

Working with Transparent Images

Objectives

- Understand Transparency
- Use Microsoft WORD to create transparent images
- Use paint.net free software download to create transparent images

Images are created in a rectangular window, but not all images we wish to display are rectangular. Take Duke as an example.

Duke.png



At first glance Duke looks like a good candidate for using in a game, but if we choose a background that is not white we will see the following:

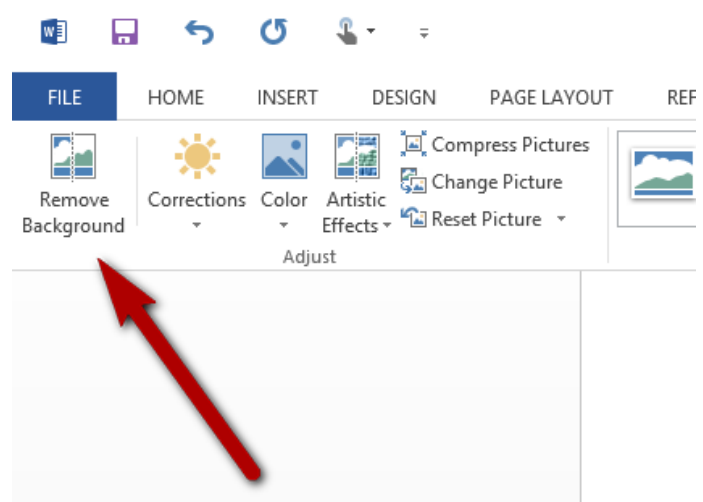


This produces an ugly white border around the Duke character. What we want is the white border around duke to be transparent. That means that instead of seeing a pre-defined white color, we would see the background.

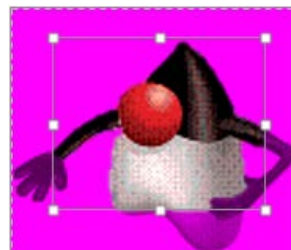
Not all graphic formats support transparency. The popular Jpeg format does not support transparency. So if you save an image using this format it will always contain a border.

If you wish to use transparent images you should use either the PNG or GIF formats. Most of the images in Greenfoot use the PNG format because of this ability.

If you have Word, Excel or PowerPoint installed, you have an easy way to remove your picture's background. The process is identical for all three programs, and requires you to insert the picture into a new document. Once that's done, click the Format tab, and under the Adjust group, click on Remove Background.



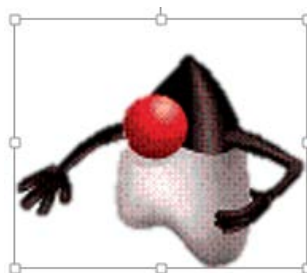
The program will try to figure out automatically which parts of the picture are the background, and mark them in purple. Depending on the complexity of your image, you could be finished, or you might need to make some adjustments.



To fix problems, start by fitting the marker around your object, which will cause the program to automatically detect more background. If this is still not enough, you're going to have to use the Mark Areas to Remove and Mark Areas to Keep tools. These are not the most intuitive to use, but it mostly amounts to drawing straight lines around the objects you want to get rid of or keep.



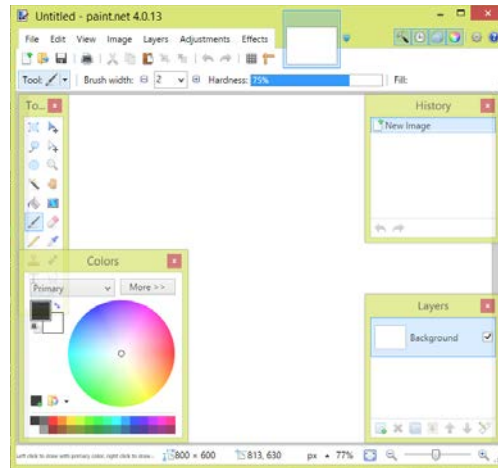
When you're done, click Remove Background and you're left with a background-less image. You can now right click the image and save it as a .PNG.



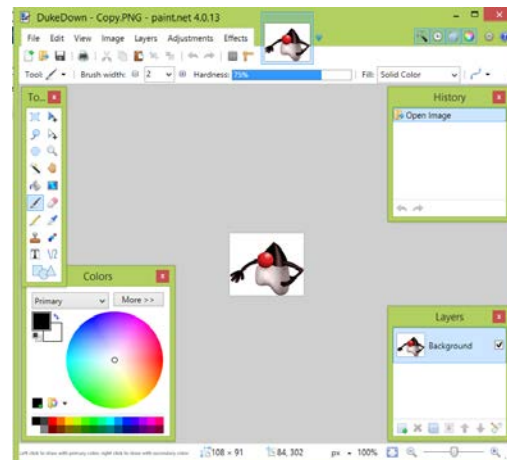
If you do not have Microsoft Office, there are free software products available that will create the transparency.


Paint.NET is a free image and photo editing software for Windows PCs. You can download it from <http://www.getpaint.net/index.html>.


Screenshots are provided to show how this software works, but similar features are available in others.

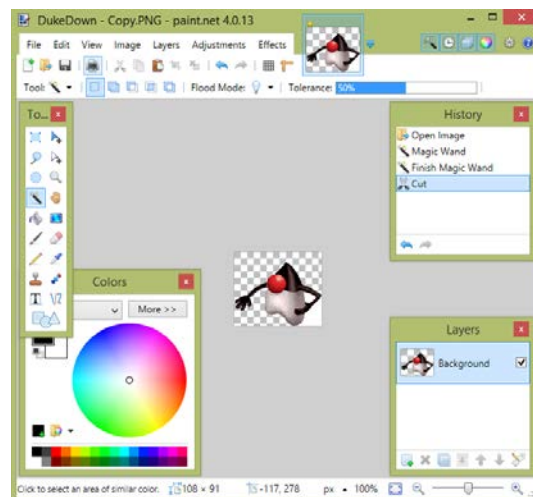


Click File, Open, and open the image in which you want to make the background transparent.

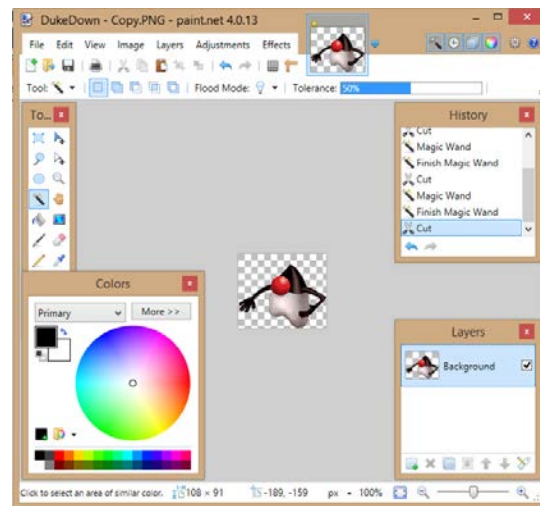


Select the Magic Wand  and click on an area you want to make transparent.

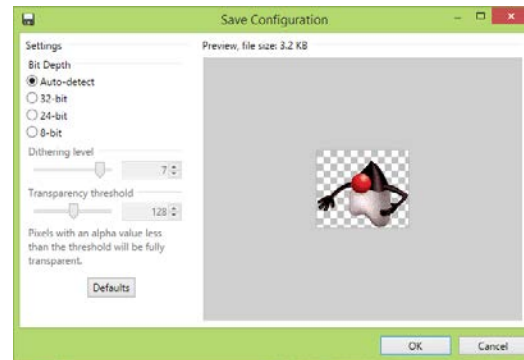
Click Edit, Cut or the  button on the toolbar and you should see a "checkerboard" pattern where the image is now transparent.



Repeat until all desired background has been made transparent (checkerboard).



Click Save As...Select a file type of PNG or GIF before clicking the Save button. Click OK on the Save Configuration window.



If we now use this image in Greenfoot we will see the following image.

Duke no longer has the white box around it, and the background is shown through the transparent sections of our image

