

Gimp

Resizing & Cropping

This tutorial is incomplete, and a rough draft. It is being posted to help a few people with specific questions regarding resizing images in Gimp. When completed, it will be modified and will become one of the opening sections for a book on using Gimp. Other sections will include

- Downloading and installing Gimp
- Gimp basics
- Layers
- Opening & Saving images
- Projects: Squaring and Cropping
 - Levels and Curves
 - Resizing
 - Retouching
 - Introduction to Sharpening

Gimp (GNU Image Manipulation Program) is a lousy name for a good, solid program. Most digital graphics artists use Adobe products. A lot of people need to do some of the things graphics programs offer, but have no idea where to turn. There are a number of free programs, quite a few at \$100 range, and then there are the gold standard programs at gold standard prices.

For the intended reader, the basic differences between programs are the look of the desktop, where tools and options are located, help and tutorials. The lite programs (e.g. Photoshop Elements) aren't really easier than their full featured relatives. I would recommend Gimp to anyone starting out in digital graphics. By the time you master Gimp, you will have little trouble converting to Photoshop, and it is quite possible that even if cost were not an obstacle, most will stay with Gimp.

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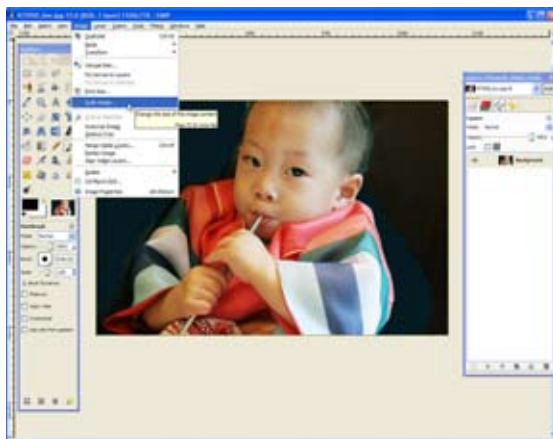
Comments & Questions to
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Resizing, Cropping & Saving

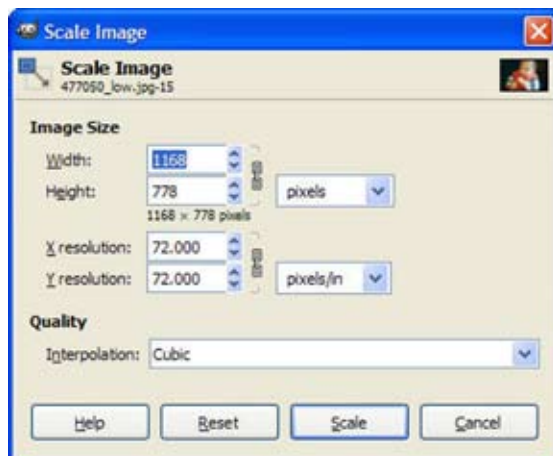
RESIZING

For photo editing, Photoshop is the pro standard, but at a price as steep as its learning curve. There are many free graphics programs: this tutorial will use Gimp, available from <http://www.gimp.org>. Gimp is no harder than any other program; and if you keep to just these two tasks, it's relatively easy.

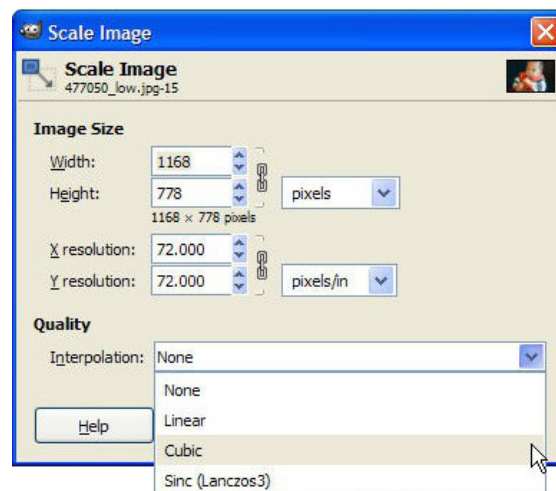
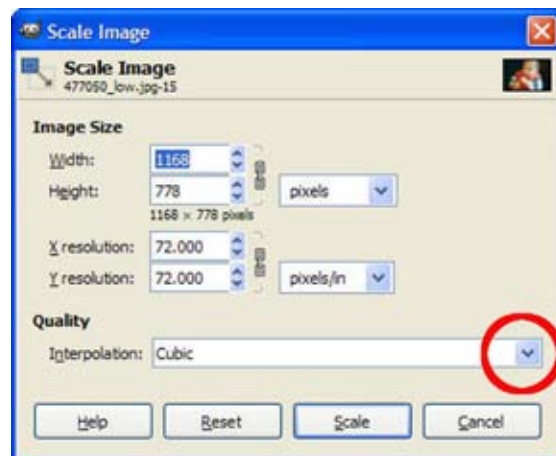
Open Gimp and open your image.



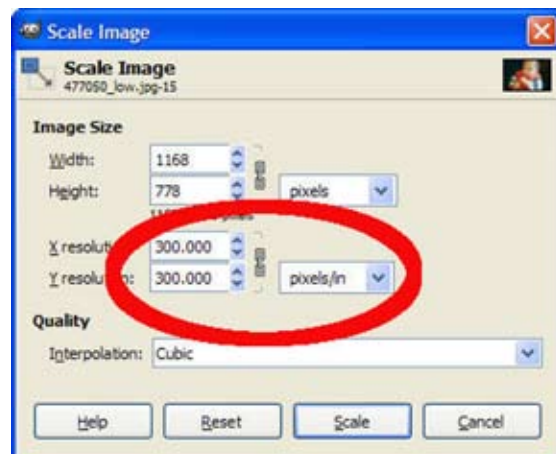
Go to Image>Scale Image and click.



In the Quality>Interpolation window, click on the blue button and select Cubic if it is not already selected (Sinc is also a good option).

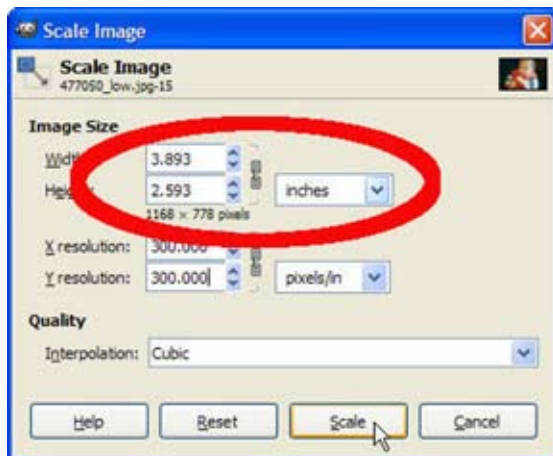
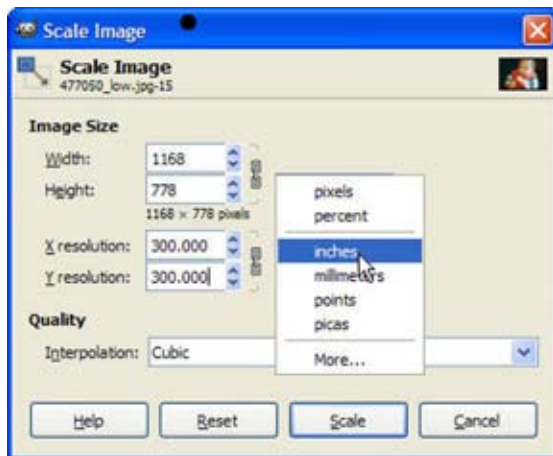


Now you actually start resizing:



Enter the desired dpi (or ppi, pixels per inch), in one of the two boxes. When you click in the other or go to the next step, the other box will change to the new dpi; and the width and height will change indirectly. The file size itself will stay the same (unsampled). If you adjust the width and height, the dip will stay where it is, and the file will be (resampled).

The point is, you don't have to think about it: just set what you need.

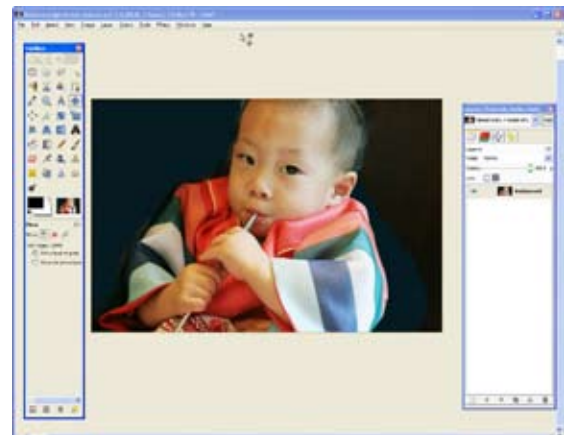


When both the dpi and the dimensions are what you need, click <Scale>. Then save the image with a name that indicates that it has been resized.

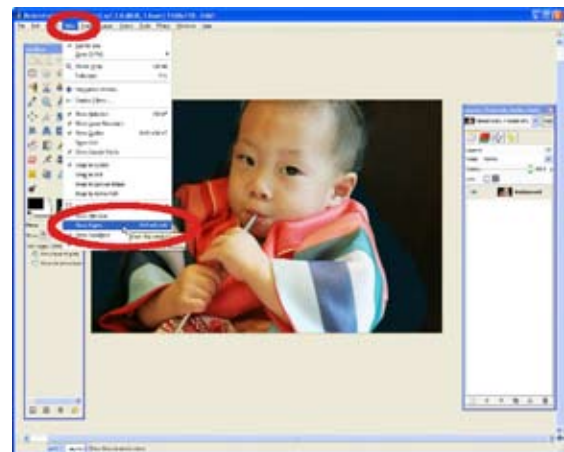
CROPPING

Cropping is easy. Although there is a crop tool, I prefer to use guidelines to establish the image area to keep, the Rectangular Select Tool, and Image>Crop to selection. Sometimes, if I am not sure about the crop, I will add a white masking layer above to see the effect of cropping without committing to it. Again, like resizing, it sounds more complicated in the step-by-step instructions than it is in the doing.

Open your image in Gimp.



If you do not see a horizontal ruler at the top or along the left side (see the first screenprint on the first page), you need to turn them on.




One of the most overlooked features in graphics programs is guidelines. You can turn on Snap (View>Snap to Guidelines), and as you click and drag to make a selection (see below), if you are close to the guidelines, it will snap to them. (Sometimes, you might want to be close to a guideline, but not on it, if you have problems, usually it is because Snap is on. Deselect it from the View drop down menu.)



Place the cursor in the ruler, here, I placed it in the vertical ruler on the left, then click and drag into the image. This will pull a guideline out of the ruler. Release the mouse button where you want the guideline.

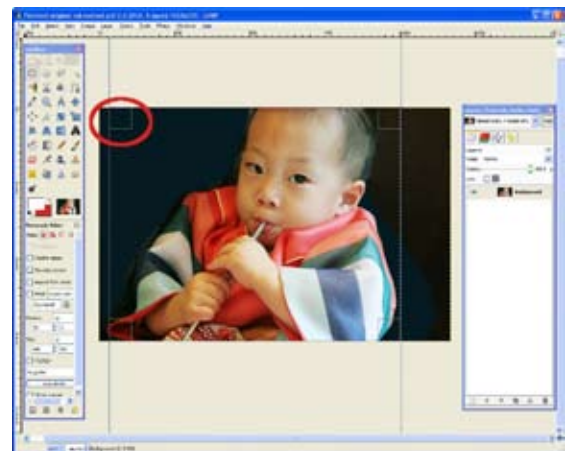


If you need to move the guideline, select the Move Tool in the Tool Box (circled in red), place the cursor over the guideline, click and drag.

With the guidelines in place, indicated what you want to keep and what you want to crop, select the Rectangle Select Tool, . Although you can click and drag from any corner, here, I dragged from the upper left corner defined by the guideline and the image edge—the top edge could just as easily be a horizontal guideline, dragged down from the top, horizontal ruler—toward the lower right corner.

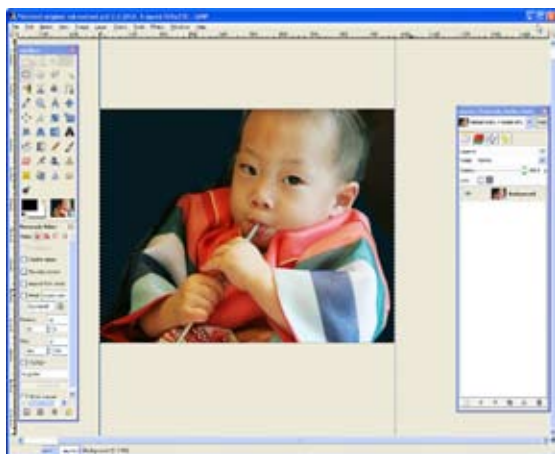


If you want to resize or move the selection, keep the Rectangle Selection Tool on:



Place the cursor in any of the little squares, the cursor will change, and you can click and drag the selection in or out. Place the cursor inside the selection, the cursor will change, and you can click and drag to move the entire selection.

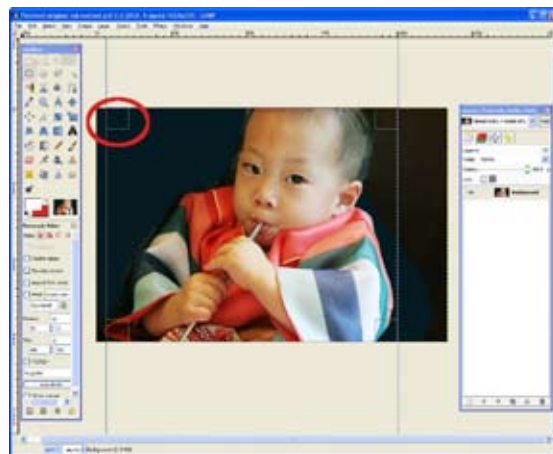
When you get the selection where you want it, Image>Click to Selection to crop the image.




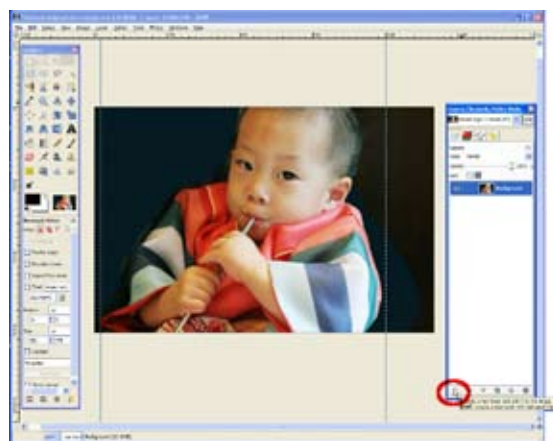
Cropping with a White Mask

Ultimately, this is exactly how we cropped the image in the previous section; however, we will create a white mask to show how the image will look before we crop it.

Repeat the steps in the previous section up to the point where you have a rectangular selection, the end of the previous page:



Now we need a new layer to place above this, so we have a place to put the white border—a safe place that does not destroy the underlying image. New layers can be made from the Layer menu, right clicking on the active layer, or clicking on the new layer icon, .

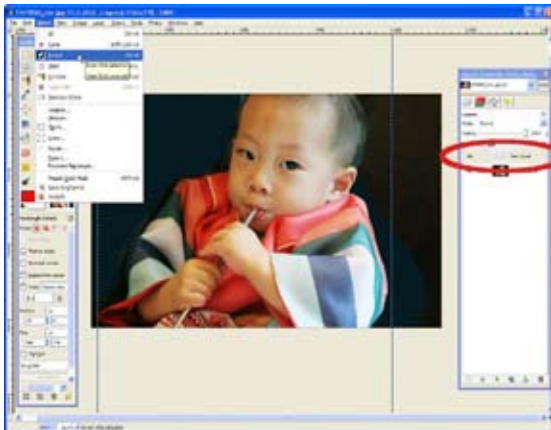


If the layers pallet is not visible, go to Windows>Recently Closed Docks>Layers, Channels, Paths Undo; or Windows>Dockable Dialogues>Layers. New Layers go above the active layer. (In a more complicated image, where you might have many layers, it is not

uncommon to be working on a layer close to the bottom, make a new layer, but not see it because the layers palette is showing the upper layers.)



If you want to call the layer something other than “New Layer” type it in the Layer Name window. Make sure you have Transparency selected and click OK.



You should still have the selection—if not make it again—click on the New Layer in the palette. It will go blue, then as you start doing other things it will be gray.

At the bottom of the tools in the Tool Box, above the Options, are the Foreground/Background icons. Each of these is interactive:

