

Create Depth of Field

You may often find that your photos have great subject matter but cluttered or distracting background elements. Paint Shop Pro 8 can easily remedy this problem, allowing you create a professional looking photo. Professional photographers know how to decrease the focal length on their cameras to make the foreground subject stand out against a blurry background, creating depth of field. This tutorial shows you how to create a similar effect.



What you'll need:

- Jasc® Paint Shop™ Pro®
- The sample image Flower.jpg

When you complete this tutorial you'll be able to:

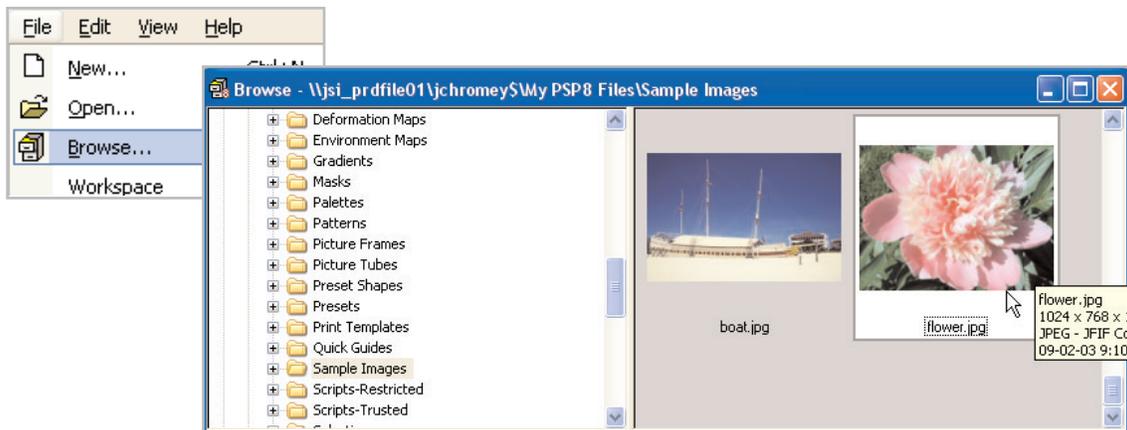
- Open a photo in Paint Shop Pro
- Set up your workspace
- Create a new layer
- Select an area of a photo with the Freehand Selection Tool
- Invert a selection
- Apply Gaussian Blur
- Save your photo in another image format

Open the Image

1. Choose **Start > Programs > Jasc Software > Jasc Paint Shop Pro** or double-click the Paint Shop Pro Icon on your desktop to open Paint Shop Pro.

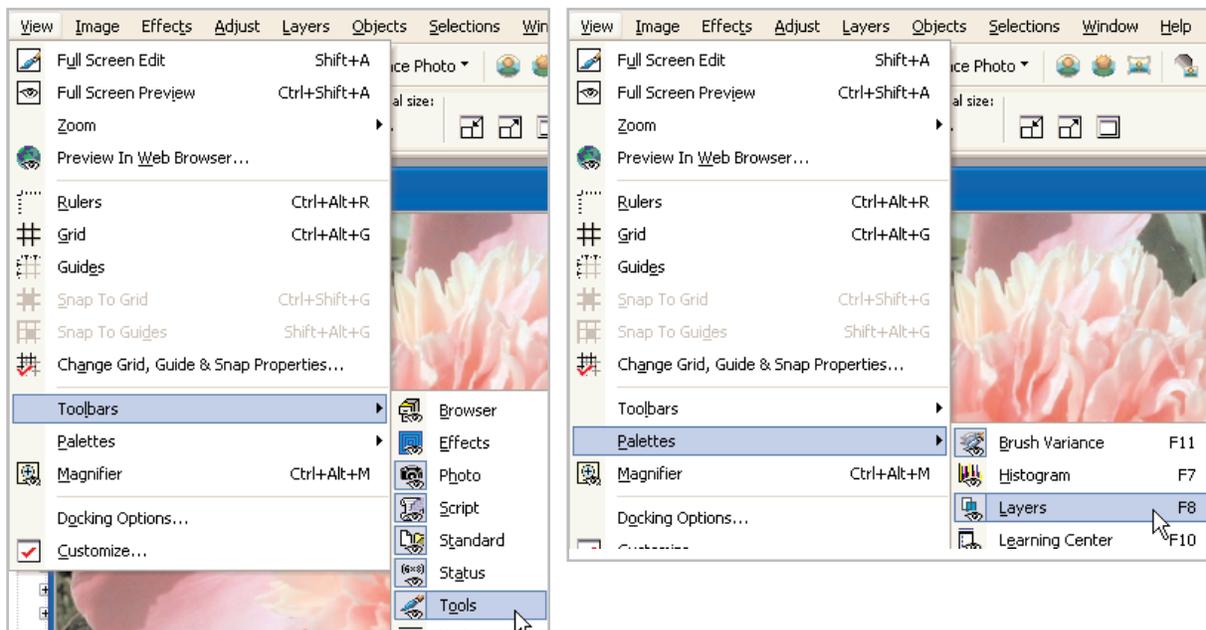


2. This tutorial uses the image Flower.jpg, which you can find in your Paint Shop Pro Sample Images folder. Choose **File > Browse**, to open the Paint Shop Pro Browser. Use the Browser to navigate to your Sample Images folder. By default it's located at My Documents > My PSP8 Files > Sample Images. Once you find flower.jpg, double click it to open.



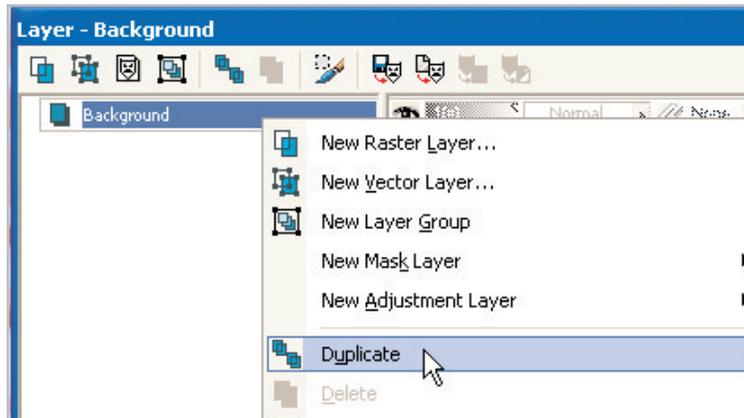
Set Up Your Workspace

3. Make sure the Tools toolbar, Tool Options palette, and the Layer palette are displayed.
 - If the Tools toolbar is not displayed, choose **View > Toolbars**, and then choose **Tools**.
 - If the Tool Options and Layer palettes are not displayed, choose **View > Palettes**, and then choose the items.



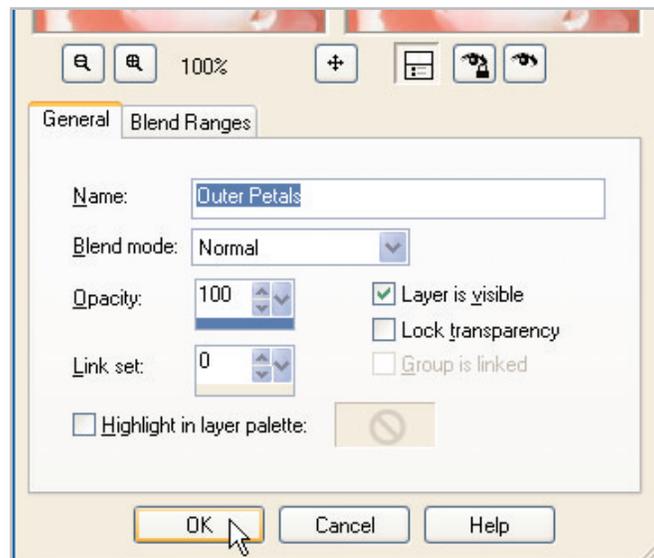
Duplicate the Background

4. Mouseover the Layer palette, right-click the Background Layer, and choose **Duplicate**.



Note: By making your edits on layers other than the Background layer, you avoid permanent modifications to the original image. You can then save one version of your final image in the Paint Shop Pro file format to retain layers, and then another version in a non-layered format such as JPEG.

5. Give this new layer a distinctive name. On the Layer palette, double click the **Copy of Background** layer. On the Layer Properties dialog, enter **Outer Petals** in the Name field and then click **OK**.



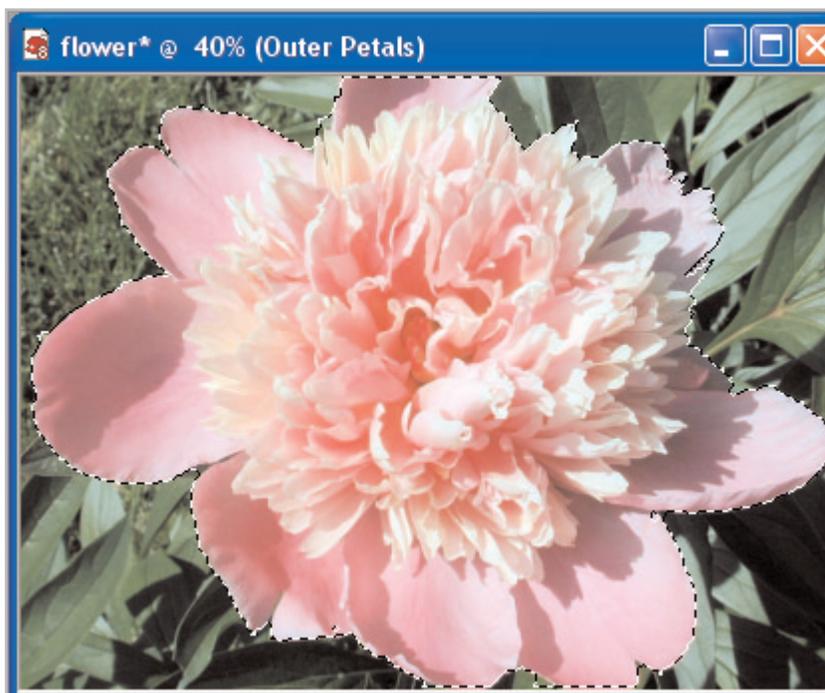
Create a Freehand Selection

6. Select the **Freehand Selection Tool**. On the Tool Options palette set:

- Selection type: **Smart Edge**
- Mode: **Replace**
- Feather: **0**
- Smoothing: **0**
- Mark **Anti-alias**

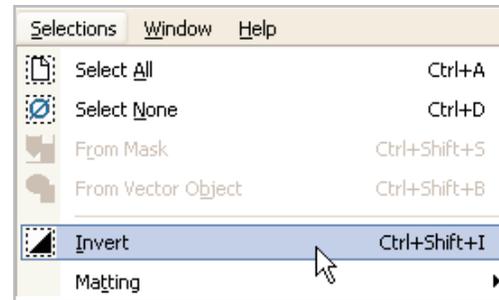


7. Position your cursor along an edge of the outer petals. To begin your selection, click once and then drag the mouse along the edge—a rectangular selection box will follow your mouse movements. Make sure the edge of the petals stays inside the selection rectangle as you drag. Release the mouse button when you can no longer keep an edge inside the selection box. After releasing the button, you'll see a faint line along the edge you've selected. Continue clicking and dragging in this manner until you've selected around the entire outer petal area. Once your selection reaches the point where you started, double click to complete the selection. You'll then see a marquee around the entire selection.

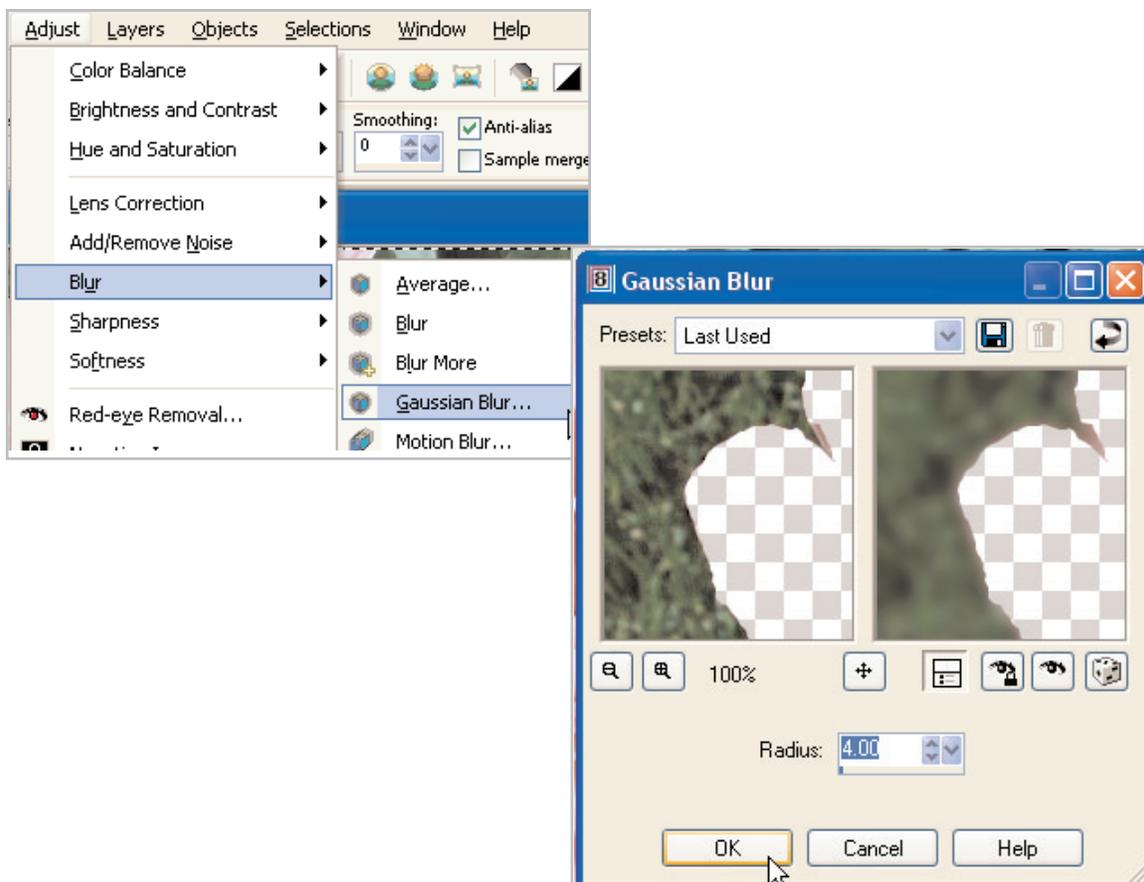


Blur the Background

8. Choose **Selections > Invert**.

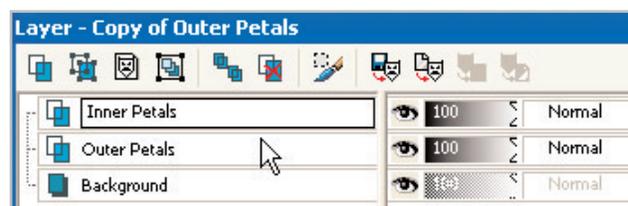


9. To apply the first blur, choose **Adjust > Blur > Gaussian Blur**. In the Gaussian Blur dialog, set the Radius to **4.00** and then click **OK**.



Create Another Selection

10. Next, create another selection and apply another blur. But before doing this, duplicate the Outer Petals layer following the same method in Step 4, and call this layer **Inner Petals**.



11. You'll select the inner petals differently than the outer petals. On the Tool Options palette, change:
- Selection type: **Freehand**
 - Feather: **25**



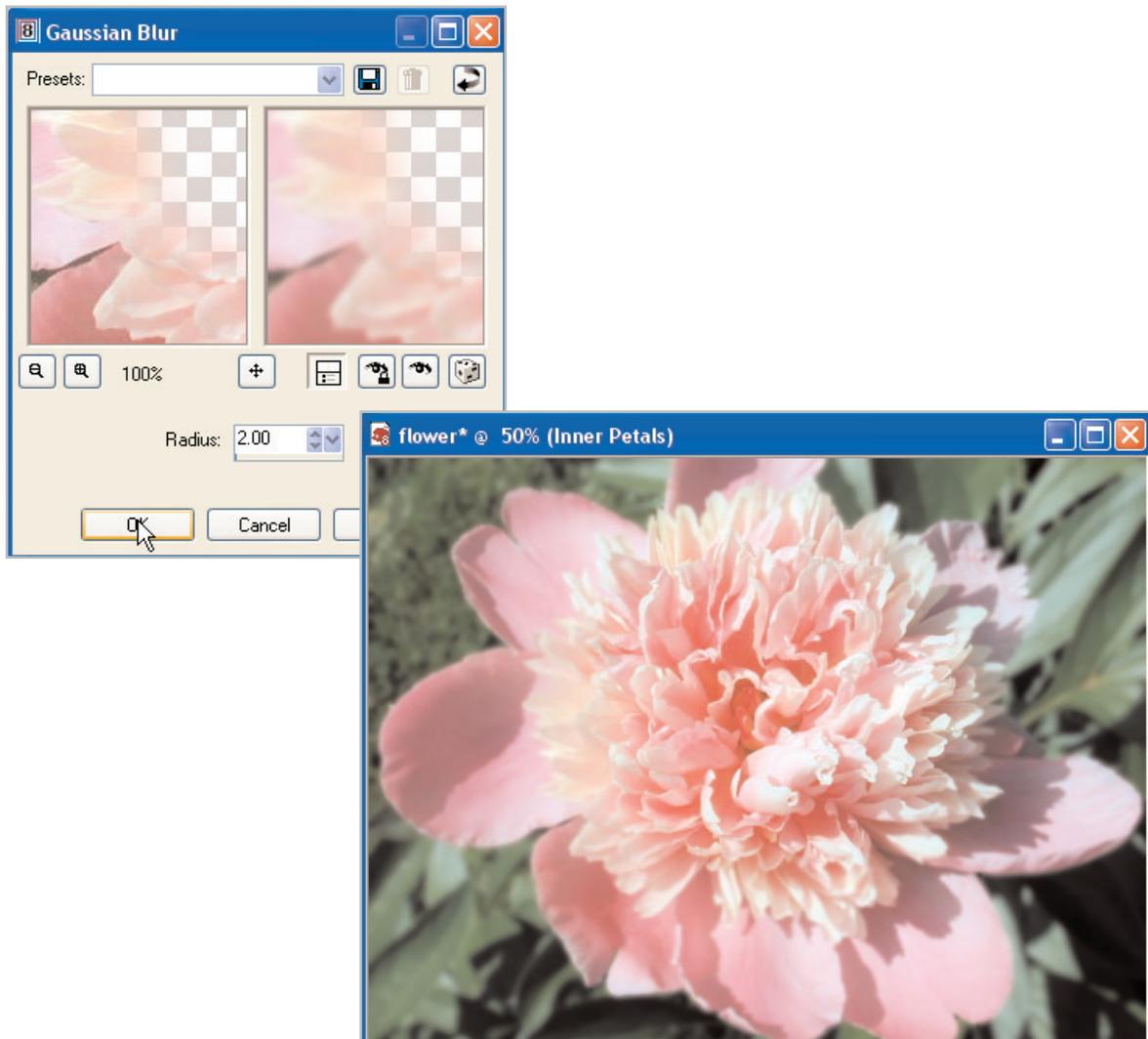
12. Position the cursor just outside the darker pink petals and then drag the cursor in around them in a circle. Release the mouse button when your cursor reaches the starting point. Because of the Feather setting, the selection will expand outward slightly.



Add a Final Blur

13. Because we want these inner petals to remain in perfect focus, invert the selection by choosing **Selections > Invert**.

14. For the final touch, apply another Gaussian Blur. Choose **Adjust > Blur > Gaussian Blur**. Set the Radius to **2**, and then click **OK**. Note that this blurs the outer petals and blurs even more the green leaves and grass that you blurred in before. Now you can see clearly see the depth of field effect.



Next Steps:

There, now you see how easy it is to mimic professional effects on your digital photos, after you've taken them. Creating effects such as depth of field can be a fun way to not only expand your digital imaging skills, but to learn more about using Paint Shop Pro.

