

Fireworks CS3 Basics

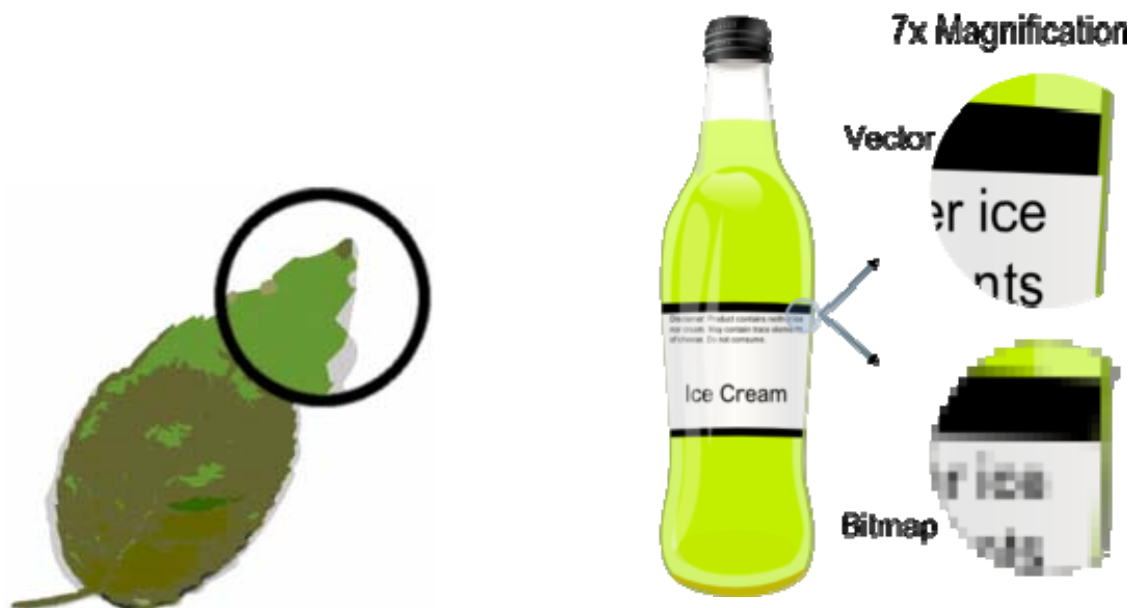
Fireworks is a versatile program for creating, editing, and optimizing web graphics. You can create and edit both bitmap and vector images, design web effects such as rollovers and pop-up menus, crop and optimize graphics to reduce their file size, and save time by automating repetitive tasks. When a document is complete, you can export or save it as a JPEG file, GIF file, or file of another format--along with HTML files containing HTML tables and JavaScript code--for use on the web. You also can export or save a type of file specific to another program, such as Adobe Photoshop or Adobe Flash, if you want to continue working in the other program.

Vector Graphics

Vector graphics render images using lines and curves, called vectors that include color and position information. For example, the image of a leaf may be defined by a series of points that describe the outline of the leaf. The color of the leaf is determined by the color of its outline (the stroke) and the color of the area enclosed by the outline (the fill).

Computer displays are made up from small dots called pixels. The picture is built up from these dots. The smaller and closer the dots are together, the better the quality of the image, but the bigger the file needed to store the data. If the number of pixels is kept constant, the size of each pixel will grow and the image becomes grainy when magnified, as the resolution of the eye enables it to pick out individual pixels.

Vector graphics files store the lines, shapes and colors that make up an image as mathematical formula. A vector graphics program uses these mathematical formulae to construct the screen image, building the best quality image possible, given the screen resolution. The mathematical formulae determine where the dots that make up the image should be placed for the best results when displaying the image. Since these formulae can produce an image scalable to any size and detail, the quality of the image is only determined by the resolution of the display, and the file size of vector data generating the image stays the same. Printing the image to paper will usually give a sharper, higher resolution output than printing it to the screen but can use exactly the same vector data file.



When you edit a vector graphic, you modify the properties of the lines and curves that describe its shape. Vector graphics are resolution-independent, which means you can move, resize, reshape, or change the color of a vector graphic, as well as display it on output devices of varying resolutions, without changing the quality of its appearance.

Bitmap Graphics

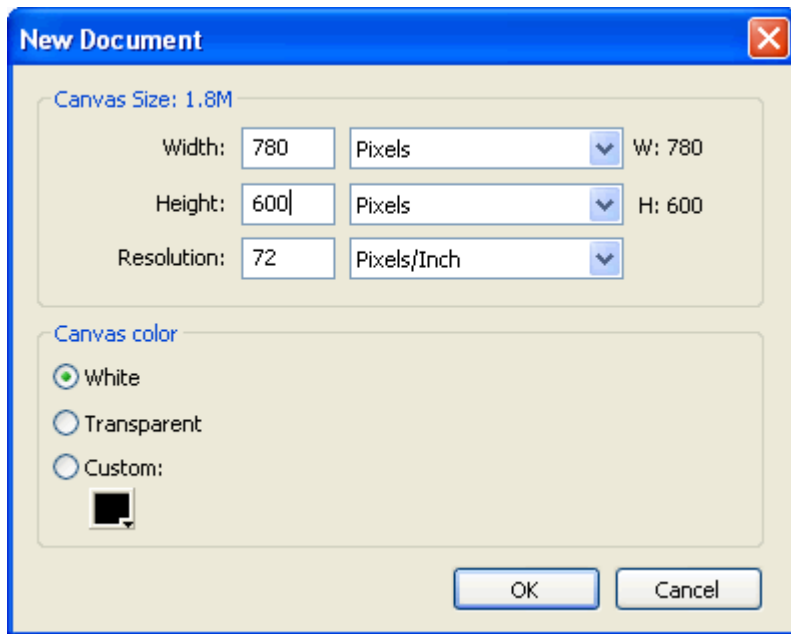
Bitmap graphics are composed of dots, called pixels, arranged in a grid. Your computer screen is a large grid of pixels. In a bitmap version of the leaf, the image is determined by the location and color value of each pixel in the grid. Each pixel is assigned a color. When viewed at the correct resolution, the dots fit together like tiles in a mosaic to form the image.



When you edit a bitmap graphic, you modify pixels rather than lines and curves. These bitmap graphics are resolution-dependent, which means that the data describing the image is fixed to a grid of a particular size. Enlarging a bitmap graphic redistributes the pixels in the grid, often making the edges of the image appear ragged. Displaying a bitmap graphic on an output device with a lower resolution than the image itself can also degrade the image's quality.

Create a New Fireworks CS3 Document

1. Open Fireworks and create a new document [File > New].
2. In the dialog box enter the width and height of the layout. I usually design for a width of 780 pixels width. This works well in monitors with 800 x1024 resolution as it leaves 20 pixels for the browser scroll bar. The resolution for the web is 72. You can also choose a background color if your webpage will have a background color.
3. Click OK.



4. Name and Save the document [File > Save]. Fireworks files have the extension .png. You can name it "layout.png".

Insert Images and Text in Fireworks CS3

Insert Images

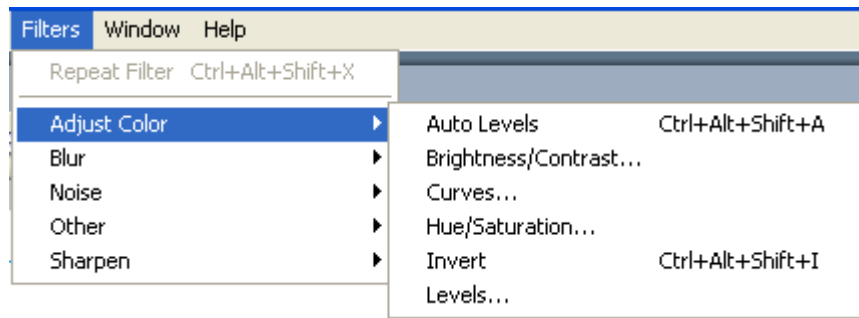
Insert any images that you plan to use [File > Import]

- Browse for the image file
- Select the file
- Click the 'Open' button
- The cursor will change
- Click where you want to place the image on the canvas
- The image will be placed there

You have many tools to clean up and enhance the image within Fireworks.

You can use auto levels to bring out the best in photos [select photo > Filter > Adjust Color > Auto Levels].

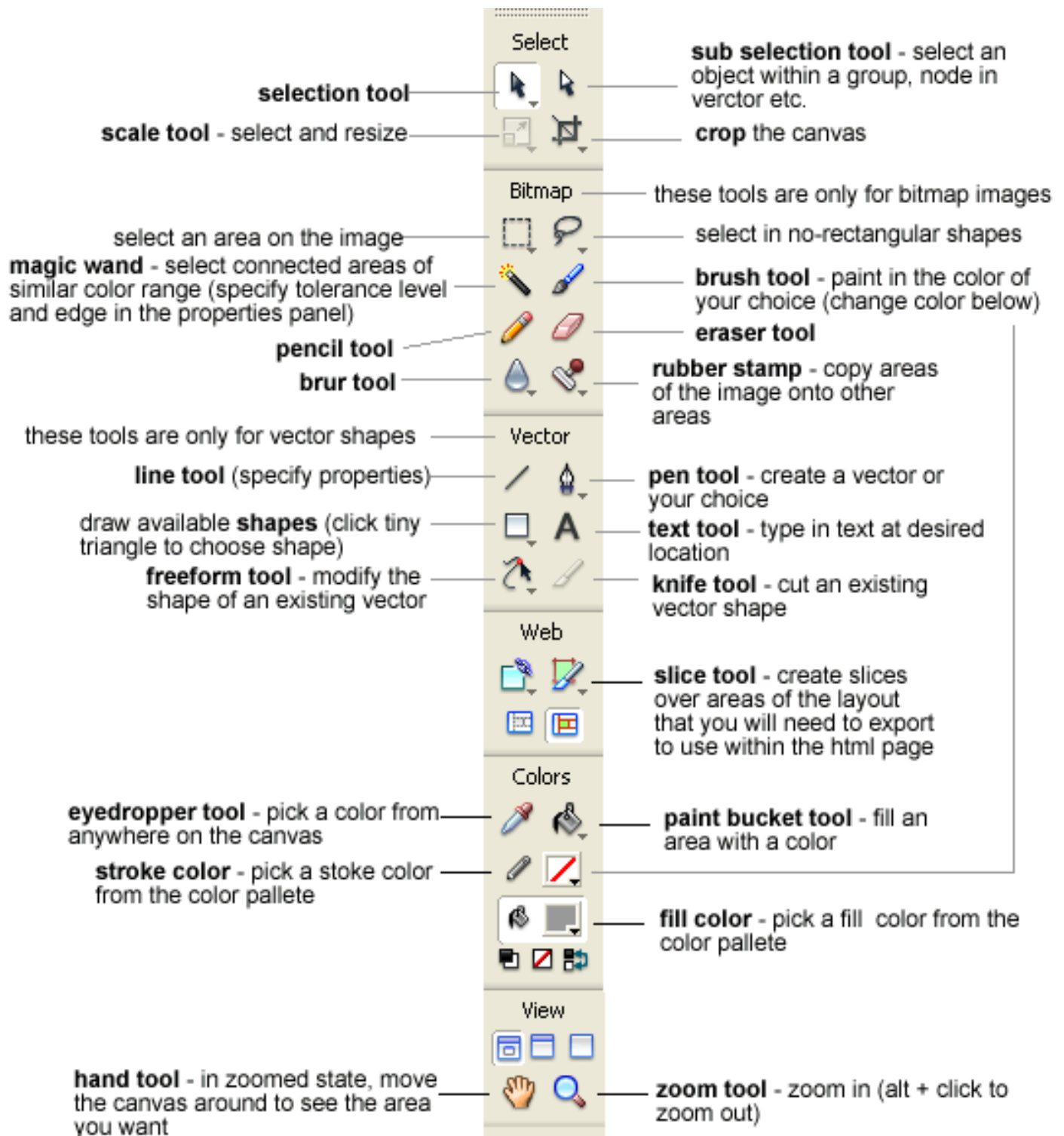
You can also try out the other filters.



Fireworks Filters

You can undo if you're not happy with it. By default you can undo upto 20 actions in Fireworks. You can increase the number of times you can undo by setting it in {Edit > Preferences > General Tab > Undo Steps}.

You can make changes to the images - remove backgrounds, resize etc. You can also create vector shapes. Take some time to explore the options provided in the tools palette [Window > Tools].



Fireworks Tools Palette

Insert Text

Use the text tool to insert text like a sample heading, sample textual content, menu items, byline, sample links, footer - copyright info etc. Style the text by using the options in the Properties Palette.



You can specify the color, font, size etc. You can also add filters, alignments, spacing, leading etc. Explore what you can do with text.