curvemeister.com

Pinning Skin Tones Using the Curvemeister 3 Plug-in for Photoshop and Photoshop Elements.

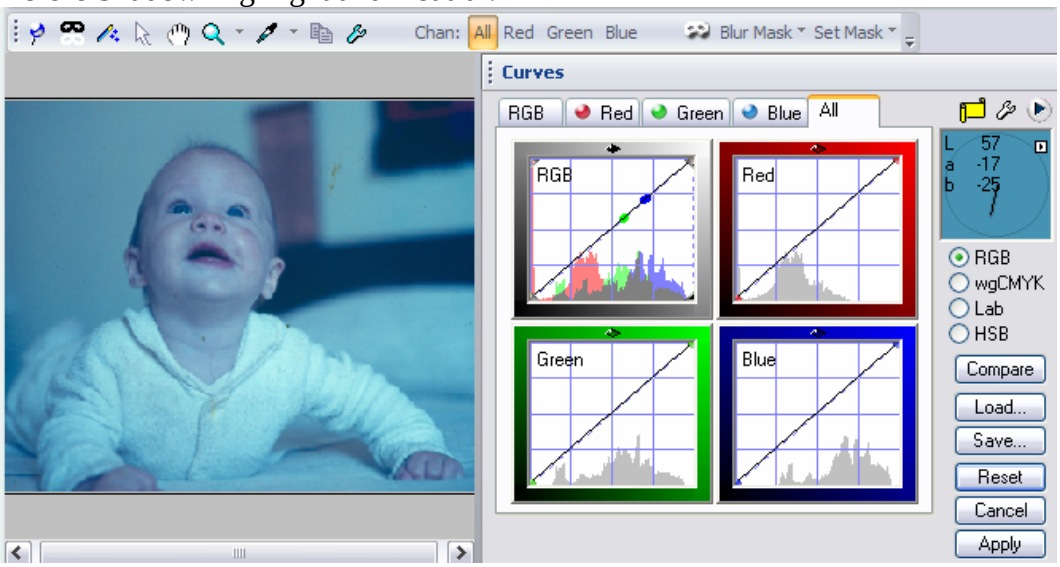
Curvemeister allows you to pin colors to a specific value. One of the uses for this is in setting skin tone values for images where the tone of the subject's skin is difficult to correct or is in a mixed lighting situation.

Creating Skin Tone Pins in Curvemeister: A Workflow Discussion

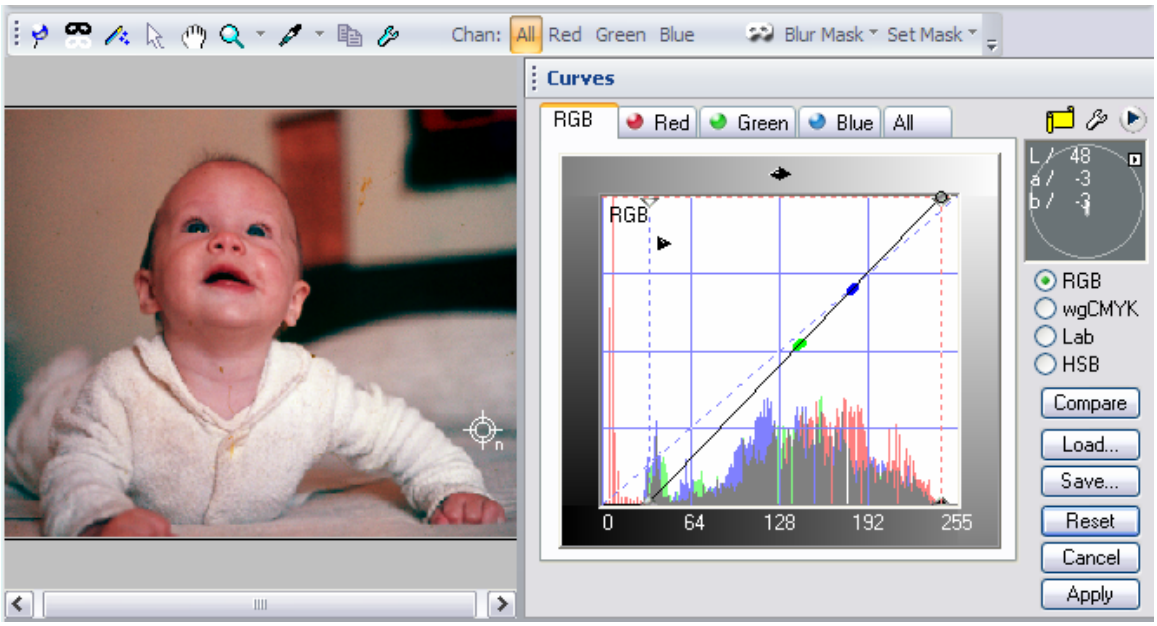
For this Skin Tones workflow you will need to do some items outside of Curvemeister to prepare the color pins you need.

Open your image in PS and using CM set the Shadow, Highlight and Neutral. It is easier to set the skin tones after you have a reasonable correction for your image. I have also had better improvements with using a "by the numbers" approach to some images rather than the wizard or just thresholding.

Before Shadow Highlight and Neutral:



After:



This is a good starting point…
Save your changes and return to PS or Elements.

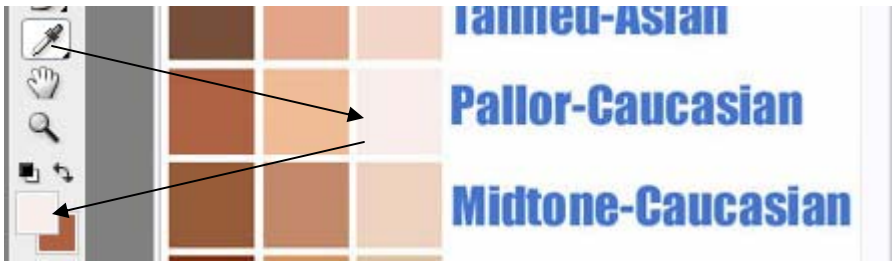
Open the Skin Tones.jpg file in PS or Elements and select a general skin tone based on the visual inspection of your original image

- The color patches in this file are reasonable skin tones collected from different source files and saved as a visual library.
- Try to match the highlight and shadow areas as close as you can to one of the sets of color patches in the file.
- Once you have selected the tones you want to use you need to set them as the foreground and background colors in Photoshop.

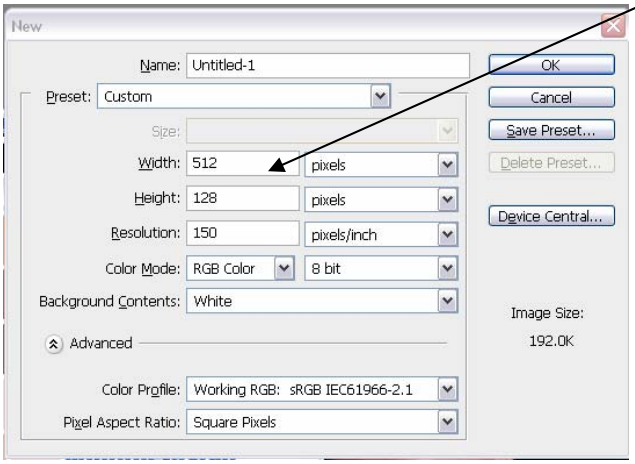
In Photoshop you can set the foreground and background colors by alt clicking on a color in an image. Or you can use the eyedropper tool

Use the eyedropper tool to sample a color

Click on the bent arrow to change to the background color and using the eyedropper tool sample a highlight value you want to use.

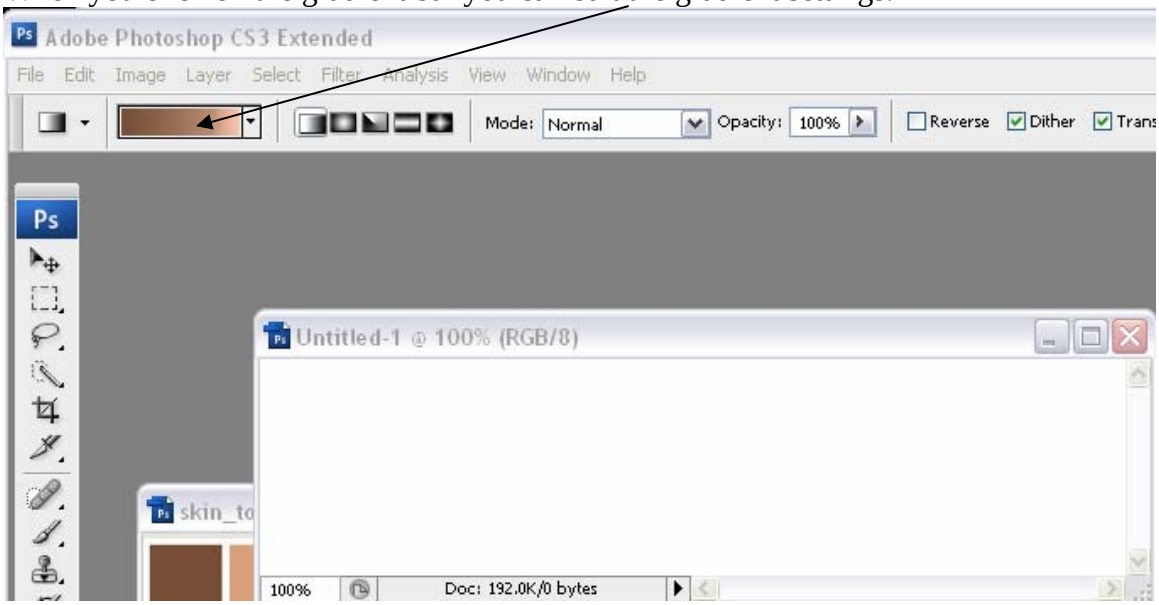


Next we need to create a new blank document that is 128 X 512. RGB and 150 DPI.

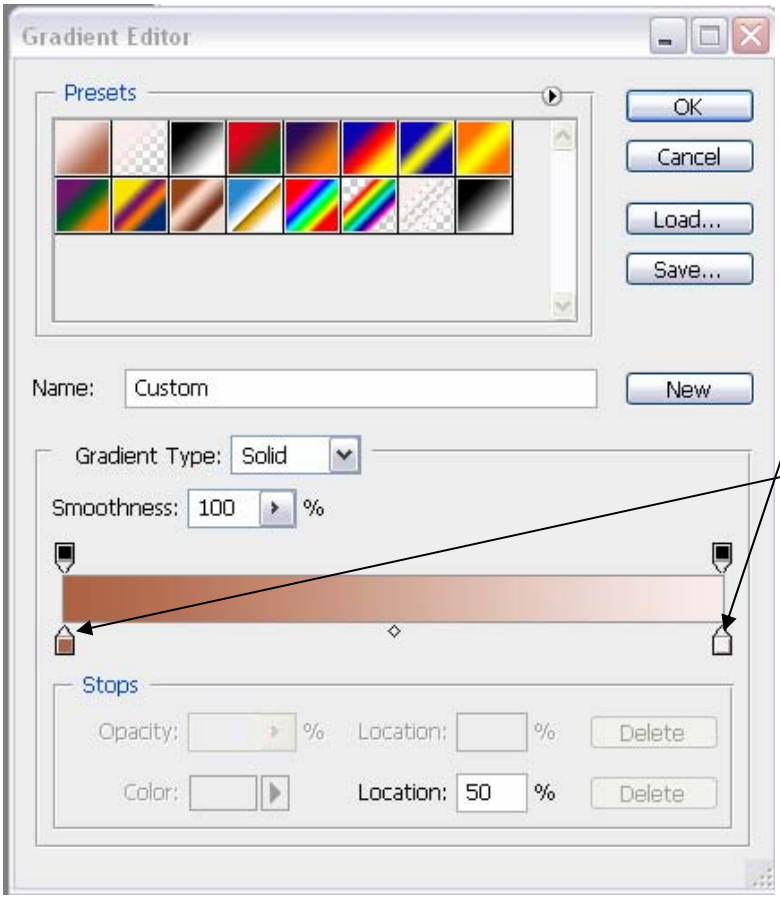


Switch to the gradient tool.

When you click on the gradient bar you can edit the gradient settings.



In the gradient editor you can set the colors from the background and foreground to be the end points of the gradient.



The lower endpoints of the gradient bar are called stops.

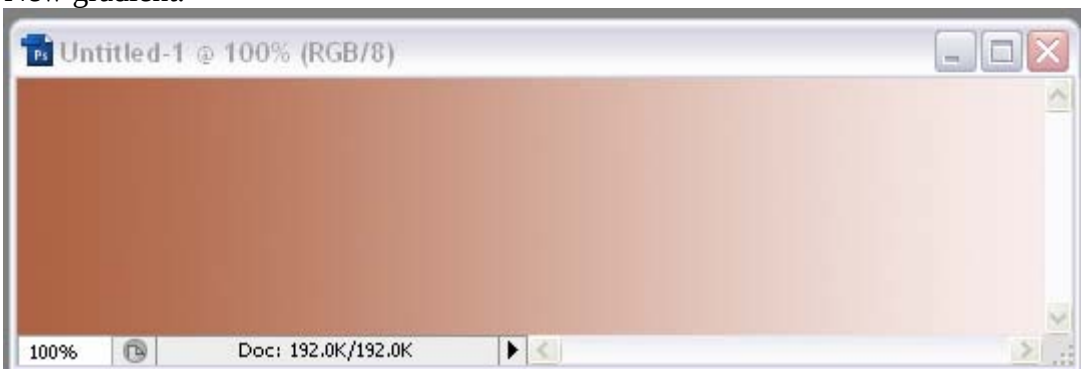
Click on the lower right stop and then click on the preset background color from PS.

Repeat this for the left color stop and the preset foreground color.

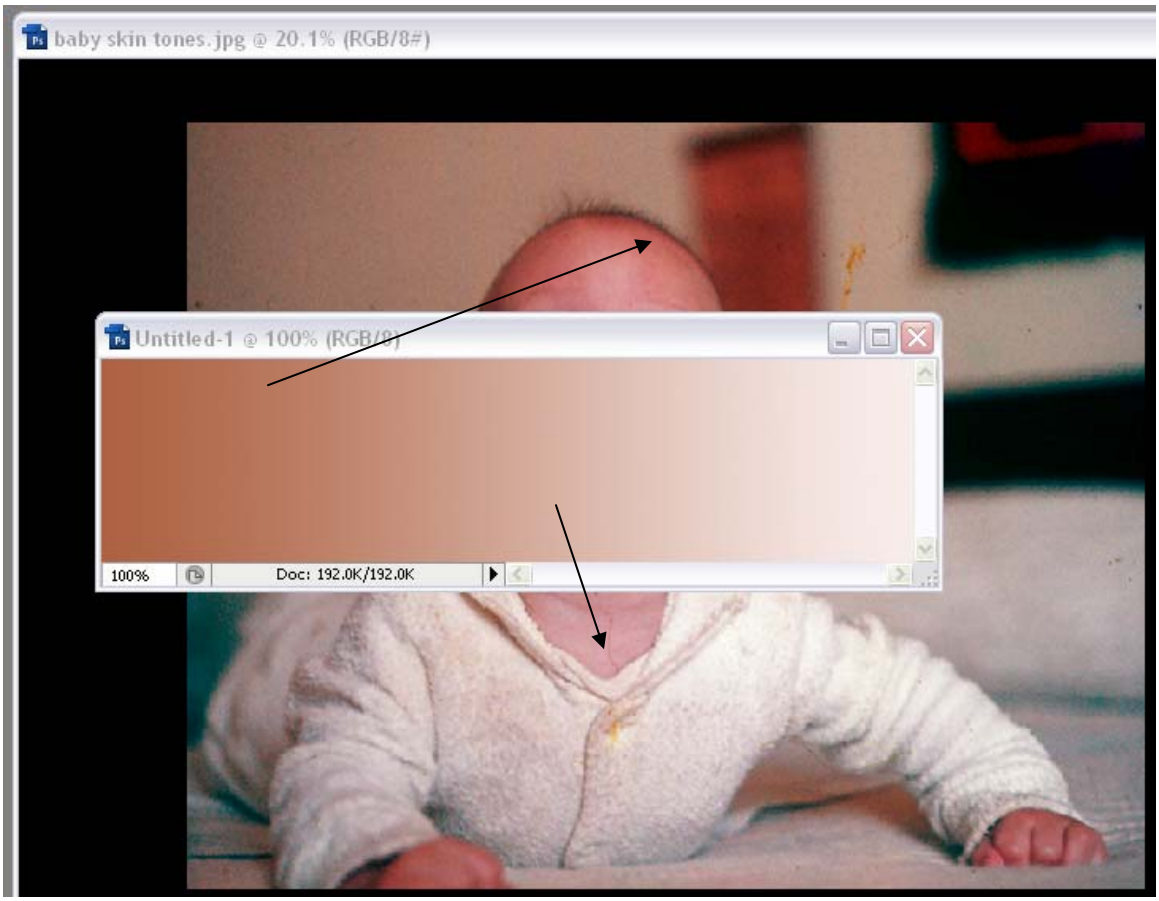
Click OK.

Draw a gradient in the new 128X512 image you created above.

New gradient.

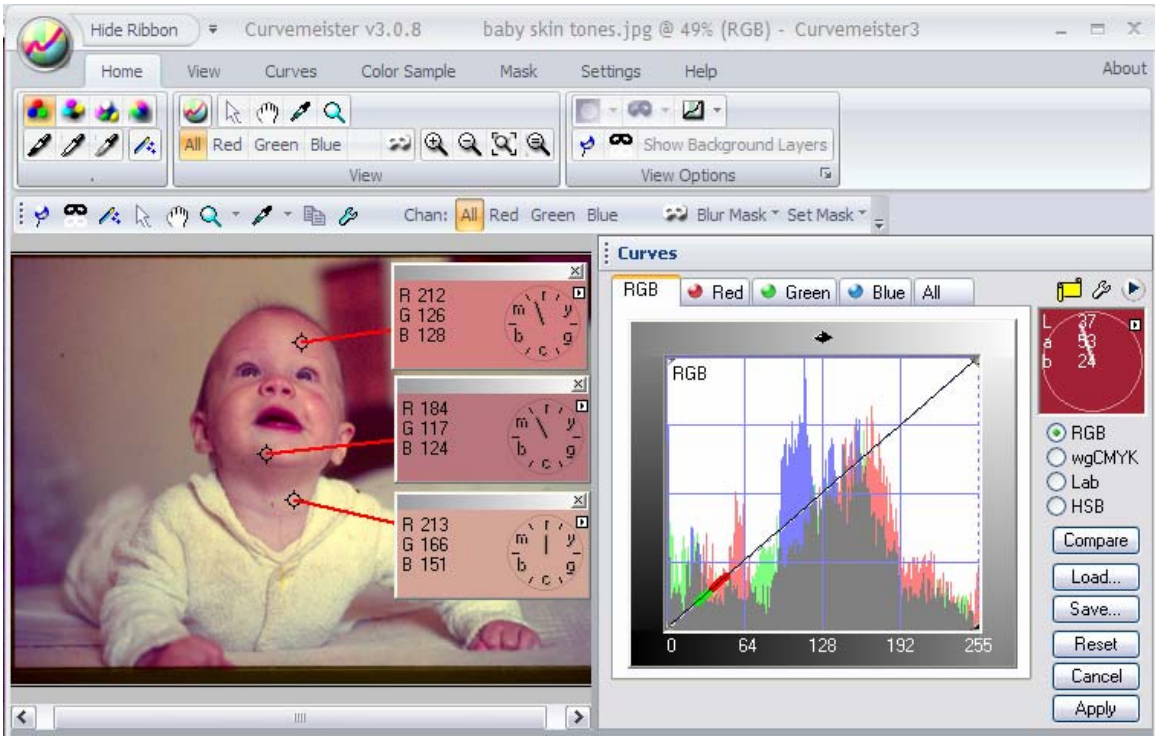


Use this gradient to select a tonal range you want to use in your image.

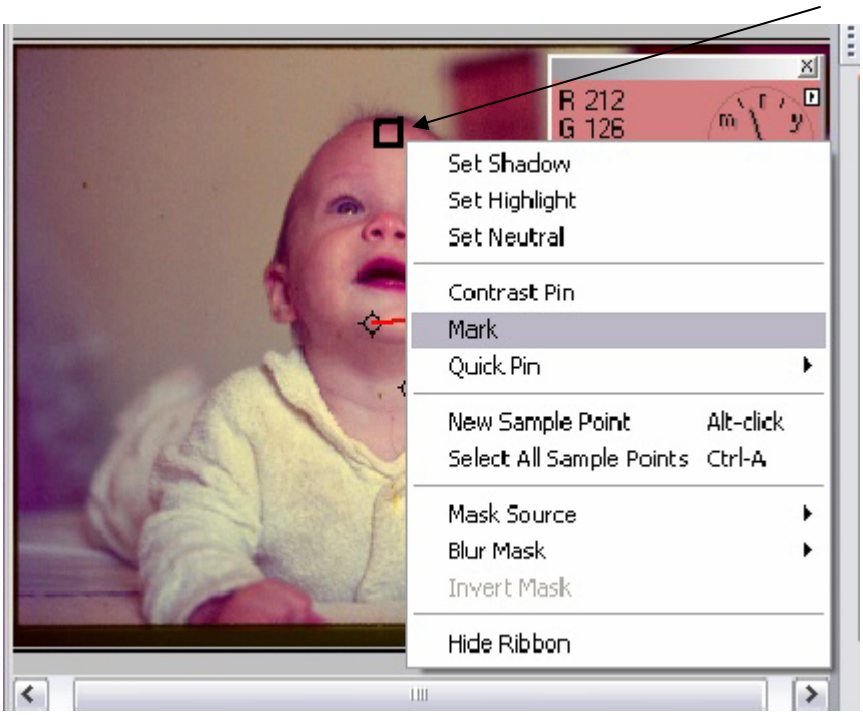


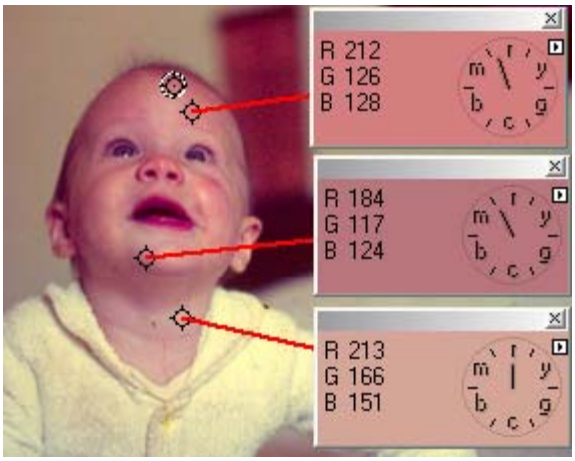
Again use the eye dropper to sample the two points.

Re-open the original image in Curvemeister. You need to Alt-Click on the image in a few places to obtain hue clocks. As shown below the image is too red.



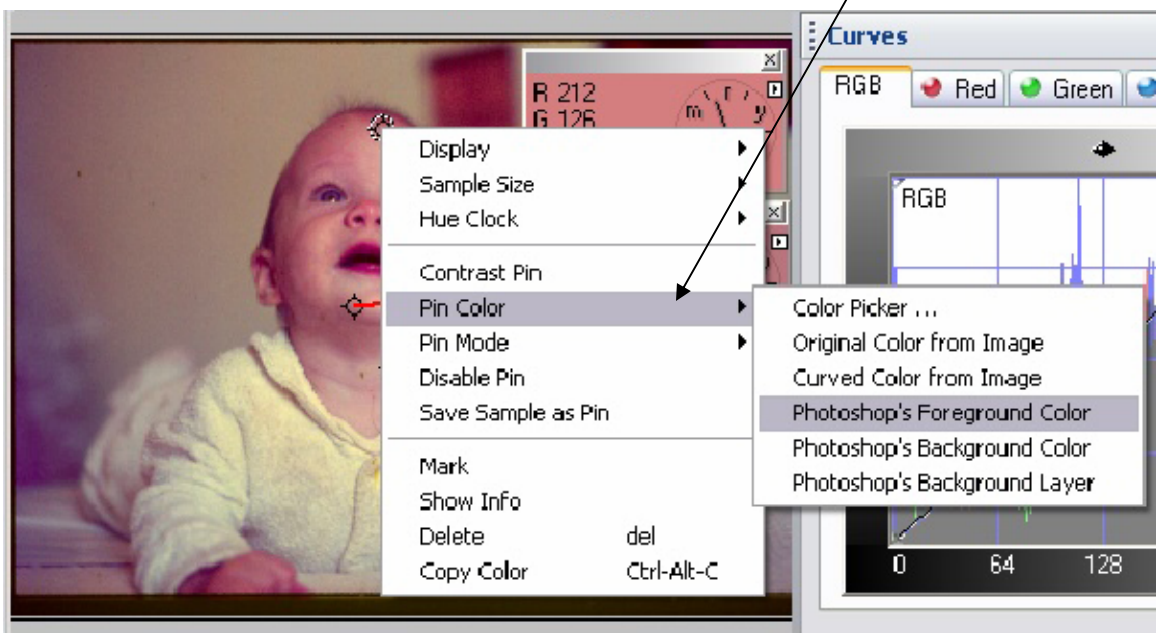
To make use of the colors we created above you need to right click on the person in an area you were using to compare the skin tones above. Here for the foreground color I selected a point in the black square to right click on and choose “Mark”



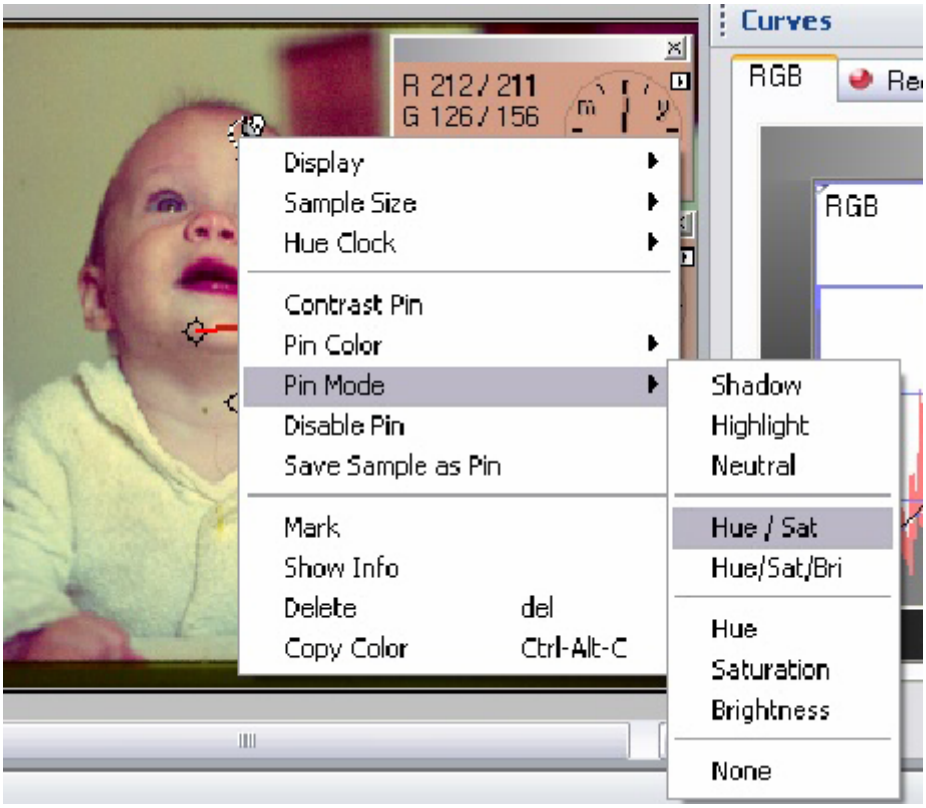


This creates a point on the curve we can again right click on to apply the foreground color to.

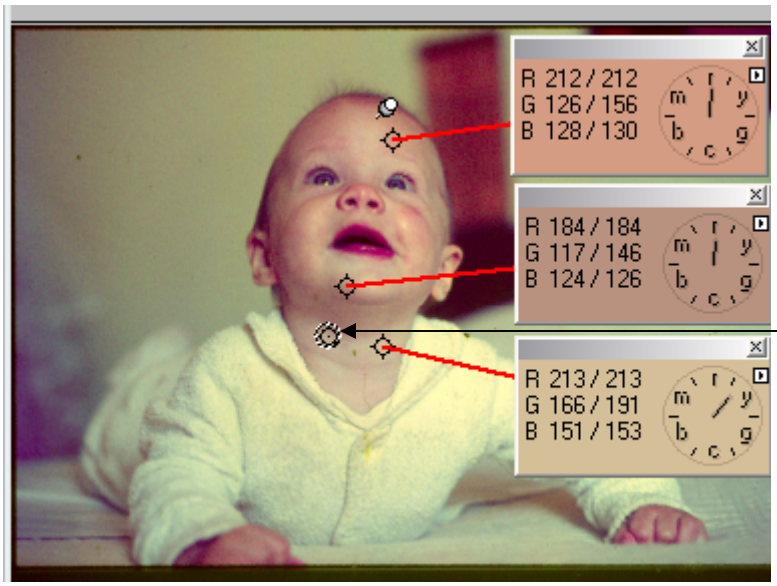
Right Click on the “mark” and apply the color as shown below.



You will need to set the pin “mode” to “Hue/Sat” so that the shadow and highlight settings are not over written by the new pin. If the colors go out of range just move the pin after changing the mode and they should return to a normal range. See next page.

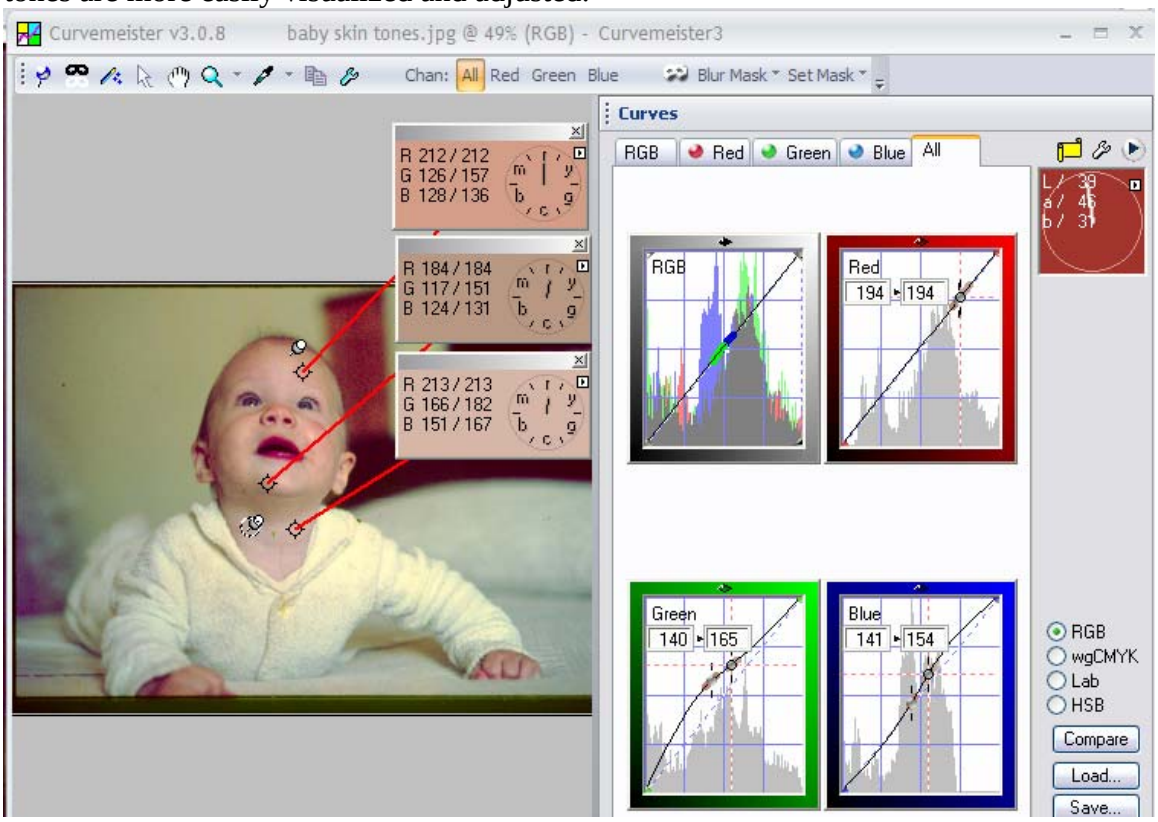


You will have to move the pin around just a bit to get the skin tones correct since you did not have an exact placement for the pin. Move it until you have a satisfactory skin tone.



Repeat the process for the background color in PS. Mark an area where the tone nearly matches the color and pin to Photoshop's background color. Again adjust the placement of the pin until the skin tones line up where you want them.

With the combination of a dark tone and a light tone from the same color range, skin tones are more easily visualized and adjusted.



Happy Curving!...