

# Color Range

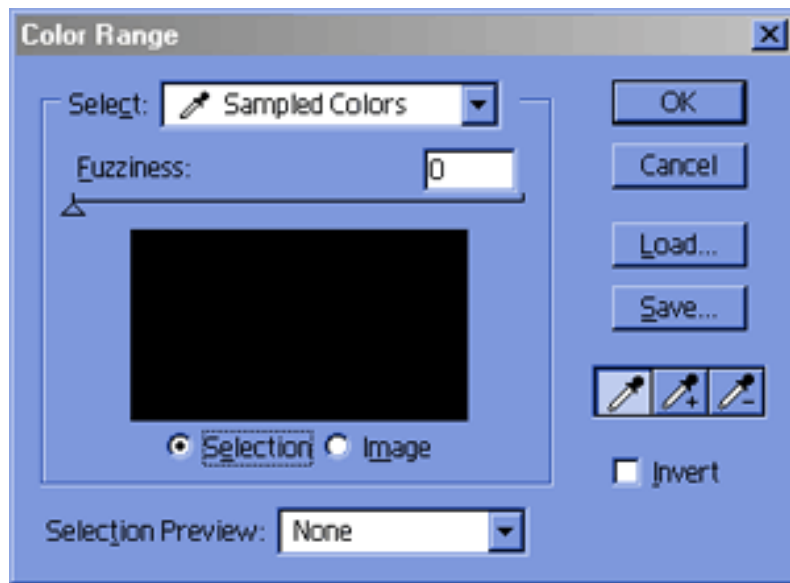
Welcome to the *Color Range tutorial*. This tutorial was designed to teach you how to use the Color Range feature in Photoshop 5/5.5, as well as some all around knowledge for manipulating images and photographs. If you need help with it, or find it confusing, don't hesitate to e-mail me, the information is at the bottom of the page.

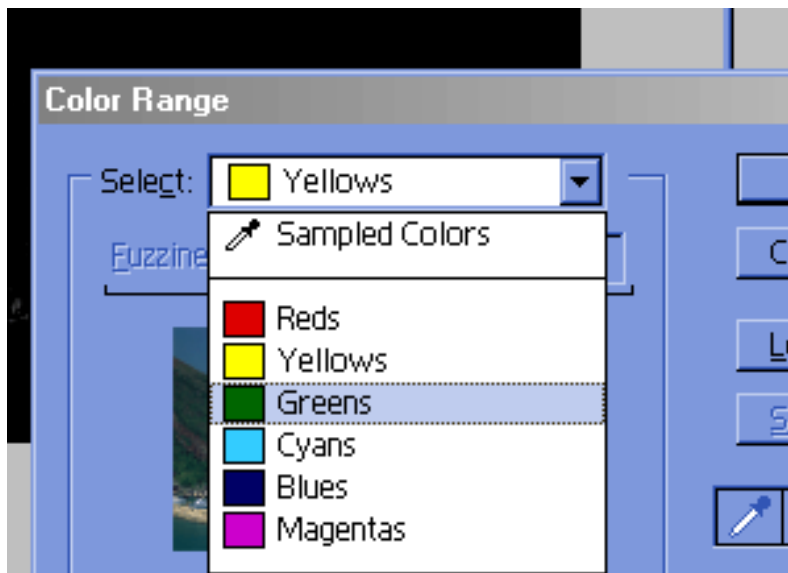


**1** Let's say we have a bunch of photos from our trip to Hawaii, but the trip wasn't that great because it rained a lot, and the sun never showed it's face. :( Well it's time to cheat and make it look like we had the time of our lives! This is precisely what the Color Range tool is good at. So grab the image to your left, by clicking on it to get a larger one, or grab your own. Answer this question and then move onto step 2: What part of this scene is making the rest of it look gloomy?

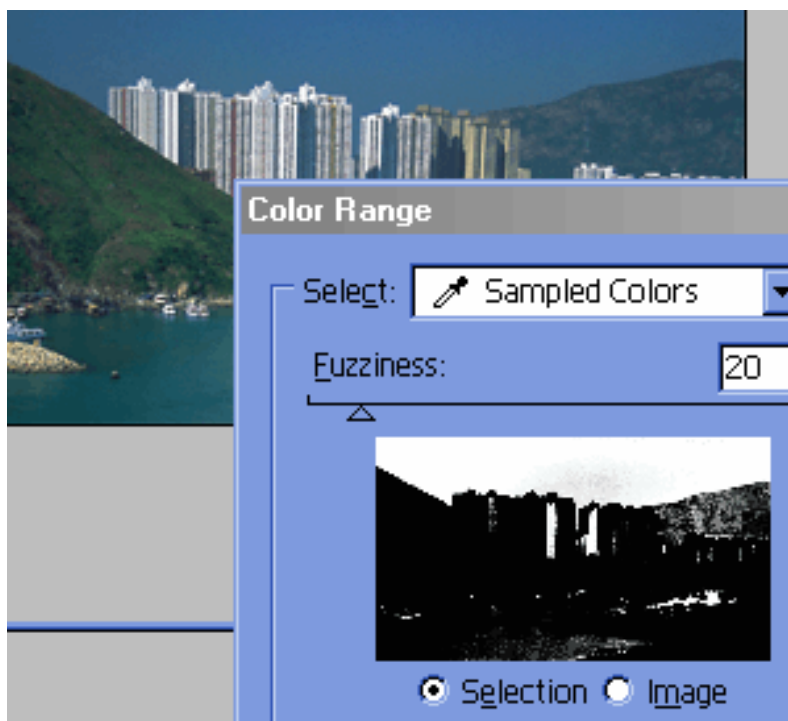
**2** Well if you said the sky, your right! So all we have to do brighten up the sky! Here we go:

With your photo selected, from the pull-down menu, choose **Select>Color Range**, a dialog box that looks like the image to left will appear. This is the Color Range dialog box, if you would like an in-depth explanation of this dialog box before you begin, just continue reading, if you just want to make the sky blue, skip ahead to step 3.





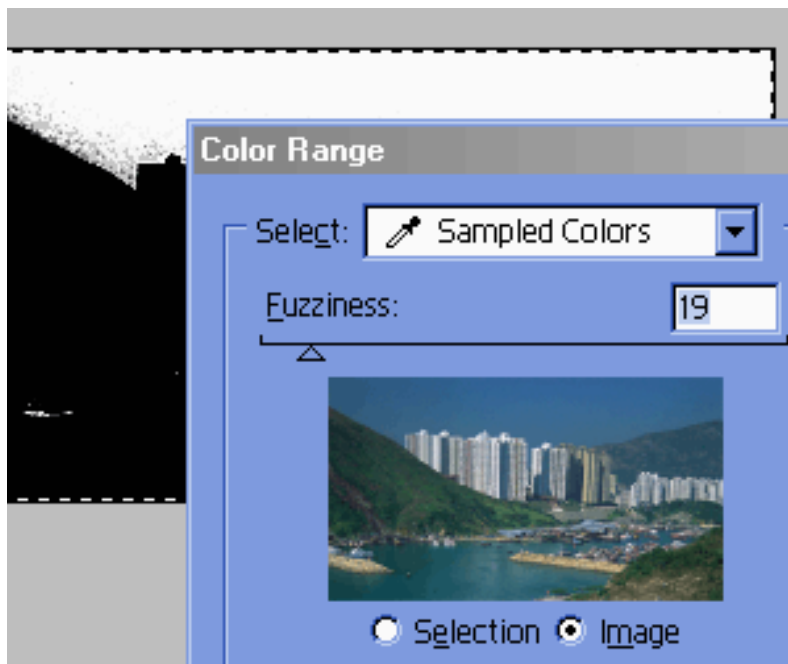
a) The Color Range dialog selects part of an image with the same color, or it can even select parts of other selections, in other words it can make sub-selections. All of this is done for the purpose of ease of modification of a particular part of an image. At the top of the dialog box, you'll see a pull-down menu entitled Select, this enables you to choose what colors you want to select out of the current image or selection. If you click on the arrow pointing downward, the menu will drop and you'll see the categories you have to select from are: Reds, Yellows, Greens, Cyans, Blues, Magentas, Highlights, Midtones and Shadows. Notice anything about the colors you can choose from? That's right, they all appear in either the RGB color spectrum, or the CMYK color spectrum. The default category is Sampled colors, unless you have an image with primitive colors in it, I would suggest using this option. Choosing Sampled Colors lets you pick colors from the image by clicking on it and dragging the cursor within the area of the colors you wish to be selected.



b) Below the Select pull-down menu is a slider entitled, Fuzziness, this allows you too choose the tolerance of the selection, or in other words how feathered it is, keep the fuzziness between 14-30 to prevent sharp looking selections. Around 20 should do just fine.

Below the Fuzziness slider, you'll see a thumbnail of the image your working on, as well two radio button options; Selection, and Image. With Selection selected and None selected from the Selection preview pull-down, you can drag the cursor around the image and the selection will show up in the dialog box. Selected items are shown in white, unselected in black, and partially selected in any shade of gray.

With Image selected and Grayscale selected from the Selection Preview pull-down, you



can keep a closer look of the selections your making by using the thumbnail to define the areas to be selected and the actual image to inspect the selection, this is handy for those perfectionists.

### Quick Tip!

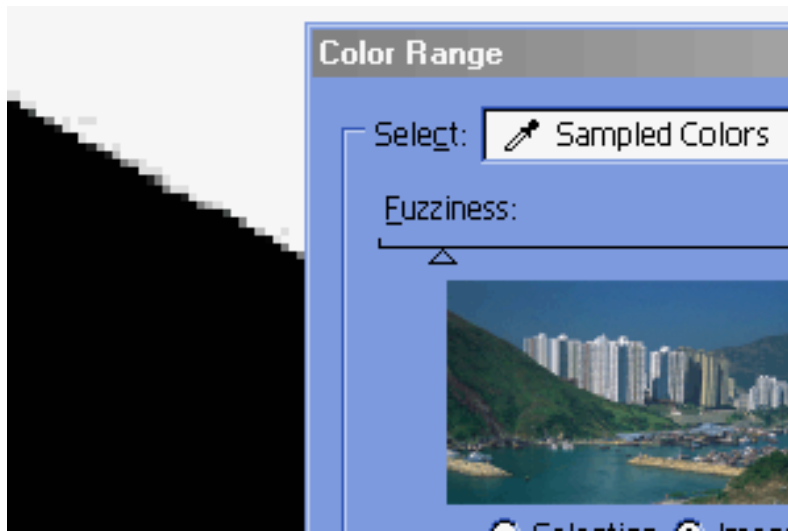
If you don't like the selection you've made, just click somewhere else, and a new selection will be made. To add selections to a prior one, hold down the **Shift** key a click elsewhere, to remove selections, hold down the **Alt** key.



### Quick Tip!

If you've made a lot of changes and selections within the dialog box, and want to reset your changes to the default settings, hold down the **Alt** key, and the **Cancel** button will change to the **Reset** button, now just click on it to restore the defaults, this applies to most of Photoshop's other dialog boxes.

- c) The Selection Preview pull-down has other options to choose from, experiment with them. Underneath the the OK and Cancel buttons to the right of the dialog are three small square buttons with eyedropper icons on them, these are the selection tools, use these to make, add, and remove selections, or you could use the easier way, which was described in last Quick Tip (above). Underneath those button is a checkbox beside the word *Invert*, make a selection and then check the check-box to invert the selection. Now that you have a proper feel for the Color Range dialog box, reset to the default settings and move on to step 3!



**Before:**



**After:**



### Quick Tip!

Try using different blending modes for the sky gradient layer, such as Screen or Dodge, they might help make the image look a little more real.

**3** Make sure Sampled Colors is selected, along with Image, Grayscale, and the leftmost eyedropper tool. Get in close and select as much of the sky area as possible, experiment, and get a nice a clean, but not sharp selection. Use the image to the left for reference. You won't get it on the first try so just keep adding and removing selections until you get a good one.

**4** Once you have your selection, click **OK**, the dialog will disappear and the selection will be made on your image. Now create a new layer above the photo's layer, and choose the gradient tool. In the gradient tool palette make sure **Foreground to Background** is selected as the Gradient Method, now set the following colors as you foreground and and background colors:

**Foreground:**R-136, G-201, B-255

**Background:** R-110, G-182, B-255

Create a new layer above the picture one. Position the gradient tool close to the top of the image, and in the center, drag downwards about an inch, and release. Once you've released the sky should be a nice brightened gradient, making it look like a cool summer day, rather than a gloomy autumn night. If you notice any of the blue has seeped onto the mountains, or the buildings stand out a bit, and you can tell the image was modified, you might want to go back and try it again with a different Fuzziness setting, or once you have your selection you might want to feather it a bit. If all else fails you could resort to the eraser tool, by getting in there and touching it up manually, in the end you should have a photo with a completely different mood to it.



## Discussion:

I hope you were able to achieve the results I did, this was a long tutorial and you might have got off track for a while, if you did, take a break and come back to it later, then try again. I hope I've helped you realize the potential of the Color Range tool. Use it for any of the selecting you need done when color is the issue. I've posted a couple examples below to show other things you can achieve. If you have any questions, or there are any steps that I can further elaborate on, don't hesitate to e-mail me using the information below. Due to the amount of e-mail I get, you'll get a quicker response if you use the discussion forum. Post your question in the tutorials forum. Click [here](#) to go to the discussion forum.

## Examples:



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