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IRFANVIEW**[IrfanView Is A Nice Free Alternative to Image Viewing](#)**

If you're short on cash, but still want good image viewing, IrfanView's calling your name!

What Image Viewing Should Belf you're still looking for an image viewer that's got depth, power and speed, look no more. I recently stumbled across IrfanView and was a bit surprised at what I found. I can't say that it hasn't been recommended, but this is the first time I've actually tested it out. It seems as though someone read my rant about image viewers and not automatically associating them with every type of image format that's humanly available. IrfanView does offer to change your file associations if you want, but it never does it automatically. It doesn't select every image format it supports and makes you unclick everything you don't want. It simply lets you choose what you want (and what I liked most about the install is that it tells you that associating image formats with IrfanView is optional). Alright meow, onto the review.

What You GetWhen you first run IrfanView, you simply get a black viewing window that lets you open and edit the picture of your choosing. I prefer to also have a thumbnail view in order to have easier browsing access through my pictures. The viewing window auto adjusts to the picture you've selected in the thumbnail view. The first thing I noticed about IrfanView is the incredible loading time of pictures. This viewer's got speed and some. My picture load time felt like it was instantaneous. I like the fact that it's quite adaptable with the many plug-ins you're able to add onto it (video, music and more image plug-ins included). A big thing that's been fixed from an earlier version has been the multiple monitor support glitch. You can now drag an image to your secondary display, hit enter, and full screen displays perfectly, before you could only switch an image to full screen mode on your primary display. Overall, it loads pretty quick, it has a decent thumbnails system, a nice screen capture mode, basic image enhancement functions and, of course, it's totally free. The only thing that it's missing is a decent caching system. The program needs to have a new feature to cache thumbnails so you can flip quicker through directories with tons of images. If a caching feature could be included while viewing an image (similar to ACDSee so it shouldn't be too hard) this program would pretty much rank as one of the best graphic viewers for Windows. You have good options when it comes to IrfanView and cool features. For an image viewer/editor, it allows you to save image files as icon files which is not a very common thing to see. IrfanView has good load speed, supports almost any format you'd like to view, it resizes, converts, crops, or formats. You have other effects like edge detection, blur, pixelize, emboss, oil paint, explosion and many more. You also get your pick of sharpening and resolution adjustments. Yet with all these, I still feel as though it lacks some functionality. I'd like to see a decent caching system like that of ACDSee 7 to increase its speed more. I guess I cant' complain too much about its inability to manage because it says nowhere in the product description that it's a manager (just viewer/editor), but that functionality would make the program better.

The GoodIt's fast, it has good features and it's not a big download at all. Oh, did I mention that it's free for personal use? I think that's important. Image, music and video capabilities with plug-ins make this one of the more adaptable image viewers out there. Supports lots and lots of formats (check them out [here](#)).

The BadThe GUI can certainly use some work. I don't know if I like the external image viewer, I'd prefer something that's all inclusive. Thumbnail caching would also do wonders.

The TruthThis is a sweet overall packaged deal. It's free, it's fast, it's got good features and it won't be a waste of your time. It's a tiny download and supports tons of formats (even other than images). You might as well give it a try. Check out some screenshots below.