Getting Started with Digital Graphics
A guide for new graphics users

This guide will address the following tasks for getting started with digital graphics:

1. Review acronyms and vocabulary.
2. Add graphics to a document.
3. Modify and arrange graphics within a document.

Detailed Instructions

1 Review acronyms and vocabulary.

Images can add visual interest, support key points, and highlight information to websites, correspondence, and documentation. One method for acquiring digital graphics is by scanning existing documents, printed images, or photos and saving them in digital form. These images may then be stored in a variety of formats that each offer unique advantages.

Format	Basic Information	Advantages	Disadvantages
JPG or JPEG	The most common file format for Web graphics	Compress to a fraction of their original file size, and download more quickly	Loss of detail and clarity due to compression
GIF	Recommended for use with Blackboard	File size of an image may be reduced without degrading the visual quality	Limited to a palette of 256 colors or less
BMP	Native to Microsoft Windows	Simplicity and widespread familiarity in MS Windows	Typically much larger than compressed image file formats
PNG	Improvement and replacement for the GIF format	File size of an image may be reduced without degrading the visual quality	Does not support animated graphics
TIFF or TIF	Used extensively for traditional print graphics	Flexible and adaptable file format	Typically much larger than compressed image file formats

Definitions

- **Compression:** Compression is the process of encoding information to reduce the size of the product or file. There are two main types of compression:
    - **Lossless:** allows the exact original data to be reconstructed from the compressed data
    - **Lossy:** some data is lost during the compression process, but not enough to make a noticeable difference

- **DPI/PPI:** Dots Per Inch/Pixels per Inch – measures the resolution of graphics by counting the number of individual dots produced within a linear one-inch space. Generally, if the graphic will be viewed on paper then the recommended DPI is 300. If the graphic will be viewed only on the computer through documents or Web pages then the recommended DPI is between 72 and 96. It is also important to remember that the greater the DPI, the bigger the file will become.

- **OCR:** Optical Character Recognition – computer software designed to translate images of typewritten text into editable text

② Add graphics to a document.

You can add graphics to a document by searching the Microsoft ClipArt database or from a file saved on your computer.

To insert an image from a file:
1. Go to the **Insert** tab and click the **Picture** button.
2. You may then browse your computer to find the desired picture.

To insert Clip Art:
1. Go to the **Insert** tab and click the **Clip Art** button.
2. The Clip Art Task Pane will appear on the right (Fig. 1).
3. Enter a Clip Art keyword and click **Go.**
4. When the preview pictures appear, click the desired Clip Art to insert it into the document
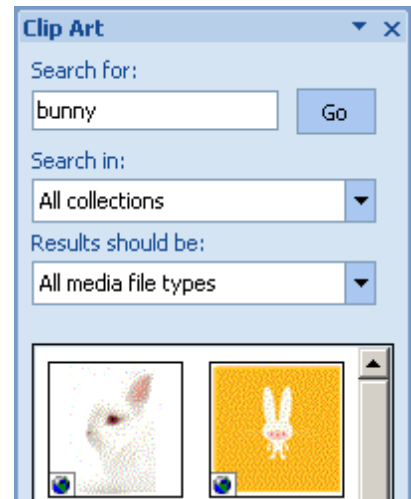

Fig. 1

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③ Modify and arrange graphics within a document.

After inserting a graphic into your document, a special **Picture Tools Format** ribbon will appear whenever you have that image selected. You can resize or rotate an image without the Picture Tools, but most other features are found on the ribbon.

To Resize an Image:
1. Select the desired picture.
2. Click and drag one of the blue dots surrounding the picture (Fig. 2). (Be sure to use the corners to maintain the **aspect ratio**.)
3. Release the mouse button at the desired size.

Rotate Image
1. Select the desired picture.
2. Click and drag the green button located above the picture (Fig. 2).
3. Release the mouse button at the desired rotation.

Fig. 2

The Picture Tools ribbon has four groups of tools on it: **Adjust**, **Picture Styles**, **Arrange**, and **Size**.

The **Adjust** Group (Fig. 3) has six tools:
1. **Brightness:** change a picture's relative lightness.
2. **Contrast:** the difference between its darkest and lightest areas.
3. **Recolor:** change the colors in a clip art picture.
4. **Compress Pictures:** dramatically reduce the size of your files by compressing the pictures in the document.
    a. If you do not intend to print your document, then click the **Options** button and select a smaller **PPI** to save space (Fig. 4).
    b. Click **OK** when you are done.
5. **Change Picture:** replace the picture with a new image from a file.
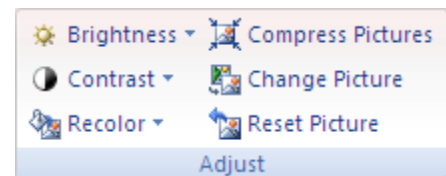6. **Reset Picture:** restores the image properties to its original settings.
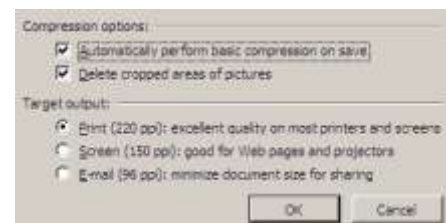

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

The **Picture Styles** Group (Fig. 5) has three tools:
1. **Picture Shape:** cuts a shape out of your picture.
2. **Picture Border:** adds and edits different borders around your picture.
3. **Picture Effects:** adds shadows, beveling and other advanced effects to your picture.

Fig. 5

The **Arrange** Group (Fig. 6) has seven tools:
1. **Position:** arranges text around your images in one of several preset ways.
2. **Bring to Front:** makes your image the top-most on a stack of images.
3. **Send to Back:** makes your image the bottom-most on a stack of images.
4. **Text Wrapping:** select how text wraps around the image.
   a. **In Line with text:** the image will appear wherever your cursor places it and the text will not wrap around it. By default when you insert an image it is placed in line with text.
   b. All the other options allow your image to "float" anywhere on the page so you may control its exact location in your document.
5. **Align:** allows you to center, left or right justify the image.
6. **Group:** groups several images together so they move as a single unit.
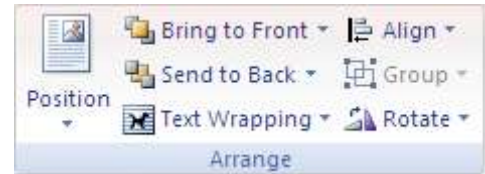7. **Rotate:** rotates and flips the image as desired.

Fig. 6

The **Size** Group (Fig. 7) has three tools:
1. **Crop:** cuts out the edges of your image that you are not using.
2. **Height:** displays the current height of the image and allows you to manually enter a desired height.
3. **Width:** displays the current width of the image and allows you to manually enter a desired width.
   - If your image becomes distorted when you resize it, click the pop-out button (Fig. 7) and make sure the **Lock Aspect Ratio** box is checked on the dialog box (Fig. 8).
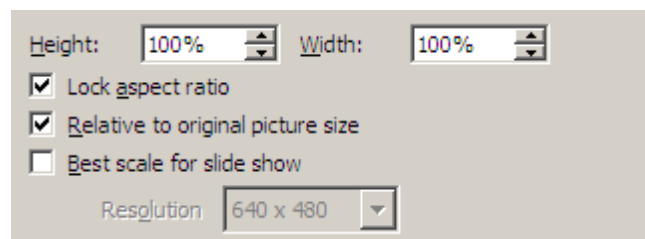
Fig. 7

Fig. 8

For more information on digital graphics and other software resources, check out http://www.txwes.edu/titleiii/.

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