



Fixing Shiny Skin

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This is a follow-up to a previous lesson that was focused on how to use an action to remove the shine from skin (or other objects) and fill that overly bright area with a color. That action will work in a lot of instances where you have unwanted shine, but there will be certain cases where the action will fail. This lesson will show you how to remove unwanted shine in those instances where the action is not up to the task.

Note: If you have not yet viewed the other lesson, you can find it by searching for the video titled “Shine Reduction Action.” The action is available for download on the lesson page.

## How to Prevent Shiny Skin in the First Place (Timestamp 0:45)

Let’s first talk about how to prevent shiny skin in the first place. There are two things to consider. The lighting is a major factor here. The larger the light source, the less shiny the skin. When you use a large light source, it won’t become concentrated to one point, creating that shine. You may also consider applying a type of makeup called HD Powder, which is extremely fine and helps to absorb oils, creating a non-glossy surface. This is what I use when recording all of the Masters Academy lesson videos.



**In the screen shot on the left, I am wearing the HD Powder makeup. You can see that my skin is far less shiny than in the screen shot on the right, where I am not wearing the powder.**

**When to use the action and when to apply manual retouching** The action will be appropriate when there is a lot of dimension in the area you're trying to retouch (a person's nose, for example). The manual technique, which we'll cover here, will not be appropriate for areas like that because it's going to even out the area, discarding a lot of the dimension.

## Using the Healing Brush to Add Texture (6:25)

When an area becomes bright and shiny, it will likely be lacking in texture. The following process is designed to create some texture, making the area look less shiny. After you've opened the image that has the unwanted shiny area, create a new, empty layer above the image layer. (Create a new layer by clicking the New Layer icon [+] at the bottom of the Layers Panel.) It's nice to work on a new layer so that you can adjust or tone down the effect later.

Activate the Healing Brush by clicking on its icon in the Toolbar on the left side of the interface. The Healing Brush will allow you to blend areas together. Before using the Healing Brush, there is a setting that you will need to specify in the Options Bar above the main image window. Because you are using this tool on



**When using the Healing Brush on an empty layer, make sure the Sample menu is set to Current & Below.**

an empty layer, you will need to set the Sample menu to "Current & Below." This will allow the tool to sample from the underlying image layer even though you are working on an empty layer above it.

To use the Healing Brush, hold down the Option key (Alt on Win) and click on the area you want to sample from. Then click and drag the mouse to paint on the area where you want the retouching to be applied. When you apply the Healing Brush, it's not going to apply the color from the area where you sampled. The Healing Brush is instead



**Here is an example of some shiny skin we're going to correct.**

designed to pick up the color and brightness of the area directly surrounding the spot you're retouching. What it IS applying is the texture and variation in brightness and color from the sampled area. This means that you can sample from an area that is a completely different color from the area you want to retouch. The important thing is that the texture is correct.



**Even though this is obviously not the result we want, it will give you a better idea of how the Healing Brush works. We sampled from an area on the rough, textured wall on the right. When we use the Healing Brush to paint over the shiny spot on the skin, we are applying the texture of the wall, with the color and brightness of the area surrounding the shiny spot.**

This can be used to remove a shiny area from skin. When you have an area that is super bright and shiny, it has probably lost all of its texture. By adding that texture back, and blending the bright hue into the darker hue of the area surrounding it, you will be able to remove the shine.

Use the Healing Brush to sample from an area of skin surrounding the bright spot. You want to sample from an area that is not blown out and still contains texture. Then, paint in that sampled content over the bright spot. You need to make sure that the paint stroke makes it completely around the spot on all sides.

This is what will allow the tool to pick up the color of the surroundings while applying the texture of the sample area. In the video example, we have a shiny spot on the forehead of a young boy. The shiny spot is mainly limited to the right side of his head. We used the Healing Brush to sample from an area on the left side, that has no shine and therefore still contains texture. Then we used the brush to paint over the bright spot.

After you're finished, you may need to lower the opacity of this layer in order to lessen the effect a bit, making it look more natural. You can do this by using the Opacity slider at the top of the Layers Panel.



**The Healing Brush was used to sample from an area on the left side of the boy's head and is now being used to paint over the shiny spot.**



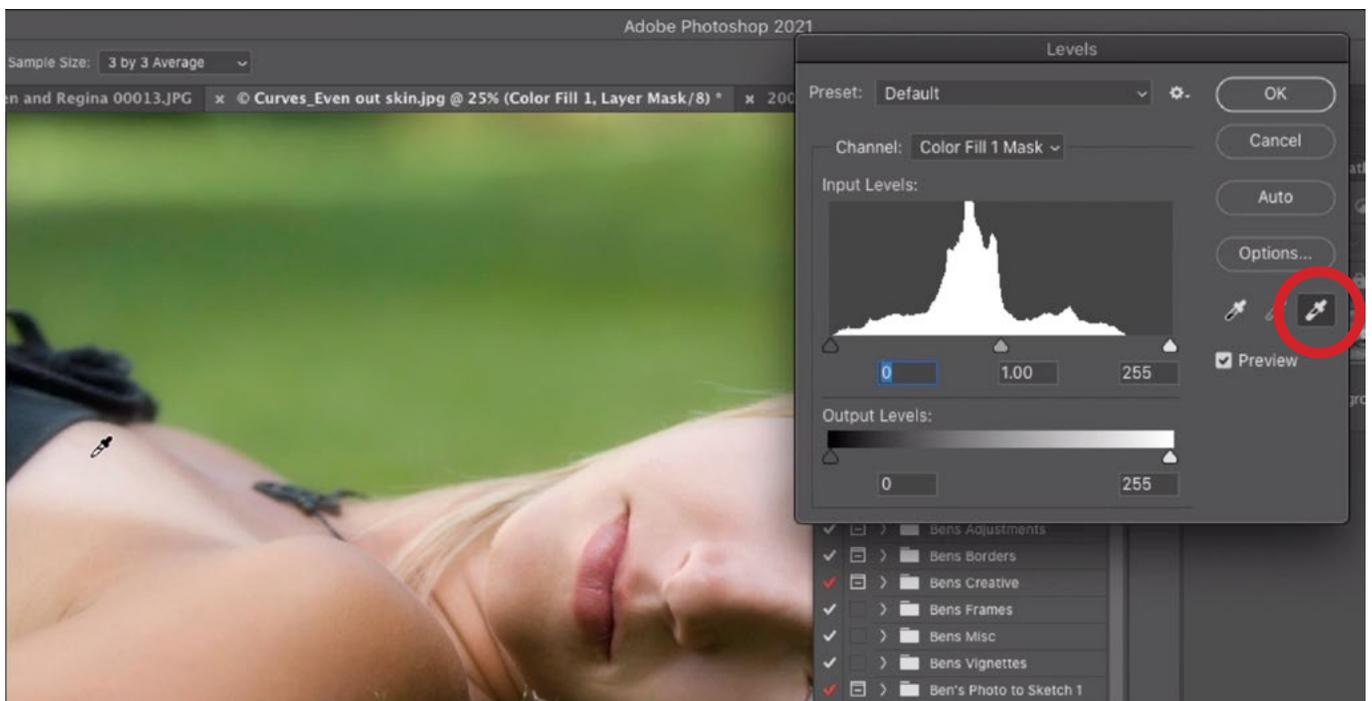
**The Opacity setting (circled) is being used to tone down the effect, bringing back just enough of the shine to make the result look natural.**

## Combine Action & Manual Retouch (13:45)

Let's look at how these techniques can be used to correct something other than unwanted shine. In the video example, we are going to attempt to remove some tan lines. We'll start by running the "Fix Shiny Area" action.

NOTE: Remember that this action can be downloaded from the "Shine Reduction Action" lesson page.

We'll open the Actions Panel, click on the Fix Shiny Area action in order to highlight it and then we'll click the triangular Play button at the bottom of the panel. This action will prompt us to work with some settings, the first of which is Levels. Here, we need to make sure that the white eyedropper (on the right side of the Levels dialog) is active and then use it to click on the brightest area that we want to change. This is the lightest part of the tan lines.



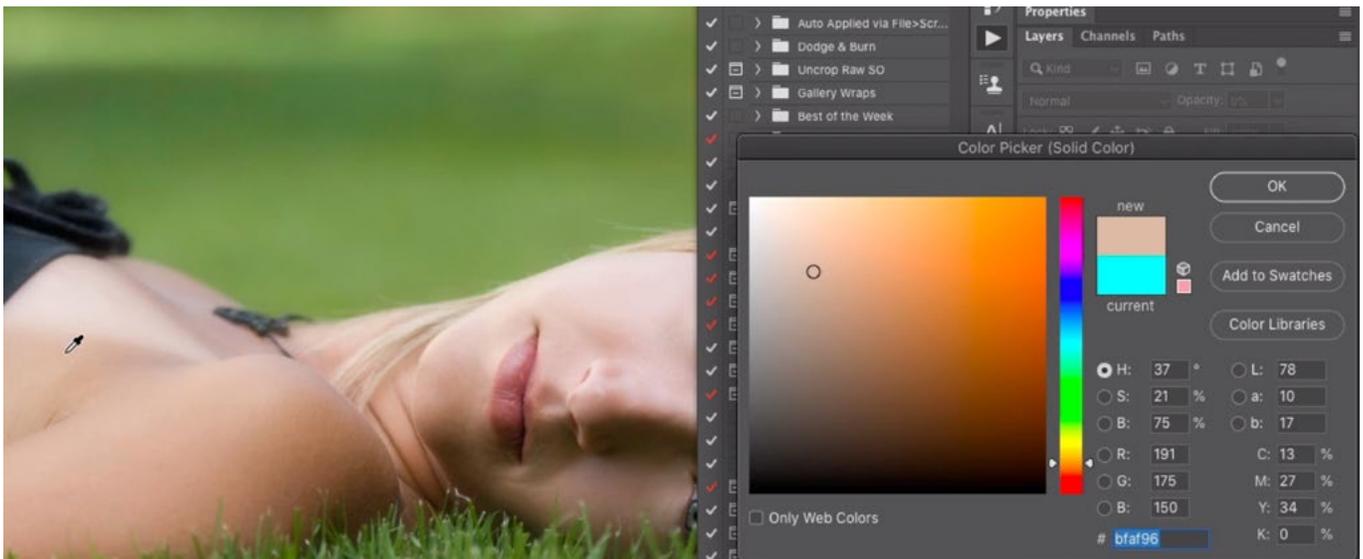
The shine reduction action will prompt us to work with the settings in the Levels adjustment. Here, we activated the white eyedropper and are using it to click on the brightest area that we want to change.

Then, we need to use the black eyedropper to click on the brightest tone that's outside the spot we want to change. This will define how far the adjustment will extend, or where it should stop. This will be the area of darker skin, just outside the tan lines. We'll click the OK button to exit the Levels dialog.



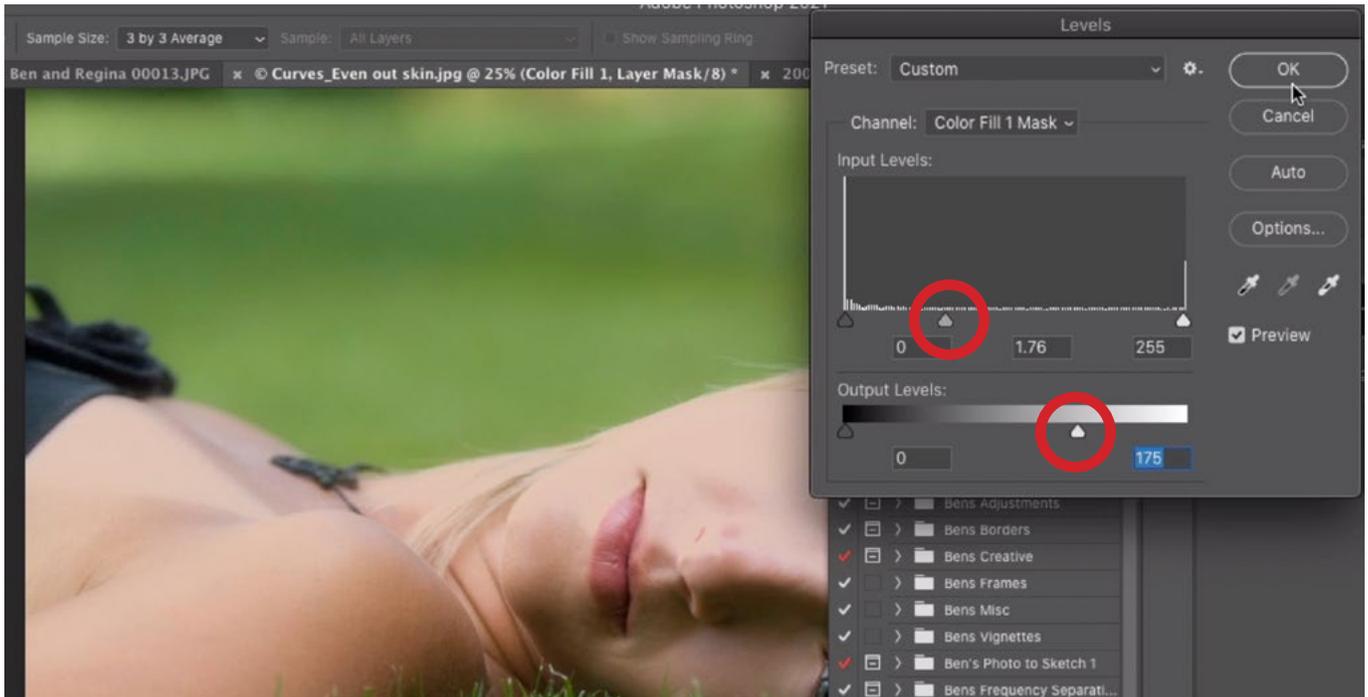
**In the Levels adjustment, the black eyedropper is being used to click on the brightest tone that's just outside the area we want to retouch.**

The action will continue and it will next present us with the Color Picker. Here, we need to choose the color that the bright area should be replaced with. We'll use the eyedropper (the cursor will automatically look like an eyedropper when the Color Picker is open) to click on the color that should be used to fill in the bright spot. In the video example, it's the color of the tan skin surrounding the tan line. We'll click the OK button to exit the Color Picker.



**The Color Picker is being used to click on the color that should be used to fill in the retouch area.**

The action will continue and it will again present us with a Levels adjustment. Here, we can use two sliders to fine-tune the results. The white slider, under the Output Levels gradient, will control how big of a change we'll be making. The middle, gray, slider beneath the Levels chart will control the transition. After making these tweaks, we'll click the OK button to exit the Levels dialog.



The action will run a second Levels adjustment, prompting us to use the two circled sliders to fine-tune the results.

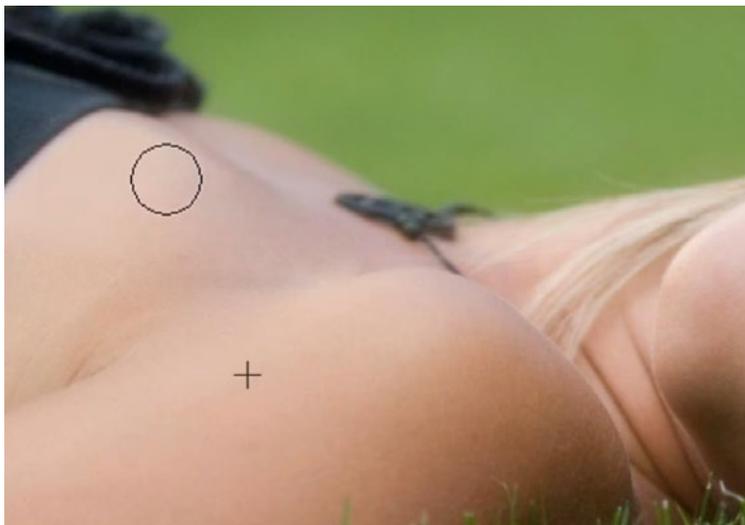
The adjustments we just made will apply to all areas of the image that fell into the targeted brightness range, and that's not what we want. Because of this, the action will actually remove the adjustment completely, by means of a layer mask, so that we can manually paint in the effect only in the area where we need it (the tan lines.) We'll use the Brush Tool to paint in the effect just over the tan lines.



The Brush Tool is being used to paint on the layer mask, revealing the adjustment in only the retouch area.

The tan line is now closer to matching the rest of the skin, but the result still does not look ideal, and that's because there is no texture in the area we just worked on. It just looks a little flat. To fix that, we're going to combine the action technique with Healing Brush technique.

We'll create a new, empty layer and place it at the top of the layer stack. Then we'll activate the Healing Brush Tool and make sure that the Sample menu is set to "Current & Below." We'll sample a clean area of skin that has some nice texture, and we can find that on her arm. Then, we'll paint over the tan line, being sure to overlap the edges of the lines so that the tool knows what colors to use from the surroundings.



**The Healing Brush is being used to sample from an area with nice texture and paint in that texture over the retouch area.**

## Using the Healing Brush Between Documents (19:17)

Sometimes, you won't be able to find an area of clean skin to copy from within the same document in which you need to apply the retouching. In cases like this, you can actually copy from a different document and apply the retouching in the document with the bright spot that needs to be retouched. You just need to make sure that the two documents are in the same mode (ex: RGB) and that they are the same bit depth.

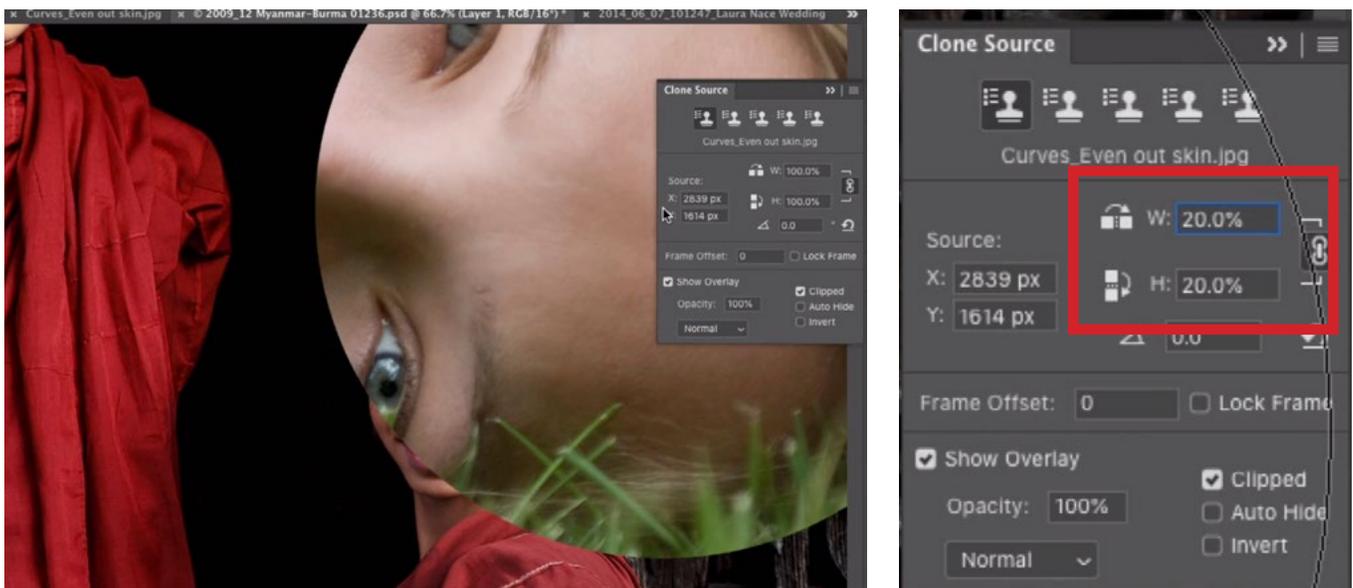


**The Healing Brush is going to be used to sample from the image on the left and apply it to the image on the right.**

You will still need to create a new, empty layer in the document that needs re-touching. Then, switch to the other document and use the Healing Brush to sample from the clean area of skin. Then, return to the first document and paint in the sampled skin over the skin that needs retouching.

**Size matching** When working between documents, it's important to consider the size difference between the subject that you sampled from and the subject that you're copying to. If they're not close in size, then the result will look unnatural. In the video example, we copied the skin from the girl in one document and want to paste it onto the boy's forehead in another document. The problem is that the girl's head is at least four times larger than the boy's.

In an instance like this, you can use the settings in the Clone Source Panel to manipulate the sampled content so that it matches the retouch area. If the Clone Source Panel is not already open on your screen, you can access it by clicking on the Window menu and choosing Clone Source. The Width and Height fields allow you to scale the sampled content, and they are linked by default. You can type in a percentage in these fields in order to scale the sample area. In the video example, we scaled that content down to 20%. Then we used the Healing Brush to paint over the shiny spot on the boy's head.



**LEFT:** We made the Healing Brush tip very large and you can see by the preview that the sampled content is much too large. **RIGHT:** The settings in the Clone Source Panel are being used to scale down the sampled content to 20%.

Note: After you're finished with a retouch tool, it's a good idea to reset the settings in the Clone Source Panel so that they don't mess you up the next time you use another retouching tool. You can do this by clicking the Reset button on the right side of the panel. It looks like a little u-turn icon.



After scaling down the sampled content, we are using the Healing Brush to paint in the area that was sampled from the other document.