

Turning Digital Photographs into Coloring Book Pages

By George Galdiano

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Introduction

Turning your favorite digital photographs into coloring book pages is a great way to keep kids entertained and may help them feel closer to a loved one who is away.



Software

The **FASTEST**, **EASIEST**, and **BEST** way I have found to convert digital photographs to coloring book pages is with a **FREE** program called "Photo to Sketch Standard," available from Thinker Software at <http://www.thinkersoftware.com/photo-to-sketch/index2.htm>.

If you want to do this the old-fashioned way and don't already own image editing software, Paint.NET is a free program that can be downloaded from www.getpaint.net. It requires Windows XP or Vista, AND the Microsoft .NET framework. After installing Paint.NET, select Help \ Check for Updates to ensure you have the newest version.

The MS .NET framework can be downloaded from update.microsoft.com in the Optional Downloads section.

Below are instructions for converting digital photographs into coloring book pages using Photo to Sketch, Paint.NET, Adobe Photo Shop Elements 4, and Corel Paint Shop Pro XI. If you use a different program, you can adapt the instructions for you software.

INSTRUCTIONS

Using Photo to Sketch Standard v 3.5

If you haven't already, download Photo to Sketch Standard v 3.5 (free) from Thinker Software's website at <http://www.thinkersoftware.com/photo-to-sketch/index2.htm>. More instructions are available from <http://www.thinkersoftware.com/photo-to-sketch/FAQ2.htm> as well.

Prepare Image (Optional)

1. Digital photos that are cropped to only have the subjects you want converted work best
2. If you have excessive "noise" after converting the image, make a copy of the originally photo and try getting rid of some of the fine details by using the "Gaussian Blur," feature of your digital image software (try about a three), then reconvert the image
3. The image does not have to be 8" x 10" since you will have the option to have the image use the entire page when you print

Open Image

1. Start Photo to Sketch and click the Open button
2. Browse to the image you want to convert and double click it to open it (HINT: When browsing for images, click the view button in the menu bar and select "Thumbnails" to see thumbnails of the images and well as their names)

Convert Image

1. Select the Pencil radial button
2. Move the Precision slider to 0, move the Line slider to 5
3. Click the Convert button
4. Adjust the Line slider if the lines are too thick or thin
5. Within the same session, the settings you last selected will automatically be applied to the next image

Print Image

1. To print the page, click the Edit & Print button, and the image will open in MS Paint (not the same as Paint.NET)
2. Click File \ Page setup
3. Under Scaling, select the "Fit to" radial button and fit the image to 1 page
4. Adjust Orientation, Margins as desired, and select your printer if necessary then click the OK button
5. Click File \ Print \ Print

Save Image (Optional)

1. If you want to save your work, click the Save button, browse to where you want to save the image, **give the image a new name**, and, and click Save
2. You can open the file you saved with any imaging editing software

Using Paint.NET v 3.05

Open & Prepare Image

1. Open Image in Paint.NET
2. Select Effects \ Blurs \ Gaussian Blur
3. Adjust Radius to about 3 pixels, then click OK (if your final page contains too much noise, redo the image and increase the Radius)

Convert Image

1. Select Adjustments \ Black and White
2. Select Layers \ Duplicate Layer
3. Select Adjustments \ Invert Colors
4. Select Layers \ Layer Properties, then in the Blending Mode drop down box, select Color Dodge, then click OK
5. The image will be all white at this time, that is okay
6. Select Effects \ Blurs \ Gaussian Blur
7. Move the slider all the way to the left, then it nudge right until all the details you want are outlined, then click OK
8. Select Image \ Flatten
9. Select Effects \ Sharpen, set the Amount to 20, then click OK
10. Select Adjustments, Curves
11. You will see a diagonal line that goes from the bottom left to the top right
12. Click in the middle of the line and drag the dot that appears to the very bottom
13. The first half of the line should be flat from left to right then start sloping upward to the top right corner for the second half

Print Image

1. Select File \ Print, then click Next
2. Select your printer, then click Next
3. See how the image looks in both "Full page fax print" and in "Full page photo print," select your favorite, then click Next
4. Click Finish

Save the Image (Optional)

1. If you want to save your image, select File \ Save As,
2. **GIVE YOUR FILE A DIFFERENT NAME SO YOU DON'T SAVE OVER THE ORIGINAL IMAGE.**

Using PhotoShop Elements v 4

Open & Prepare Image

1. Open image in Photoshop Elements
2. Select Filter \ Blur \ Gaussian Blue
3. Adjust Radius to about 3 pixels, then click OK (if your final page contains too much noise, redo the image and increase the Radius)

Convert the Image

1. Select Enhance \ Adjust Color \ Remove Color
2. Select Layer \ Duplicate Layer, then click OK
3. Select Filter \ Adjustments \ Invert
4. The Layers pallet should be somewhere on the screen. If it is not there look at the very bottom of the screen on the left side and you should see an arrow pointing left with the words "Pallet Bin" next to it. Click the arrow so it points right, and you should see the Layer pallet.
5. With the "Background copy" layer highlighted, click the drop down box and select "Color Dodge."
6. The image will be all white at this time, that is okay
7. Select Filter \ Blur \ Gaussian Blur
8. Move the slider all the way to the left and then move it right until the level of detail you want appears, then click OK
9. Select Layers \ Flatten Image
10. Select Filter \ Sharpen \ Unsharp Mask
11. Ensure the Preview check box is selected, move the Amount slider all the way to the right, and the Radius and Threshold sliders all the way to the left
12. Play with the Radius and Threshold sliders until you have the level of sharpness you want, then click OK
13. Select Enhance \ Adjust Lighting \ Levels
14. Under Input Levels, you will see the arrow head sliders. The white adjusts the white pixels, the gray adjusts the gray or mid-tone pixels, and the black adjust the black or dark pixels.
15. Move the black arrow right until the outline of the image is as dark as you want
16. Move the gray arrow left or right to further adjust the image
17. If you want to start over, click Reset button
18. When you are happy with the image, click OK

Print & Save the Image

1. Select File \ Print
2. Select Page Setup and set the paper orientation to portrait or landscape to match the image, then click OK
3. Click the Print Size drop down box and select "Fit on Page"
4. Click Print, select your printer, then click OK
5. If you want to save your work, select File \ Save As and **GIVE YOUR FILE A DIFFERENT NAME SO YOU DON'T SAVE OVER THE ORIGINAL IMAGE**

Using Paint Shop Pro XI

Open & Prepare Image

1. Open image in Paint Shop Pro XI
2. Select Adjust \ Digital Camera Noise Removal, make sure "Link Detail Sizes" is checked
3. Set Correction Blending to 70 and Sharpening to 0
4. Click OK

Convert Image

1. Select Effects \ Edge Effects \ Find All
2. Select Adjust \ Sharpness \ Unsharp Mask
3. Make sure "Preview on Image" is selected
4. Set Clipping to 0 and Strength to 500
5. Adjust the radius until the lines are as dark as you want, then click OK

Darken Lines OPTION 1

1. Choose this option OR Option 2
2. Select Brightness and Contrast \ Curves
3. Make sure Preview on Image is checked
4. Click directly in the middle of the line going upward and a dot will appear
5. Move the dot all the way to the bottom, then click OK

Darken Lines Option 2

1. Select Adjust \ Brightness and Contrast \ Levels
2. Move the middle (gray) diamond all the way to the left so it is slightly overlapping with the left (black) diamond
3. Move the black diamond to the right (the gray will move also) until you have the line darkness you want, then click

Print Image

1. Select File \ Print
2. Select your printer if necessary
3. Choose the proper Orientation
4. Select the "Fit to Page" radial button
5. Click Print

Save Image (Optional)

1. Click File \ Save As
2. Browse to the location where you want to save the file, **GIVE THE FILE A DIFFERENT NAME SO YO DON'T SAVE OVER THE ORIGINAL IMAGE**, then click Save