



How to edit GIFs without resorting to Photoshop

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GIFs ARE THE twitchy, loopy language of the modern Web. So it stands to reason that when you've discovered a GIF capable of expressing the real deep-down you, you'll want to share it with others. But sometimes those pieces of bitmapped magic need a little tweaking before they're ready for prime time in an email or on Tumblr.

Various programs and apps will allow you to create your own GIF goodness (go.pcworld.com/giftools), but if you ever need to make a quick fix on an existing GIF, you'll be interested to know that EzGIF (ezgif.com) is a free one-stop shop for doing just that.

The site offers a straightforward GIF tool belt for cropping, resizing, optimizing, and otherwise fixing a GIF—without needing to buy any software or have any graphics training.

Tool time

To choose the tool you want, click the appropriate tab at the top of the site's page. Then upload the file—either from your computer or directly from a source URL.

For example, I found a familiar friend, the cartoon gaming character Mario, captured in looping animated form, on Giphy (giphy.com), one of the many GIF repositories online.

One caveat: When using EzGIF's cropping function, it's annoyingly unclear how to proceed once you've uploaded a file—but the steps get more intuitive from there.

First, click *Set*. You'll be presented with a small box in the corner of the image. Click and drag that box to reveal a scalable, movable box for marking the perimeter of your crop.

When you find the perfect crop, click *Crop it*. EzGIF will process the cropped GIF and you'll be good to go. This process can take a few

EzGIF's easy Web suite of editing tools.





minutes—it all depends on the size of your GIF. You'll then have the opportunity either to manipulate the image further (by clicking any of the options located at the bottom of the screen) or to download it (by clicking the green *Save* button).

Below your scaling window, you'll see a pull-down menu with two options: 'Gifsicle' and 'ImageMagick'. Every EZgif function has various "engines" that it uses to process the GIF. Regrettably, due to the vagaries of GIFdom, an engine may on occasion mangle your GIF. If that happens, simply begin again and try another option in the pull-down menu.

All the options

The GIF Resize option lets you resize your GIF. Simply specify your new size based on number of pixels. If you leave either the width or the height blank, EzGIF will scale the GIF. Click *Resize it* and the tool will process the new GIF.

The GIF Optimizer option lets you reduce the data size of your GIF by applying precalibrated optimization methods. The GIF Effects option gives you access to a few preselected effects like changing the GIF to sepia tone or black-and-white, or making it run in reverse.

You can create wholly unnecessary combinations of filters, too, if you don't fear overdoing things.

Finally, the GIF Split option separates the GIF into its component slides and lets you reorder them as you see fit. But that option may be a bit too advanced if you just want to make a simple change.

Now go out there and make the Web a more seizure-inducing place. 📺

The new, improved (or at least freshly cropped) GIF.

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