

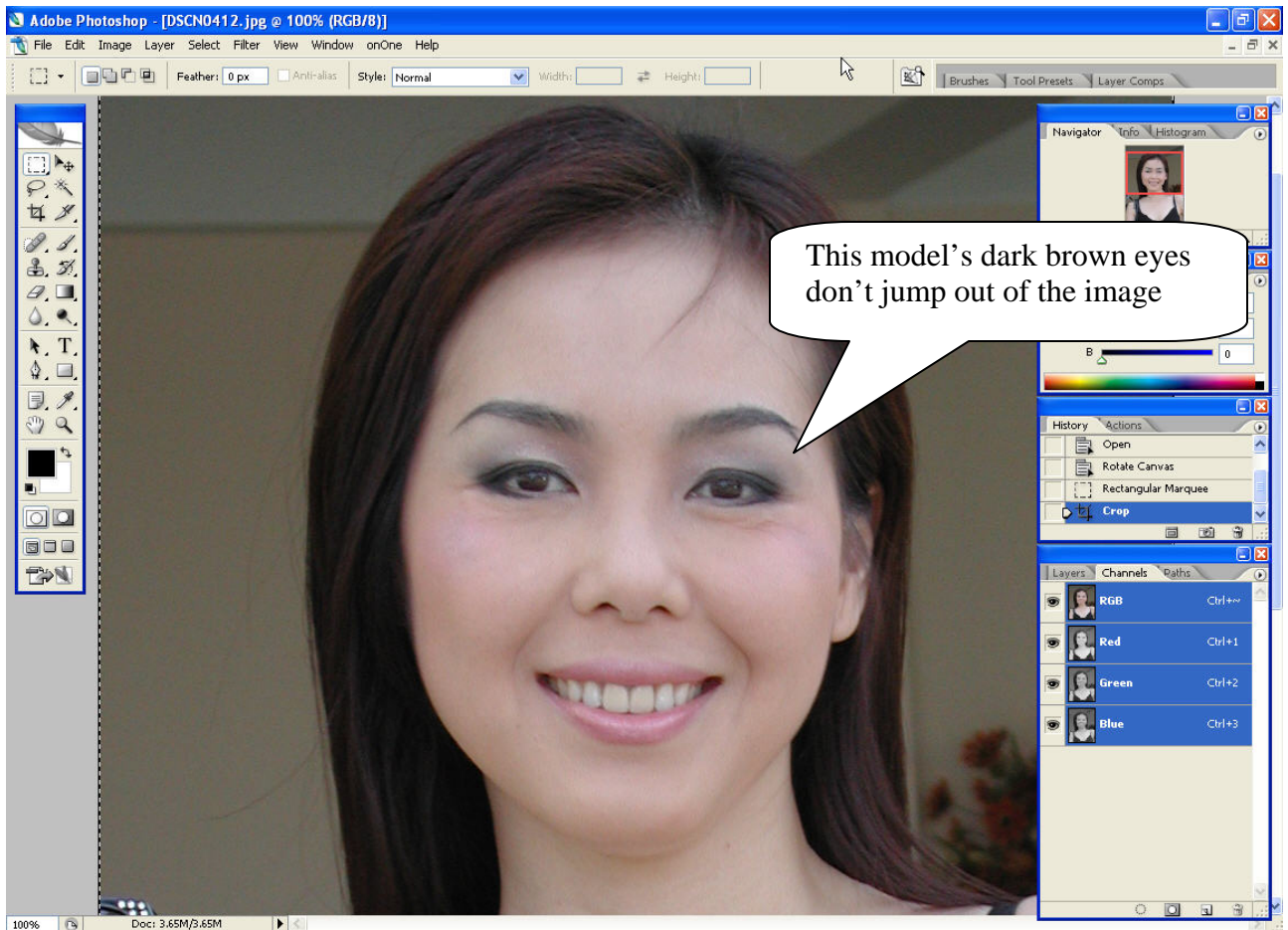
## Adding Emphasis to Eyes in a Portrait

On every portrait, the eyes are a focal point. People look at the eyes of a face instinctively, and often form judgments about the attractiveness of a portrait based on that first, subliminal glance at the eyes. Studies have shown this effect many times using similar portraits of the same person, one with brown eyes and one with blue or green, and the blue or green eyed person is usually judged more attractive.

Altering eye color is not usually a good idea for a portrait, as the resulting image may not bear enough resemblance to the subject. So, usually you're left with the task of making the eyes more interesting using other techniques to emphasize them (hair and makeup are the usual methods).

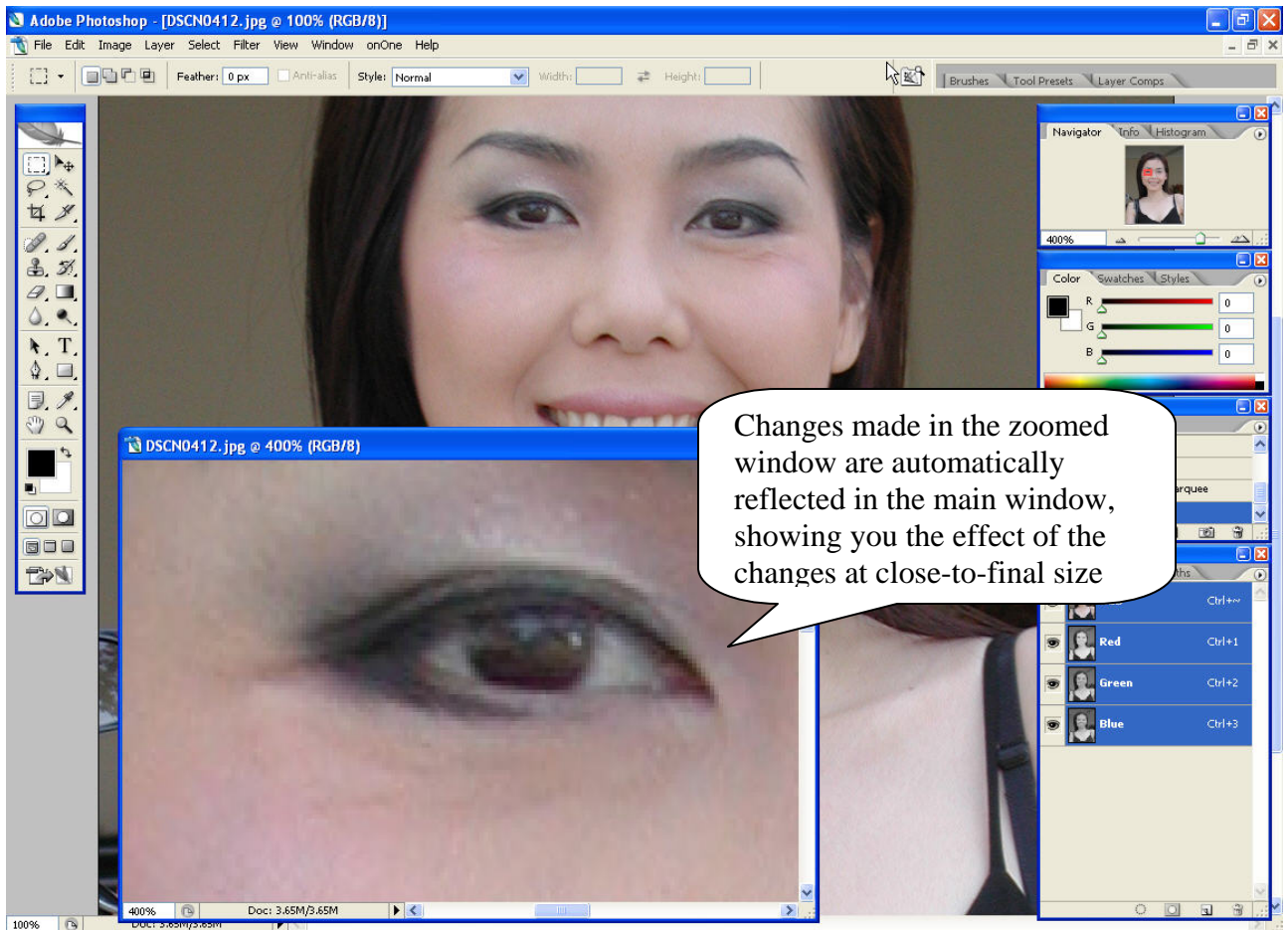
No matter how carefully you pose a subject, or what you do with their makeup, unless you're willing use colored contact lenses, sometimes it's hard to get a subject's eyes to really "pop" and add that extra something that makes a portrait come alive. Fortunately, you can add those little effects in Photoshop quite easily.

Start by opening the portrait you want to work with in Photoshop. We'll use Photoshop CS for these examples because it is still the most widely used version, but the technique applies to all versions of Photoshop. Expanded the image to the approximate size of your finished print so the eyes, which in this photo are a dark color and lacking in sparkle, can be seen in approximately final print size:

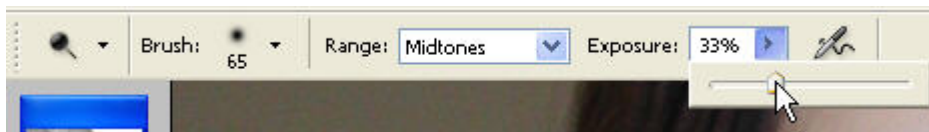


To allow for better control as you manipulate the eye color and effect, open a new window with the same image and zoom it (“Ctrl +” on Windows, “Command +” on Macs) so you can see the eyes in more detail.

It’s useful to keep both the zoomed and current window visible at the same time so you can see the effect of any changes at finished print size. Since the full-size image is updated automatically when you make changes to the zoomed version, you can quickly get feedback of your touchups (and undo effects you don’t like):



Next, click the Dodge tool (looks like a lollipop!). The top of the window will display the dodge options. Lower the exposure to a value between 25 and 40% (play with it to get a good effect, but start somewhere around 30-35% if you are not used to the effect this causes).

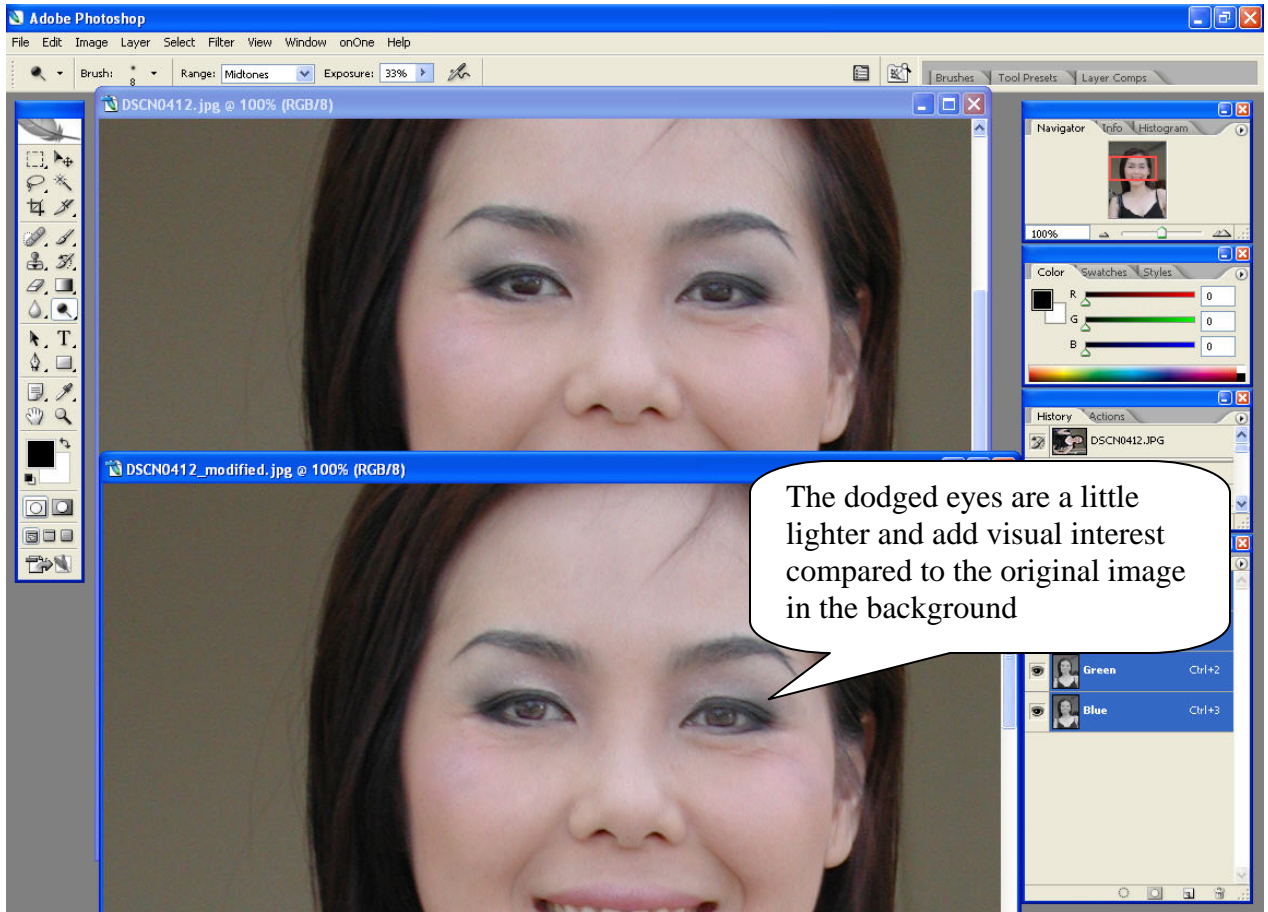


Next, move the dodge tool over the iris portion of the eye in the zoomed photo, and resize it (“[“ to expand, “]” to contract) so it fits inside the iris and does not cover the edges of the iris (the inside or outside darker lines of the iris):



Now, use the dodge tool to lighten the iris by clicking on parts of the iris. At low exposures, the effect is subtle and you can build up dodge effect on top of dodge effect until you get the effect you want. If you overdo the dodging, you can either undo a few dodge effects or alter the opacity of the entire layer.

With a few seconds judicious work with the dodge tool, you can add enough effect to the iris to add interest to the eyes, and make them stand out more. In the screen shot below you can see the original image at the top, with the modified image below. The iris has been lightened enough to make the eyes stand out more but without altering the eyes enough to make them look unnatural:



Of course, the effectiveness of this effect will vary with the original eye's color, as well as lighting conditions, but this quick manipulation allows most portrait shots to have a little extra punch.