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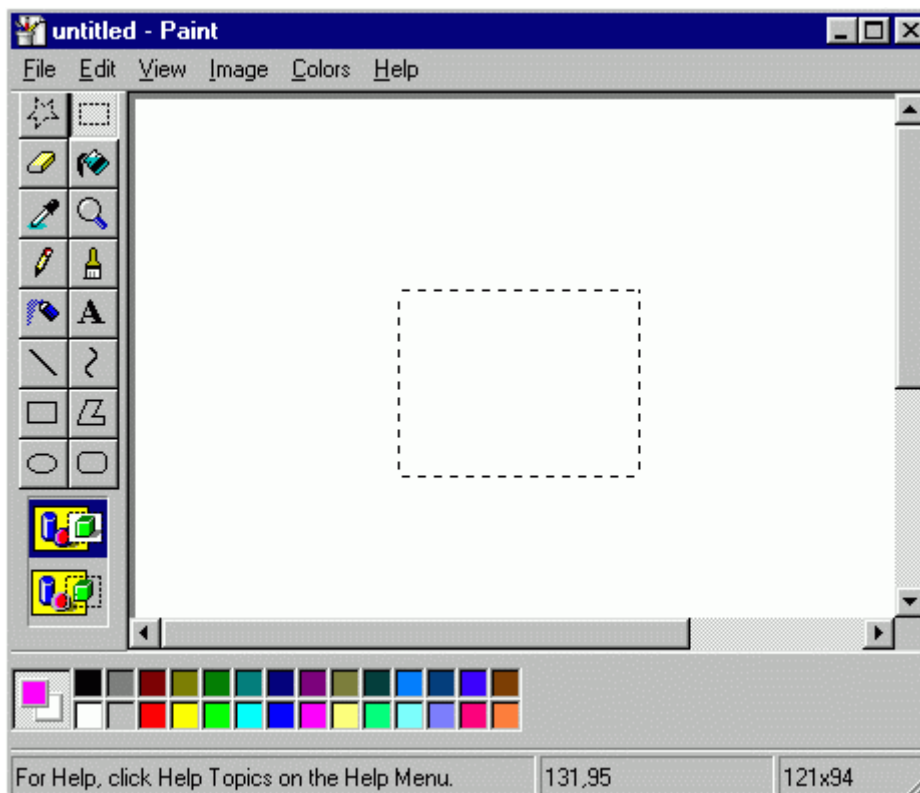
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Learn to use the tools and make pictures with MS Paint

If you find this page useful, if something hasn't been explained clearly, or if you have a question or a comment, please send me an email at obbyspage@iprimus.com.au. I'd love to hear from you. I do make additions and changes in response to suggestions, which is why the page has been revised and has a couple of extra items.

There are better programs than MS Paint, but it's the only one that comes with your operating system—it's free and you don't have to locate and download it. Having such a small number of tools and capabilities, it's easy to learn and a little perseverance will quickly make you an expert in its use.

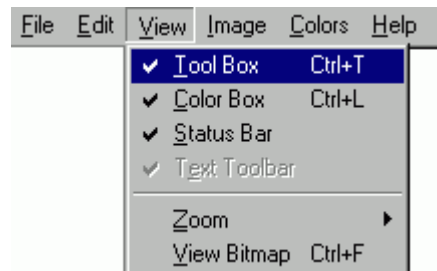
The Paint Window



This is the window that you see when you open Paint. I like to use a big drawing area, probably because I'm a messy worker! Yours may be just a small square. It makes no difference to the operation of the program. If, however, your Paint window doesn't have colours along the bottom and a double line of grey squares (with various small symbols on them) down the left side as this one does, click **View** on the menu bar at the top of the window and tick the items shown here.

Text Toolbar, which is dimmed in this picture, only becomes available when you're working with text.

The items **Zoom** and **View Bitmap** offer different views of your work. The Zoom tool is dealt with under its own heading. View Bitmap gives you a full-screen view. (On my computer it usually causes Paint to crash, but I suppose every machine has its little ways.)



Menus

Four of the Paint menus—**File**, **Edit**, **View** and **Help**—are common to almost all Windows programs. Some of the commands available, though, are specific to this program. (The items listed on a menu are known as COMMANDS. Thus PASTE is a command. Tool bar buttons access frequently needed commands.)

Menus that are special to Windows Paint are **Image** and **Colors**.

The menu of greatest interest is the [Image Menu](#), (page 4) which I'll discuss as soon as we've looked at the different areas of the Paint window.



The toolbox

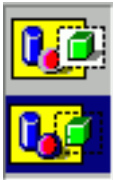
All the little grey boxes down the left are called the **tools** and together they make the **toolbox**.

The [individual tools](#) (page 5) will each be explained separately further down.

Under the toolbox is a small area where you see different options according to which tool you're using.

It may show line thickness, spray can density, size and shape of the paintbrush or whether a shape is to be filled or hollow. Some tools have no options, and when any of these tools is active (selected or in use) the area below the toolbox remains blank.

Paste Options

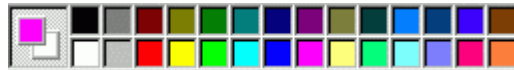


In this picture, with the [selection tool](#) (page 10) active, you have a choice between **paste opaque** and **paste transparent** (selected, as you can tell by the dark background).

When you have white as your **background colour**—the colour selected by the right mouse button—and have chosen **paste transparent**, anything you select from a picture with a white background can be pasted without a rectangle of white surrounding it.

If the item you want to select is sitting on a background of a colour other than white, clicking your right button on that colour will make it possible for you to select the item without its background.

The Colour Palette



Under the main window

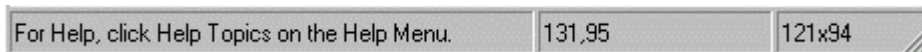
is the colour palette.

The two squares set apart from the rest at the left end of the palette show the active colours; the colours presently in use. When you click on a colour in the palette with the **left** mouse button, that colour will be the **primary** or **foreground** colour, here shown as pink. The colour you click on with the **right** mouse button will be the **secondary** or **background** colour, here shown as white.

These terms are the same in all the graphics (Programs including painting and drawing programs as well as small programs with a single function, such as recolouring.) programs I've used.

The Status Bar

Right at the bottom of the Paint window is the Status Bar. It gives information according to what you're doing.



If it can't think of anything pertinent to say, it has the "For Help" message, its variation on "Yes, Dear". **Help** can also be invoked by pressing the **F1** key at any time. This is true of most Windows programs.

Cursor Position

To the right of the help message is the cursor position (here shown as 131,95). The 131 refers to the distance away from the left margin and the 95 the distance down from the top margin. This pair of numbers changes as you move the mouse around the window with no buttons pressed. As soon as you press either button the number "sticks" and remains the same until you release the button.

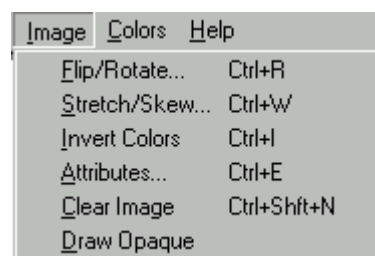
The last part of the status bar tells you the size in pixels of the thing you're drawing or the selection you've made (here shown as 121x94). The 121 refers to the width of the shape or selection and the 94 to its height.

OK. Here's the image menu.

Flip/Rotate lets you turn things upside down or sideways. You can only turn through 90 degrees, 180 and 270. Fancier programs let you rotate more finely.

Stretch/Skew lets you make things bigger, smaller or pushed sideways. Bitmaps greatly enlarged look pretty rough, so step carefully.

It's worth drawing a shape, selecting it and then investigating the effects of stretching and skewing.





Invert Colours attempts to change the colours of a selection to their opposites. Just how accurately it does this depends on the colours available, as can be seen here, where the right half of the picture is a copy of the left but has had its colours inverted.

Keystrokes

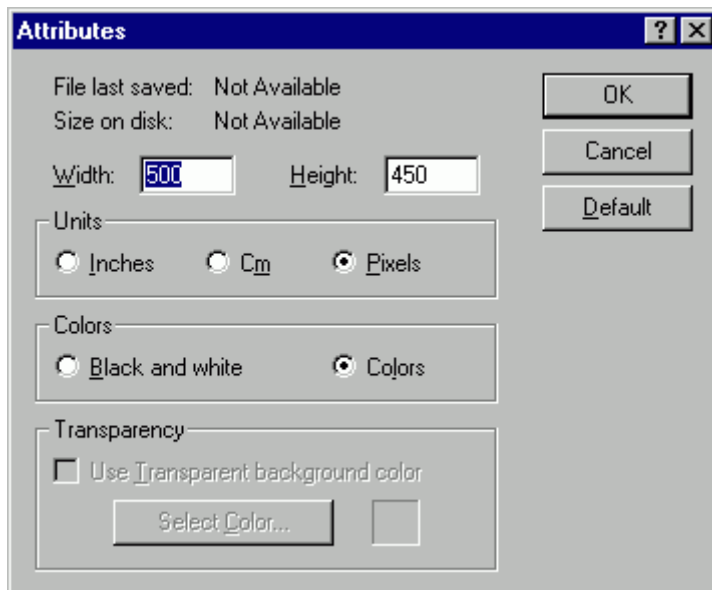
The letters beside the different items are keys you can press instead of going through the menu. Unless you're going to use

this program every day, it's not a good idea to bother learning them because they clash with Word keys that you'd use more often, like (in Word) Ctrl + e means "Centre" and Ctrl + r means "Right".

Furthermore, in my copy of Paint I get no response to these keys beyond a warning "ding".

The usual Windows keys: **Ctrl+s** to save, **Ctrl+z** to undo, **Ctrl+c** to copy, **Ctrl+x** to cut and **Ctrl+v** to paste also work in Paint.

The most important thing on the image menu is Attributes.



If you click on Attributes you can change the size of the drawing area. You can also click either inches or centimetres as your preferred measurement. This, however, will only tell you the size of your drawing area. Cursor position and the dimensions of drawn objects will still be shown on the status bar in pixels. There is also an option to work in black and white. Working in black and white is a thankless task. Many of the tools become meaningless. Leave black and white for experts or masochists.

Now for the different tools.

The button representing a selected tool will appear to be depressed.

The Zoom Tool

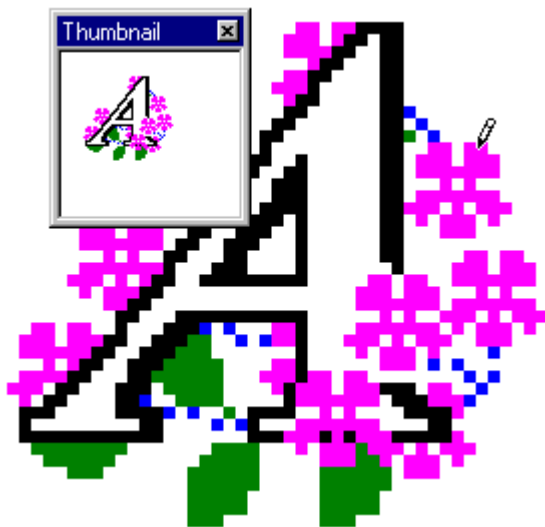


The little magnifying glass changes your view of a drawing. If you want to change some tiny thing that's really hard to see, click on the magnifying glass. It can be called the zoom tool or the view tool.

As soon as you click on it, numbers appear under the toolbox. They are 1x, 2x, 6x and 8x.

If you click on one of the magnifications, you'll get a bigger view, but you can't be sure which part of the picture you'll zoom in on. Therefore it's better to click on the picture.

However, when you **are** zoomed in, two further options become available on the **View Menu**. These are **Show Grid** and **Thumbnail**.



While you are working in a zoomed view, **Thumbnail** will give you a small window in which you can observe the results of changes as you make them. The Thumbnail window can be placed wherever you find it convenient, and it can be resized by dragging the sides or the corners.

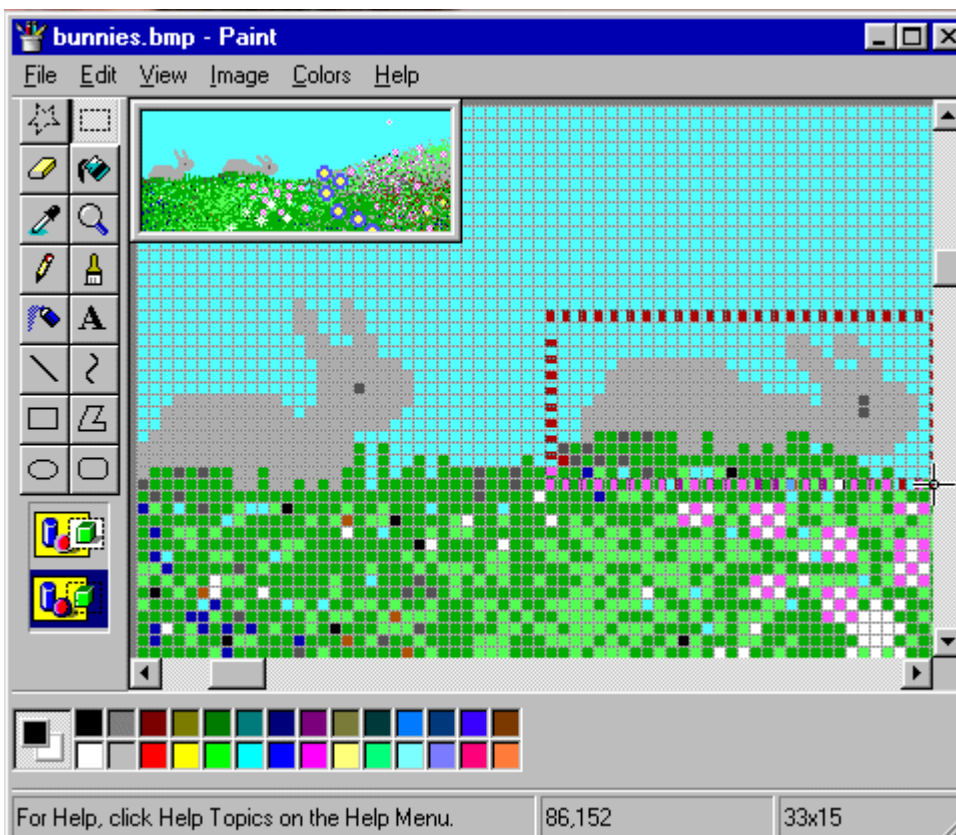
Once you have it sized and positioned to your liking, it will follow as you move tools around the zoomed window.

Unfortunately, once you return to normal view the Thumbnail window is often lost and will have to be invoked again when next you zoom in.

Show Grid

Show Grid also becomes available on the **View** menu only when you are working in a zoomed in window. Each pixel (short for “picture cell”) of colour can be seen individually. This is useful if you are trying to make a very precise selection or place one or two pixels of colour in a precise location.

Here a selection is being made, and you can see that both its starting location (40 pixels from the left and 21 pixels from the top) and size (30 pixels wide and 14 pixels high) are reflected in the numbers in the status bar.



Changing the Zoom

If, while you are zoomed in, you click the magnifying glass again and click on the picture you can choose a view of 2x, 6x or 8x.

You can also go into the **View** menu and choose **Custom**.

The choice you make here will affect the working of the zoom tool until you visit this option box again. That is, if you choose 800%, the next time you click the zoom tool on part of your picture, (while in normal view) the view will change to 8x.



The Paintbrush

This picture shows that I've chosen the paintbrush. The palette says I'll be painting with black, unless I press the right button while I'm drawing, in which case I'll paint with white, which won't really do me a lot of good. I can change either colour by clicking the appropriate button on the colour I want it to use. Under the tools and above the palette are a lot of different shapes with which I can choose to paint. The one I've chosen (it shows as an oblique white line on a blue oblong) will give a thick line when I drag in one direction and a skinny one in the other direction, so you get a sort of calligraphy pen effect. It's also useful for painting right up close to something.



The Curve Tool

This is the curve tool. It's hard to learn, but you can have a lot of fun with it. You choose a line thickness from under the toolbox, and you choose a colour to draw with. I've used different thicknesses and different colours. Drag a straight line, then click somewhere near it. Move your cursor and click again, or drag and click. You only get two clicks per curve. If you don't like what happens you hold Ctrl and tap z and it'll go away. The flower petal shapes are made differently. Imagine a triangle and click each of its points. You don't drag a line first. You have to practice for about a hundred years before you have the faintest idea which way up the shape will be. You might find it easier to get all organised and draw a grid to guide your work (page 12) and then rub it out later.

The Eraser Tool

Here we have the eraser, a clever little gadget. When you press the left button, it rubs out everything you drag over.

Swapping Colours

When you press the right button it changes anything the colour of the left button to the colour of the right button.

Say you have a blue line and you change your mind and wish it were green.

- Select the eraser tool.
- Go down to the palette and click your right button on green.
- Click your left button on blue.
- Now, pressing the right button, drag over the blue line.
- Magic! You now have a green line.



This is very handy if you need to draw guidelines to help get a picture the way you want it. You draw the guidelines in a colour you don't like much and won't use in the drawing. When you've done your drawing, you put the nasty guideline colour onto your left button and white (assuming that white is the colour of your background) onto your right button and drag over the guidelines.

Your picture remains, but the guidelines disappear.

The squares under the toolbox show you the sizes of eraser from which you can choose.

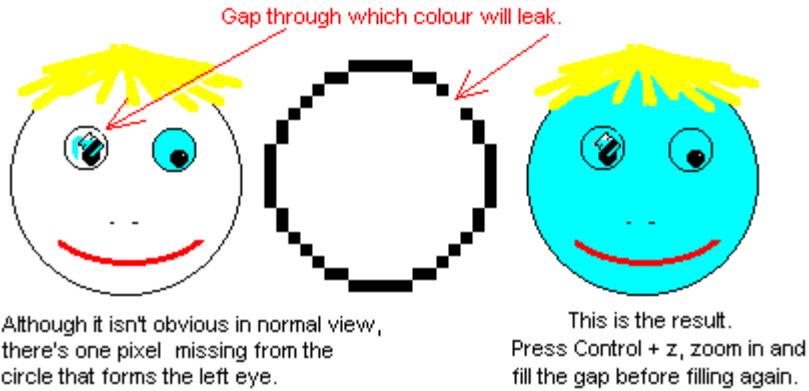


The Colour Picker



This is the colour picker. If you're working on a drawing, particularly if you're "zoomed in", and you want to use one of the colours that's nearby in the part you're working on, instead of going down to choose the colour from the palette you click on the colour picker and then on the colour in the drawing.

The Fill Bucket



This is the fill colour bucket tool. It's also called the flood tool. You use it to fill a shape with a colour of your choice.

The shape must have absolutely no holes in it, or the colour will leak out and go into places where you don't want it. If that were to happen, you'd hold down Control and press z.

Then zoom in and find the place where colour leaks through. It can be just one pixel. It's most likely to happen if you've pasted a piece of clip art and are colouring it in.

Erasing A Colour with The Flood Tool

Apart from filling shapes, this can be used as a sort of eraser. Say you've been scribbling away and you've left bits of blue all over the place. Flood the drawing area with blue, then with white, and all the bits and scraps of blue should vanish.

If you had some blue things that you wanted, though, they'd vanish too. Another job for good old Ctrl+z.

When The Flood Tool Won't Work

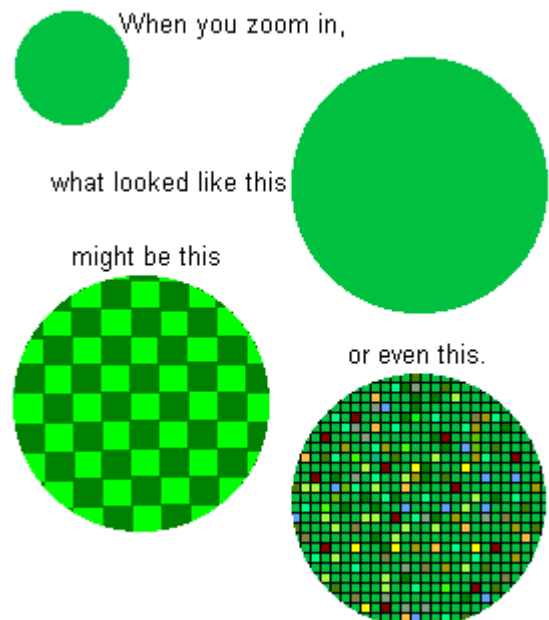
Sometimes you try to use this tool to change a colour in an existing picture and nothing happens.

After you've done the virus check, rung the repair man, worried about your brain function, etc, etc, you should zoom in and have a close look at the area you're trying to colour. What you'll see is not one colour, but two, several or many colours mixed together. This applies particularly to photographs, but also happens with some clip art. Colours are "smoothed" to make them look more natural; skin tones, for instance.

Dithering

There's also a process called dithering. This happens when a picture needs more colours than are available to it. For instance, the 16 Windows colours include no soft pink. If you change 256 colours to 16, some programs will try to match pink by mixing red and white pixels. It works well, but it makes the fill bucket impossible to use.

The only way to deal with this situation is to use the colour picker to select one colour at a time and use the colour eraser on each in turn.



The Line Tool



This tool makes straight lines. You can drag freehand to make a line in any direction, or you can hold down the shift key and the line will be constrained to exactly vertical, exactly horizontal, or exactly 45 degrees.

The line thickness is chosen from the box under the toolbox.

The Pencil Tool



The pencil draws freehand. It's very, very hard to learn to use. When you can write your name with the pencil you should rush out and buy a lot of balloons and otherwise congratulate yourself.

The pencil is always set at a width of one pixel. In zoom-in view, it's very useful for changing the colour of single pixels or small groups thereof.

The Shapes Tool



This group of tools is used for drawing shapes. Three of them, the rectangle, ellipse and rounded rectangle, respond similarly to your holding the shift key. This constrains them to drawing either a circle or a square—with or without rounded corners. The polygon tool responds somewhat differently, in that it attempts to keep its lines exactly vertical, exactly horizontal, or exactly at 45 degrees.

Polygons



To draw a polygon, such as a star, a triangle or an odd-shaped quadrilateral, drag to make the first line, then click where you want subsequent lines to end. When you double click, a line will be drawn from the end of the last existing line to the beginning of the line that you dragged to begin.

Below the toolbox there are three representations of how you might like your polygon drawn. The top one is hollow; just an outline. The middle one is filled and has a border. The bottom one is a solid block of colour without any border.

These polygons were drawn with the middle choice, which means “filled shape with a border”.

Border Thickness of Shapes

The thickness of the outline of rectangles, ellipses and polygons is governed by the last choice you made for line thickness. If your border is too thick or too thin, click the line tool, choose the line thickness that you want, then click your shape tool again.

Remember, if the one you started was wrong, Ctrl+z will undo it.

Hollow Shapes

These shapes have been drawn as hollow; they're just an outline. The background colour is used if you drag with the right button. The foreground colour is used if you drag with the left.

Filled Circles and Squares

These are filled shapes. Which colour is used as the fill and which as the border depends on the button you're holding as you drag. With the left button the background colour is used as the fill.

The Spray Paint Tool



The spray can delivers individual pixels of colour in a spray pattern.

Below the toolbox are three choices for width and density.

The dots are much closer together if you choose the small option.

This tool is one of the easiest to use and a good one to start with. Choose the wide spray, as shown selected here, and just drag all over the drawing area.

Change colours often. You'll find that it's much easier to draw some sort of recognisable shape—or even write your name—with this tool than with the pencil or brush. Spray one colour over another, or try building up more colour in one area than in another.

The Selection Tools



Now we have the selection tools. The one on the right is the one you'll almost always use. It selects a rectangular area. The star shaped one is more tricky.

The Rectangular Selection Tool



You use this tool when you want to move something to a different part of the drawing.

You also use it if you want two or more copies of the same thing.

A third thing you can use it for is to draw or write with a small part of your painting.

Last, you can use it to delete an area. The selection tools in this program work particularly well and without fuss. Don't tell the program writers, or they'll think of a way to make them less handy!

Here's How It Works.

You drag across the thing or area you want to copy. The usual way is to start at the top left and drag to bottom right. This makes a dashed rectangle around the area. Now you can let go and put your cursor anywhere inside the selected area. If you click anywhere else, the selection will be cancelled.

Press with your left button and drag the selection to where you want it. If you press with your right button you'll get a menu instead. The menu seems to be mostly about doing things in a longer way, so use the left button.

There are two things to think about when you're moving a selection. The first is your background colour. This doesn't mean the colour that's the background of your picture. It means the colour that's on your right mouse button.

If it's say, a horrible dirty green, the place from which you moved the selection will assume that colour, which is not likely to be what you want. Therefore, make sure that your right button colour is the same colour as the background of your picture.

Transparency

The other consideration is transparency. You may want to move the selection just as it is; a rectangular shape with a fair bit of white in it. On the other hand, you may want only what you've drawn, in which case you'll want the white to be transparent.



This little pair of icons, which appear conveniently when you click on the selection tool, control transparency. With the bottom icon highlighted, as shown here, your selection will be transparent. With the top icon highlighted, the whole rectangular area will come along, no matter what colours are in it.

N.B. "Transparency" here refers only to what happens while you're working in Paint. As far as I know, Paint will not save with a transparent colour. If you need to make a gif where the background shows through, you need to open your finished work in another program, such as IrfanView.

OK. That was about moving your selection. Now we'll use the same tool to make a copy.

Copying Parts of Your Drawing

Select the area as before, by dragging from top left to bottom right. Let go and place your cursor inside the dashed rectangle. Check that transparency is set the way you want it. Hold down the control key. Drag the selection to the place where you want the copy. Click. You can move it to lots of different places. Each time you click you'll leave a copy.

Drawing with A Cutout

Accidental Splodging.



Drawing with a part of your picture takes some practice. Select an area, move or copy it to where you want to begin, hold down the shift key and start dragging. How it works out depends on speed and direction. If you drag quickly, you get the image repeated randomly but recognisably. If you drag more slowly you get a splodgy result. This may or may not be what you want.



Deliberate splodging.

The word “splodging” has now been added to the dictionary!

The Freehand Selection Tool



You'll only need to use this tool if you want to copy something that's in an awkward position. If two things are close together, so that you can't draw a straight line between them, you use this tool. You use it to make a freehand selection around the thing you're selecting. Drag as though you were drawing around the shape with a pencil, until you have the whole thing outlined. As soon as you release the mouse button the selection will have been made, so if you let go too soon you'll need to start again.

When the selection appears, it looks as though a rectangular area has been selected. When you move or copy the selection, though, you'll find that only the part you outlined has been selected.

To delete something with a selection tool, select it and press the delete key.

You can also delete things by drawing white squares or circles over them, or, if they're in solid blocks of colour, by clicking the fill tool on them when it's loaded with white.

Text

Now text. Text is tricky. Always save before you start adding text, so that if you run out of undo levels you can exit without saving and have your picture as it was before you started the text.

When you click the large **A** that represents the text tool and click on your page, a little font bar should pop up. If it doesn't, click the **View** menu and click **Text Toolbar**.

You use this toolbar just as you would in a word processor, choosing font, size, and special things like Bold or Italic. There's an icon at the right hand end that I don't understand. It doesn't have a tool tip and it isn't mentioned in help. Perhaps it's an emergency exit; a “break glass in case of fire” sort of thing.

To make your initial text box, you can click or drag; it doesn't matter. If, while you're typing text, you realise that the box is too small, you can put your cursor over one of the “handles” (black blocks) and drag it wider or taller or both. When you have all of your text in the box, adjust the size of the box, because it doesn't contract to fit the text when you paste. Be very careful that you do have the double-ended size adjustment arrow before you press a mouse button, or you may paste the text before you mean to. Sometimes the text box refuses to have its size reduced. I haven't worked out what causes this to happen.

It is possible to move a text box before pasting. You have to hover your cursor exactly over the dashed line until a normal-looking arrow appears. Press the left mouse button and drag the text box to a new position.

If you want some padding in front of the text you have to use spaces.

Before you click outside the text box—thus pasting the text into the picture—check your transparency icons. You may want the text pasted on a rectangular background so that it stands out from the rest of the picture. If so, have the top icon highlighted. If you want the text without a background, choose the lower icon.

If I were adding text to a picture in Paint, I'd have spare space on my drawing area, and I'd type my text there, make a block of colour to fit it nicely if I wanted a coloured background, paste the text onto the background and then paste the whole thing where I wanted it in the picture. It's too awkward doing it straight into position; too many things can go wrong.

By the way, if I wanted it on a white background, I'd make the background some other colour until I had the box in position, and then I'd use the fill tool and/or the colour eraser to make it white.

Well, that's it, as far as I can think. Just for fun, here's a template and directions for drawing a flower. Copy the picture, paste it into Paint, and see how you go. (If it appeals to you.)

Drawing a Collection of Flowers



These directions will put you on the road to making something like this—or, probably, something much more interesting and creative. The results may not have the smooth finish you'd achieve in a top flight graphics program, but hey! Paint is free, you can produce something of your own in jig time, and you'll become familiar with many of the tools along the way.

To do this exercise without hassles, you'll need a really big drawing window.

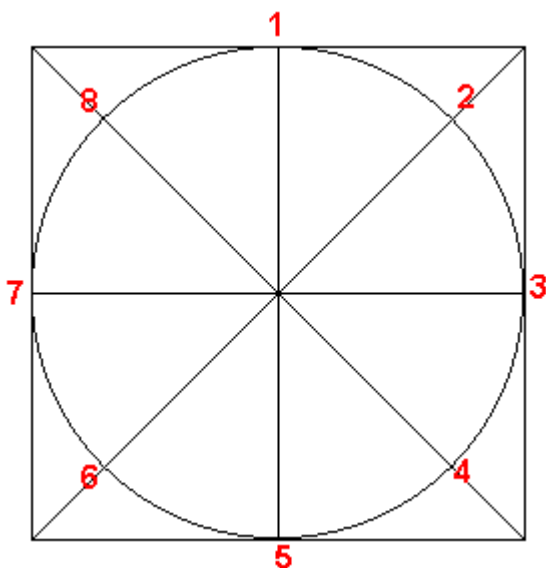
You'll also be wise to save often. Once you've saved your workspace—perhaps naming it *workspace.gif*—you only need to hold down the Ctrl key and tap “s” to save as you work.

If you find that Paint doesn't have GIF on its drop down list, there are some [possible remedies here](#). (If Paint Offers Only BMP Format, page 16)

Ctrl+s will save in just about any Windows program. Using it often is a good habit to get into.

Getting Started

Copy The Template from Here



one. The offered name is sometimes a string of numbers. Use a name that makes sense. The default name for this picture is *flower_template.gif*.

There are other ways to save pictures from the web—but not if Paint is your only graphics program. Other programs will save the picture at its true size; if Paint happens to have a large drawing area set, it will save all of the unused area as part of the picture. This is **not** an economical way to save pictures.

You can use this method to copy any picture from any web page. However, some pictures are protected and can't be copied. That's because the artist doesn't want their work freely distributed. Such pictures may have taken great skill and hours of work to produce.

If a web site has a notice requesting that you don't copy images, always heed it.

Right click on the picture.

Choose **Save Picture As**.

Make sure that the picture is being saved in a place of your choice, then either accept the offered name or type in a new

Bring a Copy of the Template into Paint

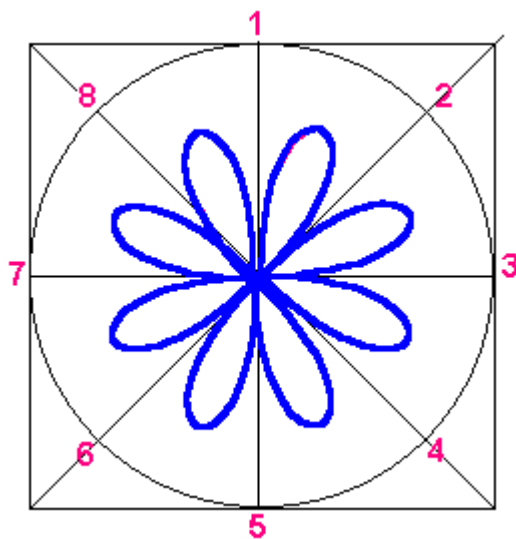
- Later, when you're ready, open Paint and make or open *workspace.gif*.
- Check that you have white as your background (right button) colour.
- Click Edit on the menu bar, choose **Paste From** and navigate to the place where you've saved *flower_template.gif*.
- Make sure that you drop down the **Files of Type** list and choose either **All Picture Files** or **Graphics Interchange Format**, otherwise the saved gif won't be shown.
- Double click *flower_template.gif*.
- When you're returned to the Paint window, there will be a dashed selection rectangle around *flower_template.gif*. If you'd like to move it to a different position, position your cursor anywhere **inside** the dashed rectangle and drag the picture.
- Click anywhere outside the picture to paste it.
- Save your work.

N.B. It's important that you work on a copy of the template, pasted in this way. If you try to work on the template directly, colours will not be available.

First Steps

Working over The Template

1. Choose a strong colour—but not red or black.
2. Click the curved line tool.
3. Set line width to the second thickness.
4. Click the centre of the circle.
5. Click where line 1 crosses the circle.
6. Click where line 2 crosses the circle. The first petal should appear.
7. Click the curved line tool to paste the petal.
8. Click the centre of the circle.
9. Click where line 2 crosses the circle.
10. Click where line 3 crosses the circle. The second petal should appear.
11. Click the curved line tool to paste the second petal.
12. Continue around the circle, following the pattern of centre, 1,2, paste, centre, 2, 3, paste, centre, 3, 4, paste, until you are back to line 1 and have an eight petalled flower.



Now Remove the Template

1. Make sure that you have white as your background colour. That is, click your right mouse button on white in the colour palette.
2. Click your left mouse button on black.
3. Click on the eraser tool.
4. Pressing your right mouse button, drag over every black line or curve.
5. Now click your left button on red in the colour palette.
6. Pressing your right mouse button, drag over every red number.

Colour the Flower

- a) Click your left mouse button on the colour you'd like your flower to be. It can be the colour that you used to make the outline, or it can be a different colour.
- b) Click on the fill bucket tool.
- c) Click inside one of the petals.
- d) Click inside each petal until all are filled.

Make A Centre for The Flower

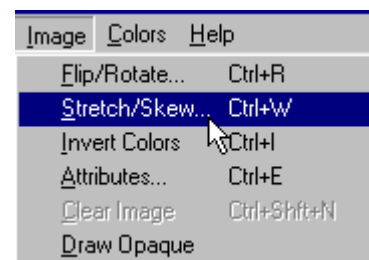
1. Click on the line tool and then on the third thickness in the box below the tools.
2. Choose foreground and background colours that are different from the colours already in the picture.
3. Click on the circle/ellipse tool.
4. Click on the filled shape below the tools.
5. In an empty part of your drawing window, hold the shift key while you draw a filled circle. Make several of these circles until you're happy with the size.
6. With your right mouse button, click on white in the colour palette.
7. Click on the rectangular selection tool.
8. Click on the transparent selection icon.
9. Draw a selection rectangle around the circle you want to use as the centre of your flower.
10. Drag the circle onto the centre of your flower.
When you're satisfied with the position, click an empty part of your drawing window.

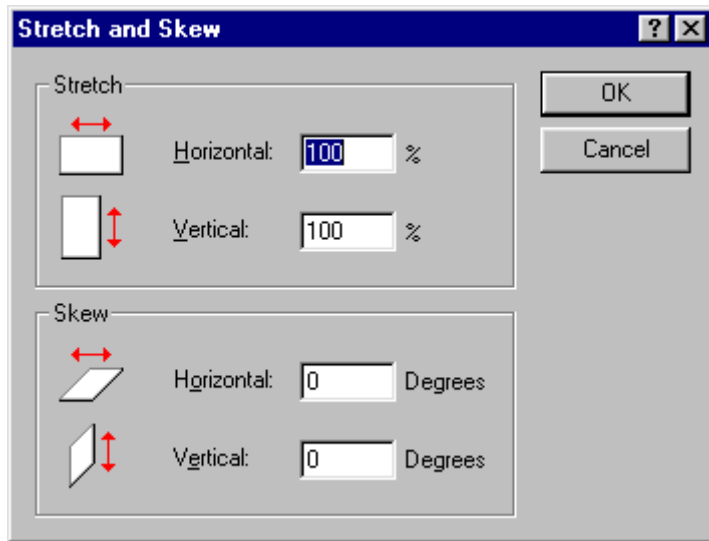
Make Copies of the Flower.

1. With white as your background colour, and with the transparency icon selected, draw a selection rectangle around your flower.
2. Press and hold the Ctrl key.
3. Drag a copy of you flower to an empty part of the drawing window.
4. Click to paste, then continue dragging until you have another copy.
5. Click each time you want to paste a copy.

Change The Size of The Flower.

1. Draw a selection rectangle around one copy of the flower.
2. On the View menu, choose **Stretch and Skew**.
3. In the dialogue box that appears, change 100 to 50 in both the horizontal and vertical slots.
4. Click OK.





The resultant size change here is rather dramatic. Select another copy of your flower, go through the same procedure, using different numbers. Try the effects of the **Skew** dialogue as well. You can, of course, change the **Stretch** numbers to something greater than 100, although the resulting picture may look rather rough. It's always a good idea to experiment so that you know what can and can't be done.

Change The Colours of The Flower.

When you have several copies in different sizes, click on the fill bucket tool, choose a colour and click on parts of one of your flowers.

Saving Your Work.

You'll eventually want to save some of the finished flowers without the huge work area you've been using.

You'll need to do this in two stages, using the **Copy To** procedure and then resaving the cut-outs.

Draw a selection rectangle around a part that you want to save. It may be one flower or a group.

Click on the **Edit** menu.

Click on **Copy To**

In the dialogue box, type a name and use the drop-down to choose 256 colour.

Usually, no formats other than bmp are offered for cut-outs. Even if they are offered, **they will not be saved correctly**, so stick with bmp at this stage. A table illustrating this problem is on the Screenshots page under the heading [The Incorrect Gif and Jpg Save in Paint](#). Click OK.

Select further parts of your picture and save them in the same way, varying the names.

It's quite useful to save a set of pictures as *flower01*, *flower02* and so on.

When you've finished cutting and saving, go to the file menu and choose **Open**.

Find the first of your cut-outs and double click its name.

Windows will now ask whether you want to save changes to *workspace.gif*.

It doesn't matter whether you do or not.

Next time you use the workspace you'll need to start by clearing away previous drawing anyway.

With the cut-out open, again click the **File** menu and choose **Save As**.

The dialogue box that comes up this time offers more formats than the previous one.

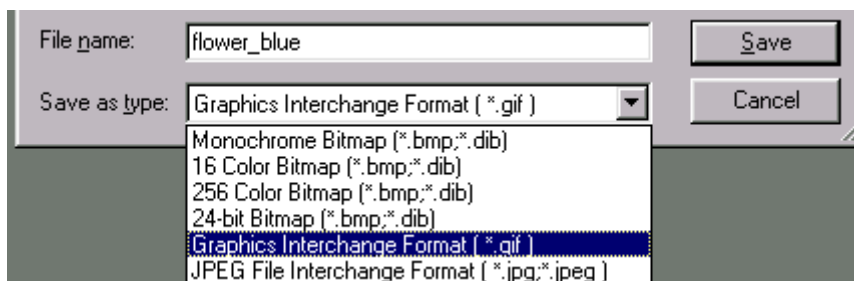
Click the drop down and choose the gif format.

This format saves quite accurately any colours you've used, and the colours won't bleed, as they do in the jpg format—but see note [below](#). (Formats for Saving Graphics)

After you click Save, Windows will warn that you may lose colour information.

With this sort of picture, that's nonsense.

Formats for Saving Graphics



These instructions refer to pictures *made* in Paint. Pasted photographs are quite different and would be spoiled by being saved in 256 colour format.

Once you've saved all of your pictures in the gif format, go to the folder in which they and the

original cutouts have been saved. Go up to the **View** menu and click on **Details**.

Now look down the **Size** column and compare the file size of the gifs with those of the original bmp files.

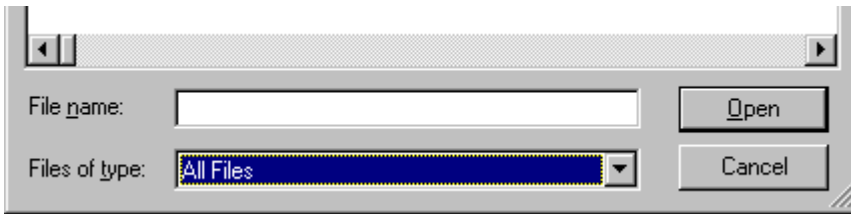
If Paint Offers Only BMP Format

If you find that you have no option to save a file as gif, there are two suggestions. As I haven't had this problem, I'm just passing on what others have told me.

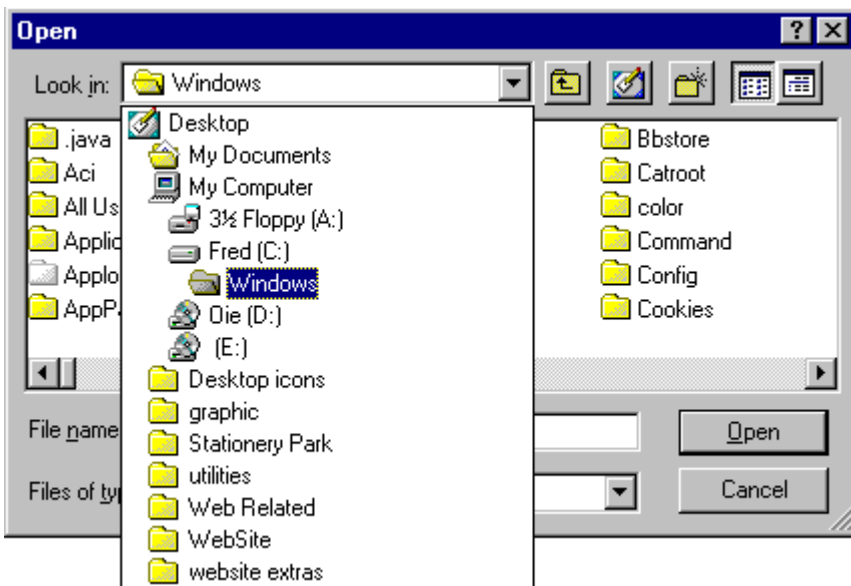
First, open Paint, click **File > Open**, browse to a gif file and open it.

Here are the steps you'll need to take for this to work for you

In order to have Paint see a gif file, you'll need to change the settings in the bottom slot of the Open dialogue. The default is Bitmap Files, so (although gifs and jpgs are in fact bitmap files) Paint may only search for those with the suffix **bmp**.



Click the drop-down arrow beside Bitmap Files and choose **All Picture Files** or just **All Files**.



You will also notice that the directory about to be searched is Windows. I shouldn't think that anyone would want to store their pictures there, so click the drop-down arrow beside the Look in slot and choose a more likely directory. For instance, if your own pictures are stored in a subdirectory of "My Documents", click My Documents on the drop-down and then double click the subdirectory when it appears in the next dialogue window.

The window will show files in alphabetic order of format, so if your chosen directory contains a mixture of images in different formats, you'll have to scroll past bmp files. Now you should be able to see some existing gif files and choose one to open. Either double click the file, or click once to select it and then click **Open**.

When the gif image is open in the Paint window, click **File > Save As** and the gif format *may* appear in the drop-down list. If it does, make up a new name and save the picture.

After that you should be able to save in gif format at any time. If that succeeds, use the same procedure to "introduce" Paint to the jpg format.

If that doesn't work, it may be that you have the newer, and less functional, edition of Paint. The earlier version is available. Search for Paint95.zip at <http://www.pcnineoneone.com/tweaks/tweekz1a.html>. The link is about half-way down the page. You'll also find step by step instructions for installing the better version.

Pictures in Emails

If you ever include pictures in emails, make sure that they are in either **gif** or **jpg** format. Obliging a friend to download huge **bmp** files isn't a good idea; it will cost them time and probably money.

With photographs, jpgs will be smaller than gifs, but if the picture has hard, clean lines the jpg format will spoil it.

This topic is discussed at some length in the articles **SOMETIMES JPG IS THE WRONG CHOICE** http://fay.iniminimo.com/gif_or_jpg.html and **SCREENSHOTS** http://fay.iniminimo.com/screen_shots.html. For tips about preparing a picture to send by email, see **SENDING PHOTOS IN EMAIL** <http://fay.iniminimo.com/photos.html>

Delete Working Files

Having looked at the file sizes, hold the **Ctrl** key while you click on each of the **bmp** files. Let go of **Ctrl** and hit **Delete**. Then click yes in the confirmation box.

Go back to the View menu and turn off Details by clicking on the display of your choice—**Large Icons**, **Small Icons** or **List**.

You now have a collection from which you can assemble a picture at any time.

To preserve the flowers for repeated uses, you don't use **File > Open**.

You open a workspace and then retrieve the picture or pictures that you want to use by clicking the **Edit** menu and choosing **Paste From**.

Make an arrangement that pleases you, then use the **Copy To** procedure to save it.

Remember that if you've put a picture at the back and suddenly wish it were at the front, you have only to use **Paste From** to get a fresh copy to paste on top.

Be certain that you have white on your right button before you do this, of course.

With further experimentation you'll make various kinds and colours of leaves, berries, twigs and vines. Always cut out and save things that particularly please you. Soon you'll be making bright corners for emails or printed letters—and they'll be your own unique work, rather than "Everybody's seen it" clip art.

Once you've mastered some of these techniques, you'll probably want to try a better program—one that offers more choices. Links to some free stuff are listed on http://fay.iniminimo.com/free_graphics.html.

For other graphics helps and tutorials on my site, a [guide](http://fay.iniminimo.com/paint_map.html) can be at http://fay.iniminimo.com/paint_map.html.