

Picasa Basics for the Web Overview

Picasa for Windows is a free image editing software program from Google. It can be used with images from digital cameras, scans, off the web, or even images created in a paint program. Features include a library for browsing images on the computer, image enhancement tools, and image sharing tools. This tutorial will introduce you to Picasa, with a focus on preparing images to use on the Web.

Topic 1: Picasa Installation

This module will review the basics for obtaining Picasa and installing it.

Subtopic 1: Where to get Picasa

Subtopic 2: Installation issues

Assessment: Interface

Topic 2: Picasa Interface

This module will review the basic interface elements and tools of Picasa.

Subtopic 1: Library Browser

Subtopic 2: Tools

Subtopic 3: Export/save options

Assessment: Image Editing

Topic 3: Images for the Web

This module includes information on planning for using images on web pages.

Subtopic 1: Type of image

Subtopic 2: Size of image

Assessment: Image Size

Topic 4: Extras

The following are additional resources for working with images on the Web.

Picasa Help and FAQ

<http://picasa.google.com/support/>

Working with images on the web.

<http://depts.washington.edu/trio/train/howto/pieces/images/index.shtml>

Clip art for Teachers

<http://www.clipartforteachers.com/>

ClipArt.com

<http://www.clipart.com>

Picasa Basics for the Web

Overview

Picasa for Windows is a free image editing software program from Google. It can be used with images from digital cameras, scans, off the web, or even images created in a paint program. Features include a library for browsing images on the computer, image enhancement tools, and image sharing tools. This tutorial will introduce you to Picasa, with a focus on preparing images to use on the Web.

Topic 1: Picasa Installation

This module will review the basics for obtaining Picasa and installing it.

Subtopic 1: Where to get Picasa

Obj:

To find Picasa on the Internet

Content:

Picasa can be found at www.picasa.google.com. The Picasa home page describes many of the programs features, system requirements, and includes a link to download the program.

Learning Activity: Download Picasa

Go to the Picasa home page (www.picasa.google.com) and download the free Picasa software. Don't install it yet. That is part of the next sub-topic.

Subtopic 2: Installation issues

Obj:

To install Picasa on a computer

Content:

The Picasa installation Wizard will guide you through the basic installation. There are two items to keep in mind with first installing Picasa.

1. If you have a previous version of Picasa and it has already set-up a library of your images, install the new version before you uninstall the old version. After the new version is installed, start it. You will be asked if you want to import your existing library database. Select yes if you do. Once your new version of Picasa has imported your library, you can uninstall the old version.

2. When you first install Picasa it will ask you if you want it to scan your computer for images and create a library for you. Be careful here. Unless you give it some limits, Picasa will add every image on your hard drive to the library. It doesn't move the images but it does list the folders they are in. You have more images on your computer than you realize. I recommend you restrict the search to your "My Pictures" folder or your "My Documents" folder.

Learning Activity:

Install Picasa on your computer. Remember to pay attention to how Picasa is set to scan your computer for images.

Assessment: Interface

Complete a reflection activity on the Picasa installation. Were there any problems? What would you do differently when installing on another computer?

Topic 2: Picasa Interface

This module will review the basic interface elements and tools of Picasa.

Subtopic 1: Library Browser

Obj:

To locate images on a computer

Content:

The Library view includes three sections; the folder list, the picture tray, and the light box. Let's look at each section.

The folder list includes all the folders containing images that Picasa scanned during installation. They are sorted by date of creation. Clicking on a folder displays those images in the light box. You can make changes in the Folder Manager under the Tools menu.

The picture tray is where you collect images to work on as a collection or group. When you select a picture in the light box it is put in the picture tray. You add pictures to the tray by pressing the Hold button and selecting more pictures, or by dragging and dropping. Options include Print, Email, Collage, Hello, Blogger, Order, and Export.

The light tray displays all the images in the currently selected folder from the folder list. You can use the View menu to change the thumbnail size, or use the slider, bottom right of the light box. Double clicking on a thumbnail will open it up in the light box. That image is now ready for editing.

Go to the Picasa Library Overview

(http://picasa.google.com/help/userguide_organize.html) for more information on how to use the Library. Use the Back button in your browser to return here.

Note: Add graphic “picasaMain.jpg”.

Learning Activity: View Images

- 1. Select a folder in the folder list and practice changing the thumbnail view size.*
- 2. Add more than one image to the picture tray.*

Subtopic 2: Tools

Obj:

To locate and recognize Picasa tools

Content:

The Picasa tools are very user friendly. Double click on a thumbnail of an image to open that image in the light box and the image editing tools. All the changes you make to an image in Picasa do not change the original file. You must export an image from Picasa to keep the changes. There are three tool categories: Basic Fixes, Tuning, and Effects.

Go to the Picasa Editing Overview

(http://picasa.google.com/help/userguide_edit.html) for more information on each of the Picasa tools. Use the Back button in your browser to return here.

Note: Add graphic “picasaedit.jpg”.

Learning Activity: Edit an Image

- 1. Select an image on your computer. Go to the Basic Fixes tools and use the crop tool to cut out parts of the picture.*
- 2. Go to the Tuning tools and adjust the highlights and shadows.*
- 3. Go to the Effects tools and explore some of the different effects.*

Subtopic 3: Export/save options

Obj:

To export images out of Picasa

Content:

The Picture Tray control includes buttons for sharing images in a variety of ways. You can print images, email them, create collages, upload to blogs, and export images. Picasa never changes your original image files so you have to export you images in some manner to save the changes. When you export an image you will be asked for a folder name to place the image in. Picasa saves the image with the original file name. You can choose to change the size of the image before you save it.

Note: Add graphic "PicasaExportScreen.jpg".

Learning Activity: Export an Image

Select a thumbnail image and make sure it appears in the Picture Tray. Then click Export and save the image on your computer.

Assessment: Image Editing

Using the following answer options:

- A. Basic Fixes*
- B. Tuning*
- C. Effects*

Answer these questions:

Where is the "Highlights Slider?"

Where is the "I'm Feeling Lucky" tool?

Where is the "Film Grain" tool?

Topic 3: Images for the Web

This module includes information on planning for using images on web pages.

Subtopic 1: Type of image

Obj:

To select an appropriate image format for the web

Content:

There are several standard image file formats used on the Internet; including jpeg, gif, and png. Of these formats jpeg is probably the most common. If you are planning on using an image on a web site, exporting and saving that image as a jpeg file is recommended. Picasa makes this easy in that it automatically saves

images as jpegs. You can use a slider to change the image quality of the jpeg. Usually a setting of 45% to 50% works well.

Learning Activity: Adjust JPEG Quality

Select an image and export it. Adjust the image quality to 45%, then save the image.

Subtopic 2: Size of image

Obj:

To save an image in a appropriate size for the web

Content:

Computer screens consist of many very small pixels of light. In general, screens range from 72 to 96 pixels an inch. If you want an image to appear to be about two inches across on your screen, then change the image size to 144 dpi wide when you export it. Most screens are set to be either 800 pixels wide, or 1024 pixels wide, so plan your images accordingly. For example, if an image should take up half the screen width, go with 400 or 512 dpi wide.

Learning Activity: Change Image Size

Export an image from Picasa, with the size of the width set to take up 1/4 of the computer screen. Practice different size adjustments and note the amount of space the image takes up on a screen.

Assessment: Image Size

Answer the following questions.

- 1. Approximately what width should an image be to take up 1/3 of a screen set at 800 pixels wide?*
- 2. Approximately what width should an image be to appear about 1 and 1/2 inches wide on a typical computer screen?*

Topic 4: Extras

The following are additional resources for working with images on the Web.

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