workshop INTERMEDIATE PHOTO EDITING taught by Lynn Weber

get it scrapped!
ONLINE CLASSES
www.debbiehodge.com

LESSON SIX: Changing the color of an object

There may be a number of reasons to change the color of an item in a photo. Perhaps everyone in a group photo is wearing a light neutral color and the one orange shirt in the group stands out too much. Or maybe you have some beautiful pink elements to use to scrap a photo but your granddaughter's outfit doesn't fit in. Or perhaps, like me, you're trying to save your grandson from humiliation in later years when he sees himself wearing that pink outfit. Whatever the reason, there are some easy fixes for these situations.
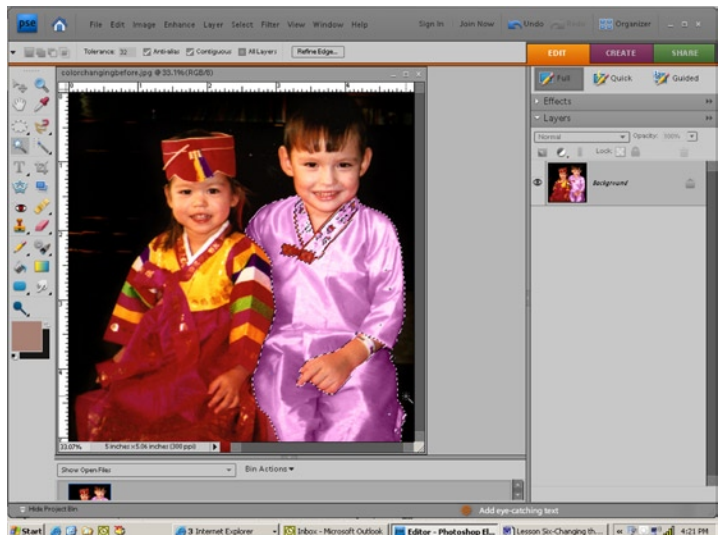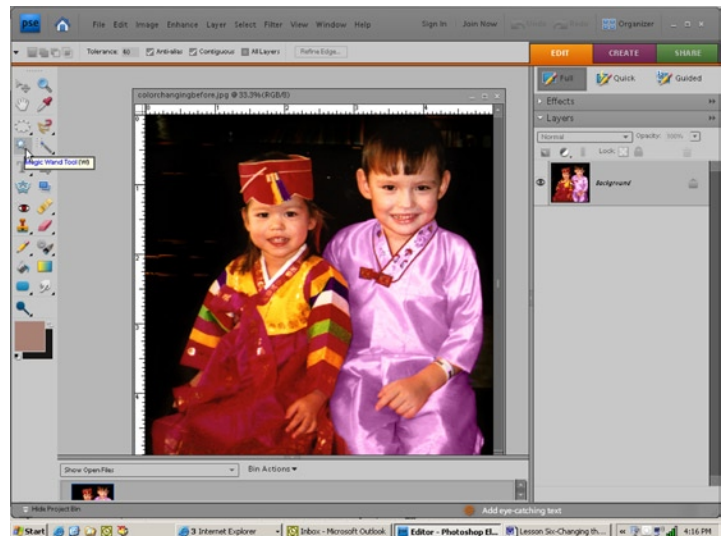
Two cuties in traditional honboks

A little change so he won't be embarassed about wearing pink!

As I have mentioned a number of times before, there is usually more than one way to do anything in Photoshop and PSE. I'm going to guide you through several ways to change the color of an object in a photo. The method that you choose to use may depend on the photo (perhaps one method may be easier to use in a particular photo) or may just be the method you find easier.
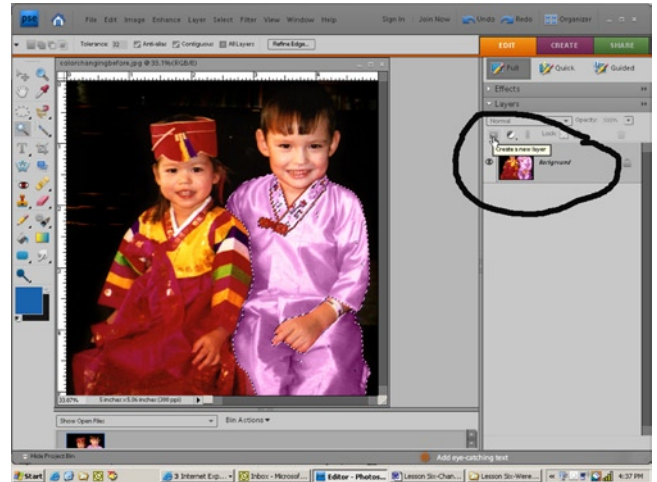
Open the photo entitled "Color Changing Before." Duplicate the photo and rename the duplicate. Close the original.
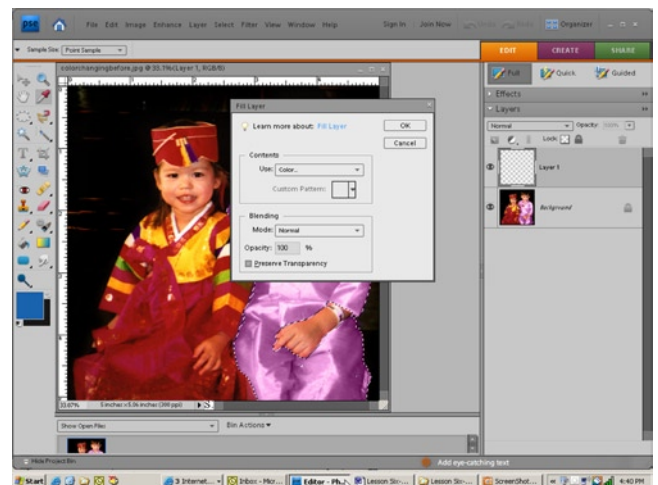
USING A FILL LAYER

1. Select the Magic Wand Tool which is near the top of the left toolbar. It looks like a stick with a flame on the end. In various versions of PS and PSE it may be housed with other tools. If you have trouble finding it, Right-Click on various tools to get the flyout menu until you find the Magic Wand Tool. In the Magic Wand menu bar at the top, choose Tolerance 32, make sure that Anti-Alias and Contiguous are both checked and "Select All Layers" is NOT checked.

2. With the Magic Wand Tool, click on the boy's outfit and you will see marching ants around part of the outfit, but probably not all of it, since it is made up of several shades of the same color.

3. With the Shift key down, continue clicking various areas of the outfit with the Magic Wand Tool until the entire outfit is selected.
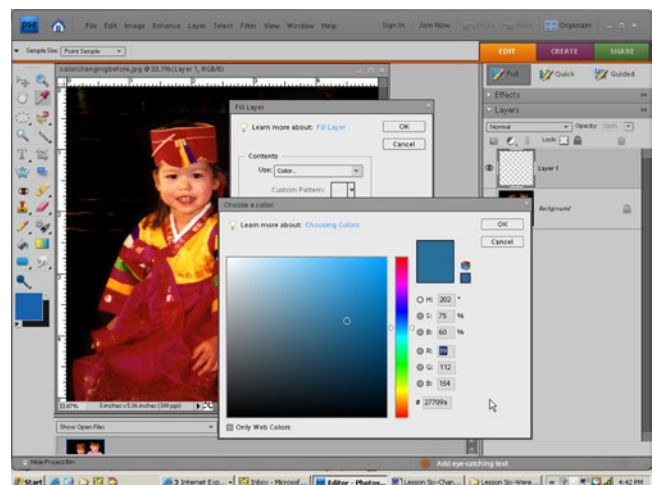
4. In the area above the layers palette on the right side of your work area, click on the "Create a New Layer Icon." You will have a new layer in the palette above your photo layer.
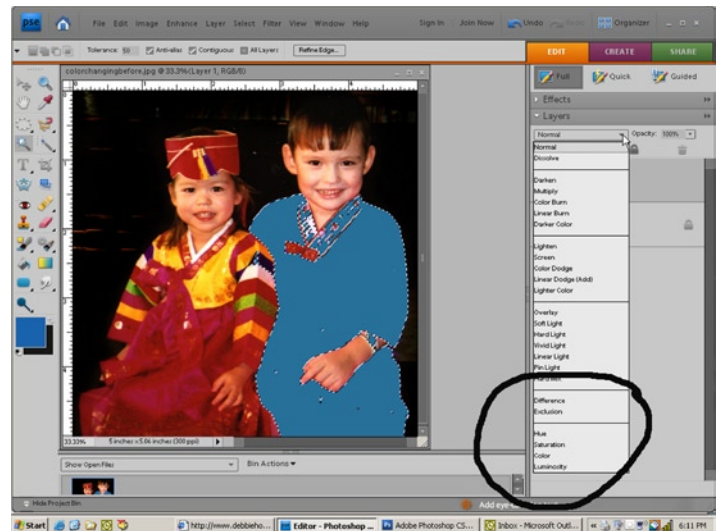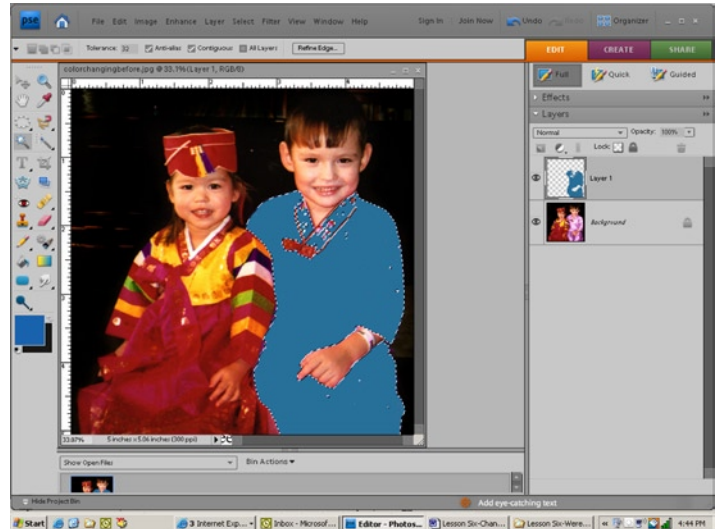
5. With the new layer selected, from the menu bar at the top of the page, choose Edit>Fill Selection. You will get a menu box like this:

6. Choose Color from the Contents dropdown menu and select the color you would like to make the outfit.

7. Click OK and the outfit will be filled with a flat blob of color like this:

8. Click on the dropdown Blending Modes box above the Layers Palette. It's a little box that says "Normal" with a small triangle next to it.

9. Near the bottom of the Blending Modes box, click on "Color." This should change the boy's outfit to the color you chose, with all of the variations in shade.

10. Ctrl+D (CMD+D in Mac) will deselect the area and remove the marching ants.

You should now have a boy who is NOT wearing a pink outfit, but an outfit in the color you chose!

You can save this newly edited photo or choose Edit>Revert (in some versions) and the photo will go back to the original pink outfit.

THE COLOR REPLACEMENT TOOL

The Color Replacement Tool lets you brush a replacement color onto the area you want to change without changing the color of anything else in your photo.

The Color Replacement Tool is housed with the Brush Tool in most versions of PS and PSE. Right click on the Brush Tool and you can choose the Color Replacement Tool from the flyout menu.{Insert ScreenShotColorReplace1.jpg}
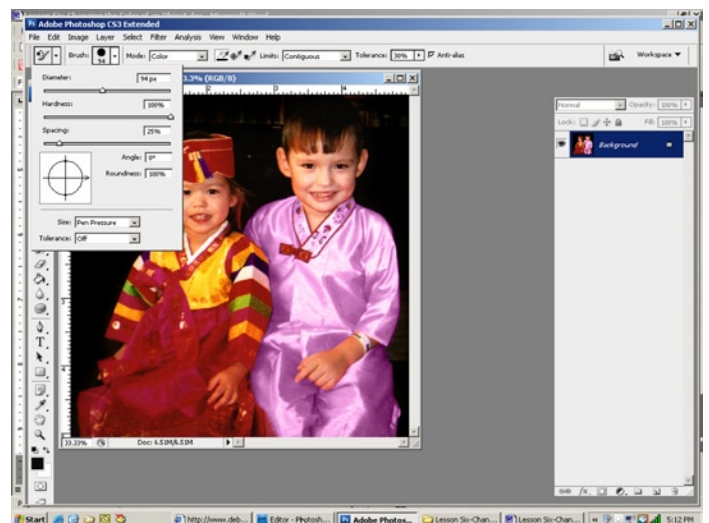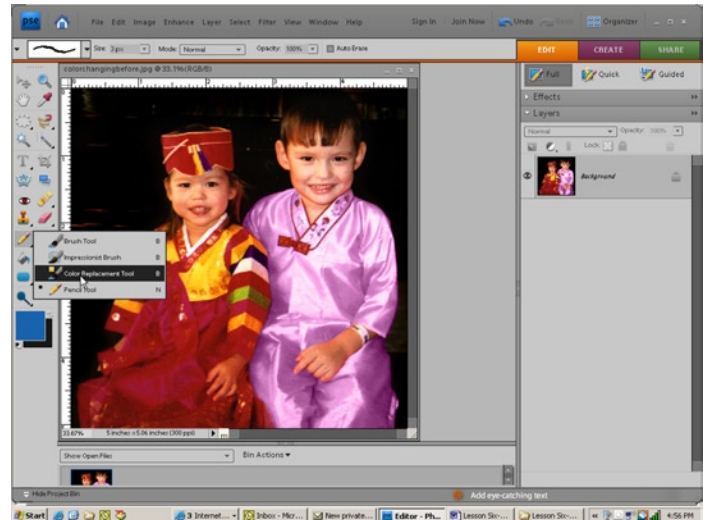
When you choose the Color Replacement Tool, you will see a small menu bar at the top of the workspace. When you click on the triangle by "Brush," you will get a dropdown menu like this:{Insert ScreenShotColorReplace2.jpg here}

From the dropdown menu make the following selections:
- Diameter-should be set to a size of about 70 pixels for this job.
- Hardness-set this at about 75% so you get a fairly hard edge without too much feathering.
- Spacing-25%.
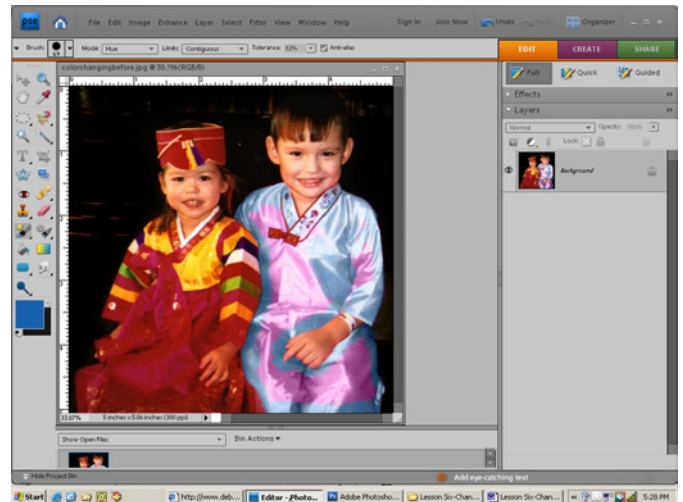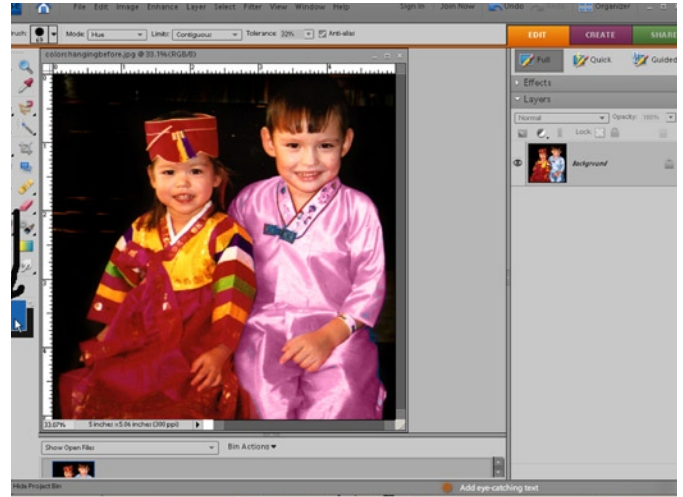
On the rest of the Menu Bar choose:
- For Mode, choose Hue since we are changing the color.
- For Limits, choose Contiguous.
- For Tolerance, choose about 32% so we can change a fairly sizeable range of tones.
- Anti-Alias should be checked.

Open the Photo "Color Changing Before."

1. Click on the small square Foreground Color Icon at the bottom of the tool bar on the left of the workspace and choose the new color you want to use to "paint" the area.

2. The Color Replacement Tool cursor is a circle with a + inside. Position this cursor over the boy's outfit. Hold down the mouse button and drag it slowly over the boy's outfit, "painting" over the outfit with your cursor. First, I like to go around the outside edges of the area to be recolored. The area right around the + is where the painting actually happens. Since we chose a fairly hard brush and the contiguous setting, we shouldn't have too much bleeding over into the other areas of the photos, but we still need to paint carefully. Anytime you get color on an area you didn't mean to change, just press CTRL+Z (CMD+Z in Mac) to undo. It might be a good idea to press CTRL and + to make the photo larger when you want to get around the trickier areas, like the hand.

3. Once you have outlined the whole area, you can go back and fill in the area with your Color Replacement cursor.

   When the whole area is filled in, you can save the edited photo or choose Edit>Revert (in some versions) and return to the original photo.

You now have two different ways to recolor items in a photo. I hope you will try them out and post your Before and After photos to our Gallery! I'd love to see your examples of recoloring and hear which technique you liked better!

We're now at the end of our six lessons. I hope you have enjoyed learning a few more ways to change and enhance your photos. Please join me again in a few weeks for my next class, Fun Photo Techniques!