



Installation and Instruction Manual

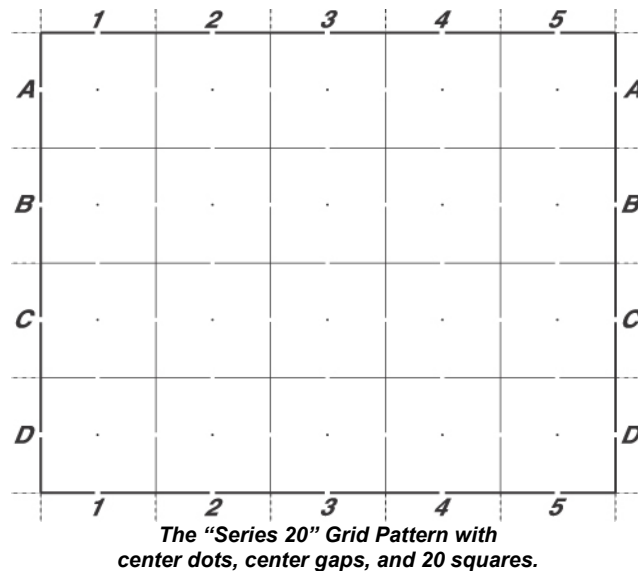
Copyright © 2003 GridArt, LLC ~ All Rights Reserved
Rev. 0310

For the latest version of this document,
please see www.paintbygrids.com/software.

Paint-By-Grids and ColorMixer are trademarks of GridArt, LLC.
"Windows" is a trademark of Microsoft Corporation.
All other third-party trademarks are those of their respective owners.

1. Introduction

The Paint-By-Grids Software program is an easy-to-use Windows-based application for helping users to draw or paint images from their digital cameras, scanners, or from the Internet. This software places the Paint-By-Grids “Series 20” grid pattern onto any .jpg or .bmp image file.



This program is designed to work with the Paint-By-Grids canvases and transfer sheets. See www.paintbygrids.com for more information about these products. The transfer sheets are useful for watercolor painting onto your preferred brand of watercolor paper, or for transferring your image to another surface such as a wall, canvas, or even a wooden chest or mailbox in the case of tole painting and decorative painting.

The software allows you to very accurately position and size the grid exactly the way you want it for the best composition of your final painting. The program includes ColorMixer™, which shows you how to mix the particular color that's under your cursor. Finally, it allows you to print the original image, the base color image (if you use base colors), the image with the grid pattern, and the various colors used in the painting on a “color key” chart.

This is a very linear program, and easy to use. One step leads to the next, and then the next. There are no menu options as with standard Windows programs. This linear flow makes this program extremely easy to use, even without these instructions.

Requirements

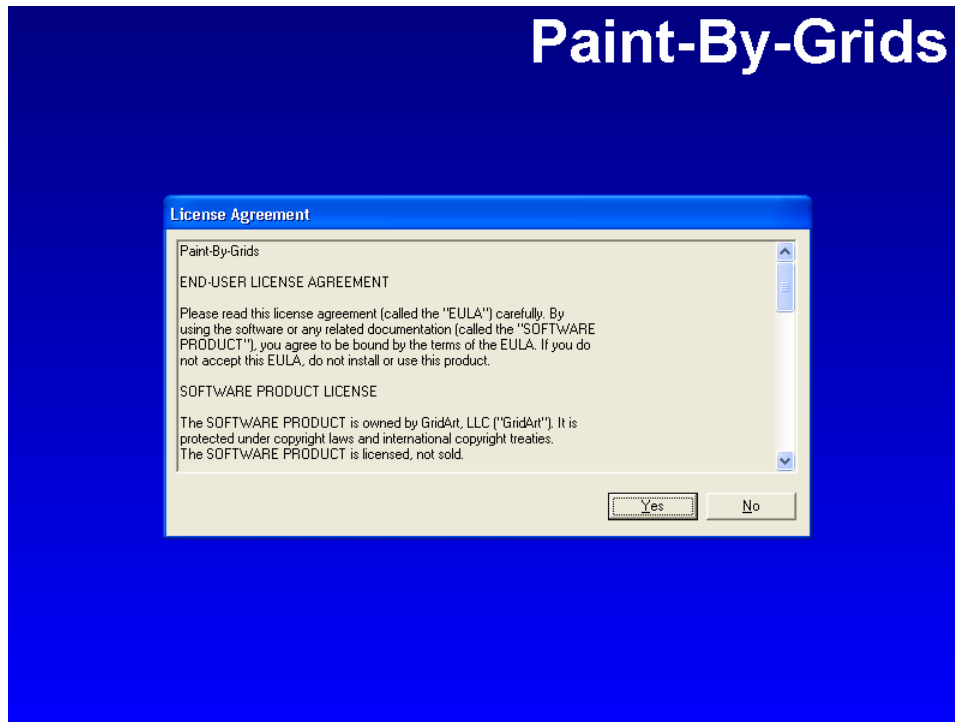
The software will run on any Windows operating system. Currently there is no Mac OS or Unix version, nor are there any plans for such versions. We recommend about 1MB of free hard drive space, at a minimum, and at least 64MB of RAM.

Uninstall

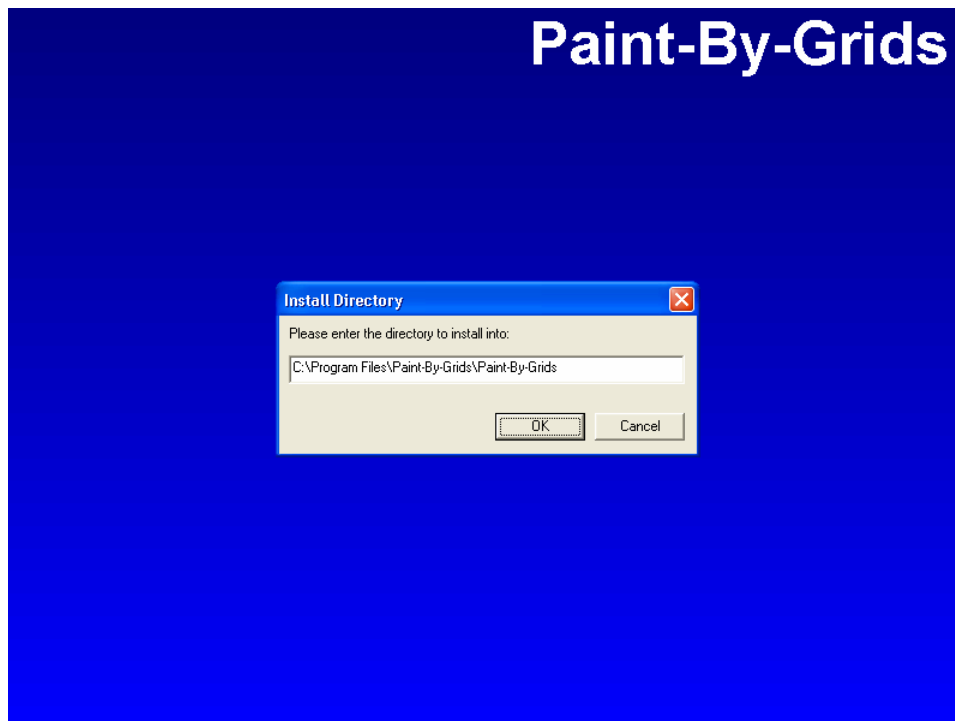
To remove the software from your computer, select the “Add or Remove Programs” option from your control panel (which you can access via the Start Menu). Scroll-down and then select the “Paint-By-Grids” software application and click on “Remove.”

2. Installation and Registration

You can begin the installation process by double-clicking on the “setup” program that is on the CD-ROM or that you downloaded. The license agreement screen will appear. You must accept the license agreement before continuing the installation. If you do not agree with the license agreement, press “cancel” and the installation process will terminate.

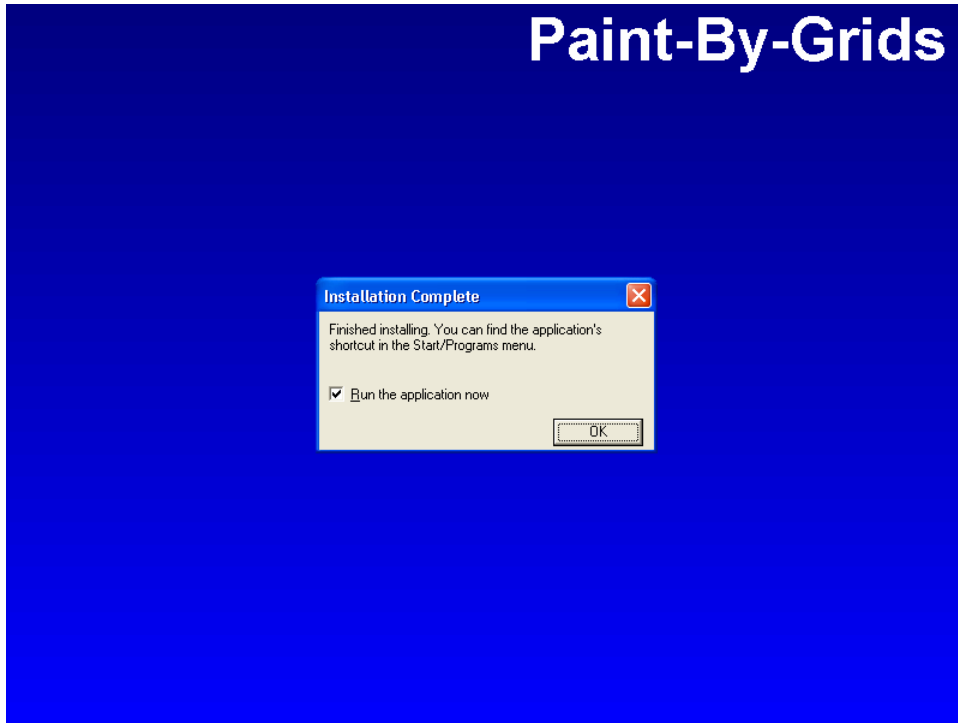


The next window will ask you where you wish to install the software...



We recommend that you install the program in the directory that's shown in this window. Otherwise, any technical support issues that you may have in the future will be complicated as we may not know where the program is located on your system. Press "Yes" to continue.

After this step, your installation should be complete and you should see the following screen:

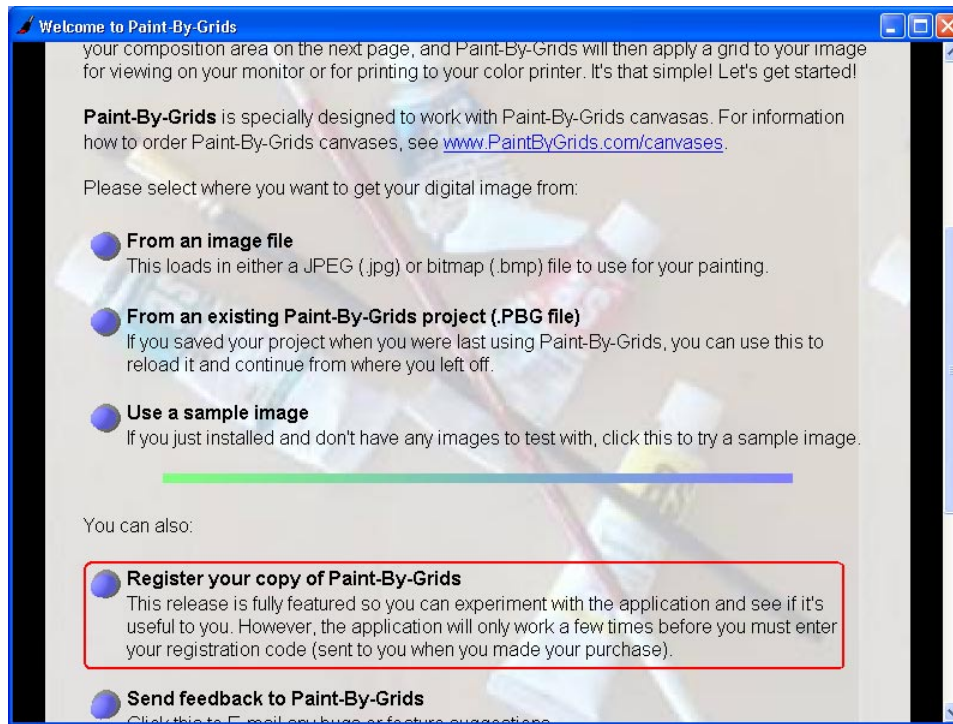


If you'd like to run the Paint-By-Grids Software application now, press "OK." Otherwise, uncheck the "Run the application now" option and then click "OK." With this, the installation of the software is complete. The Paint-By-Grids software will be accessible from your Start menu.

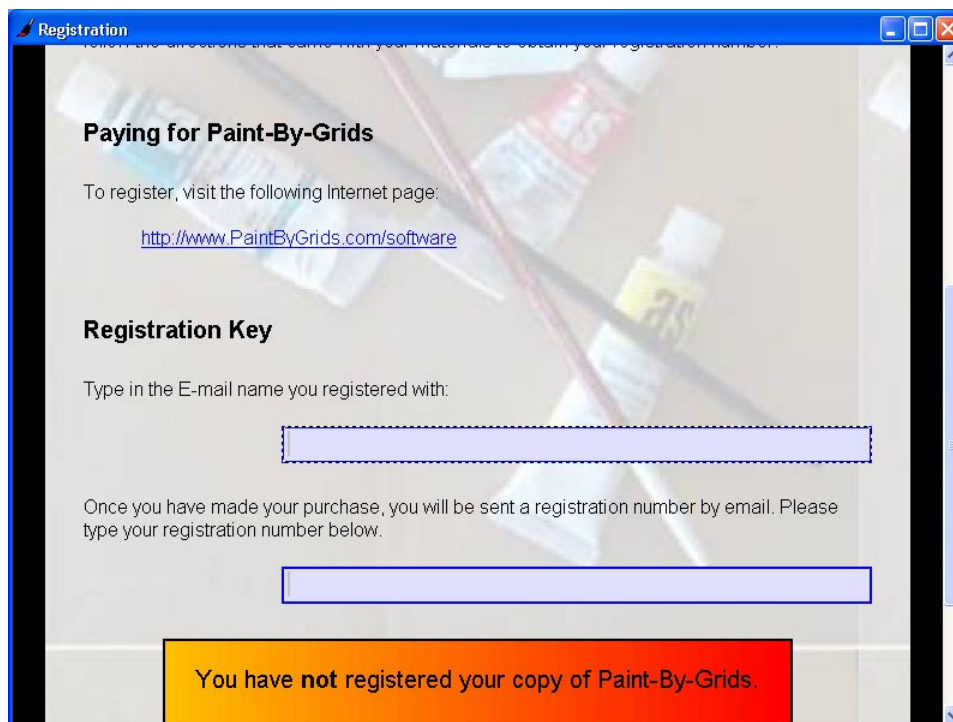
Next, if you have purchased the CD-ROM from one of our retailers, a catalog company, or from our website, you should enter your registration number to "un-lock" the software. The software will work a few times as a free trial without registration; however, once it locks-up you will only be able to access the registration page to enter a valid registration code. Once you've entered a valid registration code (which you'll receive after purchasing the software) you will be able to use all features of the software.

When you first run the program you'll see the first screen. To register the software, scroll down to the fourth option, "Register your copy of Paint-By-Grids" and click on it. The next screen is the "registration page," and it is on this page that you have to enter an email address and a registration number.

If you purchased the software from the Paint-By-Grids website (at www.paintbygrids.com) or from another on-line source, you will be sent a registration number that works with your email address. You must put your email address and your registration number into the appropriate text boxes, as shown below.

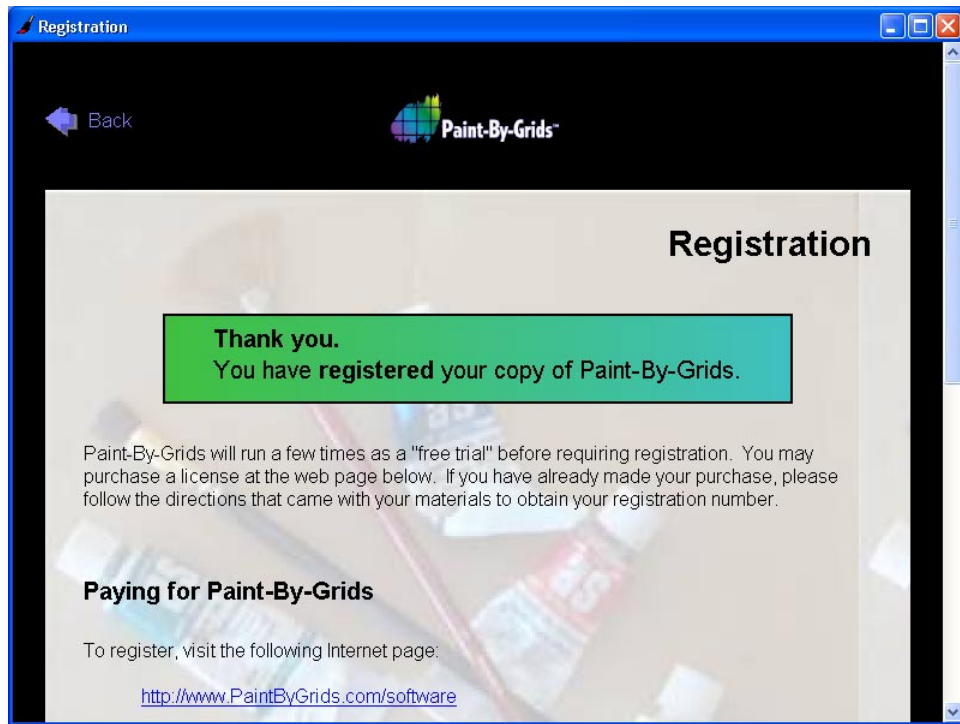


The first screen, showing the "Register your copy of Paint-By-Grids" option.



The Registration Screen, showing an email text field and a registration number text field.

Once you have entered a valid email address/registration number combination, you'll see the red boxes turn green, and your software will be registered (as shown below).



Once registered, your registration page should look like this

Troubleshooting registration problems

If you are having trouble registering your software, be sure that you've entered the email address and registration code exactly as sent to you. Make sure that you don't have any extra spaces, as spaces will cause problems.

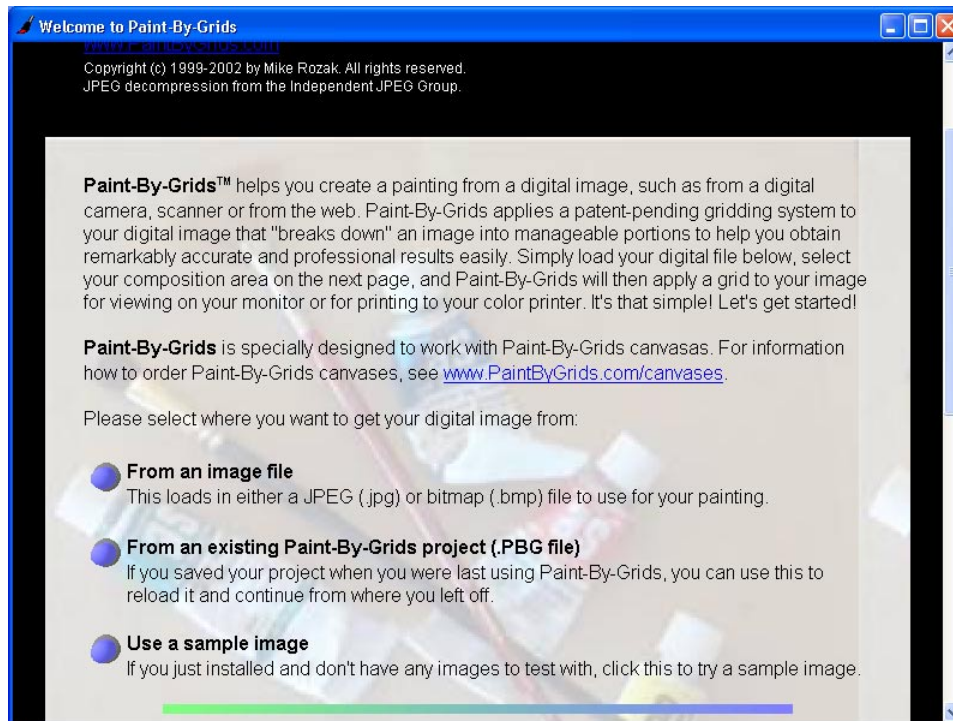
Also, if you purchased your software license from a catalog company or from a retail store, the software CD case came with a valid email address (artist@paintbygrids.com) and a registration number for this email address. Be sure you're using this email address, not yours (even though the page says to enter your email address).

If you continue to have trouble, please see www.paintbygrids.com/registration for further assistance.

3. Software Use Instructions

The first step in using the software is to load the image file that you wish to paint or draw. Be sure the image file is either a .jpg or a .bmp file. There are many graphics programs that can convert one type of image file to one of these very common .jpg or .bmp files, in the event that your original file is in some other format. There are a fair number of free utilities and shareware programs on the Internet that will convert images to .jpg or .bmp files as well.

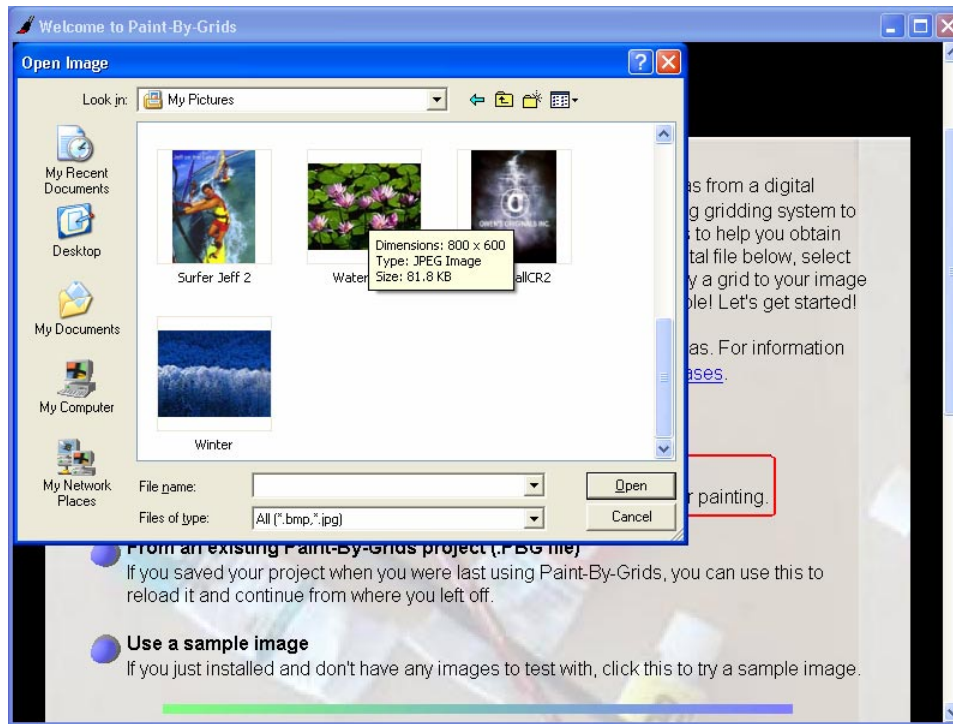
Further, if your image is much larger than 1000 x 800 pixels, the program will run more slowly (depending upon your computer's speed). The ideal size your image is 800 x 600 or so. This size will allow you enough detail when printing, yet will not cause the software to run slowly. Your image may be in Adobe Photoshop or another graphics program, and its size may be indicated by dpi (dots per inch), such as 300 dpi, and its full size, such as 11 inches by 17 inches (a very large file). You should reduce to 96dpi and no larger than about 6 inches by 8 inches.



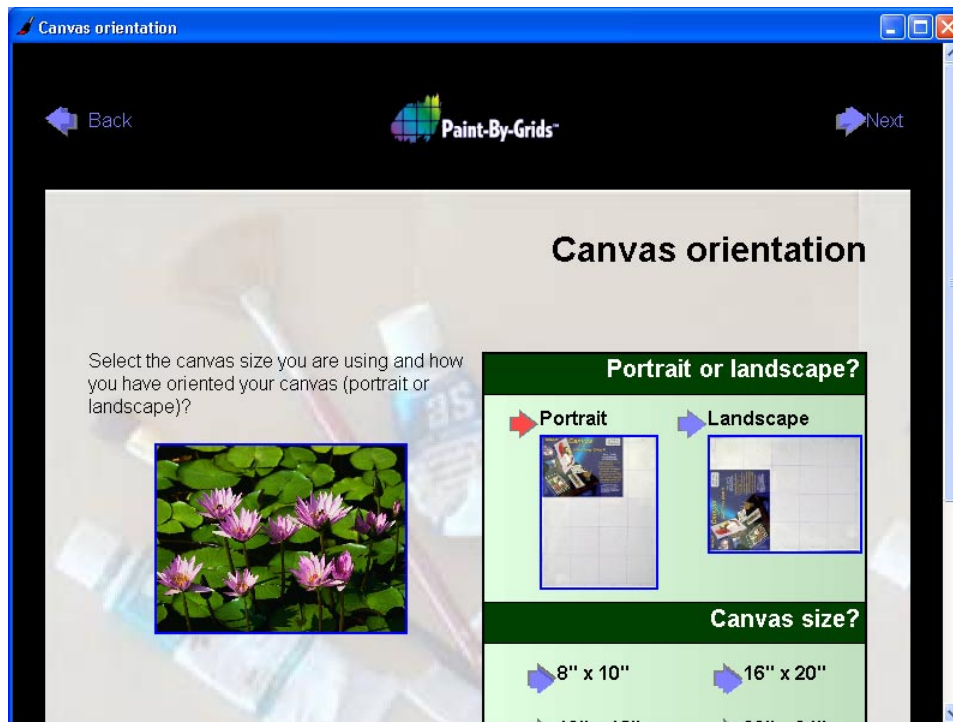
The first screen of the software, showing the three image loading options.

On the first screen of the software, you can choose to either load an image file, load an existing Paint-By-Grids project file (.PBG file), or load the sample image of a parrot. The first option is what you'll usually use. But once you've set-up your project with the correct grid size and positioning, you'll want to save your project as a .PBG file. That way your settings will be saved and you won't have to set-up your image again with the grids.

Meanwhile, if you don't already have a .JPG or a .BMP file to work with, we'll use the sample image of the parrot by clicking the third option, "Use a sample image." If you do have a suitable .JPG or .BMP image to work with, click on the first option "From an image file." You will then have to navigate to the image using the Windows filing system. Many digital cameras automatically load your files into your "My Photos" folder. However, each digital camera is different, so your images may be located in some other folder. Also, if you downloaded images to use with the Paint-By-Grids Software, you'll need to remember where you saved the file on your hard drive or network in order to retrieve it with the Paint-By-Grids software.



Once you have your image loaded, you should see something like the following on the orientation and canvas selection screen.



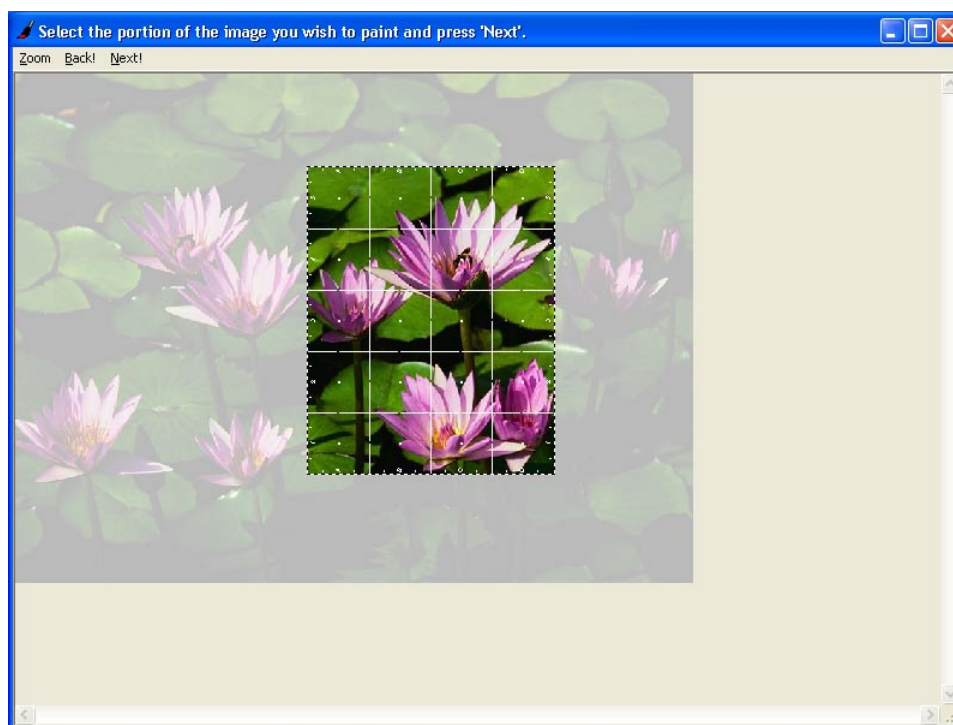
After selecting your image, you'll see the "Canvas orientation" screen.

Even if your image is in landscape format, for example, you can choose to do your painting with a portrait orientation. The next screen will show you how that's done. We'll select a portion of the flower image above, but we'll use a portrait orientation, effectively "cropping" your original image to the portion you wish to paint. Select the back arrow if you want to load a different picture.

If you're using a Paint-By-Grids canvas for oil or acrylic painting, select the canvas size from the four listed. If you're using a Paint-By-Grids transfer sheet, select 8" x 10" (even if this isn't the size of your transfer sheet). Selecting the size has no effect on the software, other than showing some of the very small difference between the different canvas sizes. But the grid pattern will be essentially the same as those on all of the canvases and the transfer sheets, so you don't have to worry about the sizes that are listed on the screen.

If you aren't using either a Paint-By-Grids canvas or transfer sheet, you can put your own 4x5 grid on your painting or drawing surface. Just divide the longest size by 5 to figure out how far apart to place the grid lines. This works best on drawing surfaces with an aspect ratio of 0.8, or where the length of the longest side divided by the length of the shortest side = 0.8 (such as with an 8x10 or 16x20 canvas). Canvases with a different shape will result in some areas not covered by the grid on either the canvas, or some areas of the original image that won't make it on the canvas. If you don't have a Paint-By-Grids canvas or transfer sheet, you'll have to work with exactly how the grid will work on your drawing surface (and you won't have the benefits of the gaps and dots on the Paint-By-Grid Series 20 grid pattern). You will also have to erase or paint over your manually constructed grid lines with this option.

Click on the "Next" arrow in the upper right portion of the Canvas orientation screen to get to the next screen, the grid size and positioning screen.



The grid size and positioning screen.

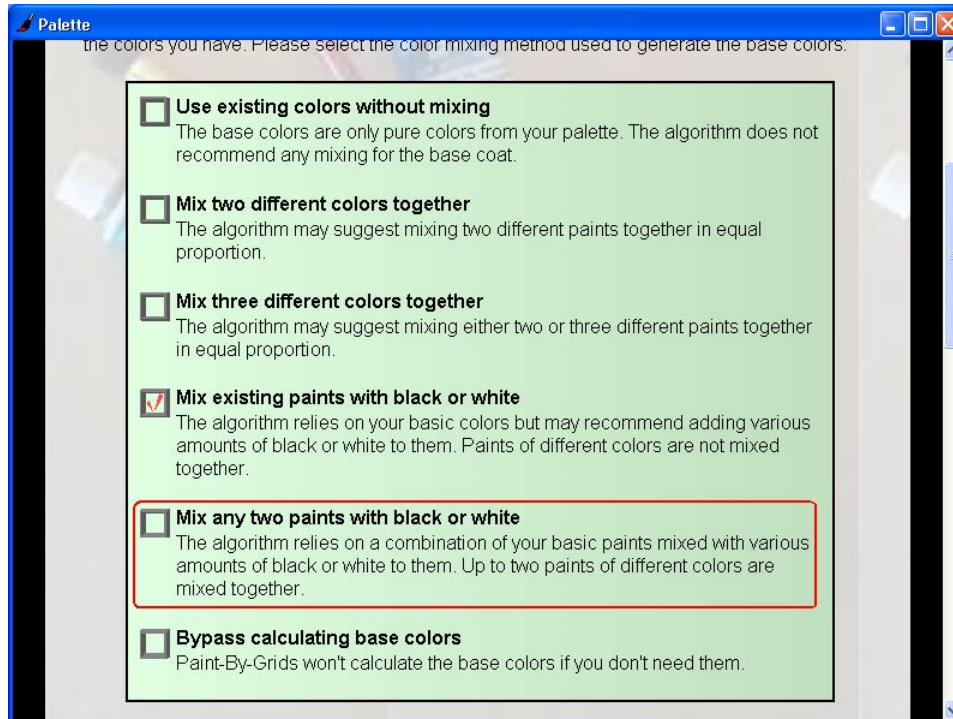
To position the grid: "Grab" the center of the grid by clicking in the center of it and holding down the mouse button while you move the grid around the screen.

To resize the grid: "Grab" one edge of the grid and move it around. You'll see the size change.

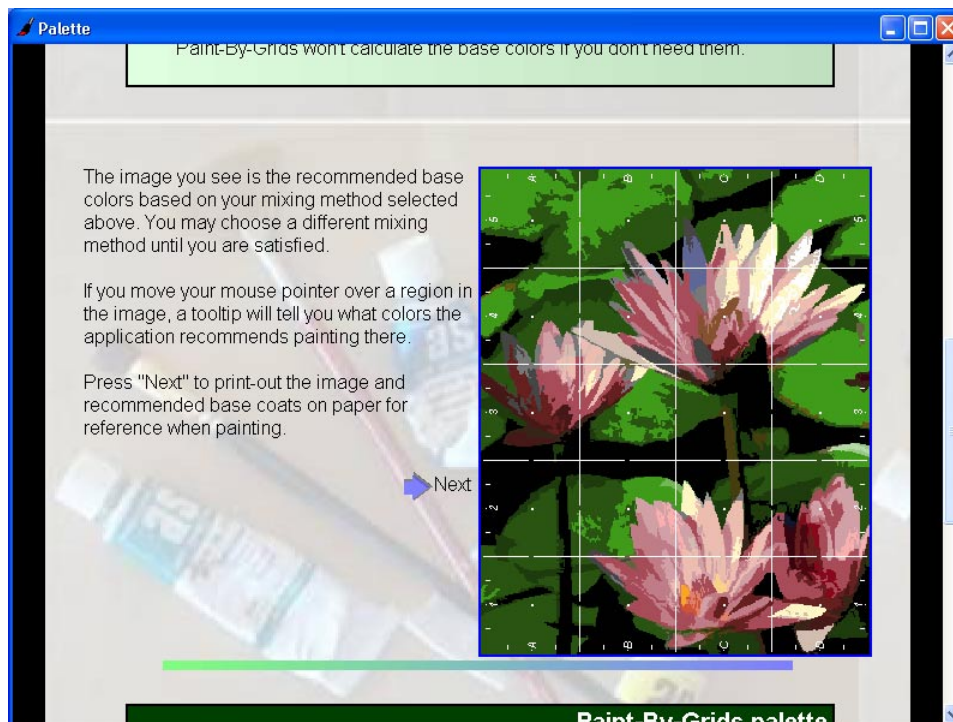
Use these two methods to get the image exactly as you want it on your drawing (the grid represents your canvas or drawing surface). You can select "back" if you want to change the

orientation of the grid from portrait to landscape or vice versa. Select “next” to go to the next screen.

The next screen, called the “Palette” screen, has to do with base coats. You may skip this screen if you do not use a base coat for your paintings. A base coat will result in the rough blocks of your painting being filled-in (thereby painting over your sketch). However, many artists use base coats and many art teachers teach using a base coat.



The base-coat mixing section of the “Palette” screen

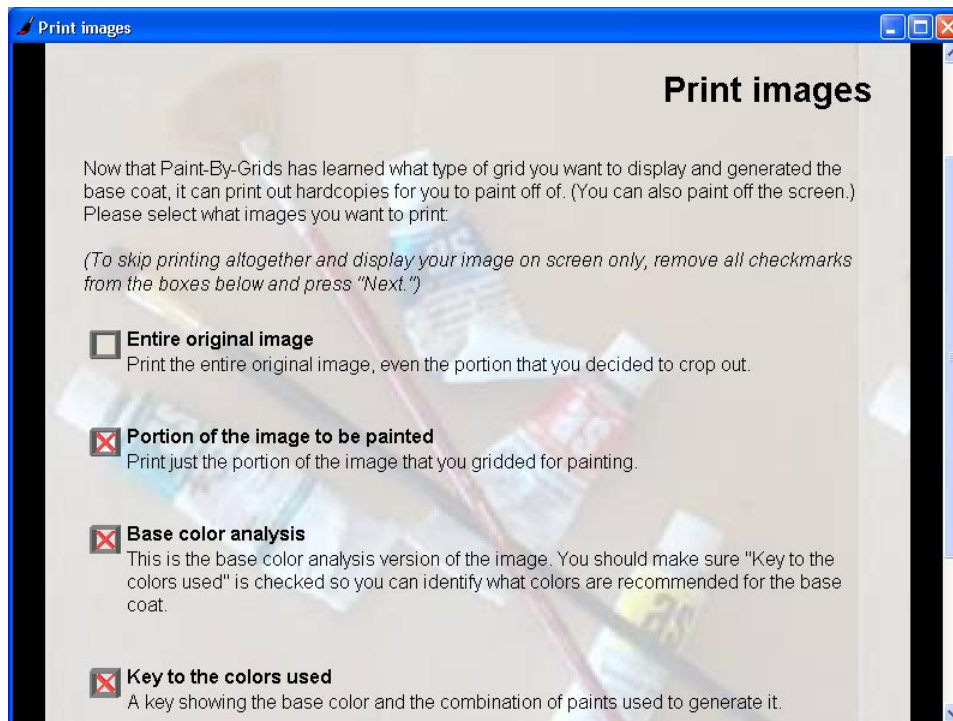


The base coat mixing choice selected in the top image results in different looks of the sample base coat painting shown below it.

The program can show you what the base coat painting will look like when you mix the paints in certain ways. The software program assumes that you're using acrylic paints, and specifically those colors that are included with the Paint-By-Grids Acrylic Kit (see www.paintbygrids.com/kits). You can check the various boxes to see how the different selections changes the base coat mixing algorithm.

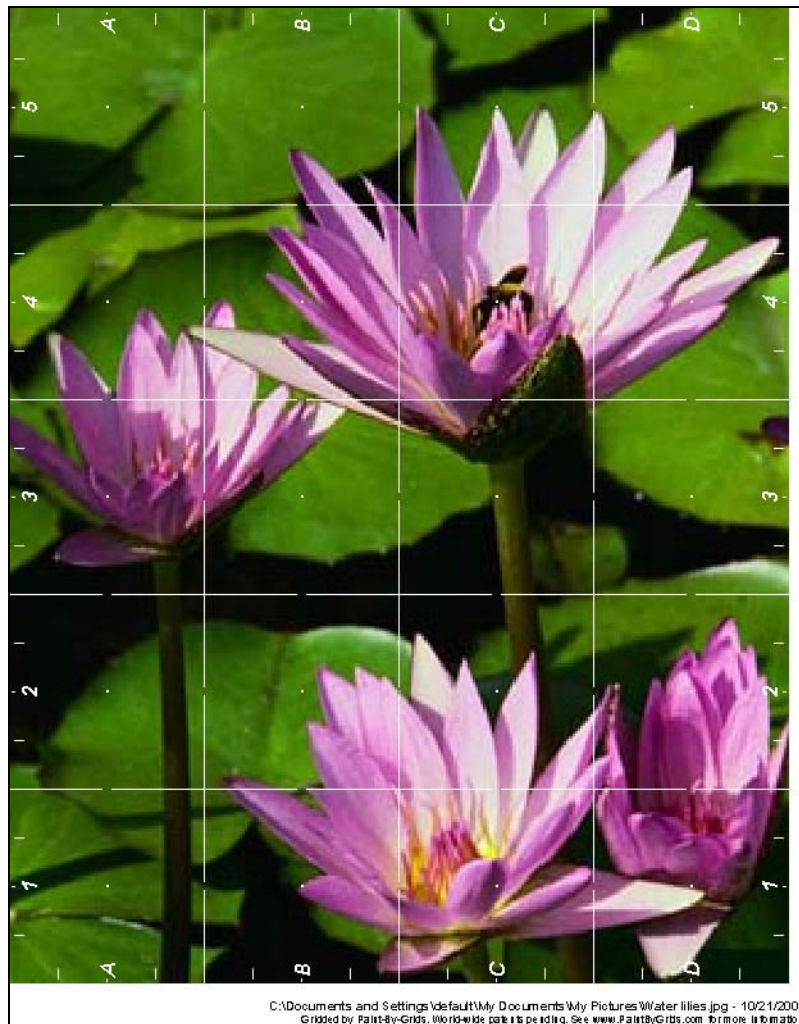
Tip: *If you wish to change the colors included in the palette, the shareware program Oil Painting Assistant may be a good option for you. This program is very similar to the Paint-By-Grids Software and also allows you to change the number and size of the grids that are used. See <http://www.mxac.com.au/oilpaint.htm>.*

Click “Next” when you're ready to advance to the “Print Images” screen. We're almost done!



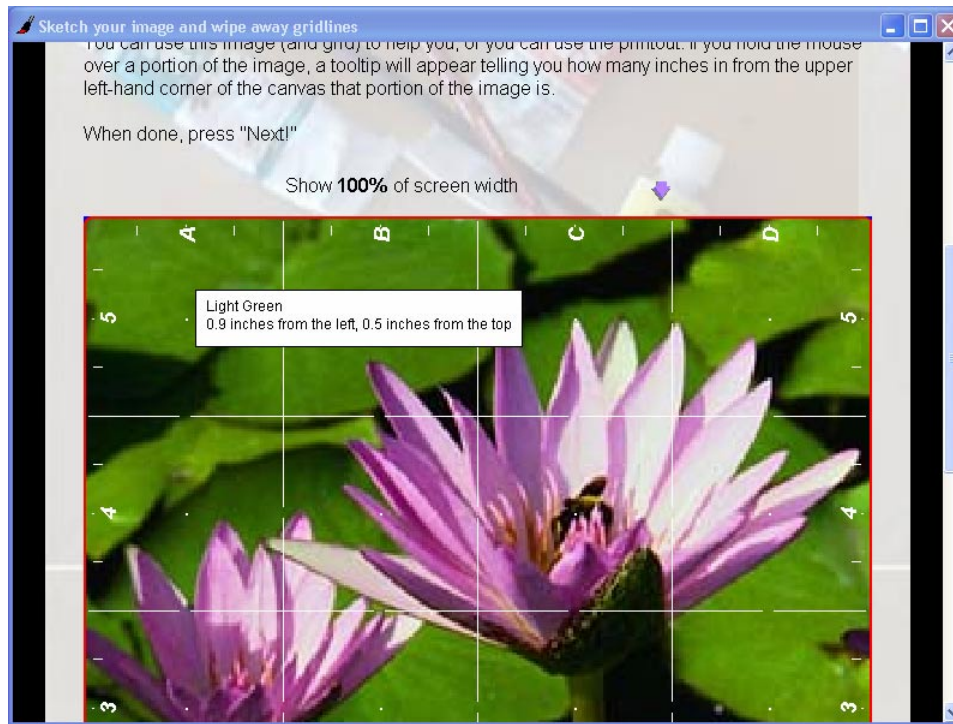
You can choose to print 1) the original image, 2) the portion to be painted with the grid, 3) the base color analysis, and 4) the color key. The last three options are checked by default, and you should certainly print these at least once to see the results. If you're not interested in the base color analysis, you can un-check the box by clicking it.

Normally you will just select the “Portion of the image to be painted” and print that. It will result in something similar to that shown on the next page. However, you might also find it useful to work off of the screen and not even use a hard-copy print-out. (This will certainly be the case if you don't have a printer attached to your computer!) The next screens that are displayed are each of the print-outs that you selected above, but on the screen. When you put your cursor over a particular point on any of these images, the program will tell you how to mix that particular color using the colors in the Paint-By-Grids palette. See the illustration below.



Sample print-out of just the portion of the original image to be printed, with grids.

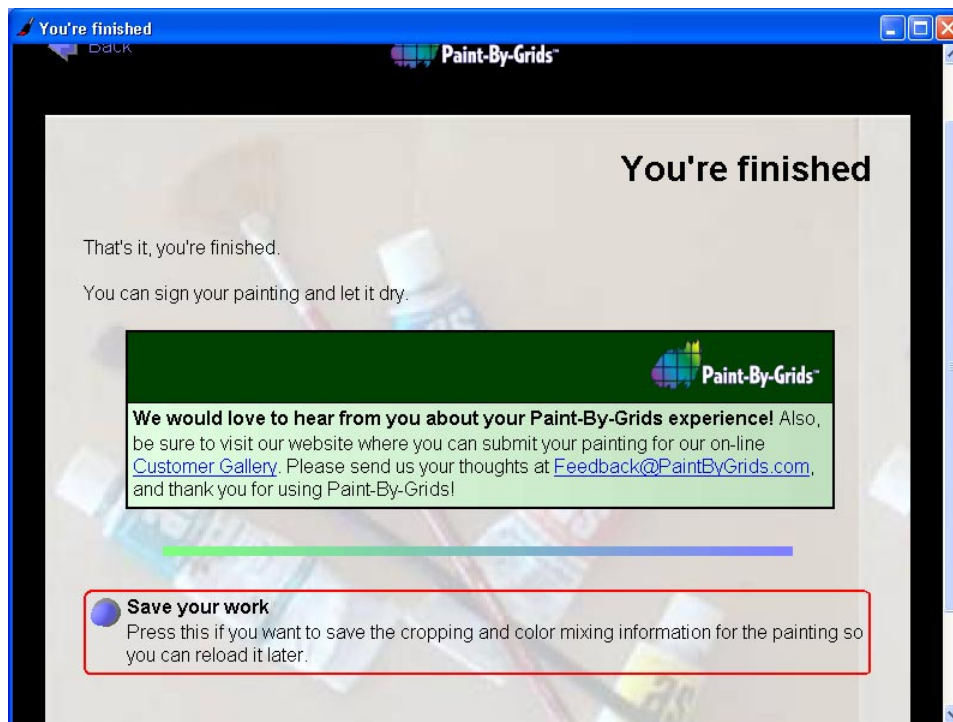
This “Print images” page also addresses the removal of the grid lines on the Paint-By-Grids canvases. The blue grid lines on the canvases are water soluble, and they can be wiped away with a wet sponge. If you’re using the transfer sheets, obviously you can just remove and discard the transfer sheet (unless you want to save it and perhaps do a duplicate painting of the same sketch later... the transfer sheets will last for up to about five or six separate sketches).



The "Sketch your image" screen, with ColorMixer™

After printing, the "Sketch your image" screen shows you, on-screen, your image. The advantage of using this screen to work from is that you can place the cursor over any spot and it will show you what colors to use from the Paint-By-Grids palette.

Pressing the "Next" button on this page shows you a similar page with your base coat, and then a final page for your details, all of which work in a similar way to this page.



Finally, the last page has an option to save your work as a .PBG file (Paint-By-Grids file). This type of file will save your grid positioning information on the image. Similarly, if you close the program from any page you'll be asked if you wish to save your work first in .PBG format.

We hope you enjoy this software and use it regularly. Please let us know how you like the program, and if you can see any problems or suggested additional features. Email us at feedback@paintbygrids.com. We would also love to see your finished artwork, and possibly include it in our gallery online at www.paintbygrid.com/galleries.