

Graphics Editing

Images have become more and more a part of everything we do with technology. We can get images from many places such as:

- The Internet
- A digital camera
- A scanner

And we can use the images in many things such as:

- PowerPoint presentations
- Word processing documents
- Our own web pages

One important step though, is making sure your images are good quality, the proper size, and saved in the correct format. This guide will help you make sure that the thousand words your pictures are speaking are the ones you meant to say.

Graphics Editing Programs

First you need to choose a **graphics-editing program**. Such a program will allow you to alter your images by resizing, cropping, rotating, brightening, etc. There are many excellent programs available for this purpose including **Adobe PhotoShop**, **Paint Shop Pro**, and a slew of others.

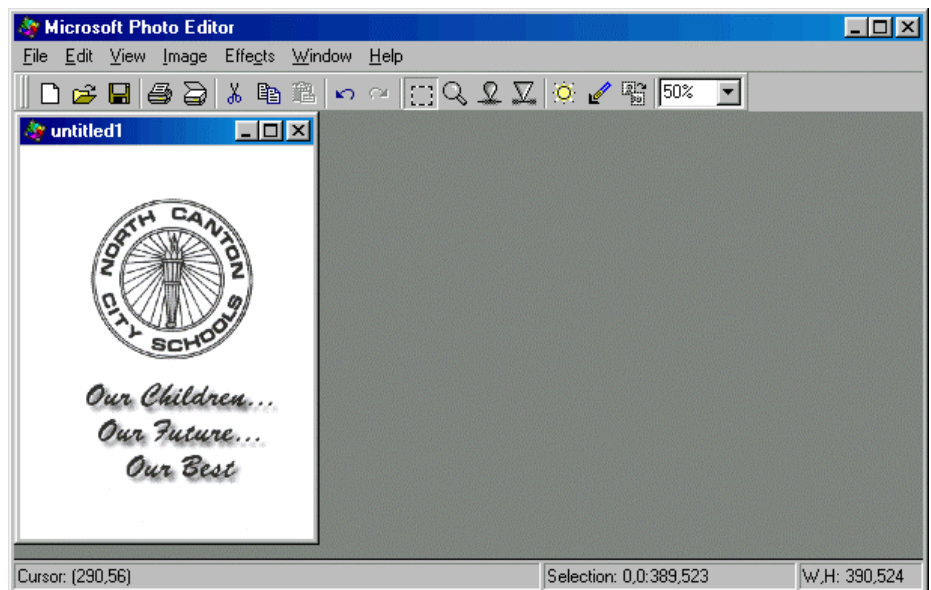
For this guide, we will be using **Microsoft Photo Editor** for two reasons.

- First, it is a decent program with most of the basic editing functions you will need, while not being so advanced as to be intimidating.
- Secondly it is very widely available. It is installed along with the rest of Microsoft Office, so if you have Word, Excel, and such, you ought to have Photo Editor as well.




Using Microsoft Photo Editor

- 1) After starting up Photo Editor, begin by opening up an image. To do this:
 - a) Click on "**File**" in the top menu bar
 - b) Next click "**Open...**" from the drop down menu
 - c) Using the drop down menu in the "**Look in:**" box, navigate to locate your file
 - d) Finally, click on "**Open**"



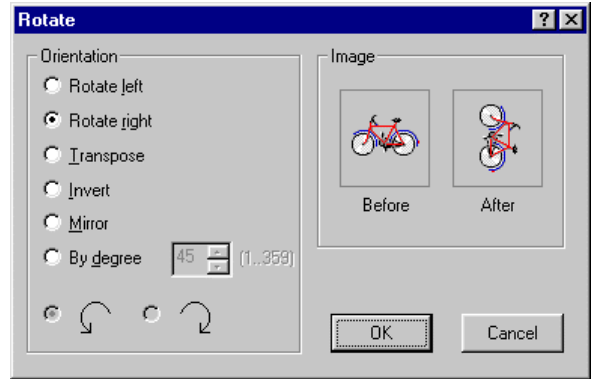
Now that the image is open you can begin editing it:

2) **Crop the image** - To cut the image down to just the portions you want...

- Click the **"Select"** button 
- Click and hold down your mouse button at one corner of the selection you want, and then drag your mouse to the opposite corner so that a rectangle surrounds the area you wish to keep.
- Click **"Image"** and then **"Crop..."**
- Click **"OK"** in the Crop Window to do the crop.

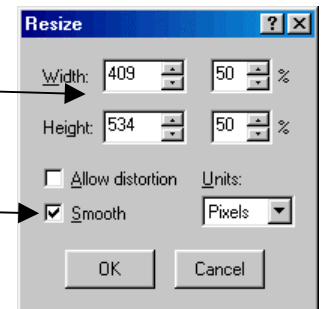
3) **Rotate the image** - To rotate the image...

- Click **"Image"** and then **"Rotate..."**
- Choose the type of rotation you want from the Rotate Window.
- Click **"OK"** to do the rotate.



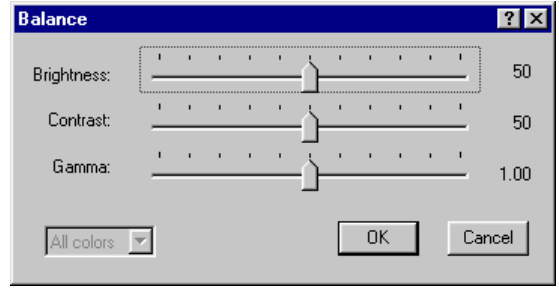
4) **Resize the image** - The final size of the image is a very important consideration. If you leave the image too large, it will take up an unnecessarily large amount of data space, making PowerPoint presentations or Word documents too big to fit on a floppy disk. To resize the image...

- The best way to measure the size of an image is in pixels. A **pixel** is an individual dot in the picture. Make sure you are measuring with pixels by clicking **"View"** and then **"Measuring Units"** and then **"Pixels"**.
- Take note of how big the image is by hovering your mouse over it and reading the width and height in the bottom right corner of the Photo Editor window. A typical computer screen is either 640X480 or 800X600 pixels. Decide if your image needs to be as big as it currently is.
- If you choose to resize the image, click **"Image"** and then **"Resize..."**
- You can change either the pixels or percentage for the width or height until they are set to the size you wish.
- You should check the box for **"Smooth"** to make sure the resulting image is a clear as possible.
- Click **"OK"** when ready to do the resize.



5) **Balance the colors** - Sometimes an image can be difficult to see because it is too dark or too bright. You can adjust these problems with the **Balance** control:

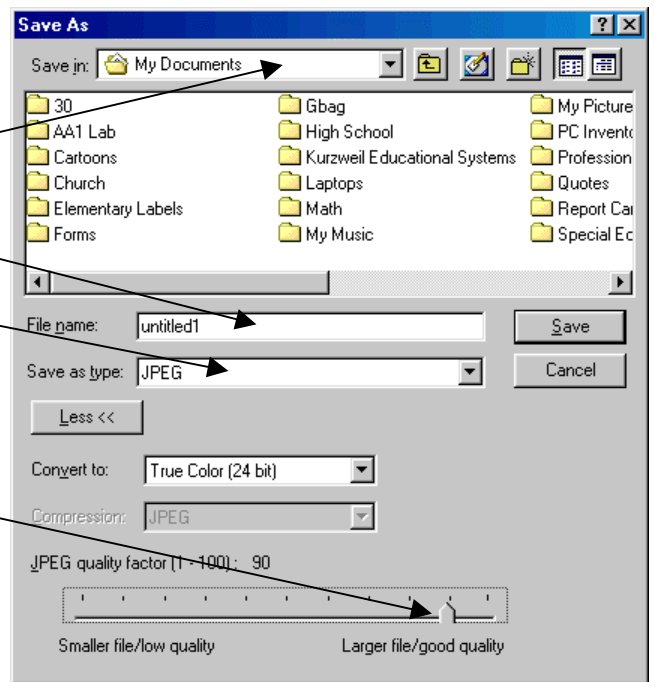
- a) Click "**Image**" in the top tool bar, then "**Balance...**" from the drop down menu
- b) Now you can slide the "**Brightness:**" control to make the overall image brighter or darker.
- c) You can also slide the "**Contrast:**" control to increase or decrease the difference between the brighter and darker colors.
- d) Finally, you can slide the "**Gamma:**" control to alter the contrast in only the dark areas of the picture.



- 6) **Save the image** - When you are ready to save the image you will need to choose which format to save it in. There are two main option, each explained below:
 - a) **GIF format** - This method only allows for 256 colors, so it is best for a non-photorealistic image, such as a chart, graph, cartoon, map, or logo.
 - b) **JPEG format** - This method allows for 16.7 million colors, so it is best for any image that is photorealistic, such as a photograph or a picture from a magazine.

When ready to save...

- c) Click "**File**" and then "**Save As...**"
- d) Choose where you want to save the image in the "**Save in:**" drop-down box.
- e) Choose a name to give to the image in the "**File name:**" box.
- f) Choose the format for the image in the "**Save as type:**" box, by choosing either **Compuserve GIF** or **JPEG**.
- g) If you choose JPEG, click on the "**More>>**" button to adjust the **quality factor**, which ought to be set around **90**.
- h) Click "**Save**" when ready to do the save.



... and that is it! Now your image is saved and ready for use in whatever application you wish

Questions, comments, concerns? Email me at:
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