

Digital Camera Workshop

Connecting your camera

Method 1 – Memory Card:

If your camera has a memory card and your computer has a memory card reader either built-in or attached, you can use the memory card to transfer pictures to your hard drive. This has its advantages over using the USB cable, for example, if you are taking pictures on location or holiday, you can swap memory cards and be downloading one lot of pictures (on your laptop) while you keep on snapping with a new card.

There are a number of different brands each with a different shape, so you have to have the right reader on the computer for this method to work. You can buy readers that connect to your computer which will take most of the common types. Just check before you buy it that it will read your brand of memory card. (You might like to take into consideration the types of card that your computer will read when you buy a camera, but bear in mind that it's cheaper to buy a card reader than to swap your camera if you find it doesn't have some other feature that you need.)



How to do it:

Using a memory card is not hard –

- Take the memory card out of the camera. Most lock and release with a push. You may need to turn your camera off first. (check your manual)
- Put the card into the computer. It might click and lock the same way or it may just push straight in. Usually at this point the computer will open a dialog to ask you what you would like to do. Follow the instructions for USB cable downloading in the next section.

Method 2 - USB Cable

Find the USB plug on your camera. It should look like this:



- Plug the small end of your USB lead into this port.
- Plug the other end into your computer (there should be a port on the front, if not – try the back)
- A dialog should pop up with a list of options; double-click on 'Copy Files to My Computer'. (If you know what you are doing you can 'Open the Folder to View Files')



Using the wizard to copy your pictures:

- When the intro window comes up, click on 'Next'
- Select the photos that you want to copy (to copy everything click 'select all')
- On the next screen you'll choose where you want to copy the photos. Choose a name for the set (usually today's date) and select the folder you want to put them in (usually My Pictures). If this is your computer, you should probably tick the 'Delete pictures...' box. Then your camera will be empty and ready for you to start taking more photos
- Click 'Next' and wait for the wizard to move your pictures, then click 'Next' again
- When the 'Completed' screen comes up – press 'Finish'



If you don't see the wizard you'll have to do it manually:

- Open 'My Computer' and then double-click 'Removable Storage (x:)' Yours may have a slightly different name.
- There will probably be at least one sub folder – double click on any sub folders until you come to your list of photographs.

When you see a list of filenames:

- Ctrl-A (to select all)
- Ctrl-C (to copy)
- Show desktop (on the quick launch bar) or minimize open windows
- Double-click on 'My Documents' then 'My Pictures'

My documents should also be an option in your Start Menu

- Right-click – new folder: Today's date or similar
- Open this folder
- Ctrl-V (to paste)

You can now move on to sorting and editing (don't forget to keep the originals)...

Manipulating your photos

There are a number of programs available to manipulate your photos, ranging in price from free to very expensive. All have different features and varying levels of complexity. The most basic will allow you view and resize the photos, while the more expensive will allow you to do very fine detail editing and corrections. (e.g. airbrushing blemishes, fixing red eyes, and adding or removing people).

Some of these advanced functions can be accomplished in a very basic way by the cheaper and free versions.

If you've got Microsoft Office, then you should have MS Office Picture Manager. This comes free with MS Office and can perform some basic photo editing and touch-up functions. The instructions below are for this program. At the end of this handout we've included websites of some other programs you can download or buy.

Microsoft Office Picture Manager

Microsoft Office Picture Manager is used to make basic changes to a picture file. With this programme you can resize or compress your image, remove the "red eye" effect, rotate your photos (if they have been taken on an angle), flip the photo to make it face the opposite way, and adjust the colour, brightness and contrast of the picture.

There is a handy "crop" feature available as well, that allows you to remove unwanted areas around the outside of the photo. There is also an "autocorrect" button that requests the computer to try and adjust the contrast and brightness of the picture without you needing to do so manually.

Don't forget to save your changes during and after you have worked with a photo and always keep the original.

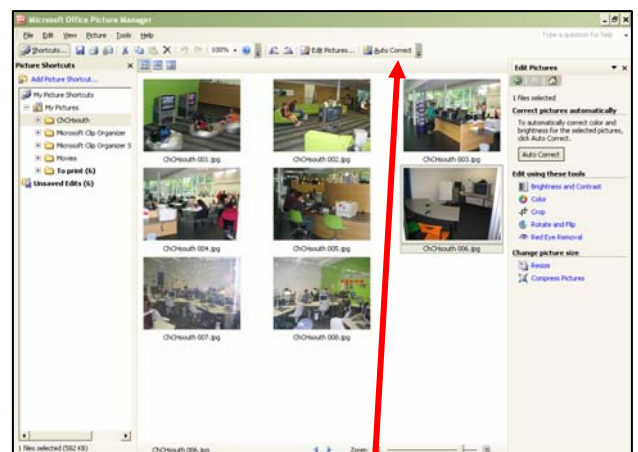
To work with a photo, you will first need to open the photo file. There are several ways to do this.

You can either:

Use My Computer to locate the file, and then double click the photo to automatically start MS Office Picture Manger and open your selected photo

Or

Start MS Office Picture Manger, and use the folder browser at the side to find your pictures.

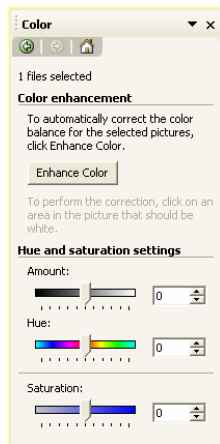


When the photo is open on the screen, you will need to click on the 'Edit Pictures...' button on the toolbar. It will appear down the right hand side of the screen.

Brightness and Contrast

This button allows you to adjust the brightness and contrast of the picture. A new menu will appear on the right of the screen, with a set of three sliders; one for brightness, one for contrast, and one for adjusting the midtones.

Click on the picture you wish to work with. Click hold and pull left or right on the slider to adjust it. Keep an eye on the picture above it to see the resulting changes and continue to adjust as needed. If you change your mind, you can reset the picture back to the default.



Colour

This button will allow the user to adjust the hue and or the saturation of the picture. A new menu will appear on the right of the screen, with a set of three sliders; one for the amount of shading adjustment, one for the actual colour adjustment, and one for adjusting the saturation of the colour. Always remember to watch the picture you selected to see the changes reflected there, and save the file when you have finished.

Crop

Crop is a really handy feature that allows you to “chop off” unneeded edges of a picture (not the middle of it). This allows you to refocus the picture on a specific area. For example, you may have a large background area and only a small part of the photo containing the person or feature you wanted to display. Click crop to get the moveable edges to appear (as black lines along the edges) and then click, hold and pull inwards to where you want the picture’s new edges to be.

Hint: Hold the Alt key while dragging the edges for additional control.

Rotate and Flip

This feature allows you to turn the picture to a jaunty angle, or turn it around from sideways to upright (or vice versa). Alternatively, you can use the flip part of the controls to make someone who is facing right, face left and so on.

Red eye Removal

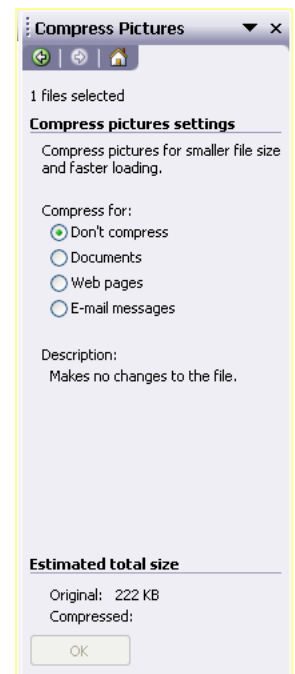
We all know that when we take a picture with the flash on, sometimes it produces a “red” look over the pupils of peoples’ eyes. This is known as “red eye”, and can be removed using this feature.

Resize

If the picture is too big or too small, you can adjust the height and or the width of the picture with these handy controls. Click and type in the box on the right and click ‘OK’ to see the result.

Compress

If you are planning on sharing photos by email or on the Internet, you will probably need to reduce the file size before you do. Compression works by removing some of the (unneeded) data from the file, so make sure you select the correct compression type from the list. Click the radio button to the left of the selection; at the bottom of this area it will tell you what the compressed file size will be. Then click OK.



Websites for photo editing software

gimp.org/downloads

acdsee.com

picasa.google.com

gimpshop.net

adobe.com/products/photoshop/photoshop

getpaint.net