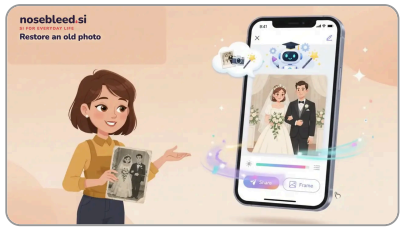
Restore an old photo

Use AI to repair a faded or creased photo, and check it hasn't changed the people in it.



By the end, you'll be able to:

- take a good copy of an old photo
- ask AI to repair it, carefully
- check the result, and keep the original safe

Warm-up What's the oldest photo in your family?

Talk about it with your group. Where is it kept? What condition is it in? Who's in it?

1 Take a good copy

Before AI can help, you need a clear copy on your phone or computer. Tick the good habits.

	Good idea	Not a good idea
Lay the photo flat, near a window, out of direct sun		
Use the flash		
Hold the phone straight above the photo		
Take it out of the frame, so there's no glass reflection		
Fill the screen with the photo		
Iron out the creases first		

2 Ask AI to repair it

You'll need an AI app that can work with pictures. If you have one, share your copy and try this prompt.

TRY THIS PROMPT

Please gently restore this old photo. Remove the creases, spots and scratches, and improve the faded parts. Keep the people's faces, hair and clothes exactly as they are: don't add or change any details.

3 Spot the changes

When AI repairs a photo, it sometimes invents things. Tick the changes that would be a problem.

	Fine	A problem
The creases have gone		
Grandad now has a different nose		
The faded sky is blue again		
A smile has been added		
A missing corner has been filled in with made-up background		
The spots have gone		

Talk about it: why does it matter if AI changes a face, even a little?

4 Colour, or no colour?

AI can add colour to black-and-white photos. But it has to guess the colours. How would you label a coloured copy, so family know?

5 Keep it safe

- Always keep the original photo, and the plain copy you took.
- Save the restored version as a new copy, with a name like "Wedding 1958, restored".
- Write the names, place and year on the back of the original, in soft pencil.

> **No device?** Pass round some old photos (copies, not originals). In pairs, list what's damaged, and what you'd ask AI to fix.

Find out more: read the free step-by-step guide, with a 10-second video, at **nosebleed.si/ideas/restore-an-old-photo**

Teacher notes: Restore an old photo

Time: 45 to 60 minutes

Group: any size; works well in pairs

Level: beginners; no AI experience needed

You'll need: a copy per learner; old photos (copies); phones or tablets with an AI app that can edit pictures (optional)

Before the session

Try the prompt with an old photo of your own. Not every AI chat app can edit photos, and some only do it on paid plans, so check what yours can do first. Bring a few printed copies of old photos for learners without their own.

Running order

5 min	**Warm-up.** Old family photos.
10 min	**Part 1.** Taking a good copy. Demonstrate with a phone.
20 min	**Parts 2 and 3.** Try the prompt, then what counts as a problem.
10 min	**Parts 4 and 5.** Colour, and keeping originals safe.
5 min	**Wrap-up.** Repair, don't rewrite.

Answers: Part 1

Good: lay it flat by a window; hold the phone straight above; take it out of the frame; fill the screen.
Not good: the flash causes glare; ironing can ruin an old photo.

Answers: Part 3

Fine: creases gone; spots gone; the sky (though a "blue" sky is a guess).
A problem: a different nose; an added smile; a made-up corner, if no one knows it's made up.

Part 4

For example: "Colour added by AI in 2026. The colours are a guess." Without a label, a guess can become "fact" for future generations.

Discussion points

- Compare the restored copy with the original, side by side, especially faces.
- Old photos are personal. Think about privacy before sharing pictures of living people.
- For very precious or badly damaged photos, a professional restorer is another option.

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