





There are three main formats for images used in web pages, and they all have advantages and disadvantages. **JPEG** is a very efficient compressed file format that has support for full range of over 2 million colours. It is ideal for photographs, and the compression can be adjusted to get the best balance between file size and resolution.

PNG is best suited whenever images with transparent regions are required. It supports a full range of colours, but is not compressed.

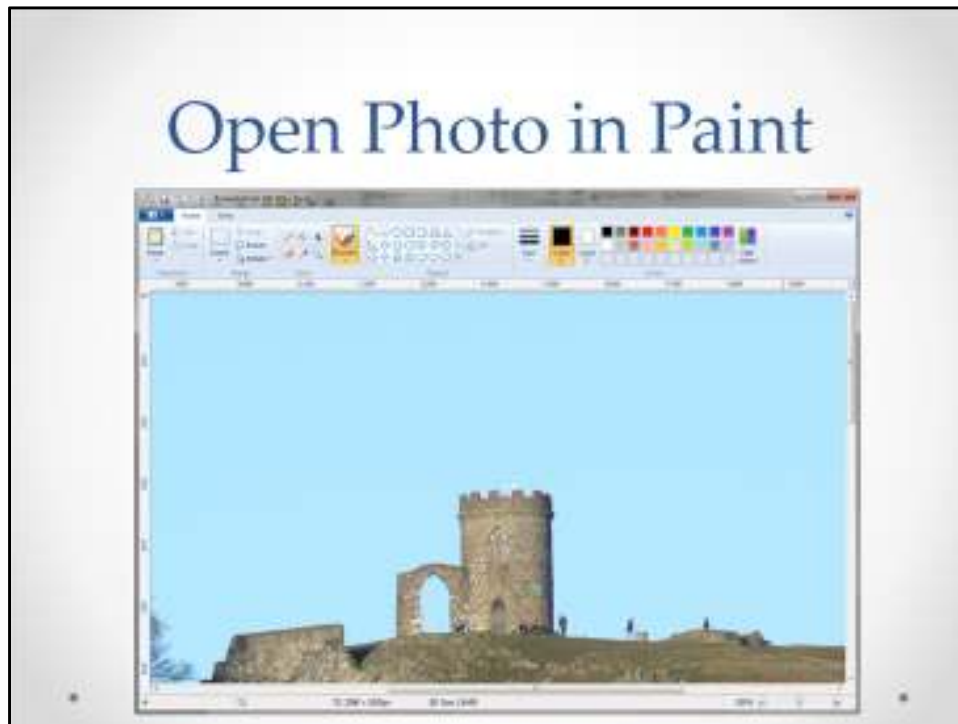
GIF has limited range of colours, but is the only format to support multiple frames that can be used to produce animated images. Most commonly used for simple animations such as the circle of rating spokes used to denote file loading.



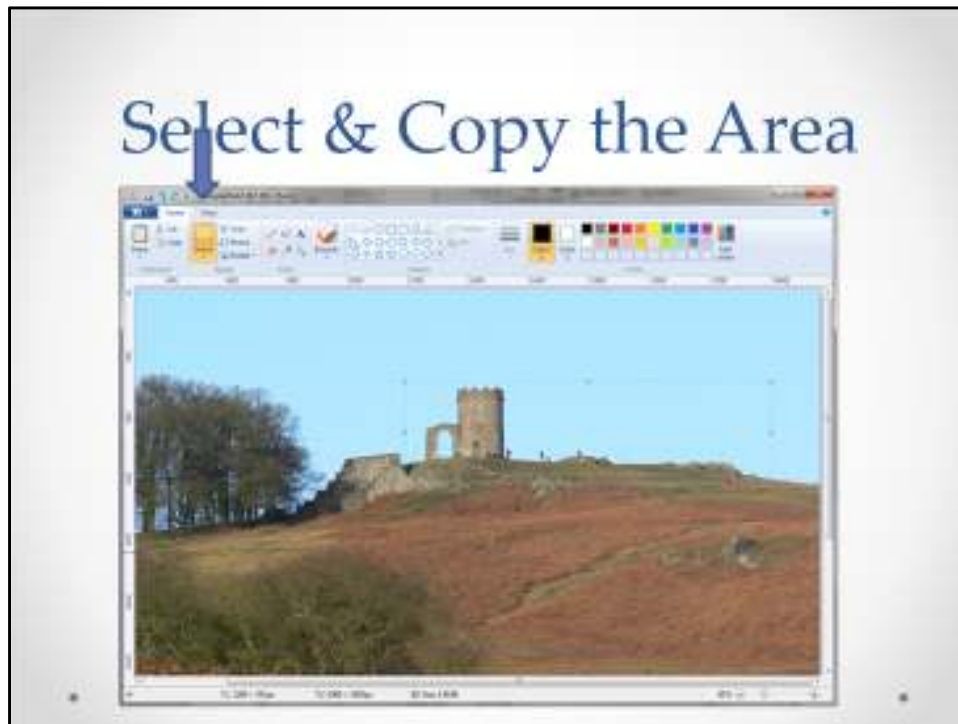
Photoshop is by far the most widely used image editor, and is used by almost all professionals. It is however expensive and not intuitive to use. A cut down version called Photoshop Elements is much more affordable and easier to use, it is aimed at non-professional use by hobbyists and amateur photographers. **Paintshop Pro** is a similar price to Elements and some prefer it as being easier to use, it can also create GIF animations.

Fireworks is an alternative that is specifically aimed at producing small file size images for the web which it does better than Photoshop. It is also somewhat easier to use. It is however expensive.

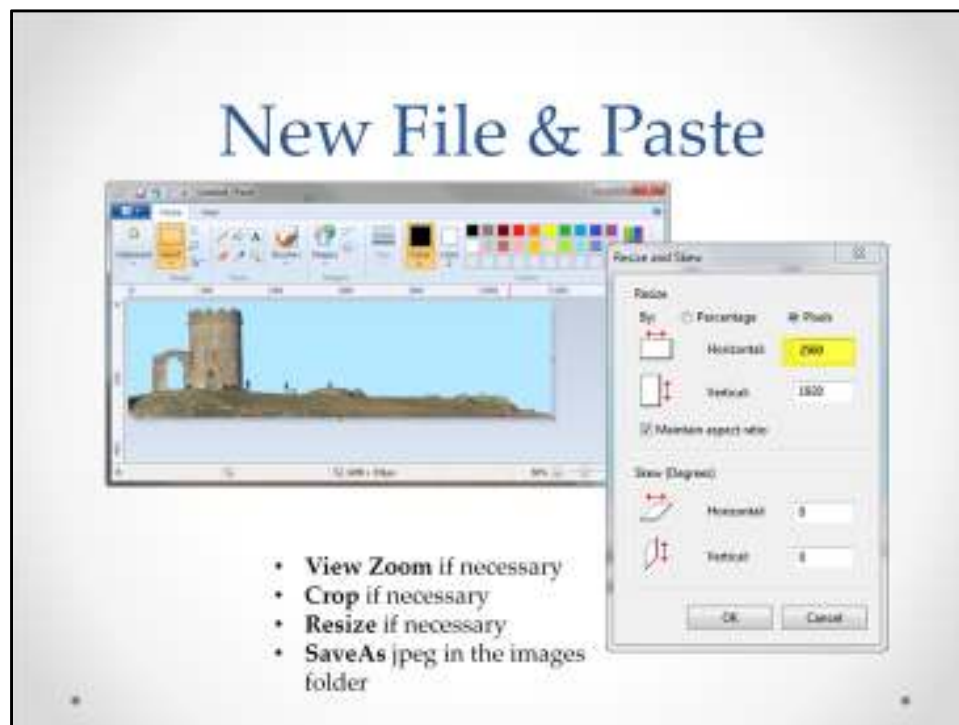
Paint is free as part of Windows 7, and can do the basic jobs of selecting parts of an image and saving the image in the correct resolution. It is also by far the easiest to use. However the version that comes with Windows XP is does not have sufficient features to be useful.



To prepare a photograph for the web open it in Paint (or alternative package). By default photographs are typically 2500 x 2000 pixels (5 Megapixels). This is far to big and would be very slow to load into a web page.



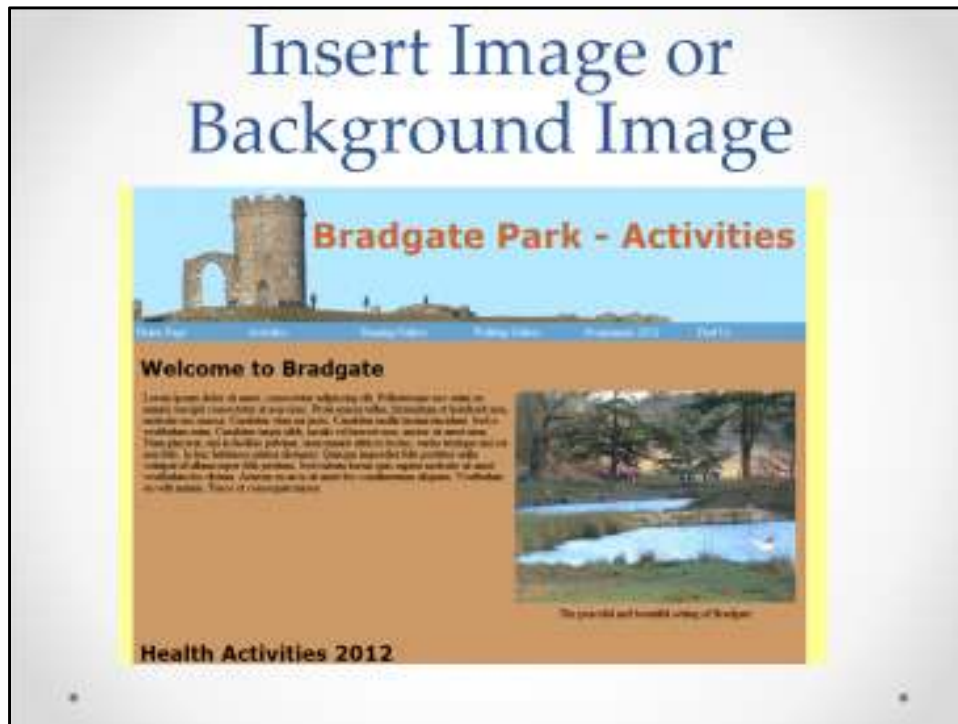
Use the select (marque) tool to select that rectangular area of interest. In some cases the entire image may be used. Copy the selected area.



Create a new file and paste the copied image area onto a blank canvas. If the image is too small to fit the canvas use the Crop tool to remove any blank canvas area.

The image then needs to be resized by clicking on the Resize Icon (to the right of the Select tool). Switch to pixels, and then change the Horizontal width to the desired size which should be smaller than the current size. The vertical size will be automatically adjusted to keep the aspect ratio correct (as Maintain aspect ratio is selected by default). Only change the aspect ratio if you deliberately want a squashed look.

Use File -> SaveAs to save the image in the correct file format (JPEG) for photographs. The image should be saved into an Images folder in the web site.



To use the image either Insert it into the HTML page as shown in the bottom image, or use CSS to add a background-image to an HTML element such as the <header> tag.