

PHOTOSHOP SOFT-PROOFING

Introduction

Soft-Proofing is a facility in the full version of Photoshop which allows the simulation on screen of what the printed version of the image is likely to look like. It should therefore be part the Colour Management workflow.

To get the best out of the Soft-Proofing it is important to have a calibrated monitor and the ICC Profile for the printer, ink and paper that are going to be used to produce the print. If the print is going to be produced by a photographic laboratory they will be able to supply the ICC Profile they use to enable you to Soft-Proof the image before it is sent away for printing.

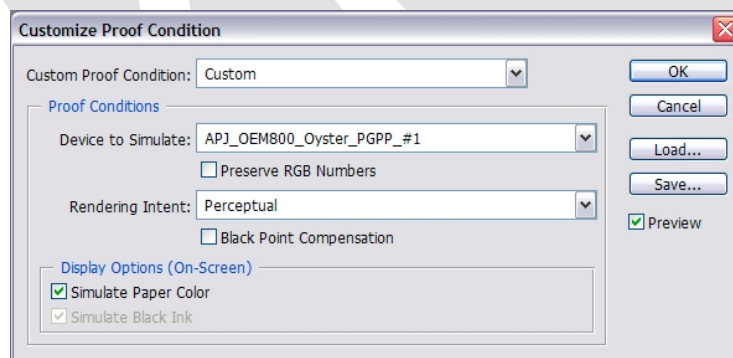
Even with a calibrated monitor the image will always look different to the printed version because the monitor image is produced by transmitted light and the print viewed by reflected light. What Soft Proofing will do is to try and address this difference.

Soft-Proofing in Practice

The time to Soft Proof is when the image has been processed in Photoshop, but before it is printed.

To set up Photoshop to Soft-Proof go to **View > Proof Setup > Custom**

And fill in the dialogue box as follows:



Under Device to Simulate select the ICC Profile that will be used for printing

- Preserve RGB Numbers must be unticked
- Rendering Intent should be set to Perceptual – also see note below
- Black Point Compensation should be unticked – also see note below
- Simulate Paper colour should be ticked. Note that when this box is ticked the Simulate Black Ink box will become greyed out and can be ignored

If **Gamut Warning** is ticked from the **View Menu** a warning will be displayed for the colours that are out of range for the printer. These colours will be corrected by the chosen **Rendering Intent** – also see note below.

Once OK is clicked the image displayed on the monitor will take on the appearance of the printed version. If the image is acceptable then the image can go to print, otherwise further adjustments in Photoshop are needed.

If comparing the printed image to the monitor, it is important that the light source to view the print is either true daylight, a daylight bulb or daylight corrected light source. If the print is viewed under an uncorrected tungsten light or fluorescent light source the colour balance of the print will be affected and a direct comparison cannot be made.

A Note on Rendering Intent

The Rendering Intent will tell the printer, via Photoshop, how to reproduce the out of gamut colours. These are certain colours the monitor can display but beyond the range that can be reproduced by the printer.

There are four rendering intents to choose from but only **Perceptual** and **Relative Colorimetric** are suitable for photographic use. The recommended one to use for most situations is Perceptual – unless following any manufacturer's instructions on using their profiles, in which case, use the Rendering Intent advised.

A Note on Black Point Compensation

Black Point Compensation will tell Photoshop how to re-align the blacks between different colour spaces and profiles. There are no set rules on its use but, it is generally accepted, is best to leave it unticked unless following any specific instructions, or if converting from RGB to CMYK colour spaces.

