

Basic Picture Editing with Irfanview

Robert F. Loftus, MSLIS

Irfanview is picture editing software. This handout focuses on some of the program's most basic functions, including:

- installing the software
- opening files
- selecting regions
- view options
- resizing images
- cropping images
- undoing edits
- using red-eye reduction
- adding text to images

Downloading Irfanview: You may download Irfanview at <http://www.irfanview.com/>. Click on the download link at the left. The links provided on Irfanview's official download page are tested and safe to use.

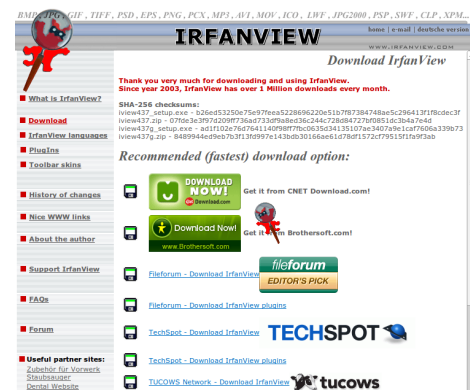
Installing Irfanview: Install the program by selecting the “Run” option when you download it. Alternatively, you can save the installer, then run the program by double-clicking on the program installer icon. Pay close attention as you're installing the program.

- Later versions of Irfanview have been bundled with additional software. Un-check the boxes on the additional software screen to prevent installation of these programs.
- On the screen that asks you to select the file types you'd like to have associated with Irfanview, it's best to select the “images only” option, so Irfanview won't take over other files.
- On the screen that asks where you'd like Irfanview to save your files, make sure you select the “User Folder” option, rather than the Irfanview Installation folder option.

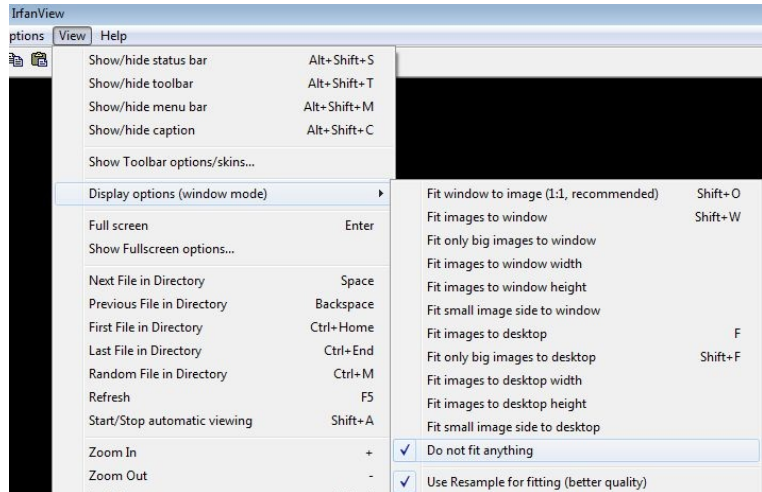
Opening Irfanview: You can open the program by clicking on the icon on your desktop or in your start menu that looks like a red sky-diving cartoon cat.



Opening Pictures in Irfanview: **File > Open** will open an Explorer window where you can select files. If Irfanview is installed properly then the first time Irfanview opens you'll be in the MyPictures folder. If you find yourself in a folder called “Irfanview” then click on the *Pictures* folder icon in the left column (on a Windows 7 or 8 machine) to get back to your Pictures folder. After your first use of the software, Irfanview will automatically open to the last folder that you opened a file from. Double click on the file name, icon or thumbnail to open an image.



View Options in Irfanview: Irfanview offers a number of options regarding how images appear on the desktop. If you are editing images, you want to see them at their original size, so it's best to click **View > Display Options (Window Mode) > Do Not Fit Anything**, so the software isn't resizing the picture to fit the desktop window while you're trying to edit it.



Resizing Photos: The default settings on most digital cameras create huge jpeg files that are far too large to fit on your computer's screen. Those large images are not practical for regular viewing on your computer. To resize a photo to fit your desktop open the photo in Irfanview, click **Image > Resize/Resample** and the Resize/Resample Image window will open. Figuring out image sizes versus pixel counts is one of those things you'll just have to practice with. One term you'll frequently encounter in photo editing is "Aspect Ratio". The Aspect Ratio of an image refers to the ratio of "height vs width", . The best approach for resizing images is to make sure the **Preserve Aspect Ratio (Proportional)** box is checked, and to then enter the width (in pixels) - the software will automatically select the proper height to maintain the original aspect ratio of the image. To help give you an idea, on a typical flat-screen monitor, a one inch square is 96 x 96 pixels, so a 3" x 5" image would be 480 by 288 pixels.

A more detailed tutorial on image resizing is available here:
<http://www.somewhere-in-time.net/tutorial/irfanview/>

Note: The following sections are hard to follow unless you have the program open in front of you. It is strongly recommended that you open a picture in Irfanview and take a very slow step-by-step approach with this next section.

Selecting Regions in Irfanview:

- To select a region of a photo left click and drag with your mouse; you will see a rectangular region is created over your image.
- Releasing the mouse will leave the selected region in place until you left-mouse-click on another area of the image.
- You can make fine adjustments to the region by mousing over the outline of the selected area until you see the double arrow cursor.
- If you left click while the double-arrow cursor is visible you will not erase the selected area.
- Left-clicking on the perimeter of the selected area when the double-arrow cursor is visible allows you to make fine adjustments to the area you're selecting by using the mouse to adjust the size of the selected area. .



Basic Photo Cropping: Use the left-click and drag method described above to select the region of the photo you want to keep, then click **Edit > Crop Selection**. This will trim away everything that is outside of the area you selected.



Undoing Edits: If you want to reverse an edit you've just made you can use the Undo button that's located in the Irfanview toolbar. Clicking the undo button will reverse the last change that you've made to an image. You will not damage an image by cropping it and using the Undo button repeatedly. If you want to undo all of the edits you've made to an image and start over from the beginning you can click on **File > Reopen**.

Red-Eye Reduction: Use the left-click drag method to select the region of the person or animal's face with the red eyes. Click **Image > Red Eye Reduction (Selection)** and the software will replace the bright red with a more natural looking dark brown color. Red Eye Reduction will not always eliminate all of the red, but it will minimize it.

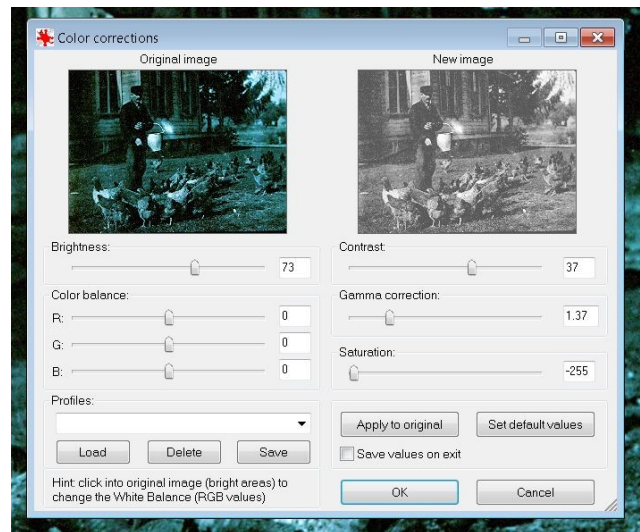
Adding Text to Images: Use the left-click and drag method to select the region of the photo where you want to add text. Click **Edit > Insert Text** to open up the **Add Overlay Text to Image Box**. Type the text you'd like to enter into the large box marked "Text". The Choose Font button will open up a font selection menu – which includes options for fonts, font size and font color. The "Text Alignment Left...Center...Right" buttons at the bottom of the screen control of how the text will line up within the region you've selected.

Be prepared to use the Undo button frequently when inserting text. The Irfanview interface is a little bit temperamental for this particular task. If you're going to be creating documents where you'll be adding a lot of captions to your pictures, then you may want to consider using a different program.

Color Corrections: Color corrections can allow you to make changes to the brightness, color balance, gamma and contrast of an image.

- Brightness refers to how light or dark the picture is.
- Color balance refers to the Red/Green/Blue balance in the image. Use the sliders to adjust the strength of that color.
- Gamma refers to the level of contrast between light and shadow in the image.
- Saturation refers to the intensity of colors in the image.

Verbal descriptions of what different color corrections do are insufficient to give the reader a comprehensive understanding of how to use this feature. To get a better idea of how to make color corrections to a picture you'll have to install Irfanview on your computer and practice making these kinds of adjustments.



In this photo we've removed the green cast and increased the contrast, brightness and gamma to get a better idea of how the photo will look when printed in black and white.

Saving Images You've Edited

- Irfanview will not save over your original image file until you tell it to.
- The best method is to save your edited image using the *Save As* function, and to make a slight change to the file name, so you leave your original image intact.
 - For example, if your original file was called:
 - Woodchuck01.jpg
 - You might change the edited version to
 - Woodchuck01cropped.jpg

A small note to yourself in the file name can help you to remember the changes you made and will make it easier to sort through your image files later on.