

### Transform Tools

In this chapter, we'll take a look at the different transform tools, including the Move tool and the Crop tool.

## The Move Tool

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The **Move tool** can move the entire image or layer, guides, floating selections or empty selection shapes. Please read [Layers And Floating Selections](#) for information about layers.

### Moving Without Using The Move Tool

In "[Selection Tools](#)" starting on page 109 we discussed the fact that Gimp displays a **move symbol** when you move your cursor over a selection, although a selection tool (and not the Move tool) is active.

If you move your selection using this move symbol, the selection will become a **floating** selection. You can only move it once, because the move symbol will disappear as soon as you let go of the mouse button. To move your selection a second time, you must switch to the Move tool.

You can also ignore the selection tool's move symbol and go straight to the `right-click|Select|Float` command. This procedure will make your selection float without moving it from its current position. Should you decide to move it, you can use the Move tool in the normal way.

## Moving Floating Selections

When you use the Move tool on a floating selection, you'll notice that the **double-arrow** symbol becomes a **single arrow** when the pointer is outside of the selection. If you click your mouse when the single arrow is visible, the floating selection will **anchor to** (merge with) the layer that was last active.

## Moving The Entire Image Or A Single Layer

If you don't have a selection, the Move tool will move the **entire image** outside the drawable area. If your image has more than one layer, the Move tool will move the **active layer**.



## Moving Transparent Layers

The Move tool can't move an empty, transparent layer. If you try to do that, the Move tool will move the top layer in the layer stack instead! This happens because the Move tool needs something solid to grab onto. Of course, you could paint a dot of color in the empty layer, turn off all the other layers (see "[Layers And Floating Selections](#)" [starting on page 315](#)) and then move the layer (by grabbing the layer by the dot), but this isn't a very convenient technique.

The solution to this problem is to press the Shift key as you drag. When you see the yellow **layer boundary** turn blue, you'll know for sure that you're moving the right layer.

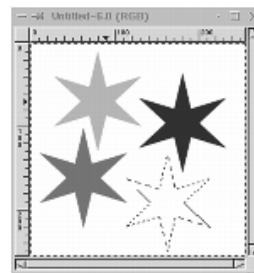
## Moving Grouped Layers

Also notice that if you have **grouped** one or more layers (with the little anchor symbol), they'll all move, regardless of which layer is currently active. For example, if you have grouped a text layer with a drop shadow layer, you'll have to ungroup them or merge them before moving another layer, otherwise you'll move all three layers. See "[Layers And Floating Selections](#)" [starting on page 315](#) for more information on working with layers.

## Moving Empty Selections

If you just want to **adjust the position** of a selection area, press the Alt key as you move the selection. With this technique, only the empty form of the selection moves, and not the contents.

Figure 10.1 Duplicating a star shape by moving a selection



Note that this option only works for the normal (empty) selections you make with a selection tool. You can never move a floating selection using the Alt key.

This option allows you to use the selection as a template: You can move the selection around and fill it every time you move it. Note that the Move tool or a selection tool must be active for this technique to work.



### Hints

The Move tool has an extra feature that allows you to **nudge** (move in small, precise increments) a floating selection or a layer with the keyboard's **arrow keys** when the Move tool is active. Pressing the Shift key as you press the arrow keys will increase the length of these steps. To nudge an empty selection, press the Alt key and the arrow keys.

Note that when you make multiple selects, Gimp treats them as a **unit**. That means that you can't move one selection closer to another with the Move tool, because all of the selected areas will move together as one.

## The Crop Tool



The **Crop tool** corresponds to the "scissors" in Photoshop. You can crop an image if you just want a part of the picture. To crop, click and drag the marquee diagonally. Release the mouse button when you are satisfied and the **Crop Information** dialog box will appear. See the next section for more information on the dialog box.

The cropmarks can be placed very accurately. You can move the crop square by dragging on the lower-left or upper-right corners, or resize it by dragging on the upper-left or lower-right corners.

You can also move (nudge) the crop area using the arrow keys on your keyboard. Alternatively, you can set **guides** (make sure that the Snap To Guides checkbox is checked in the right-click | view menu) to position the crop area.

Figure 10.2 Screen shot showing the Crop tool in action

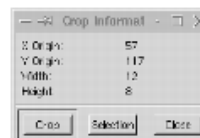


Press the **Crop button** in the toolbox, or click inside the markings, and the portion of the image inside the cropmarks will be your new image.

### The Crop Information Dialog

This dialog displays the crop area's **X and Y Origins** and **Width** and **Height** in pixels. If you have created a selection in your image, you can click on the **Selection** button in the dialog box. This will automatically place the crop area as close as possible to your selection.

Figure 10.3 The Crop Information dialog



## The Transform Tool

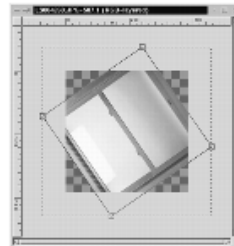


The **Transform tool** is much like the "Effects" menu in Photoshop. Double-click on the Transform tool to see the Transform Tool Options dialog box, where you can choose whether you want to **rotate**, **scale**, **shear** or **distort** a selection.

### Rotate

When you're transforming using **Rotation**, you drag the mouse to rotate the selection. Note that parts of the image will end up outside the drawable area, so you may have to resize the image afterward.

Figure 10.4 Screen shot showing that you may need to resize the image after rotating it



As you use the mouse to rotate the image, the **rotation angle** will be displayed in a small dialog box. You can't insert numbers into the dialog; it just displays how much you've rotated the image (this is not a very precise tool). However, you can press the **ctrl** key and drag on the image with your mouse, which makes the selection rotate in 15 degree increments.

If you want to rotate a layer or image 90 or 270 degrees (for example, if you scanned an image in portrait mode and you want landscape) the **right-click | Image | Transforms | Rotate** option is a better choice.

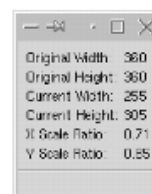
If you need to specify the exact rotation angle, use the **right-click | Layers | Transforms | Rotate Any Angle** option. Note that you can't get exact values by just dragging the slide bar in the Rotate Any Angle dialog. Click the mouse button to the left or right of the slider to change the angle in one degree increments for every click.



### Scale

Choose **Scaling** from the Transform Tool Options dialog and then click on the image to see the Scaling Information dialog. The Scaling Information dialog provides you with information on both the **Original Height** and **Original Width** of the selection, as well as the **Current Width** and **Current Height**.

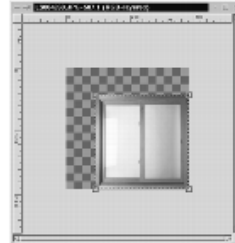
Figure 10.6 The Scaling information dialog



Drag on the image with your mouse to scale the image. The **X Scale Ratio** and **Y Scale Ratio** tell you how much you've altered the size and proportions of the original image.

The Ctrl key locks the scale's **X axis**, so you can only affect the height of the image. Shift locks the **Y axis**, so you can only affect the width of the image. Ctrl+Shift forces the image to scale **proportionally**.

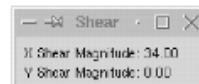
Figure 10.7 Screen shot of a downscaled image



## Shearing

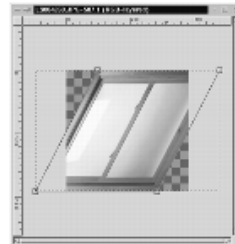
Shearing will deform an image in either the horizontal or the vertical plane. In other words, it will turn a rectangle into a parallelogram.

Figure 10.8 The Shear info dialog



Click on the **Shearing** option in the **Transform Tool Options** dialog, then click on your image to see the **Shear Information** dialog. Shear your image by clicking and dragging on the corners. Dragging up and down shears in the Y direction, and dragging on the sides shears in the X direction. You can shear along either of the X or Y axes, but only on one at a time. In other words, if the X Shear Magnitude is other than zero, then the Y Shear Magnitude must be zero.

Figure 10.9 A screen shot of Shear in action



Tip: If you want to shear a selection both ways, you have to change to another tool icon, and then return to Transform.

## Perspective

The last option on the Transform Tool Options dialog is **Perspective**. The term perspective isn't quite accurate, because no actual perspective transformation takes place (making the image small in the far end and large in the other).

It is better described as a **distortive** effect, since you can move all four displacement points (the corners) independently. You can certainly make a rectangular selection look like a perspective, but you have to do that manually.

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