

CUSTOMIZE YOUR WINDOWS DESKTOP WALLPAPER ©

or how to change the background image and have it look really great

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If care is not taken in sizing an image, the content may be too fat, too skinny, will not fill the entire desktop, or will overfill the entire desktop. Here is how to make your personal photo or a Google image a perfect fit. This was written for XP, but works very similar on Vista and Windows 7.

1. **FIND THE CURRENT SCREEN RESOLUTION:** (*XP: Right-click anywhere on the Desktop > Properties > Settings Tab*). See how your screen resolution is set. Write this value down in this format: Width in pixels x Height in pixels. (IE: 1920x1200).
2. **CHOOSE A PERSONAL IMAGE OR GET ONE FROM GOOGLE:** If you do not already have an image to use, you can Google one two ways. 1) Google the words: Desktop Wallpaper free, or 2) Go to Google and click "Images" to go to the image search. To narrow the search, you can include your screen resolution value in the search (IE: Looney Tunes 1920x1200) or after the search, you can click in the "Showing:" box, and pick either "large" or "extra large".
After the search:
 - a. Each image thumbnail tells you the size of the full image. Make sure the image you choose has both a horizontal and vertical pixel size the same or larger than your display. *Note: Small images do not "size up" well.*
 - b. After you find an image, click the image thumbnail to go the site where the full size image resides.
 - c. If the "See full size Image" option is available, click it.
 - d. Right-click the image and then click properties. Make sure the pixel size is what you expect (IE: 1024x768 or 1920x1200).
 - e. If correct, right-click the image, click "Save picture as", and download the desired image to the "My Pictures" folder. I recommend that you rename the file before you save it and include the pixels in the filename (ie: "scene1920x1200.jpg").
3. **CROP THE IMAGE, IF NECESSARY.** To look good, the aspect ratio (Height to width ratio) of the image must match your display exactly. The easiest way to do this and not get confused is to make the number of pixels on the image match the number of pixels on your display. If the image is different, you need to crop it using a Photoshop type program. The free Irfanview program works great for this. *The following example is using Irfanview and a screen resolution of 1920x1200. (NOTE: e = this example)*
 - a. Open the Image in Irfanview.
 - b. Click *Image > Resize/Resample*. Make sure the box is checked for " Preserve aspect ratio", then under " Set new size", set the Width to 1920e, then make sure the Height is 1200e or more. If not, then change the Height to 1200e and make sure the Width is 1920e or more. Click OK. *If the image appears too large, press + or - to zoom it in & out.*
 - c. Click *Edit > Custom Crop selection*. First, under 1) Set ratio for Width: Height, make sure that "None" is selected, then set the Width to 1920e and the Height to 1200e, then click the "Apply to image" button.

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- d. Carefully drag each side of the crop selection box so the image looks its best and the numbers at the top say *1920e x 1200e*. *NOTE: You must grab and move only one edge of the crop selection box at a time or you will have to start over.*
 - e. When you are happy, click *Edit > Crop selection*.
 - f. Then click File > "Save As" and save the image to the "My Pictures" folder as a .JPG filetype, putting the new pixel size in the filename. ie:
"scene1920x1200.jpg"
4. **PUT IMAGE ON THE DESKTOP:** (*XP: Right-click Desktop > Properties > Desktop Tab*) and click <Browse>. Then go to the "My Pictures" folder, select your image and click <Open>. If the image does not fit properly in the preview image, change the Position selection to "Stretch" (Stretch actually means "Fit to the screen"). If the preview looks good, click <Apply>. If you don't like it, click <Cancel>.