



An Animation Shop "How 2" Tutorial Using the Power of PSP!

AGIF Class 1 for Beginners!

This is the first of a series of tutorials to teach you how to make your own animated GIF quickly and easily. These tutorials will use Paint Shop Pro and Animation Shop, both JASC products. Some of the tutorials will be more advanced but if you follow the instructions, you should be able to follow the tutorials.

What is an animated GIF? An Animated GIF is a series of frames or cels that give the appearance of movement when viewed quickly somewhat like a flipbook. To place the frames into one file, you need a program that will do this.

We will use Animation Shop which is part of the package that comes with Paint Shop Pro. With it, I will teach you how to make several simple AGIFs.

Animated GIFs became popular with the success of the web. The smaller the file the better for your visiting web guest. If you have a slow loading page, they might tire and leave.

~*~

First a few terms that will help understand what makes an Animated GIF work.

AGIF: A shorthand method of saying: Animated GIF.

PSP: A shorthand term for Paint Shop Pro.

Frames. These are a set of images that might use one element or several elements to indicate change or movement. For example we might see a wagging puppy tail, or colors that cycle.

Loop or Looping. This is the setting that sets the amount of times that the AGIF will replay. This allows the person viewing it to get the full impact of your animation. An animated GIF that displays once is not very effective.

Display Time: A setting for the amount of time a frame will be viewed. For example, if the time is set at 10, this means 10/100ths of a second to display.

Display time can be set several ways. We will use two methods with this class.

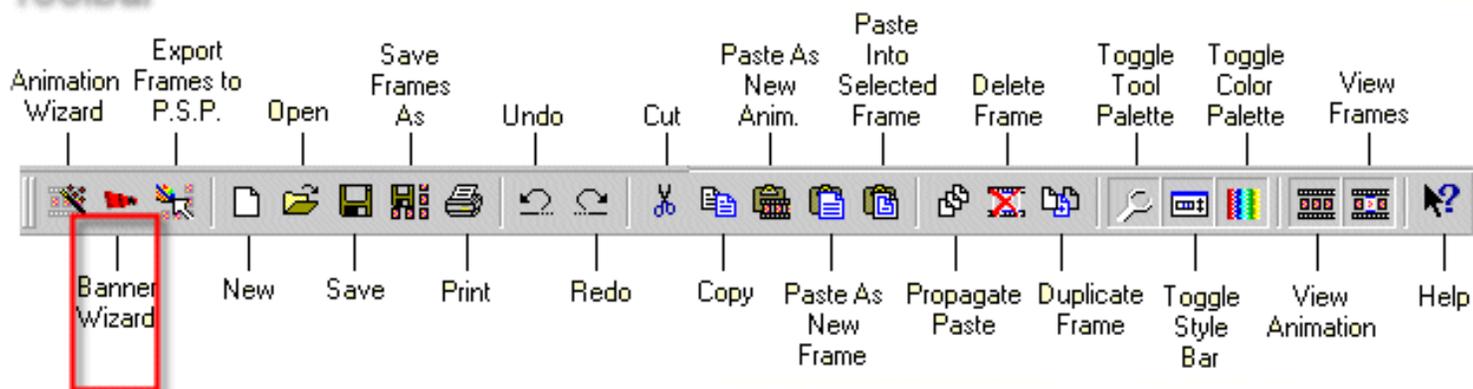
~*~

Open Animation Shop.

Click on VIEW

Let's examine the taskbar for the tools Animation Shop offers.

Toolbar



On the far left of this toolbar is the option I use the most, The Animation Wizard. It gives you the option of a fast way to begin your animation.

Next is the Banner Wizard which we will use today.

Let's get started. :)

Click on the **Banner Wizard icon**.



We are presented with choices. We will make a banner using the Wizard, then make an original one using Animation Shop's tools and effects.

The first choice we must make is whether to have it opaque or transparent. Opaque means that we will have a background, which for today I think will be easier for you.

Default setting is a white background. Let's leave it white for this example.

Click on Next >

What size would you like the banner?

Let's click in the listbox and choose: 234x60, Half banner.

Next >

How long would you like the animation to last (in 1/10th seconds)? Default should be 10, if not, type in 10.

How many frames would you like the animation to display per second? Default setting should be 10, if not, type it in or use the up/down arrows to set it for you.

Do you want the animation to be looped? Check: Yes, repeat the animation indefinitely.

Next >

Enter the text you want animated on your banner in the box below.

Default setting is: Sample Text

Let's change this to: Welcome to the AGIF Wiz Homepage!

Click on Set Font, choose a nice font if you wish, I used Ariel for today.

Font Size is 8.

Let's leave it at 8 to make sure it fits our banner.

What color or image would you like the text on the banner to use? Click on: Opaque Text and using your mouse, click in the color box, and choose a color you would like for the Email button.

I used the Bright Blue for your example file.

Next >

Now we have some decisions to make. We need to choose a transition. A transition effect is what will give our animation movement.

If you notice, Animation Shop will let you preview the effect.

The first choice bouncing, is really annoying! LOL.. I don't think this is the impression we want to make.

Arrow down to Marquee. For now, we will leave it at the default setting.

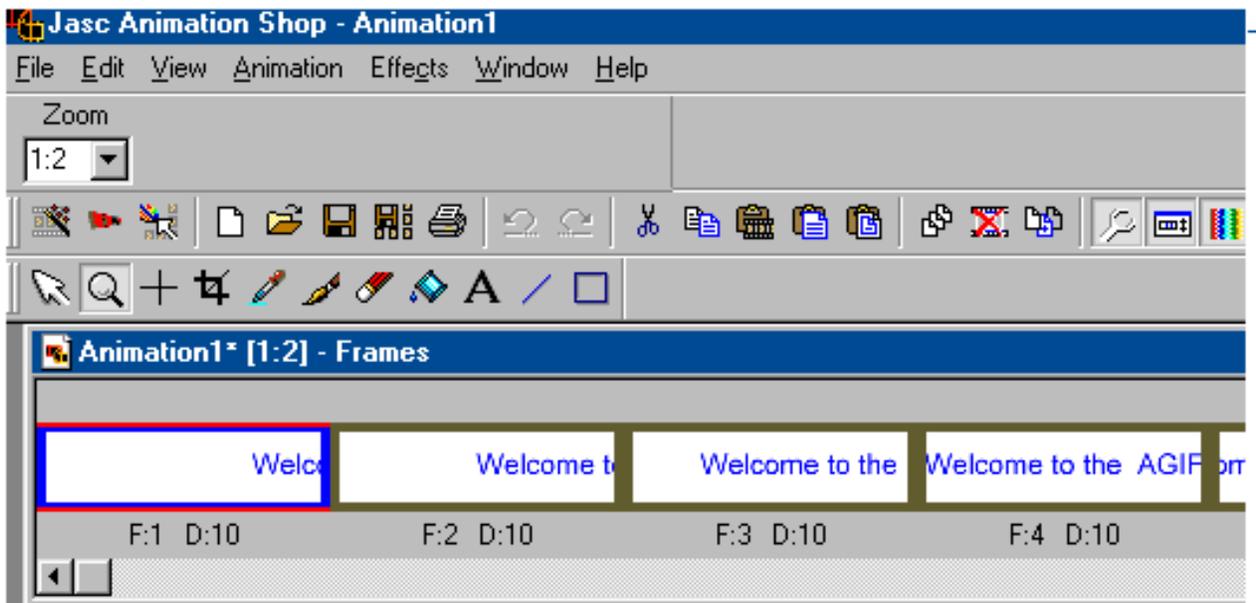
Now, we see that we can use a larger sized font, so we can go back using the back button and make our font size larger.

I selected Font Size: 18 which looks better to my eye.

Remember you can always go back and change using the Wizard options to suit your own choices. It's YOUR banner. :)

When satisfied, click on FINISH!

As you can see, we now have 10 frames created with the Banner Wizard.



Frames ~ using the Banner Wizard.

~*~

Note: Your frames will be larger than they are in the example file, I reset the view so that more of them were showing for you.

If you notice, at the bottom of each frame, there are 2 sets of numbers. These are helpful for you. The first set: F:1 means: Frame 1.

The second set: D:10 shows the timing for this frame. 10/100th of a second.

Let's view our animation and see what we have.

Click on the little filmstrip on the task, the 3rd from the far right end on the toolbar.



View Animation Icon

~*~

Click on EDIT > SELECT ALL

Using your mouse, click on any frame with the Right Mouse Button and arrow down to Properties. Change the timing to 14, click OK.

Now using the View Animation Icon, see if you like this timing better.

I think it's time to save. :)

Go to FILE > Optimization Wizard

A menu opens, Optimize for: Animated GIF File (make sure this option is selected)

When Finished:

Click on: Create a new animation from the optimized animation. (This is a better choice, because the animation you have just created will not be changed.)

NEXT >

We have a new menu, with a slider bar for Quality vs Size settings. The default setting should have this bar at the top.

Let's use this setting for now and see what our file size is when finished. It should be small, we only have 2 colors and a small area.

NEXT >

Press Next to continue

NEXT >

Size of file: Optimized File: 12K

This is small, and would be acceptable for the web because it would load quickly.

If you used the <BACK button, and pulled that slider bar down two marks, you could reduce this size to 6.9K. This gives you a nice looking animation, and a super small sized file for your page.

Let's save now. Click on FILE > SAVE and save the file by giving it a name.

page!

~*~*~

Want to try another GIF? It's easy!

Let's make an animated GIF using Animation Shop's Banner Wizard.

Click once again on the Banner Wizard Icon.

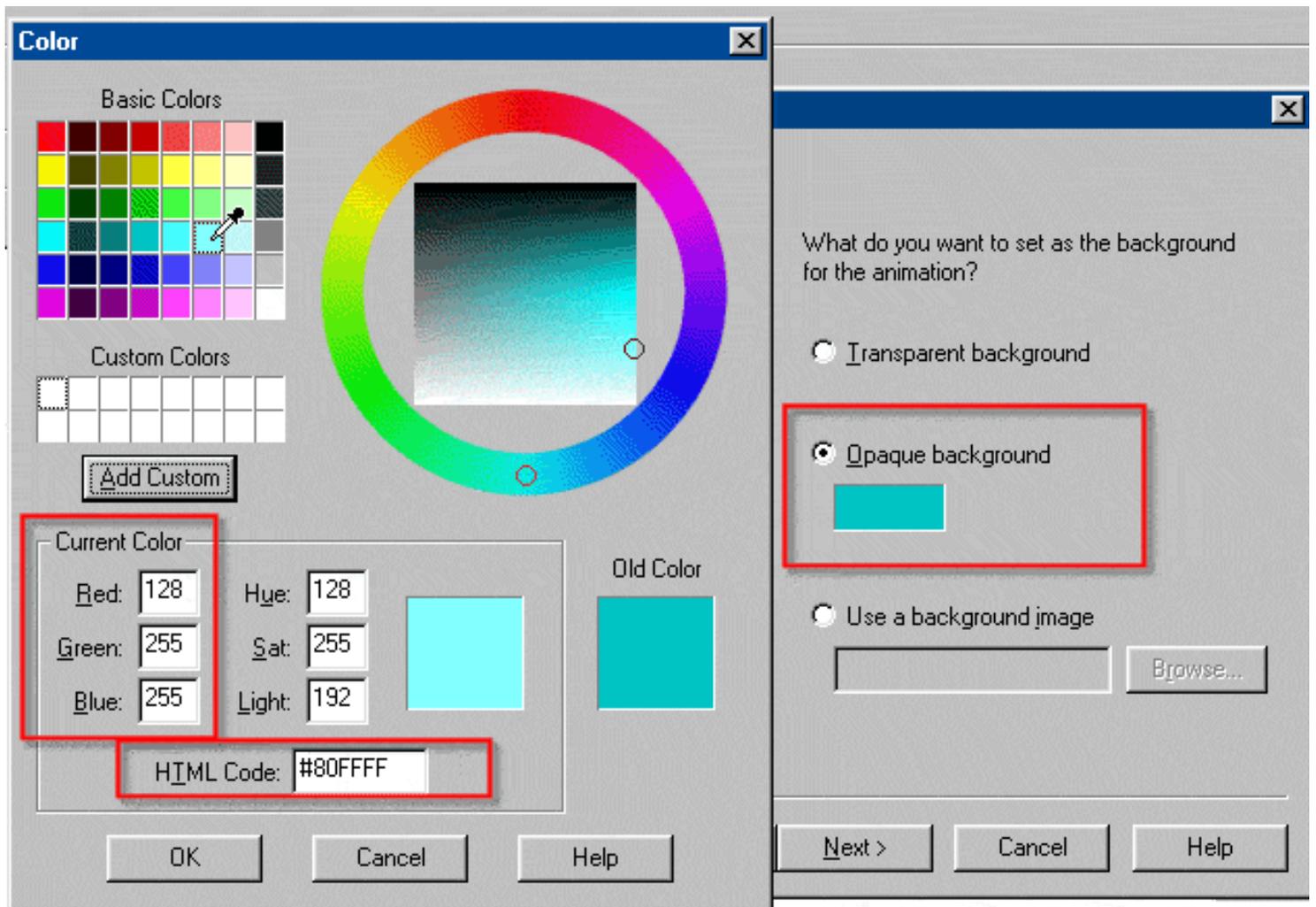
First choice we must make is color. Click on the color bar under the Opaque Background button.

The Basic color menu opens. For this banner we want a light sea blue.

I selected:

R: 128 Hue: 128
G: 255 SAT: 255
B: 255 Light: 192

or using HTML Code: #80FFFF



Selecting Colors from the Basic Color Menu

NEXT >

What size would you like the banner?

This time let's use the largest Banner size: 468x60: Full banner

NEXT >

How long would you like the animation to last:

Let's reset this to 14, since we liked that speed last time.

Frames.. leave at 10.

Yes, repeat the animation indefinitely.

NEXT >

Text: Let's change this now to say: Welcome to AGIF Wiz Waterworld!

Click in the text box with your mouse, and type the changes.

Let's leave font settings where we had them last, because we know we can change this if we need to.

NEXT >

Text Color: click in the color box and change the color to this setting.

R: 0

G: 128

B: 128

(HTML Code is: #008080)

Dark Green. :)

OK

NEXT >

Transition time! :) Arrow down and select Flag.

Now we have a watery looking text to advertise our page. (Think of it as Faux Java.)

FINISH

Preview the effect now to see if it suits your needs.

Let's save and see what size we can achieve with our new animation.

Go to FILE > Optimization Wizard

Optimize for: Animated GIF File

When Finished: Create a new animation from the optimized animation.

NEXT >

Using the slider bar for Quality vs Size settings. (The default setting with this bar at the top.)

Let's use this setting for now and see what our file size is when finished.

NEXT >

Press Next to continue

HMMMM! 51K. Rather large.

Using the <BACK option let's see what we can do to reduce this file size.

Drag the slider bar down to the 3rd setting. The information given in the text area says Standard settings selected, level 2

Click on Customize to refine this more.

Let's try 31 colors, Optimized Median Cut should be selected as well as Nearest Color.

OK

NEXT >

Press Next to continue

This time our file size is 39K. Still a bit large but acceptable.

Save again.

FILE > SAVE

Give your file a name and save it.

Welcome to AGIF Wiz WaterWorld!

~*~

If you have any questions you would like me to answer, send me an email: [Jinny @ Jinnysplace.com](mailto:Jinny@Jinnysplace.com).

~*~

Copyright © 2004 Jinny Davis, All rights reserved.