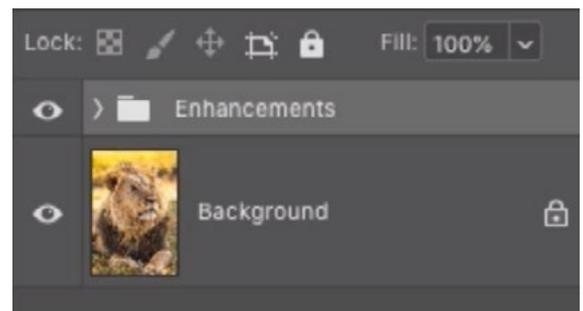
Still working on the blue curve, I am clicking on a dark part of the background and moving the curve dot to its original position so that the blue color does not affect those dark tones.

When to use a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer instead One thing that you can't do within Curves is make an image less colorful without shifting its color. If I need to make an image less colorful, I will use a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer because it includes a Saturation slider that can easily be used to make something less colorful.

In this image, I'd like to make that background less colorful so I will click on the Adjustment Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers panel and choose Hue/Saturation from the pop-up menu. The Hue/Saturation settings will appear in the Properties panel and I will drag the Saturation slider to the left, making the image less colorful. In the video example, I did not first make a selection before creating the adjustment layer, so this adjustment is currently affecting the entire image. I would like it to only affect the background. I already have a layer mask that is

isolating the background (from the last Curves adjustment I made) so I can copy that layer mask to the Hue/Saturation mask. You can copy the contents of a layer mask to another layer mask by holding down the Option key (Alt on Win) while dragging the mask thumbnail from one layer to another. You need to have the Option key held down so that it creates a copy. If you simply dragged the layer mask, it would move the mask to a new layer while removing it from its original layer.

Place all adjustment layers in a folder After I have created all the adjustment layers I need, I like to place all of these into a folder within the Layers panel. To do this, select all of the adjustment layers and then click on the folder icon at the bottom of the Layers panel. This will place all selected layers into a folder, or group. I'll then rename this folder, calling it "Enhancements."



After creating a series of adjustment layers, I'll place those layers in a folder titled "Enhancements."

Yoga Image (Timestamp 21:17)

Saved Selections In this next image, I am going to need to make very precise selections because the different elements of the image are very well defined. This lesson is not about making selections, however, so I made the selections ahead of time and saved them in the form of channels. If you follow along using the downloadable example image, you will have these pre-made selections available to you as well. You can see them by opening the Channels panel, which is usually docked with the Layers panel.

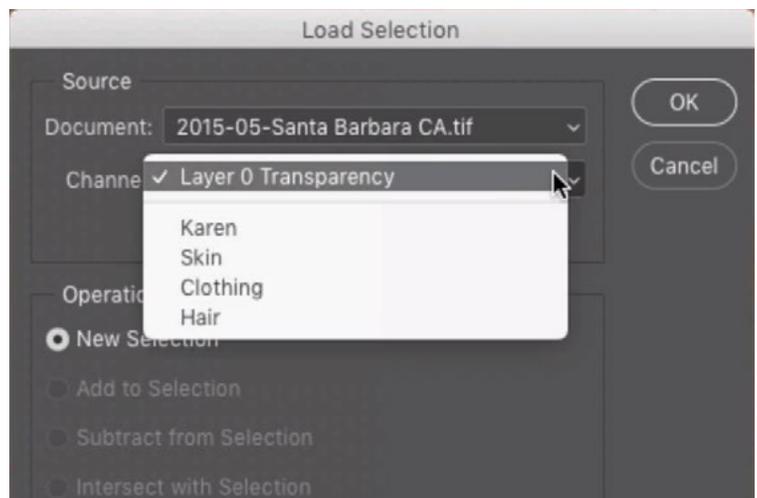
If you ever want to save an active selection, click on the Select menu and then choose Save Selection. A dialog will appear, inside of which you can name the selection and then click OK to exit the dialog. After saving a selection, it will appear as a channel within the Channels panel. If you already have the Channels panel



The Channels panel is open on the left side of the screen and you can see the saved selections at the bottom of the channel list. I clicked on one of those selections to view it in the main image window.

open while there is an active selection, you can save the selection by clicking on the little icon at the bottom of the panel that looks like a white rectangle with a dark circle inside of it. You will see the new channel appear in the list.

Once you have one or more saved selections, there are a few ways of activating them. You can click on the Select menu and choose Load Selection. This will cause a dialog box to appear. Click on the Channel menu and choose from the list of saved selections. Click OK to exit the dialog and you will see the “marching ants” selection appear.

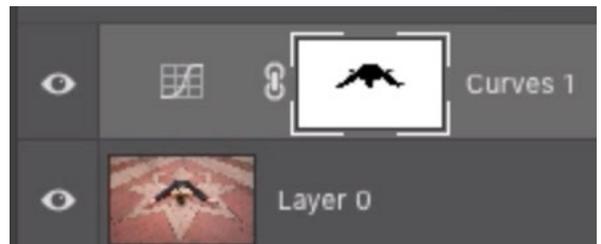


In the Load Selection dialog, I am using the Channel menu to choose which selection I want to be active.

Another way of loading a selection is by opening the Channels panel and dragging the appropriate channel to the icon that looks like a little selection at the bottom of the panel. One more way of loading a selection is by holding down the Command key (Ctrl on Win) and clicking on the channel thumbnail in the Channels panel.

Now I'll start adjusting the image. The first thing that bothers me about this image is the background. I would like the colors to separate more. Before creating an adjustment layer, I will isolate the background area and I'll use one of the saved selections to do that. I'll click on the Select menu and choose Load Selection. A dialog will appear and I'll use the Channel menu to choose Karen. This is the selection that isolates the entirety of Karen. I'll click OK and the marching ants selection will appear around Karen. Now I am trying to isolate everything EXCEPT Karen so I will click on the Select menu and choose Inverse. This will give me the opposite of the selection, where the background is selected instead.

I'll create a Curves adjustment layer and the selection will automatically be applied to the mask. The background is the white part of the mask and Karen is the dark part of the mask.



With the background selected (and Karen not selected), I created a Curves adjustment layer and that selection was applied to the mask.

I would like a greater brightness difference between the light pavement shapes and the dark ones. I'll use the targeted adjustment tool to click on a dark area and I'll drag down.

This will place a dot on the curve and move it down, therefore darkening those areas that are already dark. Then, I'll click on one of the light areas and drag up. This will place a second point on the curve and move it up, therefore lightening the areas that were already light.



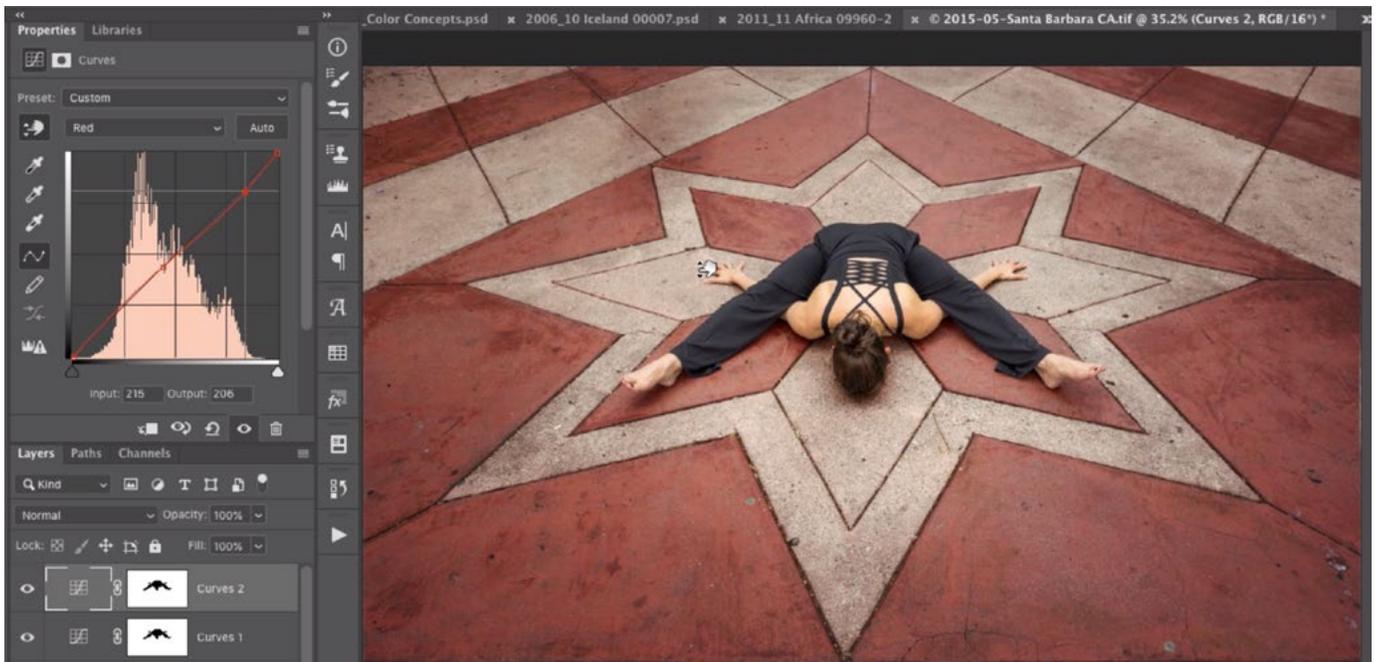
Using the targeted adjustment tool, I clicked and dragged down on a dark part of the pavement. Then I clicked and dragged up on a light part of the pavement. This added contrast.

Now any time you darken an image, it's going to make things look more colorful and vivid. If you don't want that, change the blending mode of the adjustment layer to Luminosity. (The blending mode menu can be found at the top of the Layers panel.) In this mode, a layer can only affect the brightness of the image and not the color. In the example image, the pavement became very colorful so I did change the blending mode of the layer to Luminosity.

When you change the blending mode of a Curves adjustment layer to Luminosity, it's important to know that the individual color curves will not have any affect on the image. If I would like to adjust the colors of this background area, I will need to create a separate adjustment layer to do so.

I'll create another Curves adjustment layer directly on top of the adjustment layer I just created for the pavement. I only want this adjustment to affect the pavement so I will copy the underlying layer's mask by holding down the Option key (Alt on Win) and dragging the layer mask from one layer to the other. Remember, I need to hold down the Option key so that the mask is copied and not moved.

Now I'll work on the colors. I'll change the color menu in the Properties panel to Red. I don't want to change the red hue in the dark areas of the pavement so I will use the targeted adjustment tool to click within that dark area, placing a point on the curve to lock that shade in place. Then, I'll click on a light area of pavement and drag down. This will make those lighter areas less red.



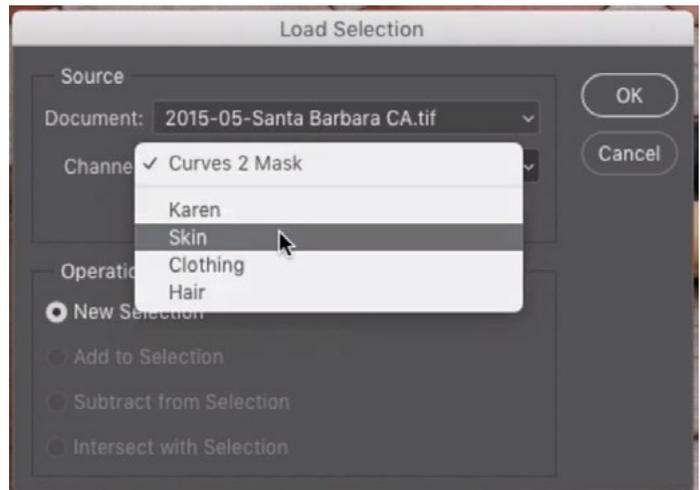
Working on the red curve, I am clicking on a light part of the pavement and dragging down, making those light areas a little less red.

I'll experiment with the green and blue curves as well, just to see how they affect the area. When I do this, I'll place a point on the dark area of the pavement to lock that shade in place. I like this dark area so I don't want it to change. Then I'll click and drag up and down on the light area to see what the effect is. I didn't like any changes made to the green curve so I left that one at its default setting. I liked what happened when I added a little blue, however.



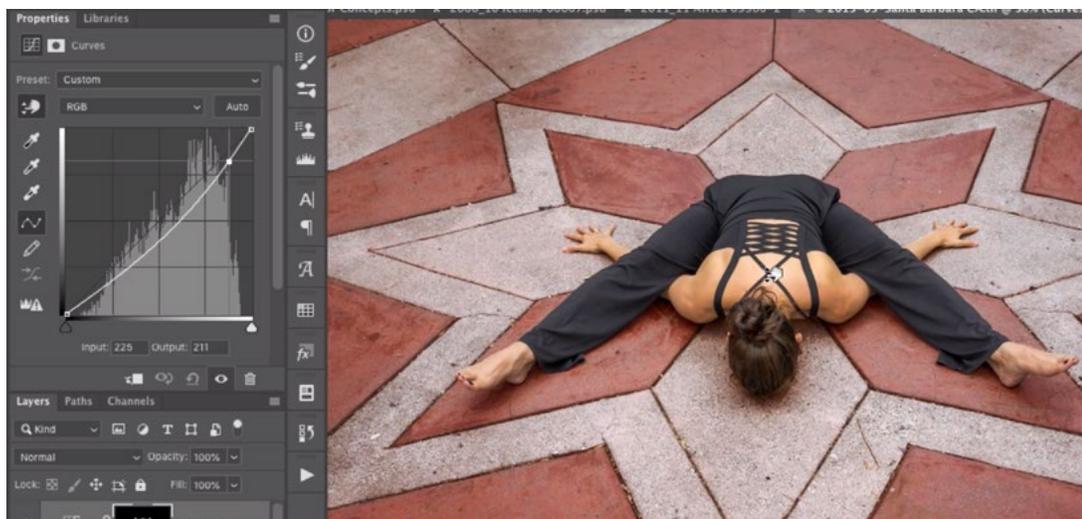
Working on the blue curve, I am clicking on a light part of the pavement and dragging up, therefore adding a little blue to those light areas.

Now I'll start working on Karen. I don't like how her skin tone looks, so I'll focus on that first. One of the saved selections I made is of her skin, so I will load that selection by clicking on the Select menu and choosing Load Selection. A dialog will appear and I will set the Channel menu to Skin before clicking OK. The marching ants selection will appear around her skin. I'll create a Curves adjustment layer and the selection will automatically be applied to the layer mask. Her skin is the white part of the mask so it will be the only area that receives the adjustment.



In the Load Selection dialog, I am using the Channel menu to load the selection of her skin.

I think the middle of her back is too bright so I will use the targeted adjustment tool to click and drag down on that area. This places a point on the curve for that brightness level and moves the point down, making the tone darker. This is a large improvement as I can now see color in the skin, whereas it was nearly blown out to white before.



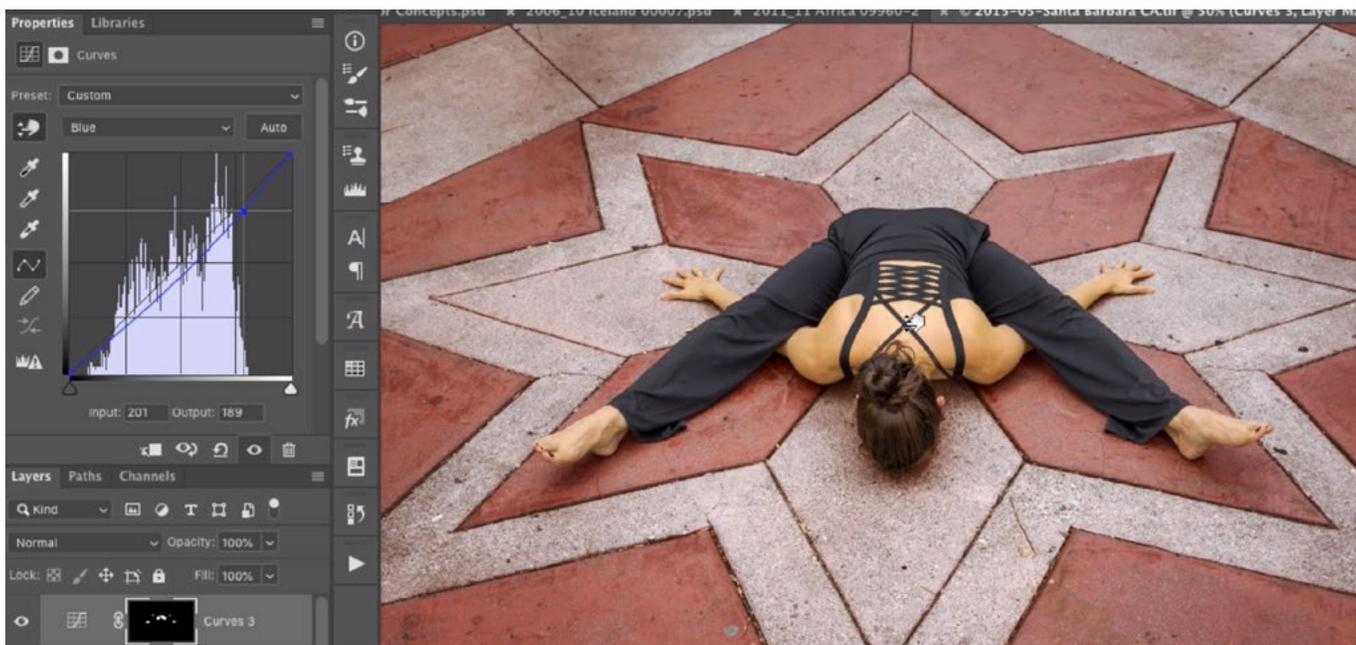
I am using the targeted adjustment tool to click and drag down on the center of her back. This is darkening the area.

Her shoulders were a lot darker than the center of her back, so I can adjust that area separately by clicking and dragging up and down to find a tone that matches her back. As I do this, I am working with a separate point that is located on a different part of the curve as the point for her back.



I am using the targeted adjustment tool to click and drag up on her shoulder so that it brightens a bit to match her back.

I would like her skin tone to be a little more yellow, so I'll work with the color curves. I'll set the color menu in the Properties panel to Blue. Remember, yellow is the opposite of blue so the blue curve will allow me to adjust both blues AND yellows. I'll use the targeted adjustment tool to click and drag down on the middle of her back. This will place a point on the curve and move it down, making the area more yellow. When you move the blue curve down, you will absorb blue by adding yellow. I think this made her shoulders too yellow, so I will click and drag up on her shoulder. This will add more blue back into that area, removing the yellow, and it will not affect the adjustment I made to her back because they are two different brightness levels.



Working on the blue curve, I am clicking and dragging down on her back, making that area less blue and more yellow.

While I am working with color, I'd like to see what it would look like with a little less green in her skin. I'll switch the color curve to green and I'll click and drag down on her skin. This introduces a touch of magenta (green's opposite) and I like the effect. Note that I only moved the curve a very small amount.



Working on the green curve, I am clicking and dragging down on her shoulder, introducing a bit of magenta into the area.

While I like the effect on most of her skin, I find that the bottoms of her feet ended up becoming a little too magenta so I'll adjust that area separately. I'll hover the cursor over her foot and I can see that the circle that appear on the curve is not in the same location as the first dot. This means that I can adjust the two areas independently of one another. I'll click on her foot and bring that curve dot back up to where it used to be.



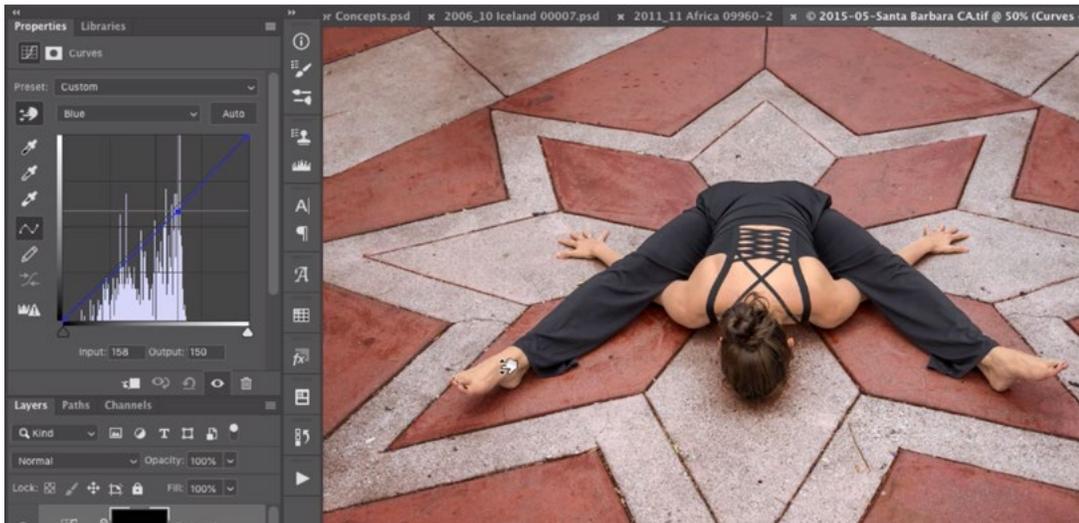
Working on the green curve, I am clicking and dragging up on the bottom of her feet until the point on the curve reaches its original position.

I'll now re-evaluate her skin as a whole and I think I would like her feet to look a little more yellow. I can't use the same adjustment layer to achieve this because the tone of her feet is too close to the tone of her back so if I made a change to her feet, her back would change as well. I'll need to use a separate adjustment layer that is masked to just reveal her feet. The current adjustment layer is masked to reveal all of her skin areas, so I can use this mask to create a selection of her feet. I'll load this mask as a selection by holding down the Command key (Ctrl on Win) and clicking on the thumbnail for the layer mask. The marching ants selection will appear around her skin areas. Now I just need to de-select everything except for her feet. I'll use the Lasso Tool while holding down the Option key (Alt on Win) in order to remove part of the selection and I'll drag out a shape around all selected areas except for her feet.



I loaded the selection of her skin and am using the Lasso Tool to remove the selection from all areas except her feet.

Now that only her feet are selected, I'll create a Curves adjustment layer and the selection will be applied to the layer mask, so only her feet will receive the adjustment I'm about to make. I want to make her feet more yellow I'll set the color menu in the Properties panel to blue (yellow's opposite). Then I'll use the targeted adjustment tool to click and drag down on one of her feet. This will move the blue curve down, therefore introducing more yellow.



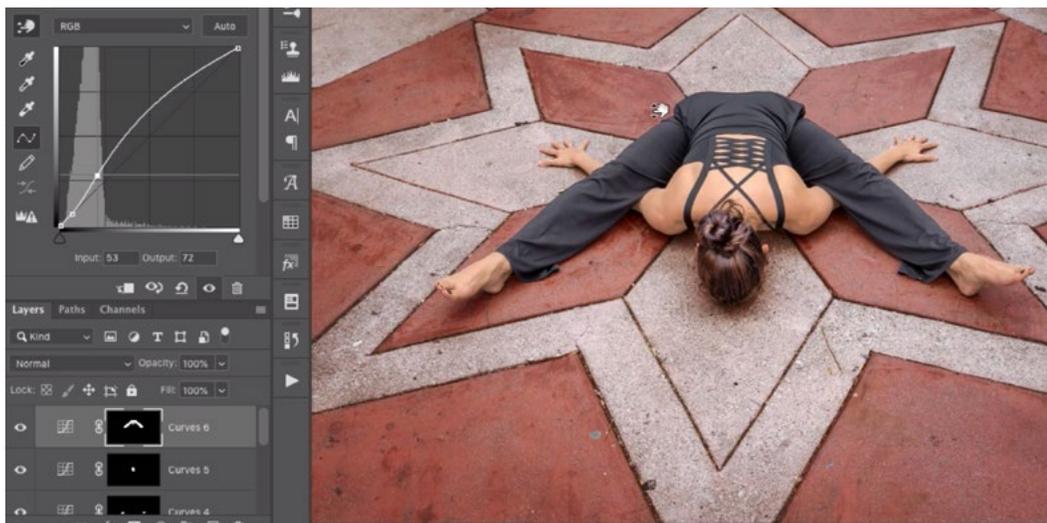
Working on the blue curve, I am clicking on her foot and dragging down. This is making her feet more yellow.

Now I'll work on adjusting her hair. There is a pre-made selection of the hair so I'll click on the Select menu and choose Load Selection. A dialog will appear and I'll use the Channel menu to choose "Hair." I'll click OK to close the dialog. Now that I have a selection of her hair, I will create a Curves adjustment layer and that selection will be applied to the mask so that the adjustment will only be able to affect her hair.

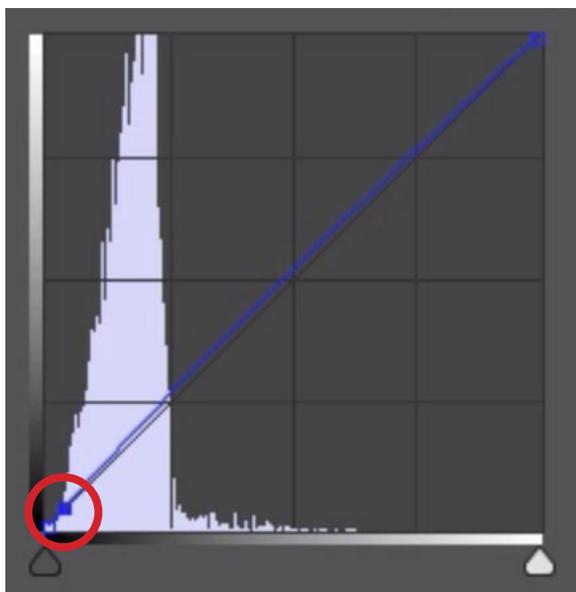
I want to adjust the brightness of her hair so I will use the targeted adjustment tool to place two points on the curve: one for the dark parts of her hair and one for the bright parts of her hair. When I click on a bright part, I will drag up to move the curve point up, therefore brightening those areas that are already bright. This adds a nice contrast and pop.

Now I'll work on her clothing. I'll load the selection of her clothing by clicking on the Select menu and choosing Load Selection. In the Load Selection dialog, I'll set the Channel menu to Clothing and then click OK. With her clothing selected, I'll create a new Curves adjustment layer and the selection will be applied to the layer mask. Now when I make changes to the curve, they will only affect her clothing.

I want to add some contrast to her clothing so I'll place two points on the curve. I'll click once in the darkest area to lock that tone in place. Then I'll click and drag up on the bright area, making those bright areas even brighter.



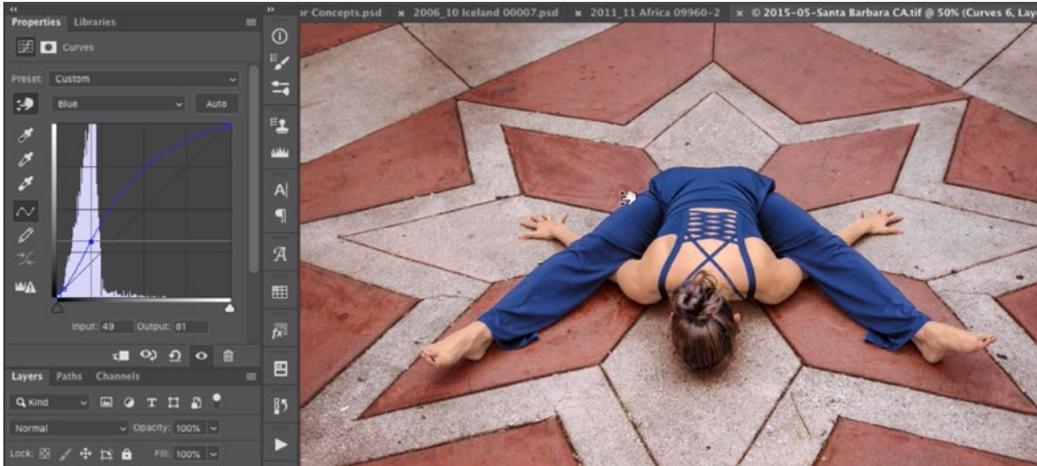
I added a point for the dark areas of clothing, locking those darks in place. Here, I am clicking and dragging up on a light area, making those areas even lighter.



I placed a point on the blue curve, very close to black. This will lock those tones in place and prevent them from turning blue when I add another point.

Let's look at how we can change the color of her clothing. When it comes to black objects, you can easily change the color as long as you don't change the darkest areas, where it's black or close to black. Keeping these dark areas black and desaturated will help to make the effect look natural. I'm going to make her clothes a blue color so I'll set the color menu to work on the blue curve. I'll lock the darkest areas in place by clicking to place a dot on the curve, just to the right of the absolute blackest tone. This will prevent these darkest areas from shifting when I move the rest of the blue curve.

Then I will click on a lighter area of her clothing and I'll drag up to introduce blue light. Now her clothing looks blue.



Working on the blue curve, I am clicking and dragging up on a lighter part of the clothing. This is adding a lot of blue light to the area.

I can also play with the green and red color curves to see how they affect the color. With the red curve, moving it up makes the clothing more purple and moving it down makes the clothing a little more teal. I like the effect when I move this curve down just a small amount.



Working on the red curve, I am clicking and dragging down and this is introducing cyan into the area.

I could also adjust the different parts of clothing independently of the rest if I use a separate Curves adjustment layer. I'll use the Lasso Tool to make a rough selection of her shirt. I don't need to be precise in the area where her shirt meets the pavement or hair because I can clip this layer to limit the adjustment to her clothing. Then I'll create a Curves adjustment layer and the selection will be applied to the layer mask. At the bottom of the Properties panel, I will click on the icon that looks like a square with a down-pointing arrow next to it. This will clip the layer to the underlying layer, which means that the layer will only be visible in areas where the underlying layer is visible.

Now I'll experiment with the different color curves to see how they can affect the shirt. I'll use the red curve the most, moving it up to make her shirt look more purple.



I isolated the shirt using a separate Curves adjustment layer and I used the red curve to make the shirt more purple.