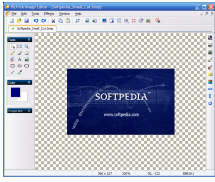


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PicPick interface

[Playing with Images](#)

PicPick your images

Image editing is a wide spread undertaking. Everybody wants to become a Van Gogh of digital image processing, especially now more than ever due to the much awaited launch of CS3's final version this spring. No doubt the application will again bring wonderful features and options dedicated to professionals. However, for beginners and for jobs not too complicates and that do not require the entire CS3 suite of effects and its arsenal of filters, there are myriads of softwares that can help you in creating a nice icon, apply simple image effects, create a watermark, etc. These are simple tasks that can be done outside Photoshop. PicPick is a freeware specially designed for the home user and aiming at giving as much flexibility as possible during the work. It even includes some features never to be found in Photoshop. PicPick, besides being a very easy to use image editor also sports graphic capture options and a set of hotkeys and options some similar editors would envy. The small size of the executable, combined with the fact that it will not install on your PC (thus there will be no entries appended to the registry) and the intuitive interface make it a good choice for a beginner to start drawing or do a little light editing of the pictures. The interface is traditional in the sense that there are no complications in getting your hand on a certain tool and every instrument is out into the open and easy to reach. The toolbox is located in the left part of the application window and contains the basic instruments to help you. For some of them there will be activated the Properties window with additional options. This way you are not limited to the default settings for line tool and you will be able to configure its opacity, color (by means of modifying the background/foreground colors), and select between the three levels of thickness available. When choosing one of the other shapes available (rectangle, ellipse or rounded rectangle) you will also have the color fill option and of changing the border color. There is no control over the shape (making the ellipse a circle can be tricky for a beginner) and you can draw it as large as you want. The text tool present in the toolbox works by the general principle of drawing the text box and writing it in a pop up dialog. Input Text window permits setting up the font, its size, format it, enable smooth edges and choosing the fill and font color. Unfortunately I was expecting more options in what concerns the palette and customizing the colors. It is quite difficult to reach a particular hue. Playing around with PicPick will definitely take you to the Effects area located in the right hand of the application window. The list is not large at all, in fact the number of options available is quite limited. However, you can do a color inversion, apply a grayscale effect, pixelate the image a little or blur it. For some of these there is the possibility of controlling the amount by simply dragging a slider (pixelate, brightness/contrast and hue/saturation). For the others the user will have to repeat the operation until the desired result is reached. Graphic capturing options are by far the best in the application. There are eight capturing options available, including full screen capture, active window, a user defined rectangular region, fixed region, freehand capture or web page. For greater flexibility PicPick offers keyboard shortcuts for all of them. In case of a conflict with other softwares you will be notified and asked to change the settings for the conflicting shortcuts. Hotkeys can be set both for screen capture and the image editing tools. For changing them it is enough to consult the About of the software. PicPick comes equipped with three sets of default hotkeys (PicPick default, HyperSnap and Open Capture) and a customize option allowing the user fixing them according to the finger dexterity. Immediately after running the software it will reside calmly in the system tray and wait for your commands. The context menu available from here reveals a set of useful options like setting PicPick to run at Windows startup, activate sound effect for windows capturing,

enable support for dual monitors, activate the pixel ruler or open the color picker that can get the color anywhere from the screen. **The Good** PicPick is absolutely free and comes strapped with a clear set of options for both image editing and screen capturing dedicated to software developers and home users. Screen capturing is definitely a useful tool and a very flexible one. Requires no installation and the intuitive interface recommends it even for the less skilled computer user. It works great with four of the most used image formats: PNG, BMP, JPG and GIF. **The Bad** The number of options available to image editing is limited to the basic ones (crop, text tool, eraser, brush, pencil, shapes, fill image inserting and color picker). The same goes for effects. I ran into some trouble with web page capturing. The shortcut activated the Capture Webpages window, but the Capture button would not activate and Reload did absolutely nothing. That was until I realized that it only works in Internet Explorer. Mozilla Firefox and other IE based engines are not affected by PicPick. **The Truth** All in all the application works fine and if you are not going after creating artworks and functionality. ease of use and basic editing is what you want the PicPick is definitely worth a shot. The application is absolutely free and besides the web page capture issue everything went fine. *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*