

## Basic concepts of Paint Shop Pro 7™

Here's how we will use PSP7 to create the wonderful (hmm!) image on the right from scratch.

This tutorial can also be carried out on later versions of PSP, but the Glow filter used is only available on the Anniversary Edition of version 7.

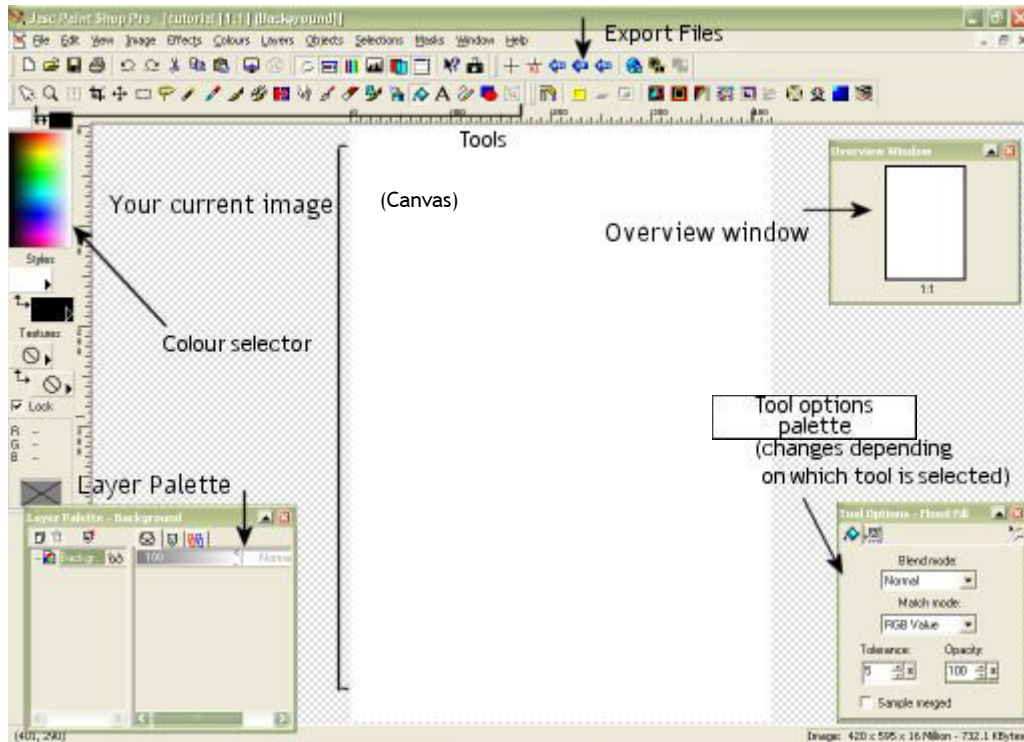
In this tutorial we will learn about

- ☺ Flood filling
- ☺ Selections
- ☺ Vector text
- ☺ Layers
- ☺ Masking
- ☺ Preset Shapes
- ☺ Plug-in Filters
- ☺ Blurring

Be sure to read the PSP manual before starting this tutorial.

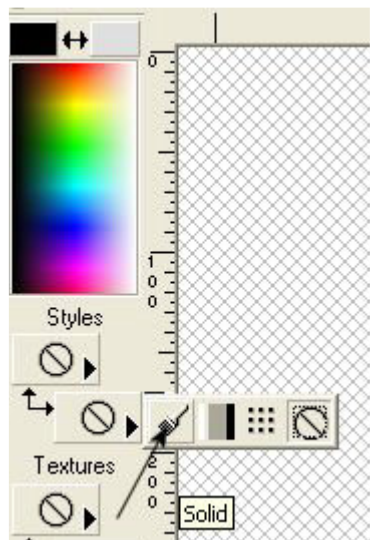
First, let's familiarise ourselves with the PSP7 window overleaf.





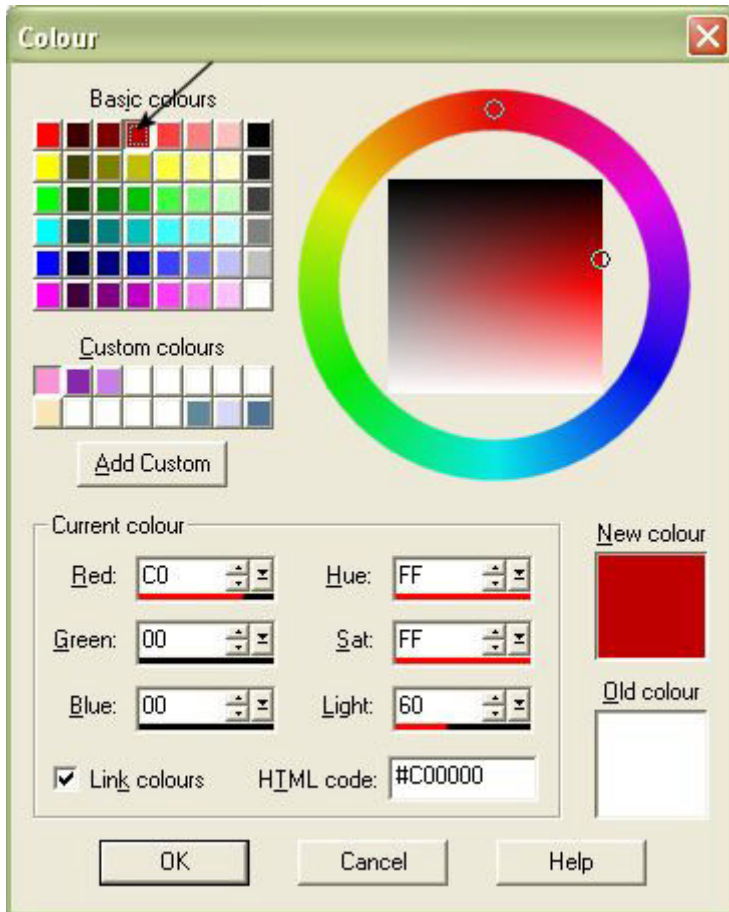
The actual position of the palettes will vary from my layout above. Move them around until you find a position that you find easy to work with. Double-click a tool palette's title bar to dock it. Feel free to experiment with the tools to familiarise yourself with them. When you're ready, we will start the tutorial.

These are the tools we'll be using:



And now we begin...

Once you've launched PSP, create a new file, through either File> New, Ctrl+N, or the small paper icon in the tool selector. Set the dimensions as 420 pixels wide and 595 pixels high. Put the background colour as white and the resolution as 72 pixels per inch (this is the default) and the colour depth to 16M (24bit). Your window should now look similar to the one in the screenshot above. Don't forget, if at any time you make a mistake, just hit Ctrl+Z to undo. Be sure to save your file frequently as a .psp file.

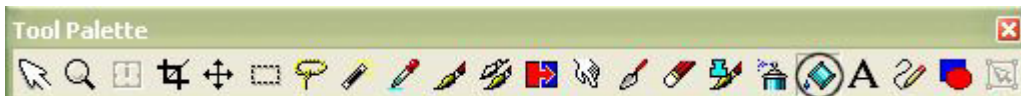


### Changing the background colour

The first thing we will do is to set the background of the image to a deep red. Click and hold the arrow on the bottom of the top two colour selectors (this is the background colour, the top selector is the foreground/stroke colour) until the style selector appears as in the image above.

Click on the paintbrush as indicated and the colour selector will change to a solid colour. Now click on this and the following dialogue will appear.

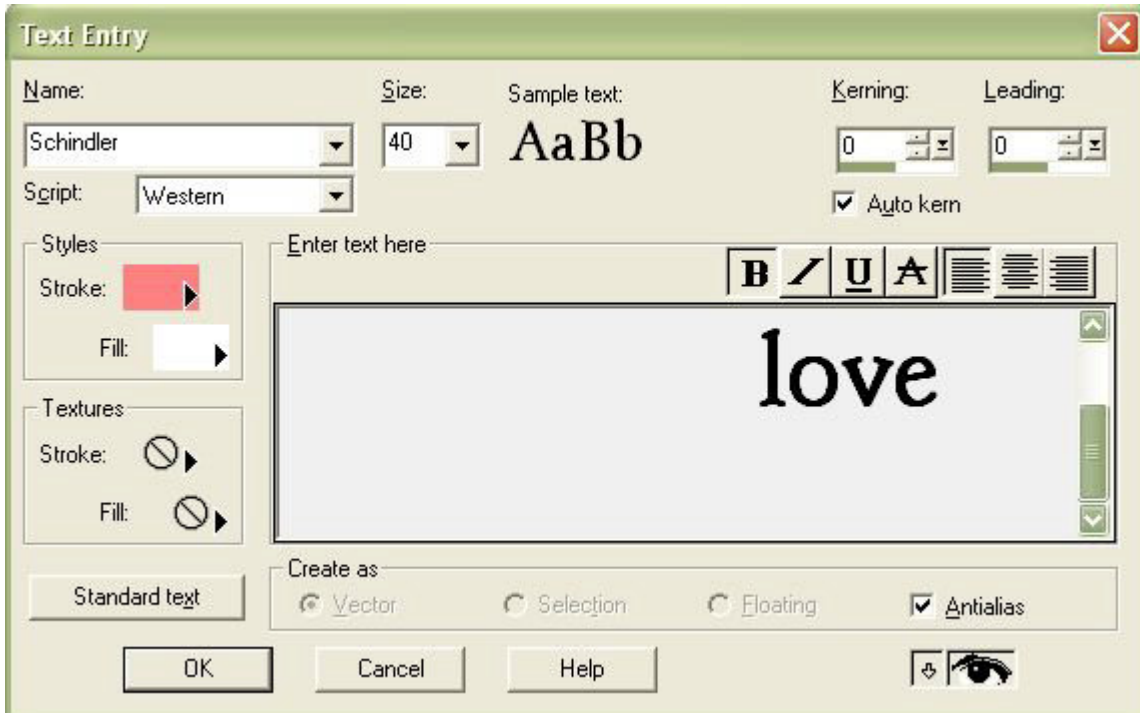
Now choose the colour red as indicated and press OK.



Now click the flood fill tool as shown above. In the tool options palette, make sure the opacity is set to 100. Then right-click on the canvas and your background should now change to deep red.

### Adding vector text

Click the A on the tool selector. The cursor will turn to a letter A. Now click anywhere onto the canvas. The following text dialogue will appear:



Set the font as Schindler (available on [searchfreefonts.com](http://searchfreefonts.com)), the stroke colour to pale red (2 to the right of the deep red we used), and the fill to white. Make sure the anti-alias box is checked (this blends the edges of the text to make a smooth finish, otherwise edges will have a pixelated look). Kerning refers to the spacing between individual letters. Leading is the space between each line of text. Make sure the VECTOR radio button is selected. This is so we can continue to edit the text if necessary. Make sure all the settings in your dialogue are identical to the one in the screenshot. The eye in the corner is the preview option. Select this to preview your text on the canvas before accepting.

Let's now type our text. We will use the very mushy phrase:  
*'A present  
 for my  
 love'.*

Then add 7 spaces before the *my* and 14 before *love*. Then click OK. The text will now appear on the canvas. The lines of text look a bit too close to each other, so let's modify the leading. Double click on the text, or draw a box around it with the vector select tool



(the last in the tool selector - it's a cursor with a box around it) and click on edit text in the tool options palette. The text dialogue should now reappear. Click on the text and press Ctrl+A to select all. Now, in the leading box, change the value to 20 and press OK. The lines should be more spaced out now. We want to align the text in the vertical centre of the canvas, so while the text is selected, click the 2nd tab in the tool options palette, and press the button shown in the screenshot.



This will centre it vertically on the canvas. To further move the text, you can either click ON the actual text (the cursor should change to a cross with arrowheads) and drag, or you can hold down Ctrl+Shift+[arrow key]. Shift+[arrowkey] moves the image in smaller steps. Position the text until it looks roughly like the screenshot.

### Adding a masked image

We will now add the photo of the diamond ring in the bottom-left corner. Go to [morguefile.com](http://morguefile.com) and search for a photo of a diamond ring. We use this one: <http://www.morguefile.com/archive/?display=45692>. There's no need to download the hi-res version as we only need a small image. So right-click on the image and copy it to clipboard. Then in the PSP window press Ctrl+V, to paste it as a new image. Now go to Image> Resize and resize it to 25% of its original size. Make sure the maintain ratio box is checked. Now right click and copy the resultant

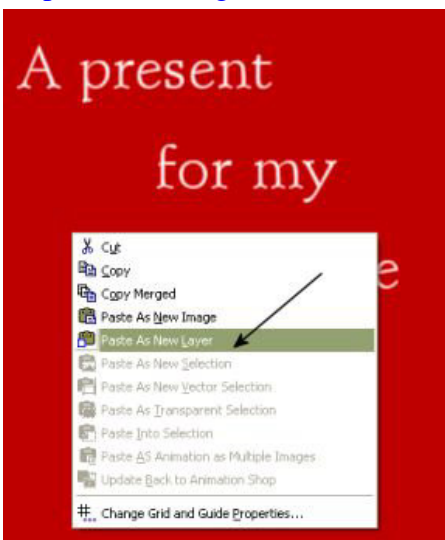
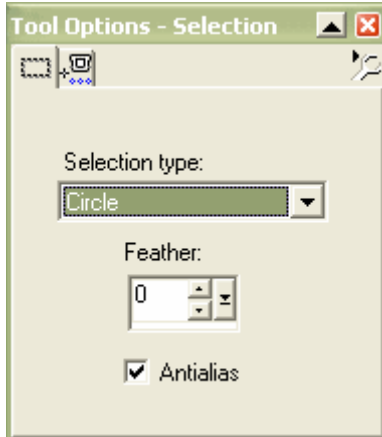


image. Switch back to our tutorial image and right click the canvas and select Paste as New Layer. This is so we can independently modify this part of the image without altering the rest of it, similar to animators' cells. Now select the move tool (the cross with arrowheads). Click on the image of the ring and drag it down to the corner as shown on the right.

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We are now going to add a mask to make the edges of the photo fade to the background. First click the selection tool. In the tool options palette, change the selection type to circle, and check the anti-alias box. Feathering adds extra pixels to the edge of the selection and anything applied to the selection would gradually fade out in the feathered pixels. We will not use it this time, so make sure feathering is set to 0.

Now holding down the cursor, create a circle selection approximately 130 x 130 (look at the final pair of numbers in the status bar as you drag the mouse) in the CENTRE of the canvas. With the move tool, RIGHT-click and drag the selection until its over the ring photo as in the screenshot. We are going to use this as the basis for a mask. Masks are a bit like stencils. We can choose how much of the image shows through. We can make certain parts completely visible, completely hidden or a value in-between.

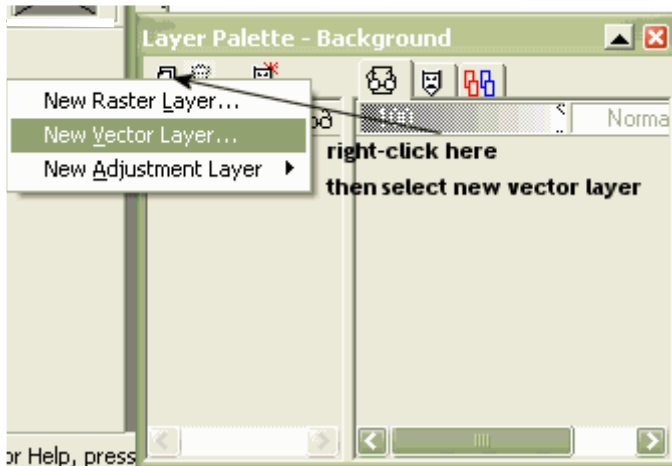


Now, leaving the selection marquee in place, go to Masks> New> Hide All. The ring will appear to vanish, but don't worry, it's still there. It has just been masked out. **DON'T LOSE THE SELECTION!!** Select Masks> Edit. Now click on the flood fill tool and set the foreground colour to white. Now left-click inside the selection and hey presto, the part of the image within the selection will appear (conversely, we can make parts of the image mask out by using black, and varying levels of transparency using shades of grey). You should have something like in the screenshot above.

NOW you can lose the selection by pressing Ctrl+D. Don't exit mask editing mode yet (this happens if you save the file, for instance. If you do exit editing mode, just go back to masks> edit). Now we will apply a Gaussian blur to the mask. Go to Effects > Blur > Gaussian blur. Now set the strength to about 12 and apply. The edges of your mask will now blur to make something like this:



Now we can exit mask editing by deselecting Masks> Edit or pressing Ctrl+K. We will now add another masked layer. Copy this image to clipboard <http://www.morguefile.com/archive/?display=90597> and resize it to about 50% of its original size in the same way we resized the ring. Now paste as a new layer and place it in the bottom right corner. We will add a mask to this layer in the same way as we did to the ring, but this time select Ellipse from the select options menu. Again, go to Masks> New > Hide All and create the mask using fill and Gaussian blur as we did before. See if you can get the resulting image as in the screenshot:



### Using Preset Shapes

Now we will add the glowing heart. We start by creating a new vector layer as below.

Then select the preset shapes tool on the tool selector. The preset shapes cache will load.

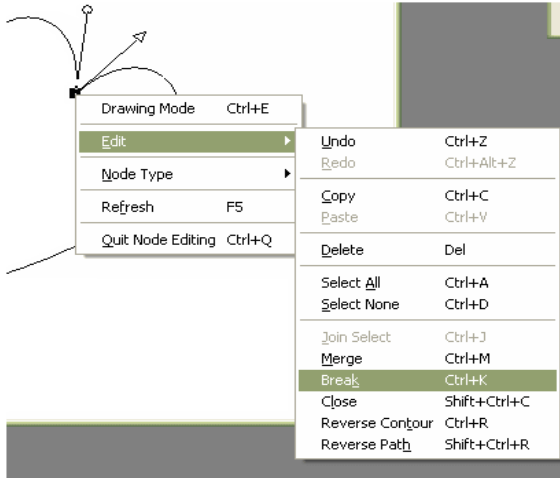
In the tool options palette, scroll down the list of shapes until you find Heart 1 (above ¾ way down the list). Draw out a heart, slightly elongated until you get something like below.

Make sure the Create as Vector and anti-alias boxes are checked. Holding down Shift while drawing the shape keeps it in proportion, but since we want the heart slightly longer than the default we won't do this. Don't worry about the colours yet, we will change them presently. Don't deselect the shape yet. Now in the tool options palette you will see an option for Properties. Click this button. Change the stroke width to 3 or 4. Now change the stroke colour to the pale red we used earlier for the text, and the fill colour to null by holding down the arrow and selecting the



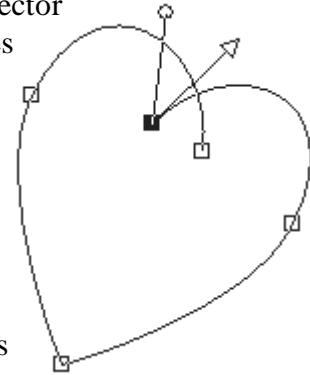
### Editing Nodes

Now your heart will be a pink outline and transparent in the middle. While the heart is still selected, notice the horizontal bar in the centre of the shape with 2 squares. This is the rotate bar. Click on the right-hand square

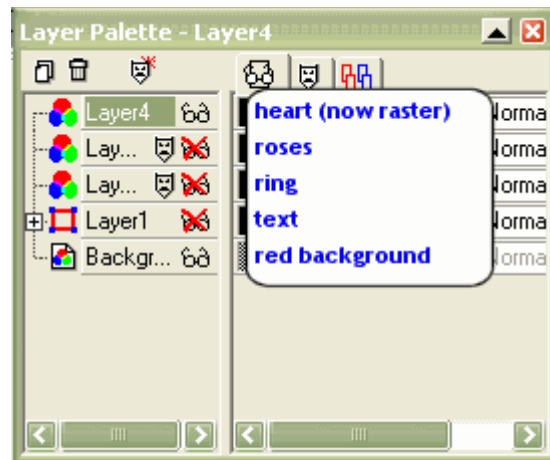


(the cursor will change to two curved arrows) on this and rotate the heart slightly to the right (downwards), about 45°. Now we are going to modify the shape of the heart slightly. Vector

images are shapes made up of nodes connected by lines. The upside of this is that we can resize a vector graphic over and over again and its



quality will never decrease. The downside is that filters and effects cannot be applied to vectors. Raster (bitmap) graphics are those made up of individual pixels. As these are resized, the quality will decrease. As our heart graphic is a vector, we can resize it by dragging the handles on the sides/corners of the selection square, and modify the nodes that make up the shape. While the shape is still selected, click on the vector select tool and the tool options palette will display a Node Edit button. Click on this and the nodes making up the heart will be displayed. Right click on the node in the centre of the heart as shown above-left. Select Edit> Break. This will cause the node to split in two. Now, of these two new nodes, drag the node on the left slightly to the right, and vice versa so you get something like the heart shown above-right. Now exit node editing mode with Ctrl+Q. If you're not satisfied with the shape of the heart, continue to modify it using the steps above. Position it as in the screenshot at the beginning of this tutorial. When you're happy with the shape, position and size, we will convert it to a raster layer so we can apply a glow filter to it.

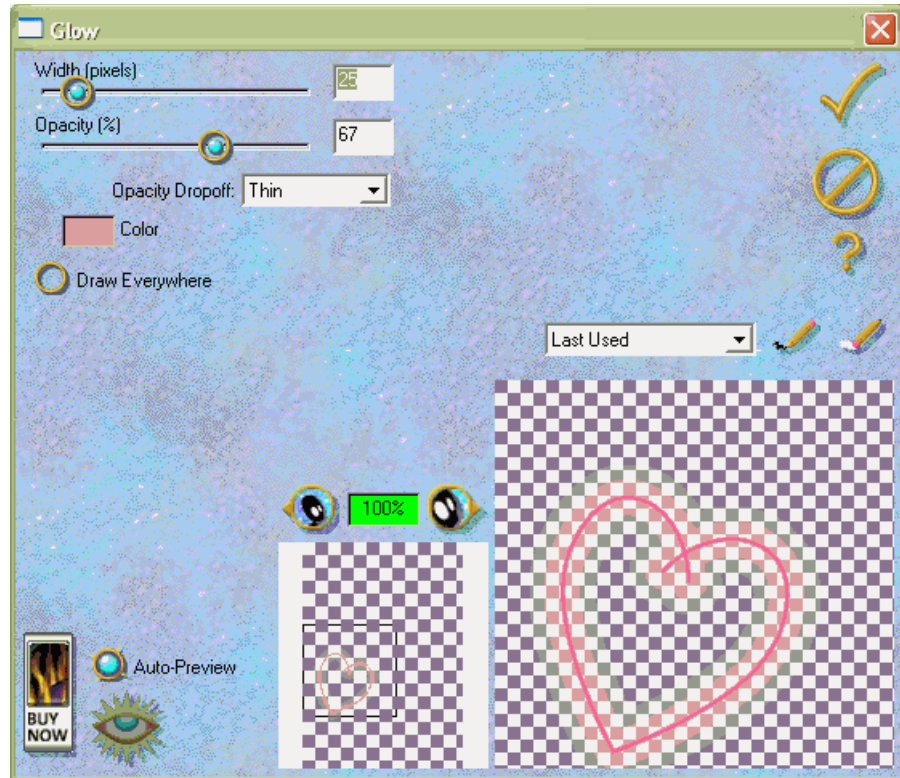


### Converting to Raster (Bitmap)

In the layer palette, right click on the topmost layer (should be called Layer 4 with a red and blue square icon to denote its raster) and select the last option in the list, 'Convert to Raster Layer'. The icon next to it will change to red, green and blue circles to show it's a raster layer. Let's hide the other layers so as to edit the heart layer more clearly. Click on the spectacles icon on the left of the roses, ring and text layers. Now only the heart and

the red background should be visible. (We can make the layers visible again by clicking on the specs again.) Now go to Effects > Plug-in Filters > Eye Candy 3.1 > Glow. Fill in the settings as shown in the screenshot below, then press the tick and the filter will be applied.

Make sure all your layers are visible again. Your image should now look like the one below. Now all that's left is to create the glowing stars. Select the preset shapes again and choose Star 1. Make sure the Create as Vector option is checked, and Retain Style is unchecked. On the main colour selector put the background colour as white and the foreground colour as null. Now draw a few stars of varying sizes over the top-right of the canvas. Again convert the layer to raster and apply a Gaussian blur of 3 or 4 and the stars will appear to glow.



All that needs to be done now is to export the file. Click the Export PNG icon (the blue arrow with the letters PNG over it). If the export icons are not visible then go to File> Export> PNG. In the dialogue that appears, set colours as 16 million, transparency as none and format as non-interlaced. Then choose the directory you want to save in and you're done!

