Make It Match
Color Blend Mode Method: Extra Steps 1 – Manual – Photoshop Elements

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Up to this point, we have seen that using the Color Blend Mode Recoloring Method has limits. Using this method has restricted us to use a paper or element that has a similar color tint or shade to the new color we want it to have.

Well, in this video, I'm going to cover the extra steps you can take in order to increase the range of colors you can recolor something to. We're going to use a Levels adjustment layer and it's going to almost seem like magic when you see how great it works!
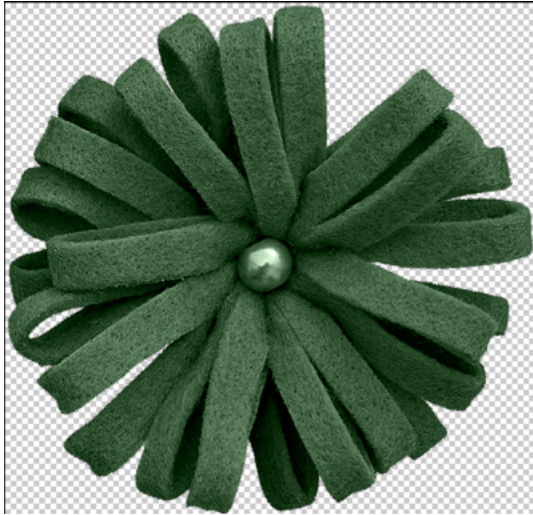
Step One: Prepare the Workspace

- There are two files you need to download, unzip, and open to follow along with this lesson. The first is a basic flower. The other is the layered cluster file.
- Once you have both files open, go to the basic flower document.
- In the Menu Bar, choose File > Duplicate to create a copy. Click OK.
- Close the original flower document.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Window > Images > Consolidate All to Tabs.

Step Two: Recolor the Flower

- Go to the layered cluster document now.
- We want to sample a color from this document to recolor our blue flower to. Previously, I would have said we couldn't use the mint color but this time, we're going to try it. So click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker and sample the mint green color from the paper strip on the document. Click OK.
- Go to the flower document.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon and choose Solid Color.
- In the dialog box, click OK.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Create Clipping Mask.

- In the Layers panel, change the Blend Mode of the Solid Color Fill layer to Color.
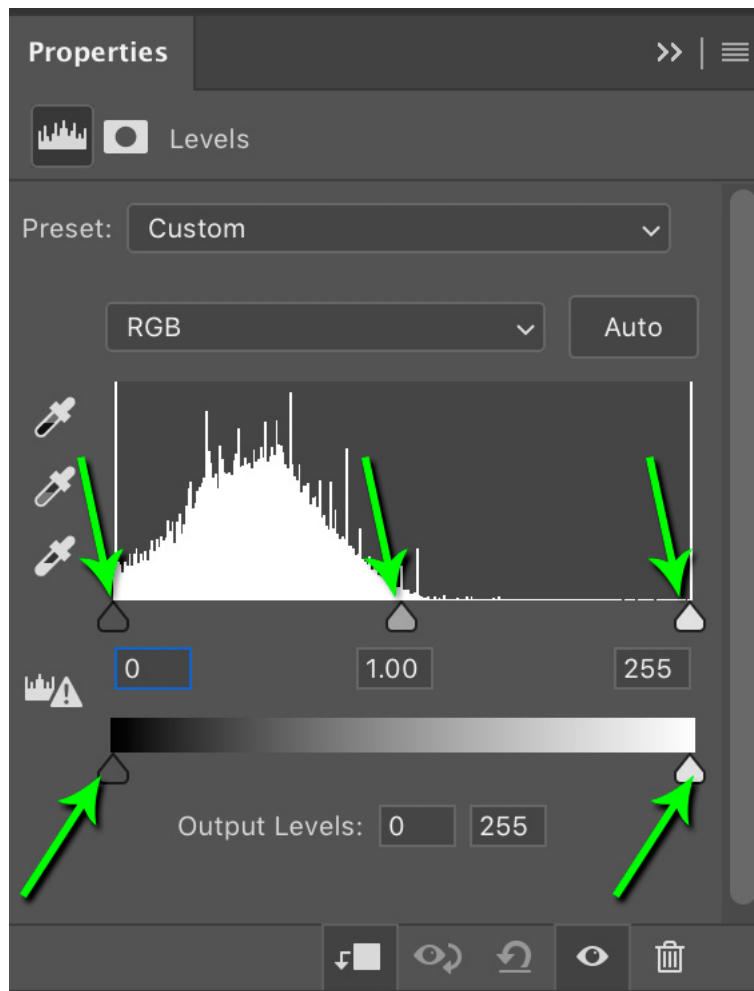

As you can see, some extra steps are needed before we can make this flower match the light mint green we sampled. As it is, this flower is too dark. But let's fix that!

Step Three: Lighten the Color Using a Levels Adjustment Layer

- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon and choose Levels.

NOTE: Before we start making any adjustments, I want you to understand something. The settings you use in the Levels Adjustment dialog box are going to depend on two things. First, the original color of the flower you are starting with. And second, the new color you wish to use. There isn't a set formula for what to set your Levels sliders to, so each time you use this method you'll have to keep adjusting the sliders until the new color is what you want it to be.
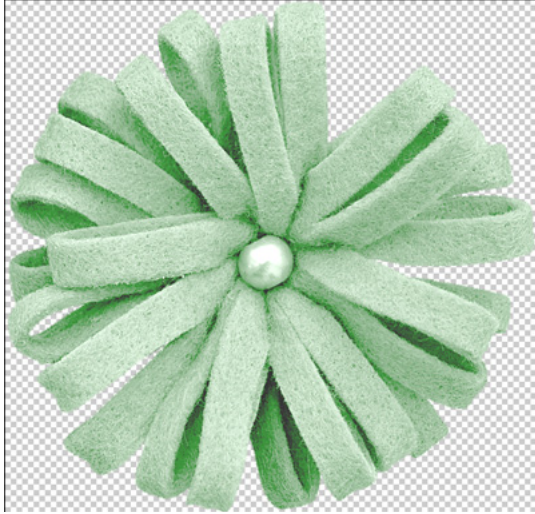
Using the Levels Sliders is going to give us the power to take this flower from a medium, darker green, to a light mint green. Let's just start playing around to see what happens. The first thing to go over is to know which part of the Levels to adjust. Let's just look at what happens when we move each option available to us. First, take note that there are two areas we can move the sliders. One above and one below. The top area has 3 different sliders and the bottom area has two.

- If we move the top black slider to the right, this flower will start to get darker. That's the opposite of what we want here so let's drag that back all the way to the left.
- If we move the top white slider to the left, this flower starts to lighten up. Let's move it over to about 150 for now.
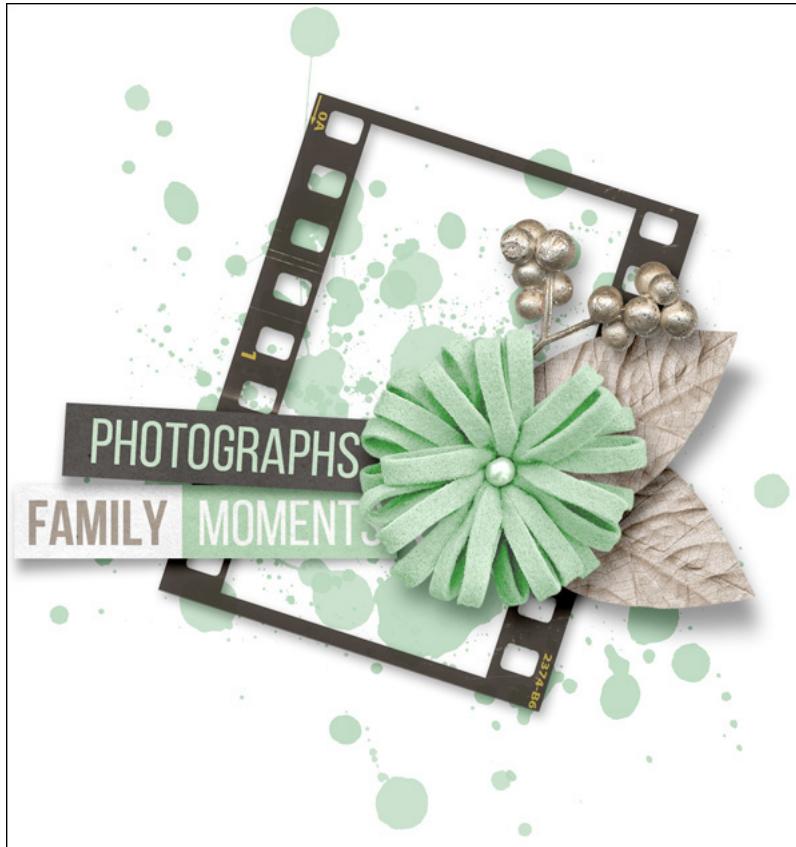
NOTE: If you take any of the sliders too far, you will start to lose detail. Make sure to never move a slider so far that the details of the flower begin to be lost. When that happens, go back to where the details remains and adjust other sliders instead.

- Move the gray mid-point slider. If we move it to the right, things start to get darker again. So let's move it to the left instead. Let's keep moving this over until we get to about 2.2 for the middle number.
- Move the lower white slider to the left. Things start to get darker again so let's take that back all the way to the right.
- Move the lower black slider to the right. Things continue to lighten up. Let's move this over until it's at about 55. I think that did it. Now I think our flower is ready.

Step Four: Move the Recolored Flower to the Cluster

- Press Ctrl A (Mac: Cmd A) to Select All.
- Press Shift Ctrl C (Mac: Shift Cmd C) to create a merged copy.
- Press Ctrl D (Mac: Cmd D) to deselect.
- Go to the Layered Cluster document.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Flower Placeholder layer to activate it.
- Press Ctrl V (Mac: Cmd V) to Paste.
- Get the Move tool.
- Click and drag from a corner handle to resize the flower smaller. Use the Flower Placeholder layer as a guide.
- Click the checkmark to commit the changes.
- In the Layers panel, Right click (Mac: Ctrl click) on the name of the Flower Placeholder layer and choose Copy Layer Style.
- In the Layers panel, Right click (Mac: Ctrl click) on the name of the Mint Flower layer and choose Paste Layer Style.
- In the Layers panel, drag the Flower Placeholder layer to the Trash.

Step Five: Save As

- Save your layered cluster file.
- Go back to the flower document.
- In the Layers panel, double click on the name of the Levels Adjustment Layer and change it to Lighten. Press Enter to commit the name change.
- Don't save or close this file just yet. We're going to use this same flower in the next lesson so just leave it open and ready to use.

Review:

1. So the big thing we learned today is that we can add a Levels Adjustment layer to the Color Blend Mode Recoloring Method in order to increase the range of colors we can recolor something to.
2. We also learned that using the Levels sliders will be different for every recoloring scenario. So each time we recolor something new, we'll have to move the sliders a different amount depending on the desired result.

Cluster Credits:
Layered Cluster: Jenifer Juris
Kit: Memory Keeper by Kim B Designs
Flower: Stories365 by Kristin Cronin-Barrow