

Wooler & District Camera Club

Paint for Windows - Cropping, resizing and renaming

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1. The **Paint** program

Microsoft **Paint** comes at no extra cost with a PC's Windows operating system. It can crop images (if necessary) and then resize them to comply with WDCC competition rules. **Paint** can't enhance photo images, but if the photos from your camera are well-exposed, **Paint** may well be all you need.

If you want to change things like white balance, levels, saturation, sharpness, etc. the Windows program **Paint.net** can be downloaded at no cost from the Internet. (Enter "download paint.net" into your browser and follow the instructions.) **Paint.net** does most of what **Photoshop Elements** (£70 from Amazon) does.

What follows is aimed at making sure that your competition photos (a) comply as far as possible with WDCC competition rules, and (b) help the judge to know your photos meet the competition brief.

2. Before using **Paint**

It's assumed you're able to save your photos to your computer and to find them afterwards. It's assumed as well that you will have chosen the photos you want to enter into the two competitions of the evening.

On your opening (desktop) screen, create and name two folders with the competition titles. [*Right-click* > *New* > *Folder*] and type a competition title to name the folder. Repeat for the second folder.

Go to your chosen photos where they are saved. Select a photo and copy it. Use [*Left-click* > *ctrl-c* > *ctrl-v*]: the copy will have the same file name, with "- copy" added. Repeat as necessary.

Move the *copies* to the competition folders on your desktop. The originals remain where they are saved. From now on, work only on the copies.

The largest image size, of 1400 x 1050 pixels, allowed in WDCC competitions is much smaller than the images produced by most digital cameras. This means that your photo

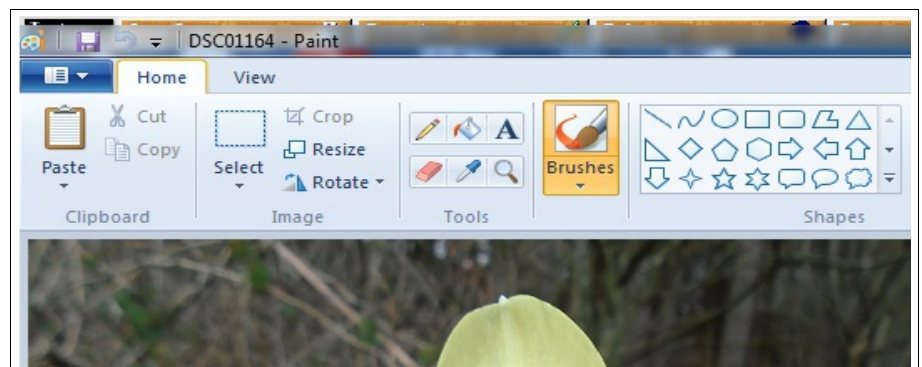
1. needs resizing without changing its shape, if it's already 4 x 3 aspect ratio; or
2. needs its shape changed by cropping, for composition reasons; or
3. needs both cropping and resizing.

Case 3 is the most general case. It's best to crop first, and resize second. It will be assumed that you have decided how your image should be cropped: what remains is to do that, and then to resize the result. You should also have decided a name for your competition image.

3. Using **Paint**

Go to a competition folder on your desktop and open it. In **Paint** you can work on only one photo at a time. [*Left-click*] to select a photo, then, keeping the photo selected, [*right-click*]. In the drop-down menu [> *Open with* > *Paint*] to open the selected photo in **Paint**.

The top left part of the **Paint** screen is shown on the right. If only part of the photo is visible [*Left-click View*], and then [*Left-click Zoom out*] repeatedly to bring the entire photo onto the screen. Then [*Left-click Home*] to return to the "Home" palette.



3.1 Cropping

[*Left-click Select*] to be able to select a rectangular area of the photo. Holding down the left mouse (or trackpad) button, drag the cursor to draw the rectangle you want. What you want to keep is *inside* the white dashed lines. Go to the screen picture at the top of the next page to see what the result looks like. When you have drawn the rectangle, you will see that the word "Crop" is no longer greyed-out. To delete the area of the photo *outside* the rectangle use [*Left-click Crop*]. If the crop is not what you want [*ctrl-z*] ("undo") will restore the deleted area, without with the selection rectangle. Then try again.

Look at the bottom of the picture on the right. Reading right to left, "Size: 7.0MB" is the size of the photo file;

"5152 x 3864px" is the width and height in pixels of the uncropped photo; and "2885 x 2713px" is the width and height in pixels of the selection rectangle.

As you draw the selection rectangle, the last pair of numbers changes, getting bigger as the rectangle gets bigger. It is easy to make a square rectangle: the width and height numbers are the same. It needs mental arithmetic or a calculator to produce a rectangle of an exact but different aspect ratio.

After cropping, both pairs of width x height numbers become the same and smaller. The file size also becomes smaller. The original image has become the smaller, cropped image.

If the the width of the cropped photo exceeds 1400 pixels, or if the height exceeds 1050 pixels, the photo will need resizing.

3.2 Resizing

On the Home palette, [*Right-click* Resize] to get the "Resize and Skew" drop-down menu. See the lower picture on the right. In the "Resize" part of the menu, select the "Pixels" button, and ensure that the "Maintain aspect ratio" box is ticked.

If the photo is a *landscape* shape, go to the "Horizontal" box and enter 1400. Now check the "Vertical" box.

If the "Vertical" box is 1050 or less, [*left-click* OK] to resize the photo.

If the "Vertical" box is more than 1050, go to the "Vertical" box, enter 1050 then [*left-click* OK] to resize the photo.

If the photo is a *portrait* shape, go to the "Vertical" box and enter 1050, then [*left-click* OK] to resize the photo.

3.3 Saving the modified photo

After resizing, check that the width and height of the resized photo do not exceed 1400 and 1050 pixels respectively. If so, save with [*ctrl-s*]. Click the exit button to exit **Paint**.

4 Renaming the files

Go to a competition folder. Each photo file will have a name like DSCF1234-copy. Names like this are no help to a judge: you need to rename the file.

[*Left-click*] to select a file, then [*right-click* > *Rename*] and type a descriptive name for the subject of the photo. When you have dealt with all your competition files, copy each *folder* to your WDCC memory stick.

5 Last words

Pixel dimensions, resolution and file size in KB are prescribed for competition entries. **Paint** will get pixel dimensions right, and file size *may* be OK. What **Paint** cannot do is change resolution to 72dpi, nor can it directly change file size. Of the two, file size is more important. Using "Save as", **Paint.net** can change file size, but not resolution, while **Photoshop** can do both.

