

The toolbar in Pixlr Editor always appears on the left-hand side, although you can drag it anywhere you like.

Crop (Shortcut: C)

Reframe your entire canvas to a desired size and remove everything else. Drag to reframe and hit Return — you've just cropped your image. You can move the crop area around before committing to a crop. Additional options: Adjust the aspect ratio to crop to a specific height and width ratio (e.g., a perfect square). Adjust output size if you want to crop to a specific pixel size.

Move (Shortcut: V)

Fairly self-explanatory, this lets you move whatever you've selected around the canvas: text, a layer — just about anything you've selected.

Marquee (Shortcut: M)

Use this to select rectangular areas of a layer or the canvas. After selecting, you can perform specific actions on that area. Great for cutting out slices of an image to copy and paste elsewhere. Additional options: You can specify a rectangular or elliptical area, pick an aspect ratio or fixed size for your selection. Feathering creates a softer edge at the selection's border. Anti-aliasing creates a more crisp outline.

Lasso (Shortcut: L)

The lasso tool is a free-hand version of the marquee tool. Use this to define an area in any shape you can draw. Additional options: Need to create an irregular shape with straight sides? The polygonal lasso lets you create shapes like hexagons. Feathering gives you control over how soft edges will be; use anti-alias to achieve sharper edges.

Wand (Shortcut: W)

The wand will make a marquee-style selection based on values (i.e., tone and color) that are similar to the area clicked. It's great at selecting large blocks of solid color. Additional options: Experiment with tolerance levels. Use anti-alias for achieving sharper edges.

Pencil (No shortcut)

Draw on an image or layer free hand. Additional options: You have a number of pencil types to choose from for different drawing effects. You can change the size and opacity of your pencil.

Brush (Shortcut: B)

Much like the pencil, the brush lets you draw freehand, but with many more options. Additional options: Choose from a ton of brush types; you can even create your own customized brushes and save them. You can also alter how the "paint" is applied and mimic different brush types (e.g., hard tip).

Erase (Shortcut: E)

Use the erase tool to remove details. You can also erase details from a specific layer. Additional options: Brush types for erasing mimic the brush tool, and you can alter your eraser opacity for better results.

Paint bucket (Shortcut: G)

Dump a big mess of color onto a layer or on your background. If you want more control over how messy that paint dump is, adjust the tolerance. Additional options: A lower tolerance level will limit coloring to similarly colored pixels (light coloring); higher tolerance equals a stronger use of your paint bucket to fill less similar pixels (heavy color dumping)

Gradient (No shortcut)

Use this tool whenever you want to create a gradient — a gradual colored shading — of two colors. Pixlr blends them for you based on your settings. Additional options: Define your foreground and background colors and alter any other settings (linear vs. radial, spread method, mode); then, click on a starting point on your canvas, drag your mouse to the endpoint, and let go. Your gradient will fill the layer or selection.

Clone stamp (Shortcut: S)

Lets you sample pixels in one defined area and replicate those pixels elsewhere. While you can use this to duplicate an entire object in your image, people often use this to blend colors and textures in an impressionistic way or for minor touch up of blemishes. Additional options: You'll want to choose your brush size, and you can adjust opacity if you desire. If you select aligned, the clone source moves when you move your cursor to a different location. If you want to clone multiple times from the same location, don't choose aligned. You will always clone in the layer you're working on unless you check the box to clone all layers.

Color replace (No shortcut)

The color replace tool replaces areas under your brush with a new, desired color — while preserving the underlying texture and shadows. Additional options: You may want to change brush size to avoid coloring outside of the area you want to color, but

the most important detail of this tool is the tolerance level. Flat areas of color can be colored using a lower tolerance; areas with a lot of texture or shading may require a higher tolerance. Experiment and undo if necessary!

Drawing (No shortcut)

Use the drawing tool to create basic geometric shapes like lines, rectangles, rounded rectangles, and ellipses. Additional options: You can control the opacity, border size (outline), and choose to color in your shapes or not. If you have advanced skills, you have many mode choices to choose from; if you're not an expert, it's probably best to stick to normal mode.

Blur (Shortcut: R)

Pretty straightforward: Make things blurry. Additional options: Click and drag to blur. Keep clicking to make it blurrier. This is a good tool for blending harsh edges together.

Sharpen (Shortcut: Y)

This applies the sharpen filter to a brush tool. Sharpening increases the contrast between pixels, which has the visual effect of bringing out details and highlights. It's very easy to overdue this, so take a light hand when you sharpen! Additional options: You can change the brush size and strength. Since it's easy to over-sharpen an image, experiment with different strength levels.

Smudge (Shortcut: U)

A bit different than blur, smudge effectively combines pixels of different colors to produce an effect that can look like smudged paint. Additional options: Brush size and brush strength are adjustable.

Sponge (Shortcut: P)

The sponge tool enhances or sops up color, depending on your settings. It's a great tool for saturating or desaturating specific areas of an image. Additional options: You can change the brush size and brush strength, but the most important setting is whether you want to saturate (increase) or desaturate (decrease) coloring.

Dodge (Shortcut: O)

Use the dodge tool to lighten specific areas. Note that this is a tool that deals with contrast (light vs. dark) and not color, although color may sometimes appear to change based on your lightening. Additional options: You can change brush size and exposure settings. You can also choose to focus your lightening on shadows, midtones, or highlights.

Burn (Shortcut: N)

The opposite of dodging, burning lets you darken an area. Additional options: As with dodging, you can change brush size and exposure, as well as focus your darkening on shadows, midtones, or highlights.

Red eye reduction (No shortcut key)

A miracle worker of a tool, red eye reduction easily corrects the annoyingly common red-eye effect. This is a single-purpose tool that usually just works the way you want it, but if you find you're having trouble, try different tolerance settings.

Spot heal (No shortcut key)

Super useful, the spot heal tool can help remove scratches or blemishes by simply clicking on the area. Additional options: Besides size of brush, you have a choice of Pixlr choosing to blend the area with nearby area values or generate a pattern. Generally, you will only want to choose a pattern if you're blending an area that has a pattern (e.g., a chain-link fence).

Bloat (Shortcut: A)

The bloat tool lets you distort an area as if it were being seen through a convex lens. Great for embellishing the reflection seen in a pair of sunglasses, for example. Additional options: You can choose the size and strength of your brush.

Pinch (Shortcut: K)

The opposite of the bloat tool, pinch creates an effect like you might see through a concave lens — everything becomes smaller toward a center point. Additional options: Choose the size and strength of your brush and start pinching.

Colorpicker (Shortcut: I)

Simple and essential, the colorpicker lets you sample colors from your image for use with other tools (e.g., paint bucket).

Type (Shortcut: T)

Need to add a few words? The type tool lets you add characters, letters, words, numbers, etc. Click where you want your text to appear on your layer or image. You can control the font and its size, style and color. Important to know: Pixlr Editor will include most fonts that are installed on your own computer.

Hand (Shortcut: H)

Use the hand tool to move your image around, especially useful if you are zoomed in working on details and need to slide your canvas around to reach an unseen area. Additional handy shortcut for this tool: Hold down the space bar nearly anytime you're working in Pixlr and you can use the hand tool.

Zoom (Shortcut: Z)

Unless you have a 100-inch monitor, you're inevitably going to need to do some detail work. Using zoom, you can either click to zoom or draw a rectangular area to zoom into. Pro tip: Use your shortcut keys! Zoom in quickly by holding down the shortcut key (Z) and clicking your mouse in the desired location.

Set main color (No shortcut key)

Your color palette contains the color you're currently working with and the last six custom colors you've chosen. Clicking within the large color palette area brings up a window where you can choose colors based on HSL, RGB, Web, or IMG specifications. Or, just pick something that looks good.