# Converting to Grayscale in Photoshop

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Photoshop provides multiple methods for changing a color photo to Grayscale. Each method provides a slightly different look for the final image, so there is no one specific method to use. Instead, experiment with each method to find which one looks best.

Whatever method is utilized, in all cases the final image must be in Grayscale mode. The file should say Gray in the information tab at the top of the image window and not RGB or any other mode.
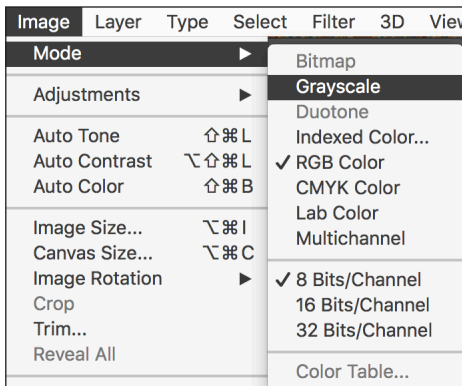
**@ 100% (Gray/8) ***

It should show this.

**@ 100% (RGB/8*)**

It should not show this.

In fact, the most common method of converting an image to black and white is to go to the Image menu, select Mode and choose Grayscale. This will remove all color from the image and leave it in grayscale mode. This is the easiest method, and in many cases will provide an adequate image, as shown here.



A second method desaturates the photo first before changing the mode. Desaturate is found under Image -> Adjustments. It provides a slightly different result. Remember to change the mode to grayscale after desaturating. Note the skin tone looks a little flatter in this particular photo.
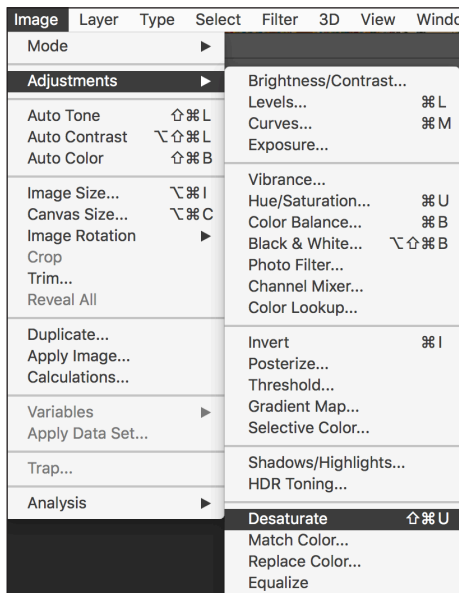
A third way to convert the image to Grayscale involves the Channels palette, which can be displayed by going to the Windows menu and selecting Channels. Channels separates the color photo into Red, Green and Blue channels - the additive primary colors of light. Select the channel which looks best and delete the other two channels. This method also requires changing the mode to Grayscale at the end of the step.

Click on each channel individually to see which one looks best. Eighty to ninety percent of the time it will be the green channel. It will almost never be the blue channel, since that is where a lot of noise can be seen. Discard channels by clicking on the channel with the mouse and dragging the channel to the small trash can in the bottom right corner of the palette.
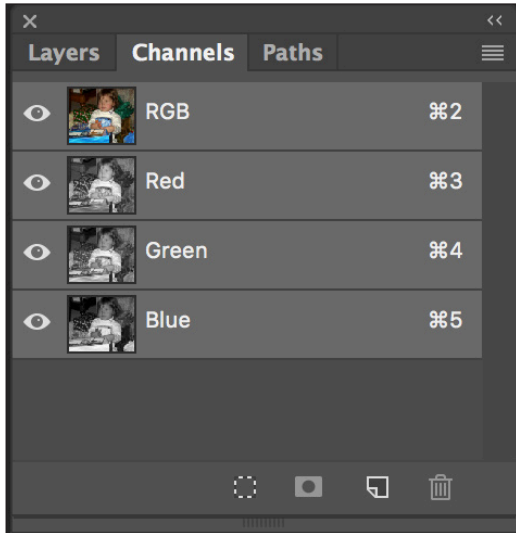


Another method for converting to Grayscale provides a tremendous amount of control, but takes the most work. The Black and White option under Image -> Adjustments allows the user to mix a percentage of RGB and CMY to provide the most control to the image.
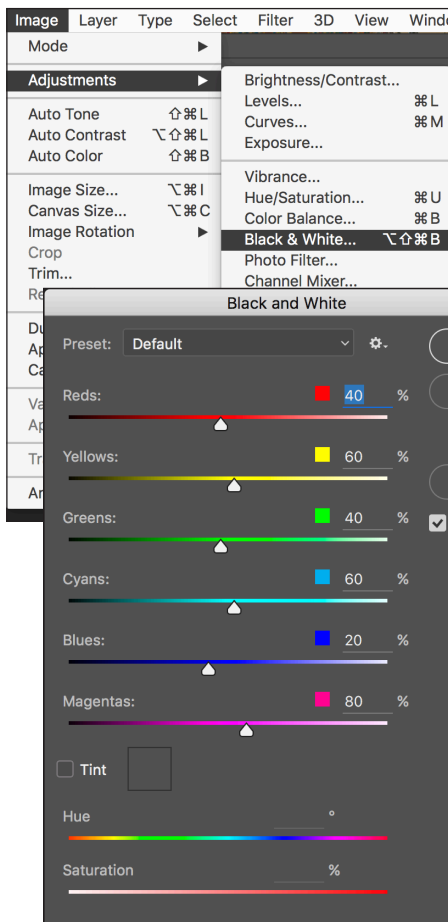


Note that the total percentage of RGB is 100% and CMY is 200%. You should try to stay close to these percentages, but you can mix higher and lower percentages of each channel in order to achieve the black and white image that looks the best.

Again, there is not a right way or wrong way to convert to Grayscale. Try each method to see which one looks the best.