



# Mrs. Wizard's CompuQuickTips

*For the Rest of Us*

Volume 8 # 8 November 2002  
Editor Cindy L. O'Neal  
(901) 753-6990

## *In This Issue...*

<i>PaintShop Pro ... Masks</i> .....	1
<i>Installing &amp; Uninstalling Software</i> .....	3
<i>Tiny Treasures .. EggTimer</i> .....	4
<i>Mrs. Wizard Quick Tips</i> .....	5

*Learn what Masks are for and how to use them to your advantage in PaintShop Pro.*

*Installing and Uninstalling software doesn't need to be the nightmare it used to be with older versions of Windows. Learn what to look for and what NOT to worry about in this issue.*

## PaintShop Pro ... Masks

Using a mask in a paint program is like using a stencil that can be reversed by simply flipping a switch. This means you can use the inside (cutout) of the stencil to frame another graphic or the outside to achieve just the opposite effect. The shape of the mask is what gives your image the *illusion* that it is something other than a rectangular image. Learn the basics of masks and layers (last month's issue), stir in a little imagination (more is better), and there is no limit to the interesting effects that can be produced.

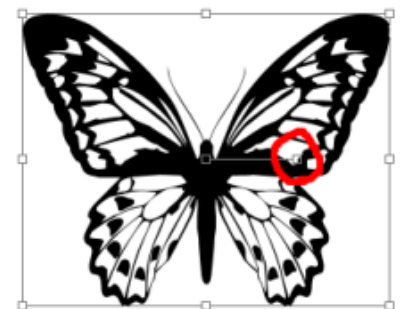
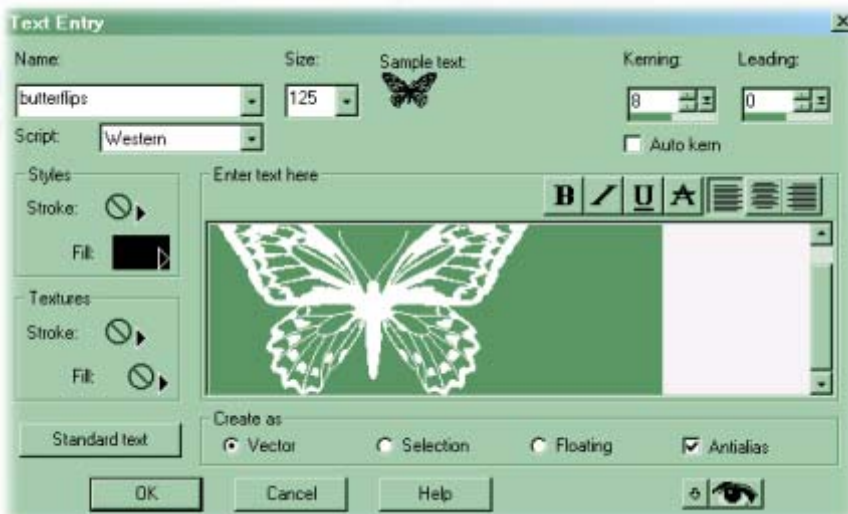
Grab a copy of *The Font Thing* from the Tiny Treasures section of [mrswizard.com](http://mrswizard.com) to help you browse through your available fonts to see which ones have interesting graphic characters you might want to use. <http://dingbatpages.com> is a great place to pick up graphic fonts to add to your collection if you want to add to your existing collection. I used *butterflips* font for the graphics while doing this tutorial. The letters and characters in this font are actually butterfly graphics. Regular fonts (letters and words) can be used as masks too. This is where your imagination comes in. There really aren't any rules.

Begin with a new blank image. Any size is fine, but I started with 360 pixels wide and 360 pixels tall, with white for the background color. Be prepared to use plenty of layers. You can hide any layers you don't want to see at any particular time and use the same graphic for many different things.

Select the *Font* tool and click once in your new image. When the *Text Entry* box appears, choose a graphic font and type the letter for the picture you want. You can use regular letters or words too. Make the font as large as you can in the size box. 72 is good to start, but you can type in any size you want. Choose *Create as Vector* at the bottom of this window. Using the *Vector* option will allow you to resize each character at will, with virtually no distortion. Make sure the color is black so it will show up OK. Click OK and you will see your "font image" appear on your image as a new vector layer.

Any time you want to adjust the size of your Vector/Text layer, click the vector object selector button, then click on the bit of text or graphic. You will

see handles appear around it. The outside handles are for resizing. The inside handle (red circle) is for quickly rotating the object. You won't have these tools available if you are working with a Raster (non vector) image.



*Continued on page 2*

## PaintShop Pro (Masks)...

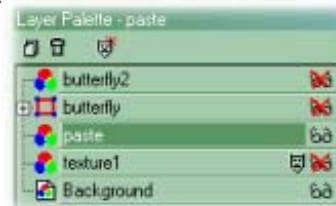
Continued from page 1

Now your image has begun, have some fun with it. Open the layer palette and make sure your *layer* is selected. Click the word *Masks* at the top. Go to *New*, then click *From Image*. Click *OK*. You should see a faint outline of your little graphic. Click the word *Masks* at the top of the main screen, then click *Save to disk*. Make sure the Masks folder is where your new mask file will go. Then give it a name and hit the *Save* button. Since you just saved your mask to use whenever and wherever, you don't need it on this image any more.



Click the word *Masks* again and choose *Delete*. Create all the new layers you want and make as many new masks to save for future images.

Create a new layer and fill it with color or a texture. Use your imagination. When you are ready, make sure this new layer is selected in the *Layers Palette* and click the word *Masks* again (at the



**Black and white images and drawings make great masking material, as well as character fonts. You can use Raster or Vector images. Vector images and objects are great to work with because they can be resized without losing any quality. They will be just as sharp if you make them larger or smaller.**

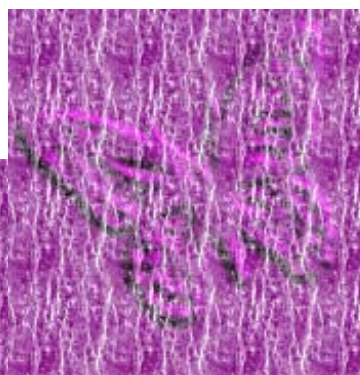
top), then click *Load from Disk*. Choose the mask file you just created and click the *open* button. You should see a faint outline of your mask. It does look like a stencil doesn't it? Click the word *Masks* again and choose *Invert*. Now you should see your image with no background, but the texture is where the black used to be.

Click the word *Selections* at the top of the main screen and choose *From Mask*. This will cause the entire area to be selected with those marching ants. At this point, the area is entirely at your mercy. Click the word *Effects*, move the mouse pointer down to 3D Effects and choose *Outer Bevel*. Have fun with it. While it is still highlighted, press CTRL+C to copy that bit to the clipboard. Create a new layer. Hide everything except the new layer and your background. Click the word *Edit* at the top of the main window. Choose *Paste as new selection* into this new layer. Click the word *Effects*, then *3D Effects* and give it a little drop shadow.

I don't know why, but if you fiddle with any of the 3D effects while the mask is still present, then delete the mask, it leaves a "ghost" impression on the layer you are removing it from. Heck! Even *accidents* can be fun while you are learning to use masks. Use CTRL+Z to backtrack (undo) any time you feel you need to go back a bit or regroup.

Now get out there and begin playing on your own!

Initial mask looks like a stencil



Ghost effect



Beveled and pasted as a new selection

**Next Month...  
Using Raster images as masks.**

# Installing and Uninstalling Software ... The right way

**I don't suffer from insanity, I enjoy every minute of it.**

Things have definitely changed. Now that XP has arrived and is pretty much the operating system of choice on newer computers, lockups and crashes are almost a fading memory. The old "rule" (for Windows 95/98) of giving your computer the "Three Finger Salute" (CTRL+ALT+Delete), and choosing *End Task* on everything except *Explorer* and *Systray* is not only not necessary, it is downright impossible unless you know exactly what to close. The new Task Manager has several new tabs to peruse. The *Applications* tab is pretty straightforward. It shows what is absolutely running right *NOW* and you should recognize the *End Task* button at the bottom. These are actual program windows you have opened. The *Processes* tab shows *everything* that is running in the background. Stuff that is running, but not necessarily in front of your nose where you can turn it off at will, is listed here. Don't let this send you into a panic.

There is still a right and a wrong way to install and uninstall software. While it is no longer as critical (with the newest versions of Windows) to do

CTRL+ALT+Delete and close everything except *Explorer* and *Systray*, you still need to at least give a cursory glance to

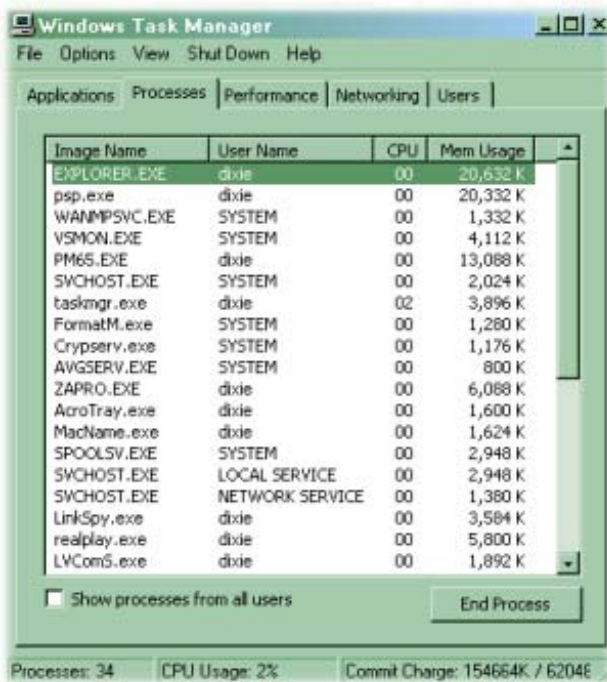
what is in your System Tray (bottom right of your main computer screen), right click everything and close as much as you can one way or another. Don't worry about things like your volume control or task scheduler, but do make sure your antivirus is disabled. Use the Task Manager Applications tab to make sure there are no obvious applications running. Windows XP is very forgiving, and even if you don't pay any special attention to shutting down running programs, it will let you know during the installation process if something is running that could conflict with your installation. When you see a message like that, pay attention and close what it tells you to close before resuming your install.

You can even install software while you are online. There is no need to disconnect in most instances. Heck ... Windows *expects* you to be connected. People with cable or DSL connections are connected whenever Windows is running. It is wonderful to be able to install and still have your connection handy.

Use *Add/Remove Programs* in the *Control Panel* to *uninstall* software you no longer need. It is much improved over older versions of windows and the safest and most complete way to remove old programs. If an *Uninstall* option is available in the program group, you can uninstall that way too. Look in the Program group first, and if an *uninstall* option isn't available, go straight

to the *Control Panel*.

It doesn't seem to be necessary to restart your computer immediately after installing most programs any more. Programs requiring a restart will let you know at the end of the installation process. If your computer seems to be a little sluggish after an install, use it as a clue to shut down and restart anyway. The increased stability of Windows XP seems to have eliminated many headaches that used to come with software installing and removing. You will actually get to spend more time working or playing and less time trying to figure out what went wrong!



## Tiny Treasures ... EggTimerPlus

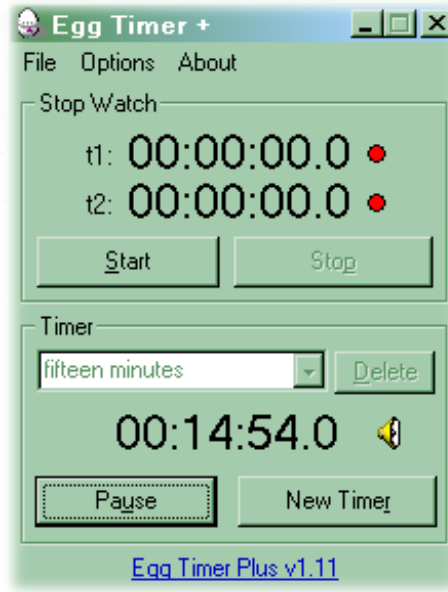
When you are working or playing on a computer (depends on your perspective), it can be easy to lose track of time. How many times have you put something on the stove, run to the computer to do a "quick email check," with every intention of returning to the stove to do your chef's duties properly, only to be rudely awakened from your digital daze by the smell of something burning? Not a very pretty mental image, is it?

Are you tired of your family thinking you care more for that "silly computer" than you do for them? Don't want to be torn unnecessarily away from the "machine?" Hehehe Here is the perfect tool for YOU!

*EggTimer Plus* is perfect when you need a timer with an alarm. Weighing in at 85Kb, there is nothing to install. Just Unzip and use. Put the folder anywhere you want and drag the *exe* file to your desktop to create a shortcut for it.. It's very intuitive (easy to use) and if it saves your fanny once, it is well worth the price (FREE).

All you need to remember now is what the timer is going off for!

Freeware from <http://www.sardinesoftware.com>



I don't believe  
in miracles.  
I rely on them.

## Holiday Goodies ...

<http://yumyum.com>

The best holiday recipes. You'll gain 10 pounds just browsing!

<http://twinklebulbs.com>

Great all year round, but REALLY fun during the holidays!

<http://winmx.com>

Great way to find your favorite music (MP3 style)  
Easy to use, no popup ads, and does NOT contain spyware!

<http://sfmusicbox.com>

Reliable online shopping for special gifts  
Great source for quickie holiday graphics too!  
Just right click, copy and paste.





# Mrs. Wizard QuickTips ...



What if the  
hokey pokey really  
is what it's all  
about?

**Viewers ...** If you don't have the latest version of Microsoft Word, Excel or PowerPoint, you can still open those files well meaning friends send. Simply visit <http://www.microsoft.com/office/000/viewers.asp> and download the ones you need for FREE. Remember, these are only *viewers*. You won't be able to make changes.

**System Information ...** (Windows ME and XP)

Want more information about what's going on under the hood of your machine? Go to *Start/Programs/Accessories/System Tools*. Be advised, when browsing through this little gold mine, it's a good idea for you to not be doing much of anything else. The *System Information* program is VERY resource intensive.

**Make your Quick Launch Toolbar a Floating Palette ...**

By default, the *Quick Launch* Toolbar is right next to the *Start* button. But if you've added so many shortcuts to this Toolbar you can't see them all, you may wish to make it a *floating palette*. Then you will have instant access to these shortcuts without unnecessary scrolling.

Click the left edge of the *Quick Launch* Toolbar, drag it out to a blank area on the desktop, and let go. (Note: If your Taskbar is locked, the Toolbar won't move.) You can resize the resulting palette as you would any window. Hold your mouse pointer over its edge, and when the pointer changes to a double-pointed arrow, click and drag in any direction.



To insure that your palette is never out of sight, right-click its title bar and select *Always on Top*.

**Put it Back ...** To put your floating *Quick Launch* Toolbar back on your *Taskbar*, X out of it so it is gone from your Desktop. Right click any empty area of your Taskbar and move your mouse up to the word *Toolbars*. You should see a list of available toolbars to pick from. Click the words *Quick Launch* so there is a check mark next to it and it will reappear in your Taskbar. Life is good!



**Allowing Cookies ...** The newer versions of Microsoft's Internet Explorer web browser are much more secure than previous offerings. Even cookie handling is easier to manage, so you can opt to allow only the cookies you need and not everything that wants to make a mark on your computer. Sometimes though, you can have those privacy settings a bit too high, blocking important websites that really *need* to read their cookies on your computer. These might be subscription sites that need to check to make sure it is really you trying to access your special area on their web. If you get a message saying cookies must be enabled in order to access a site you really want, make sure they are allowed specifically, instead of allowing just everyone and anyone. Right click on the Internet Explorer icon and choose *Properties*. Left click (once) on the *Privacy* tab. Click the *Edit* button at the bottom of the window. The next window that appears will show a list of sites that have been blocked or allowed. Scroll through it until you find the one that is giving you a hard time. Click it once so it is highlighted, then click the *Allow* button to the right. That should fix it!



If you don't see *Custom* in the middle of the *Privacy* tab window, click the *Advanced* button and make sure *Override automatic cookie handling* is selected in the next window that appears. Choose *Prompt* for First-party Cookies and Third-party Cookies. Click OK to lock in your changes and return to the *Privacy* tab.

**All rights reserved.** Unless otherwise indicated, articles may be reprinted in nonprofit publications without express permission, subject to the following conditions. Full acknowledgment must be given to The O'Neal Solution and the author. The article must be reproduced in its entirety, without editorial changes, deletions or additions. The information contained in this newsletter is believed to be correct and accurate. The O'Neal Solution however, cannot and will not assume responsibility for the consequences or errors contained in articles or misapplication of any information provided. The opinions expressed in these articles are those of the author. Any information used from these articles is at the user's own risk. Articles in this newsletter may contain trademarks of various companies. Any proprietary right those companies have in those names is hereby acknowledged.

## Editor's Desk

This FREE newsletter is dedicated to taking the mystery out of computers in an entertaining, informative way. If you have any questions or comments, please, drop me a line, give me a call or email me and let me know what you think and would like to see addressed in future issues. I really enjoy hearing from you and am happy to help all I can. You can subscribe to the electronic version of CompuQuickTips by visiting Mrs. Wizard's Web listed below. You will receive a full-color, information-packed subscription delivered straight to your email each month as an Adobe Acrobat PDF file.

Download the latest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader for FREE at <http://www.adobe.com>.

You can help support CompuQuickTips by ordering Mrs. Wizard's CD Essentials when you visit <http://mrswizard.com>. Look in the *Special Offer* section for more information and other ways to help. Due to popular demand, the latest version of the CD has *ALL* the past newsletter issues (since 1995). Acrobat Reader (the latest version) is on the CD for you to install with one click of your mouse, as well as lots of Mrs. Wizard's favorite graphic shareware programs. This is a terrific learning tool! Just pop in the CD and have fun!

If you want ALL the daily tips in one place, as well as lots and lots of custom wallpapers for your desktop, think about joining the Happy Dragon Club at the [mrswizard.com](http://mrswizard.com) website. A very small (one time) donation will get you access to a growing number of Members Only goodies.

Sincerely,

*Cindy O'Neal*



### Contact Mrs. Wizard

America OnLine: [CQTips@aol.com](mailto:CQTips@aol.com)  
 CompuServe: [cmrswizard@cs.com](mailto:cmrswizard@cs.com)  
[mrswizard@mrswizard.com](mailto:mrswizard@mrswizard.com)  
[mrswizard@midsouth.rr.com](mailto:mrswizard@midsouth.rr.com)

**Mrs. Wizard's Webs**  
<http://mrswizard.com>  
<http://compuquicktips.com>

In December ...

More on Masks



Your Personal  
Computer Tutor

**Cindy L. O'Neal**

1565 Wood Farms Drive  
Cordova, TN 38016

**(901) 753-6990**

[mrswizard@mrswizard.com](mailto:mrswizard@mrswizard.com)  
 Consulting | Instruction | Web Design