

Teens and Technology 2012

Using READ™ Design Studio to create dynamic programming and marketing materials



Tutorial #7

Working with Layered Files

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Created by Idaho
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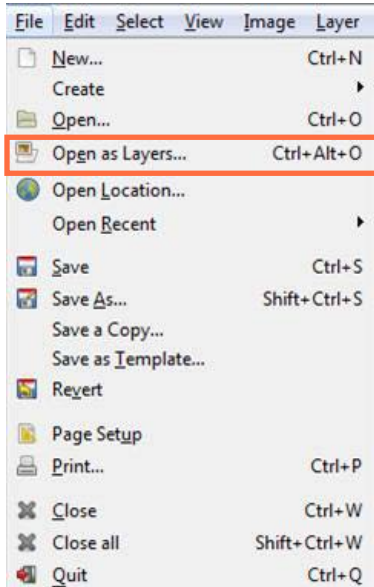


This project funded by the Institute of Museum and
Library Services 2012

Working with Layered Files

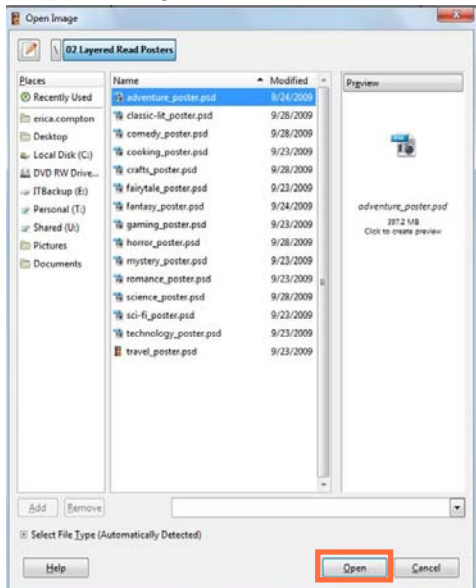
Opening a Layered READ® File

Step 1: Select **File > Open as Layers**.



Tip: A new dialog box opens.

Step 2: Navigate to the location of the READ files from your CD.



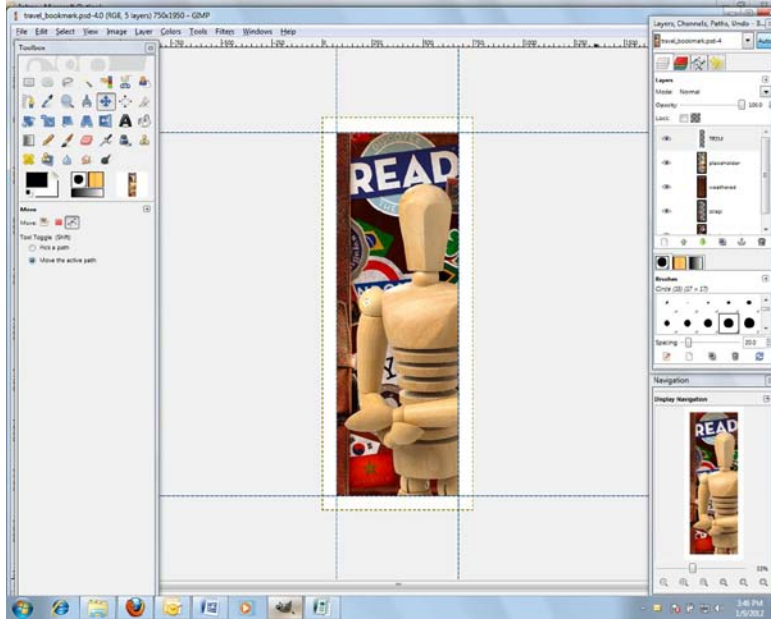
Step 3: Choose the bookmark file you want to use with your image and Click **Open**.



Tip: For this tutorial we are going to use bookmark .psd files that contain layers.

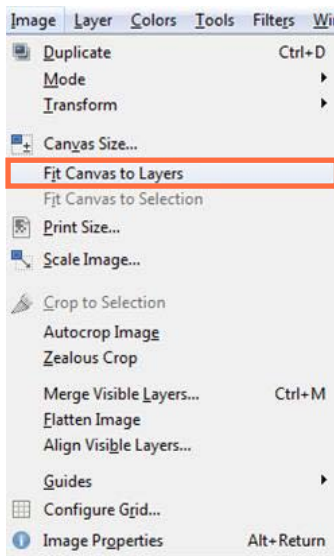
Working with Layered Files

Step 4: The background you chose will open and fill the screen.



Tip: The entire READ bookmark may not show up in your image window. If this happens do Step 5. Otherwise proceed to the next section.

Step 5: Select **Image > Fit Canvas to Layers**.



Tip: Your bookmark is automatically resized to fit the image window.

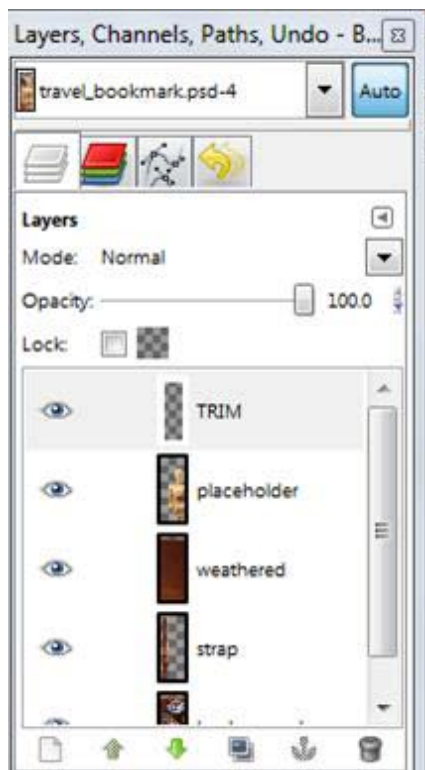
Working with Layered Files

Working with Layers

Now let's take a look at what a layered file looks like.

As you can see below the READ bookmark file contains multiple layers and each one corresponds to different elements of the poster. In this poster you can see “Trim”, “placeholder”, “weathered”, “strap” and more. It is important to understand that the order of the layers is critical to how your images show up on the screen. Think of layers as a set of transparencies – one on top of the other. If one layer is moved on top of another, then the image may change slightly...perhaps a part of the image will be hidden, or revealed. Take a few minutes to move the layers either up or down and see what happens. Try clicking the “eye” icon to hide or reveal layers to get a better idea of what each one looks like.

Finally use the Move tool to move the “placeholder” layer. You may notice that even if you move it up or down it will not show up outside of the actual bookmark. This is because of the “trim” layer which is the top layer for most files. The trim layer creates a border behind which all other layers reside. It allows you to position images within the bookmark and still have a clean border around the edges.



This tutorial is going to focus on using different techniques and filters to enhance your project. **You are going to open a photo that has already had the background extracted for the next part of the tutorial.**

Step 1: Select **File > Open as Layers**.

Step 2: Navigate to the location of the extracted photo on your computer.

Step 3: Choose the file you want to use with your poster and click **Open**.

Working with Layered Files



Tip: Your bookmark art may have just disappeared! What happened? Two things; your image may be much larger than the bookmark image, causing you to only see a portion of the photo, and it is the top layer which allows it to block out the bookmark. (See example below) Don't worry. A couple of quick steps will get everything fixed up.



Step 4: Select the layer that contains the photo you just opened.

Step 5: Select the **Scale** tool in the toolbox and use it to decrease the size of the image so that it will fit within the boundaries of the bookmark.



Tip: Remember to hold down the **CONTROL** key while dragging to scale proportionately. Be careful when you scale down. Do not make the image too small because you lose resolution each time you make the image smaller. If you find that you have made it too small and want it bigger, it is best to use the UNDO key to go back to the original image and start over so that you keep the best resolution possible.

Step 6: Select the **Move** tool and place the image where you want it in the bookmark.

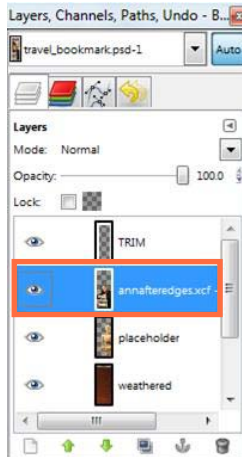


Tip: You may notice that your image “overflows” the bookmark. Let's move your image below the “trim” or “border” layer so that it is behind it.



Working with Layered Files

Step 7: Click on the image layer and move it in the stack so it is below “trim” or “border” as seen below.



Tip: Your image should now look similar to this.

Notice that the arms and books now fall behind the border.



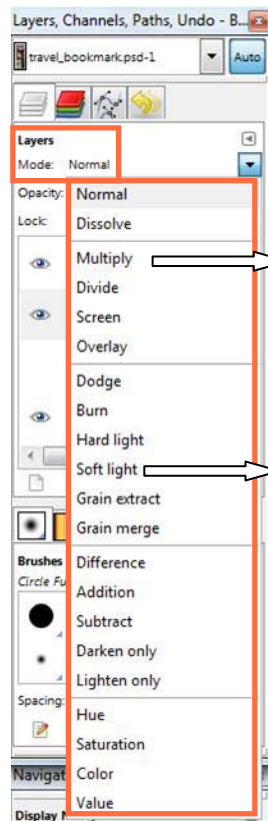
Tip: Use the **Eye** icon to hide the placeholder layer. We don't need it any longer and it can make things confusing!

You can now scale, move, adjust your photo as necessary to fit the bookmark you have chosen and make it look like you want it to. Next we will learn how use different layer modes to enhance your project.

Working with Layered Files

Using Layer Modes

GIMP has twenty-one layer modes. Layer modes are also sometimes called “blending modes”. Selecting a layer mode changes the appearance of the layer or image, based on the layer or layers beneath it. If there is only one layer, the layer mode has no effect. There must therefore be at least two layers in the image to be able to use layer modes. We will work two of the layer modes described below, but feel free to experiment and see the unique ways you can change your image using this tool.



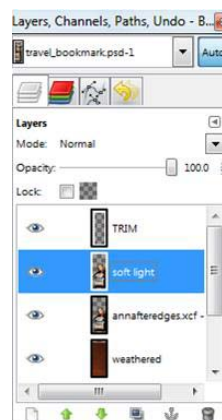
Multiply mode multiplies the pixel values of the upper layer with those of the layer below it and then divides the result by 255. The result is usually a darker image.

Soft light is not related to “Hard light” in anything but the name, but it does tend to make the edges softer and the colors not so bright. It is similar to “Overlay” mode.

Step 1: Select the layer containing your image.

Step 2: Right click on the image to “**Duplicate Layer.**”

Step 3: Rename this layer “Soft light.”



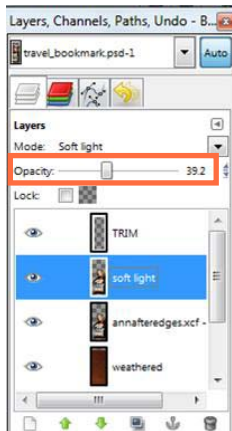
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Step 4: In the **Layer Mode** dropdown, choose **Soft Light**.



Tip: Note the change in the look of your image. It should look a bit richer in color – like soft lighting has been added to the entire photo. A good way to see what the layer effect looks like is to toggle the “eye” icon on and off to see the image change. Then you can determine what looks best.

Step 5: Change the opacity of the Soft Light layer by clicking and dragging the bar up and down. Note the changes and choose a look that you like.



Repeat the above steps, but this time rename the duplicate layer “Multiply” and add that mode to the layer. Again you will have to adjust the opacity to get the look that you want. The combination of Soft Light and Multiply often makes photographs look great – enriching the color, adding depth to the image. However, every photo is different and you will have to experiment with these modes to see what works for your particular project.

Before modes added



After modes added



Step 6: Save your file and choose **Close All**.

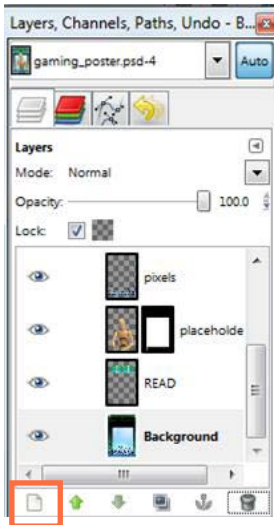
Working with Layered Files

Changing Color in an image

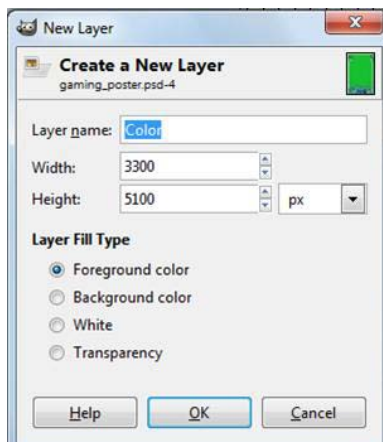
Step 1: Open a layered poster or bookmark file called “gaming” on the Genres and Subjects CD.

Step 2: Open the **Foreground and Background Color** windows and choose a medium dark green for the foreground color.

Step 3: Create a new layer.



Tip: A new dialog box opens.



Step 4: Rename the layer **Color**.

Step 5: Choose **Foreground Color** for the **Layer Fill Type** and click **OK**.



Tip: Your layer will turn almost all green. That's OK!

Working with Layered Files

Step 6: Decrease the Opacity of the Color Layer to around 20-30.



Tip: The poster is now a different hue than it was before.

This is a simple way to alter the templates slightly (or a lot!) to create a custom look and feel.

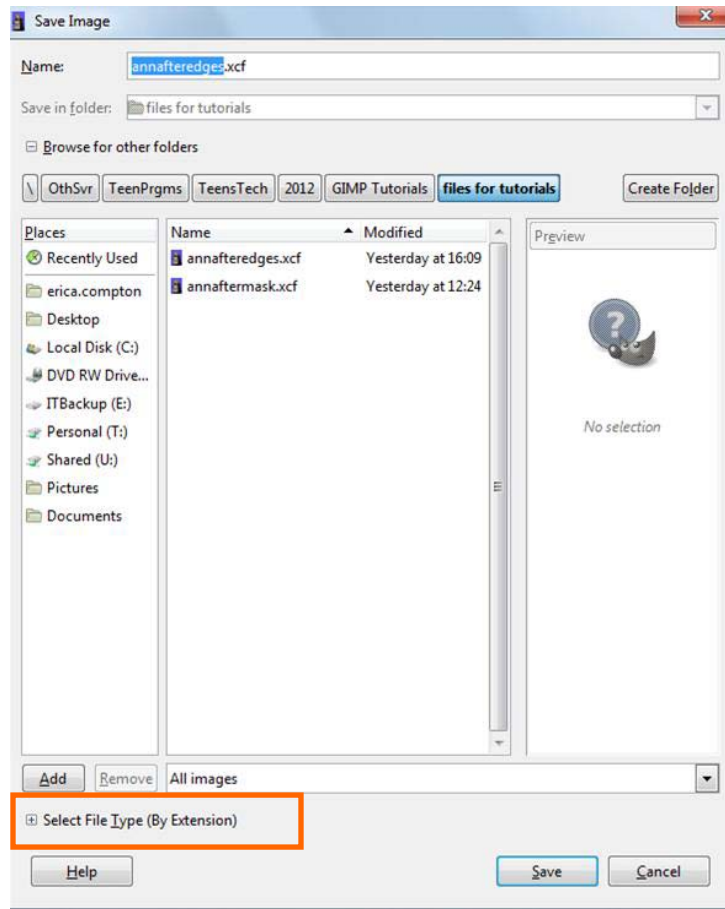
Working with Layered Files

Saving Your File in Different Formats

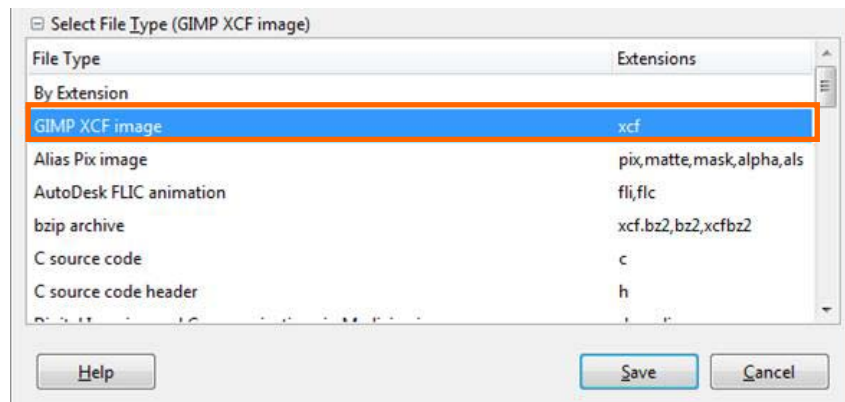


Tip: If you want to be able to edit your poster again, it is important to save it in the correct file format. You need to save it in a format that GIMP will recognize as “editable” and which will contain all the layers.

Step 1: Click **File > Save As**. A new dialog box opens:



Step 2: Click **Select File Type**. A drop down menu appears.



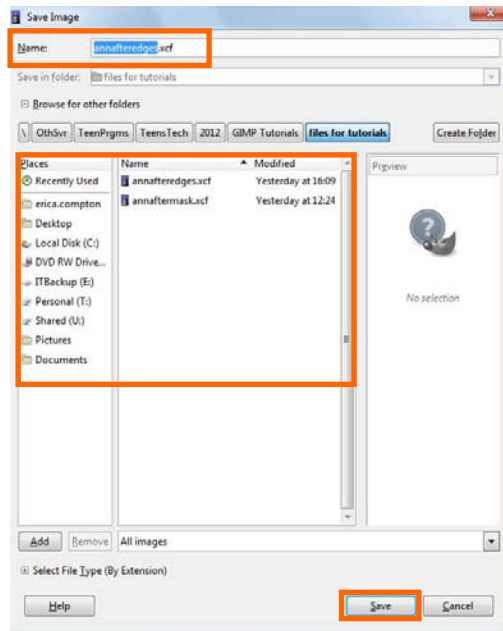
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Step 3: Select **GIMP XCF image** extension.

Step 4: Rename the file.

Step 5: Navigate to the location to save the file.

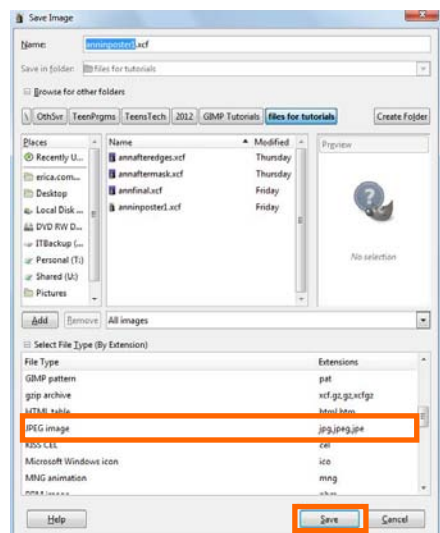
Step 6: Click **Save**.



Your file is saved! You will still be able to open it and edit it again if you need to.

But wait! If you want to send the poster to someone so they can view it, you need to save it as a .jpg so it can be opened by just about anyone. Follow **Steps 1** and **2** the same as above and then:

Step 3: Choose **JPEG Image** in the drop down menu. Navigate to where you want to save the file. Name the file and click **OK**.



Congratulations! You have just created a READ poster with your very own photo! While there are many other tools and techniques you can use to enhance and refine your poster, you have learned all of the basic tools necessary to create posters or bookmarks using GIMP and ALA's READ content.

Now that it is in .jpg format you can create many different projects using simple programs like Word or Publisher.