



Artmixer.com presents

Basic Image Editing Tutorial

By Torbjörn Bergsdal

Image editing series

Standard version

Release date, Oct 9, 2005

Resizing digital images and basic editing – easy tutorial

Knowing how to edit digital images is today almost a necessity and luckily it is fairly easy to learn.

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tutorial

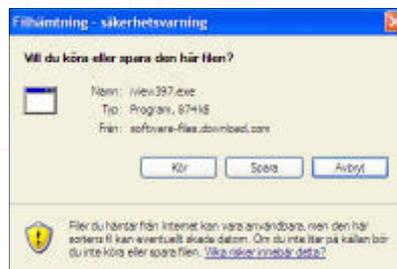
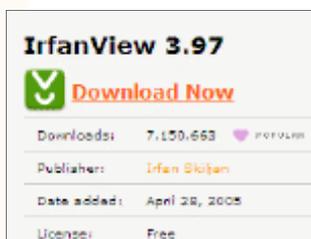
In this tutorial* I am going to use a smart, compact, free and easy-to-use image editor – **IrfanView**.

You will learn how to download, install and starting the program. It works like a breeze on all computers. I will then let you know how to open an image and start some basic editing, such as **resizing, adjusting light, contrast, and colours**, and finally make some **cropping and sharpening**. Of course you may just do the part of the tutorial you are interested in, and leave the rest. It's all up to you.

Download and get started

Start by downloading at www.irfanview.com . Click the Download link to the left and then choose downloading location. Alternatively you may click this direct link:

<http://www.download.com/IrfanView/3000-2192-10021962.html?part=dl-IrfanView&subj=dl&tag=button> .



Click Download Now. Then select Save (save on the computer's desktop).

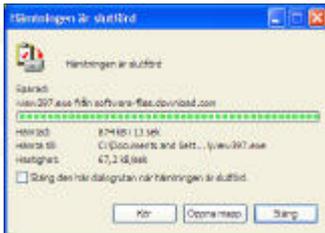
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When finished, select Open. The installation process starts. You may click Next throughout the installation, which is a swift one. There will be a shortcut on the desktop.



Double click to start, then click **O** (or **File, Open**) to open an image.



In the bottom left corner you can see the size of the image. Next to the right of the percentage sign you can see the file size. An image intended for web use would preferably be around 50-60 Kb in file size. If a photo, the file format needs to be Jpeg (Jpg), if illustrations or other graphics, Gif is the recommended format. Remember, this is for web use. Printing is another matter. Jpeg, Tiff and Png will work fine for that purpose. It all depends on how you intend to use the image.

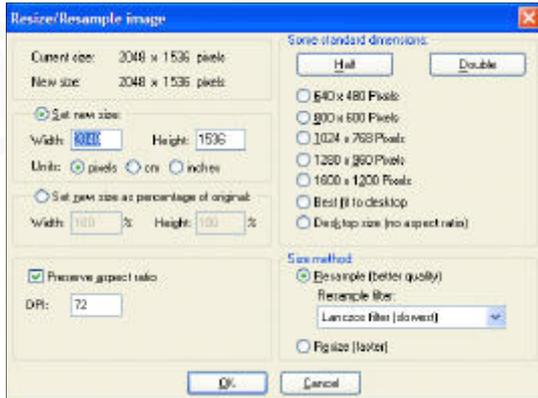
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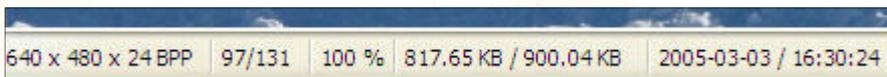
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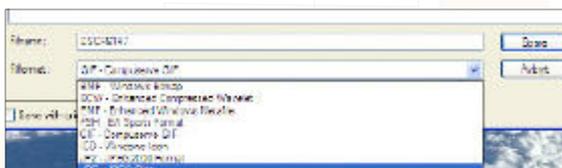
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Resize/ Resample

The sample image is large, 2048x1536 pixels and its file size exceeds 800 Kb. It is by far too much for screen and web use. Press **Ctrl+R** on the keyboard (Image, Resize/Resample) to **resize**. Use the standard dimension 640x480 pixels and click Ok. Use the keyboard letter **F**, and you will toggle between **Fit window to image** (original image size) and **Fit images to desktop** in IrfanView. The keyboard key **ENTER** will take you between Full screen and (pressing again) back to program view.



You can now see that the image size has decreased to 640x480 pixels. To see the new file size, you first need to save the image (the image will be compressed).



Click (keyboard shortcut) **S (File, Save As)**. Save your image to a favourite place on your computer, name it logically and select best suited file format – in this case, Jpeg.

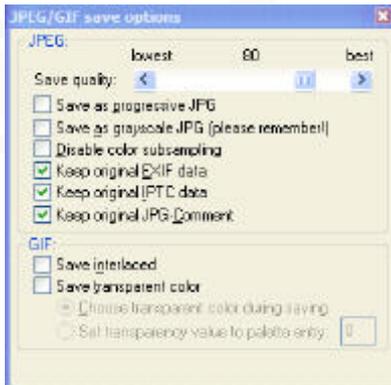
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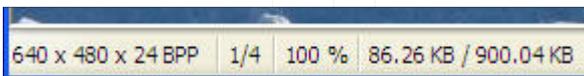
Standard version

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The dialog box (JPEG/GIF save options), top right, is set by default: standard settings which will compress the image without to much quality loss.



Now, open your recently saved Jpeg-image by clicking **O (File, Open)**, and you can see the new (compressed) file size. If you would like to compress more, just drag the slider to the left for a lower value (than 80) at **Save Quality** (top left in dialog box JPEG/GIF save options) prior to saving.

Remember, it is only the first time through that you - as a beginner - might think this is a slightly complicated process. It will soon be an automatic process. You may of course use any graphics program to perform resizing of images. The advantage of using a program such as IrfanView, is that it is free, quick and small, yet very capable of basic image editing.

If you have a folder full of images that need resizing, you will have to use another method – the so called Batch conversion. There will be a separate tutorial for this.

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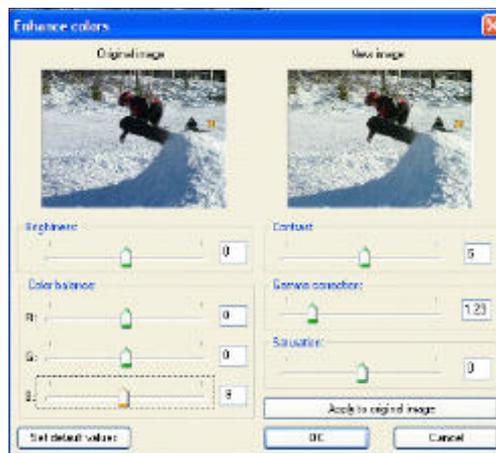
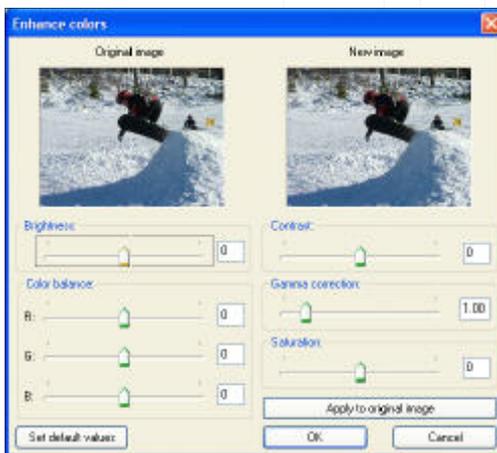
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Editing

If you would like to make some enhancements to your images, at the same time as you're resizing, it is quite simple in IrfanView. Let's start with **light, contrast and colour**.

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Press **Shift+G** on the keyboard (**Image, Enhance colors**). The dialog box Enhance colors opens. To adjust **the light or brightness** of an image, it is best to edit the middle tones, the **Gamma correction**. The middle tones are usually dominant in an image. Therefore it is better to adjust those, without loss of image quality and risking the darkest and lightest parts becoming greyish.

Each time you open the dialog box Enhance colors, the Gamma correction value will be set to 1.00. If an image needs brightening, drag to the right for a higher value, between 1.15 and 1.40 is usually fine. Increasing the value too much, usually affects image quality negatively.

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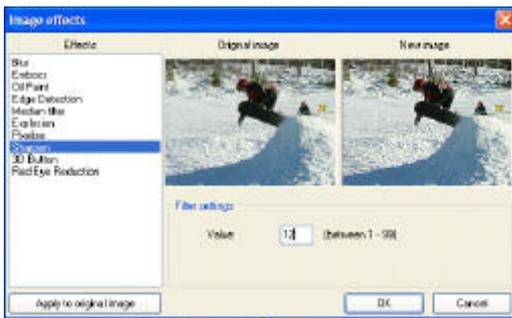
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In this example I set the gamma value to 1.23, the **Contrast** a little higher, to 6, and then I decrease the **Color balance** slightly, to -9 (winter scenes with snow are often slightly blueish, that's why I want to decrease the blue) . Experiment with your own image to see what looks best. The original image can be seen in the top left preview window, the edited version to the right. Click Ok when satisfied.

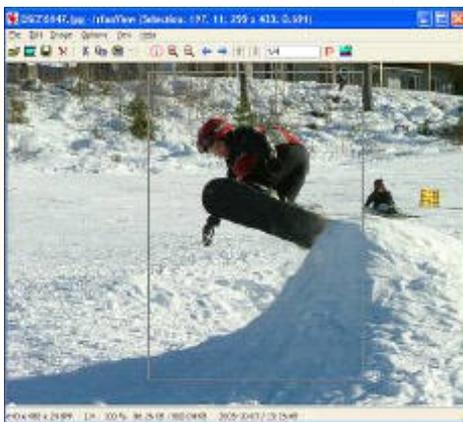
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Increasing the **Sharpness** of the image, is also done with ease.



Press **Ctrl+E** (**Image, Effects, Effects browser**). Select Sharpen in the list of dialog box Image effects. Set the value to something in between 5 and 20. It is usually enough, without image deterioration. Click Ok.

Finally, you may want to **Crop** the image. This is done by clicking and dragging a desired area of the image.





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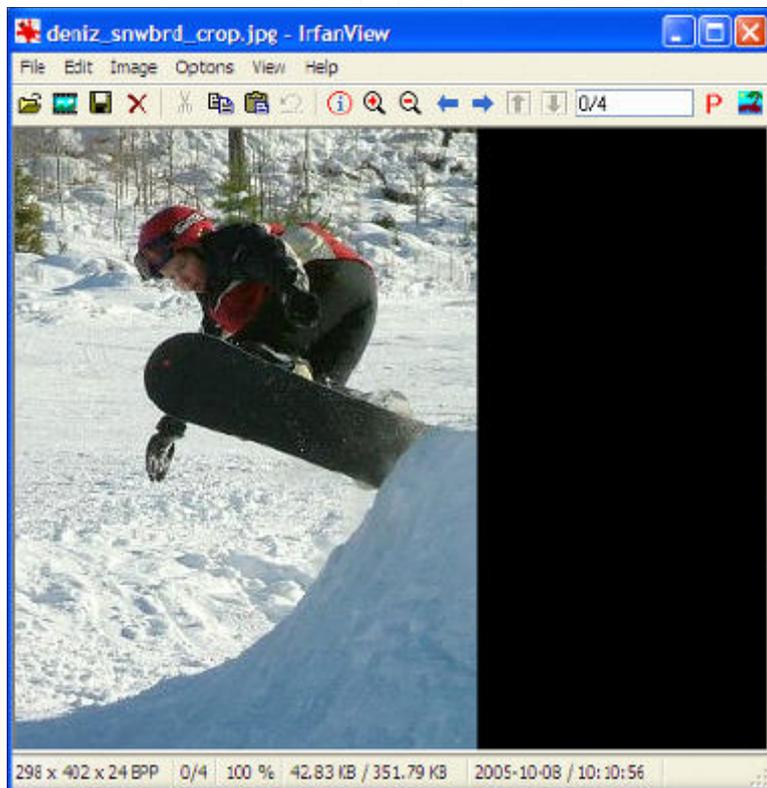
Image editing series

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It is possible to click and drag the edges of the selected area to edit its size. When done, press **Ctrl+Y (Edit, Crop selection)** on the keyboard. The image is cut after the selection.

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Note that when you save a cropped image, the file size will decrease, due to less digital information in the image. The photo above now has a file size of 42 Kb only.

All the luck with your image editing. Do take your time to explore IrfanView some more on your own. There are many things that can be done with this precious little image viewer/ editor.

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