Irfanview:

Irfanview is a free photo program that you can download at http://www.irfanview.com/ There is also a free set of plugins that you can download. The plugins give some extra features but you don't have to have them. Download and install Irfanview, then download and install the plugins if you wish.

When you open Irfanview this is the window you will see:
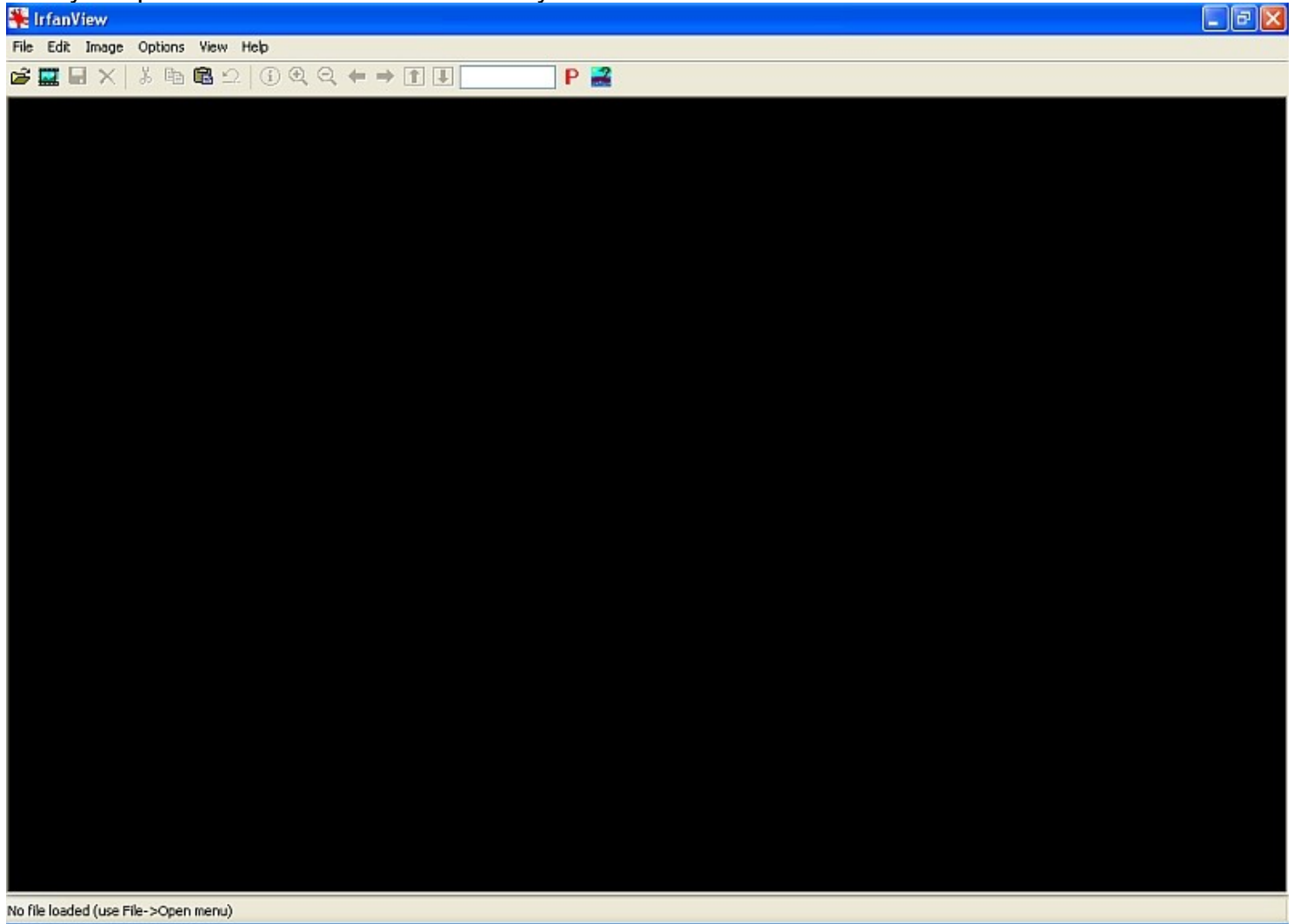
Opening your pictures in Irfanview:

When you download and install Irfanview you can set Irfanview to be your default viewer for images. If you did that, when you browse to a picture in your computer and click on it, it will automatically be opened in Irfanview. If you didn't do that when you installed Irfanview, you can change the settings to make Irfanview your default viewer.

At the top of the Irfanview window, click on the "Options" menu, then click on "Properties/Settings". You will see this window. Click on the "Extensions" tab.
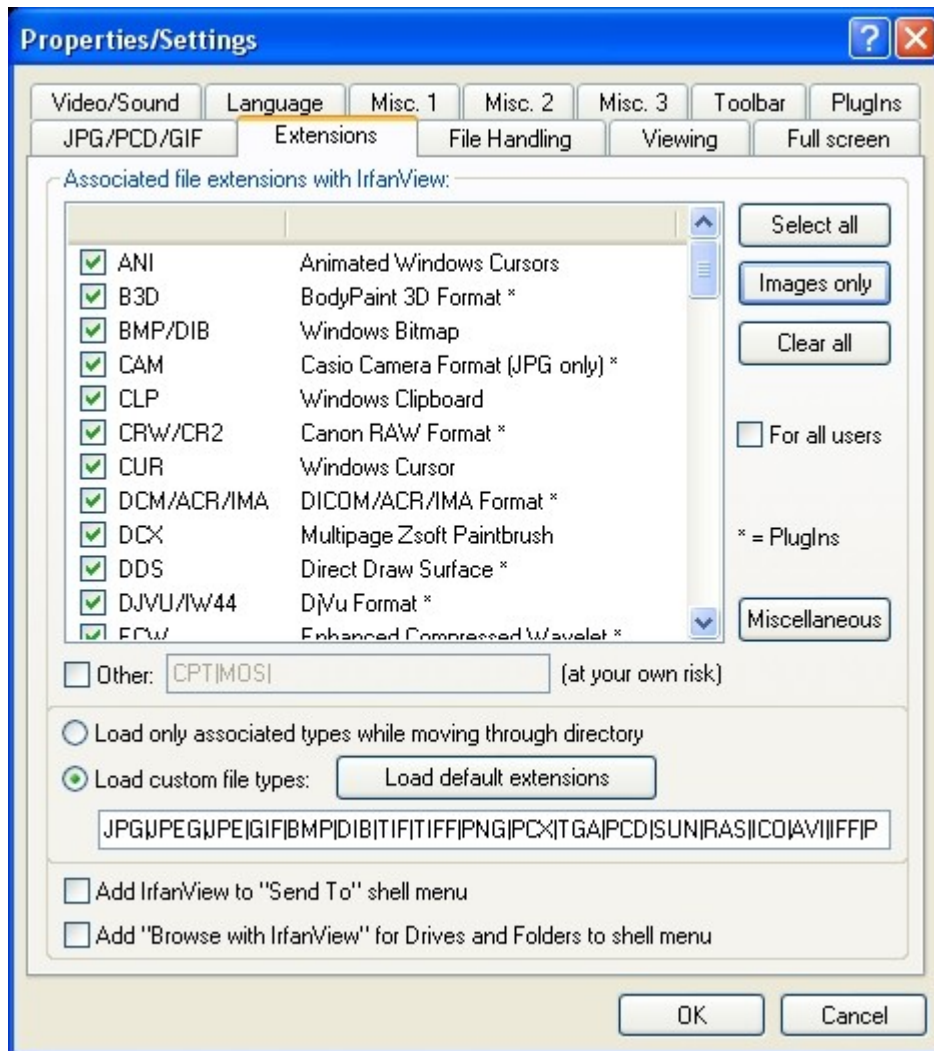

You can pick whatever file formats you choose to have opened in Irfanview. If you want Irfanview to be your default viewer for images only, click on "Images Only", then click "OK".   Irfanview will be set to be the default viewer for images and you just click or double click (depending on your settings) to open your pictures in Irfanview.

If you don't want to set Irfanview to be your default image viewer you have 3 ways to open a picture in Irfanview.

#1: Browse to your picture in your computer, right click on the picture, then choose "Open with", then choose Irfanview. Your picture will be opened in Irfanview.

#2: From the Irfanview window click on the "Open File" button, then browse to the picture you want to open and click on the picture. It will open in Irfanview:
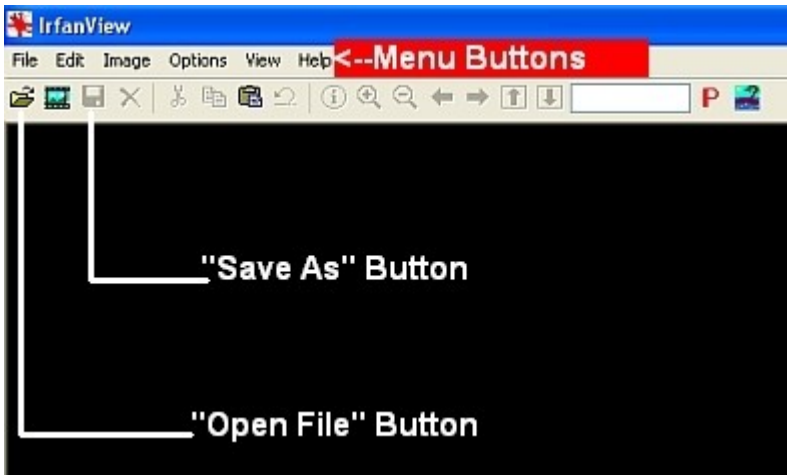

#3: From the Irfanview window, click on the "File" menu, then click on "Open", then browse to the picture you want to open. Click on the picture and it will open in Irfanview.
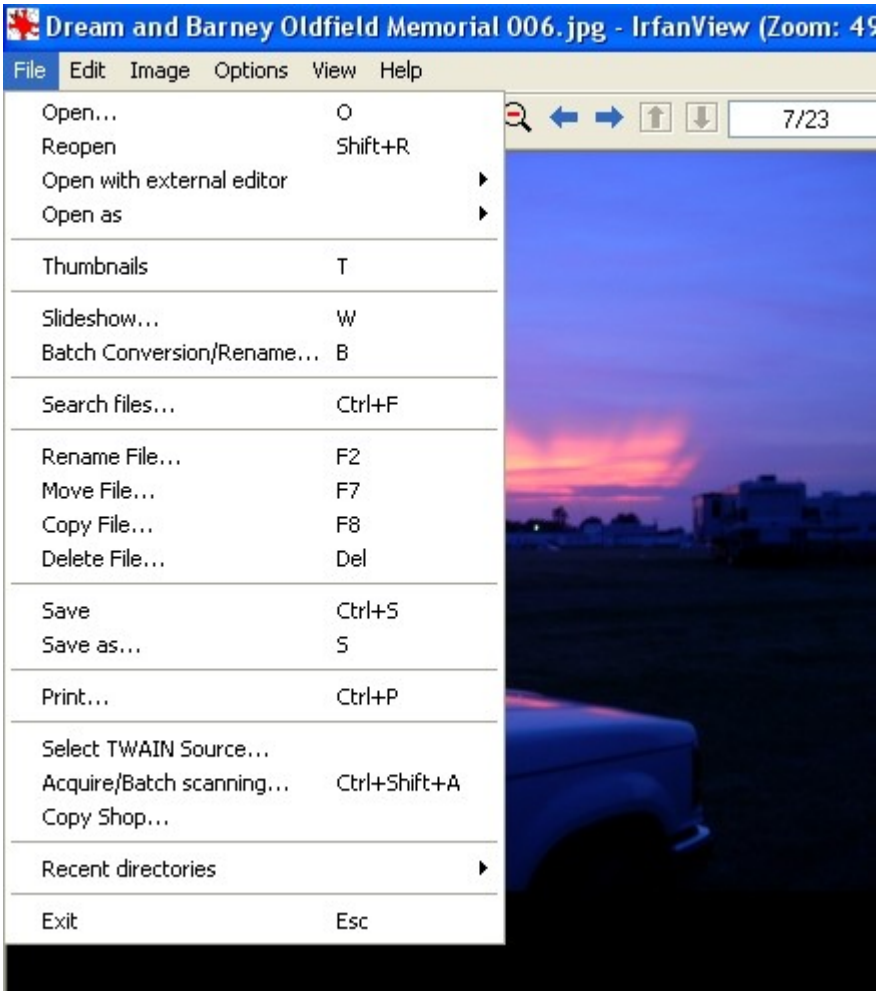
Working with your pictures in Irfanview:

When working with your pictures in Irfanview, feel free to experiment with the different features and functions. Any change you make can be undone. Click on the "Edit" menu, then click on "Undo".
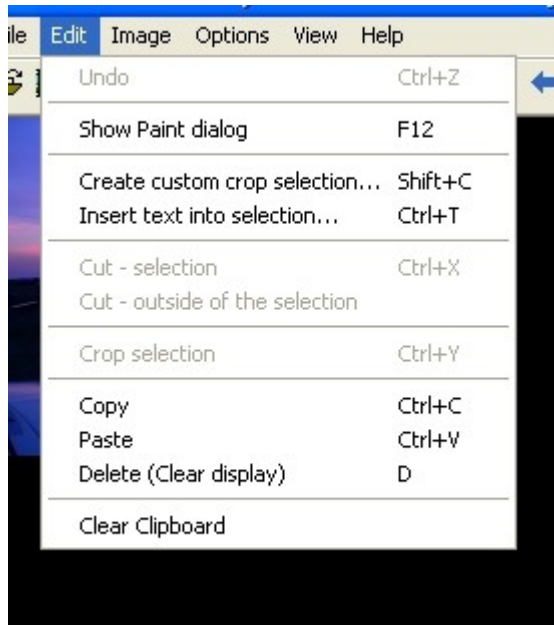
If you make several changes in a row, only the last change can be undone. If you have made a number of changes and you don't like the way your picture looks, and the "Undo" function doesn't get you back to where you like the way your picture looks you will have to re-open the picture. Remember, the changes you make to your picture are not permanent until you save the picture.

To save your pictures:

Click on the "File" menu, then click on "Save as" and enter the settings to save your picture.

or

click on the "Save Button" in the Irfanview window, then enter the settings to save your picture.

If you want to replace your original picture with the new picture save it with the same name, Irfanview will ask if you want to replace/overwrite your original file before it saves the picture.

If you want to keep your original picture and also save your new picture, then you will need to give the new picture a different and unique filename. You only have to change 1 character in the file name to make a new, unique filename. Often, I use the same name as the original picture, adding "small" at the end, or "640" if I've sized the picture to 640x480, "800" for 800x600, etc. If I have an unusual size, say 440x331 pixels, I might use the file name and add 440x331 at the end. Use whatever works for you, as long as the new picture has a different name than the original you will have both pictures saved to your computer.

Save your pictures as a JPEG (JPG/JPEG) format, it is the most universally used format. You can use your JPEG format pictures most anywhere you can post a picture or upload a picture online.

Setting the viewing size in Irfanview:

To set the viewing size onscreen click on the "View" menu, then click on "Display Options". There are several options, but the one that I use most is "Fit only big images to window", smaller images are viewed in their actual size and large pictures are sized to fit the Irfanview window for viewing. If you are viewing small pictures that fit onscreen, or you are wanting to view your larger sized pictures in their original size, "Do not fit anything" works.
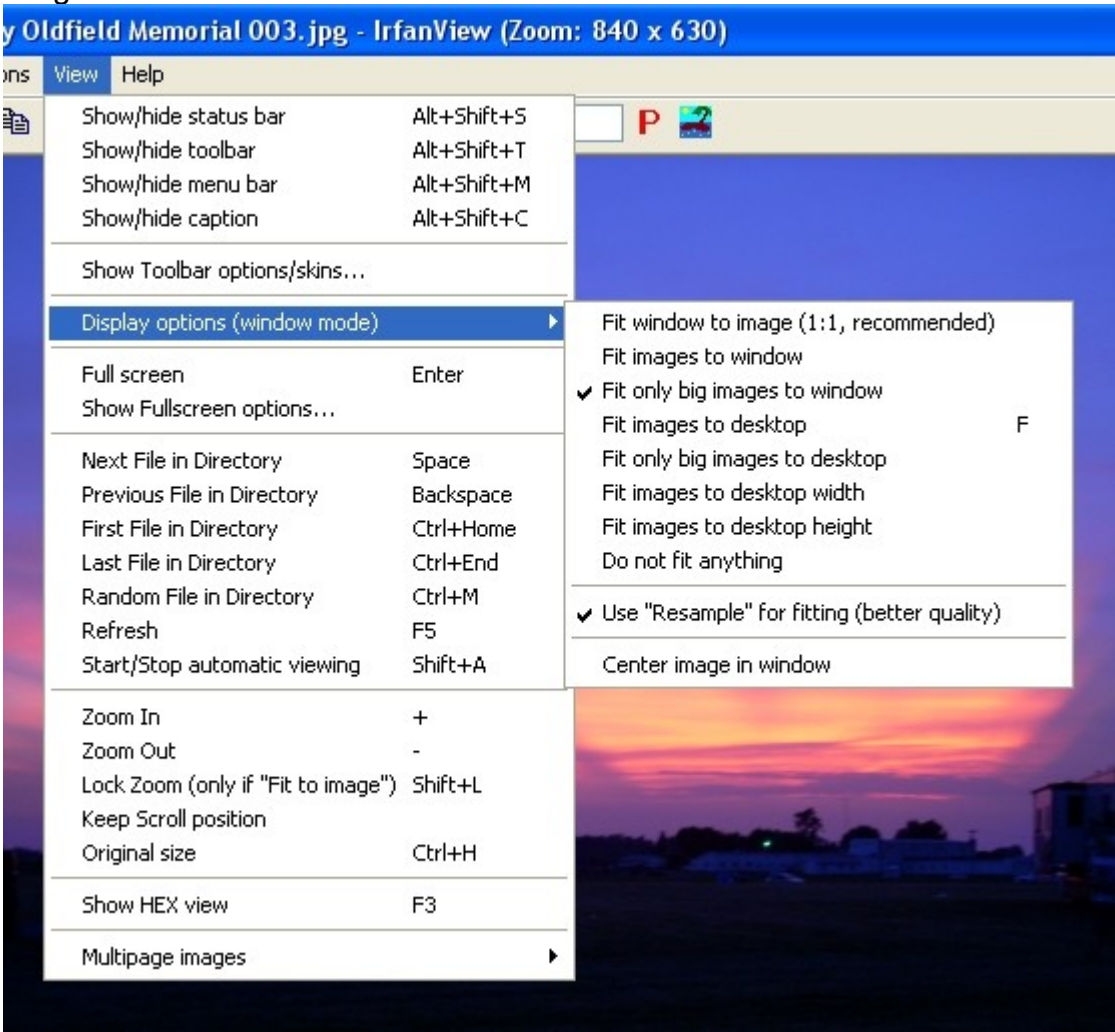
Making a "selection" in Irfanview:

To use many functions in Irfanview, first you have to make a "selection" area in your picture.
To make a "selection" in your picture: Put your mouse pointer where you would like one corner of your selection to be, press and hold the left mouse button while dragging your mouse pointer to where you would like your selection area to end, then release the left mouse button. You will see a square where you have made your selection.
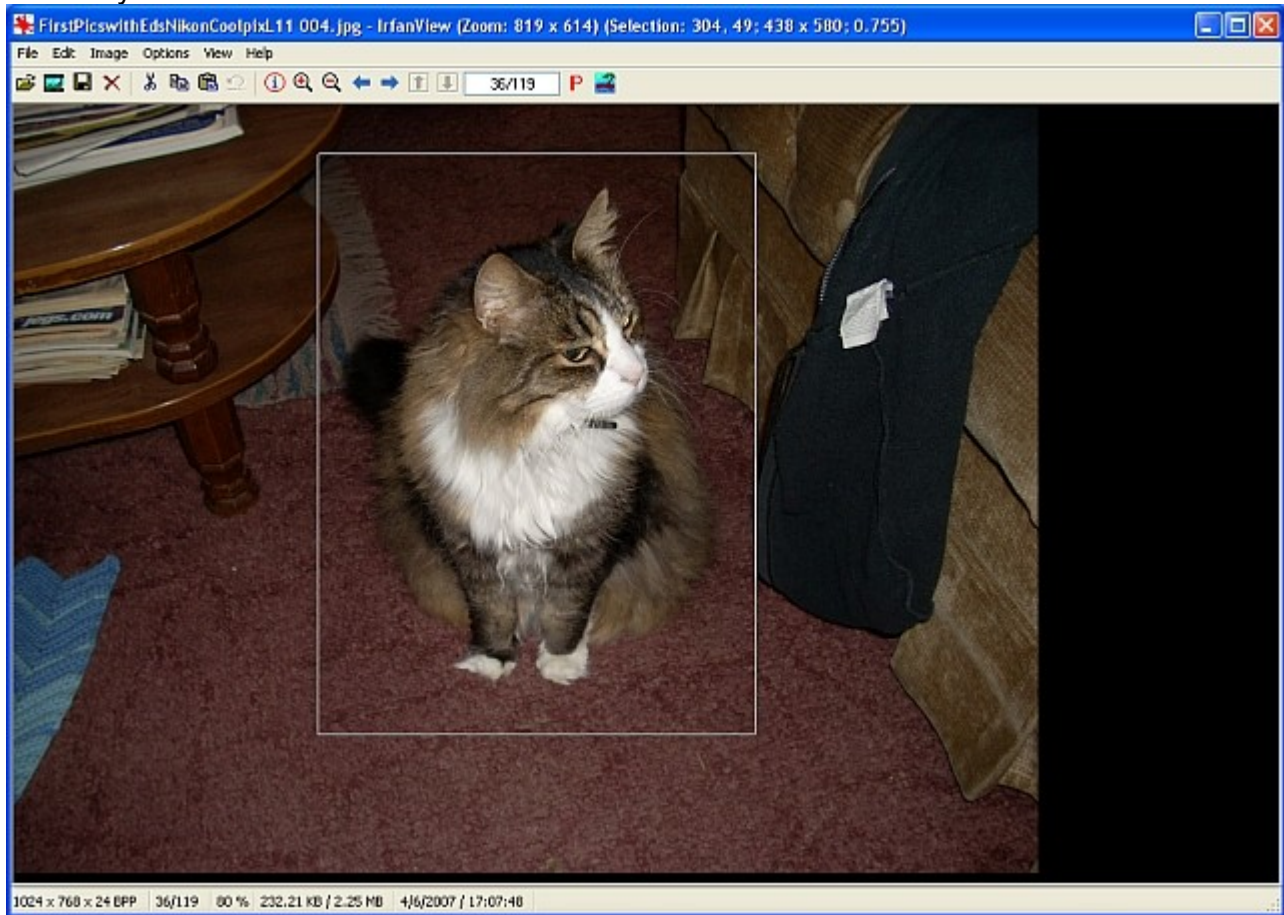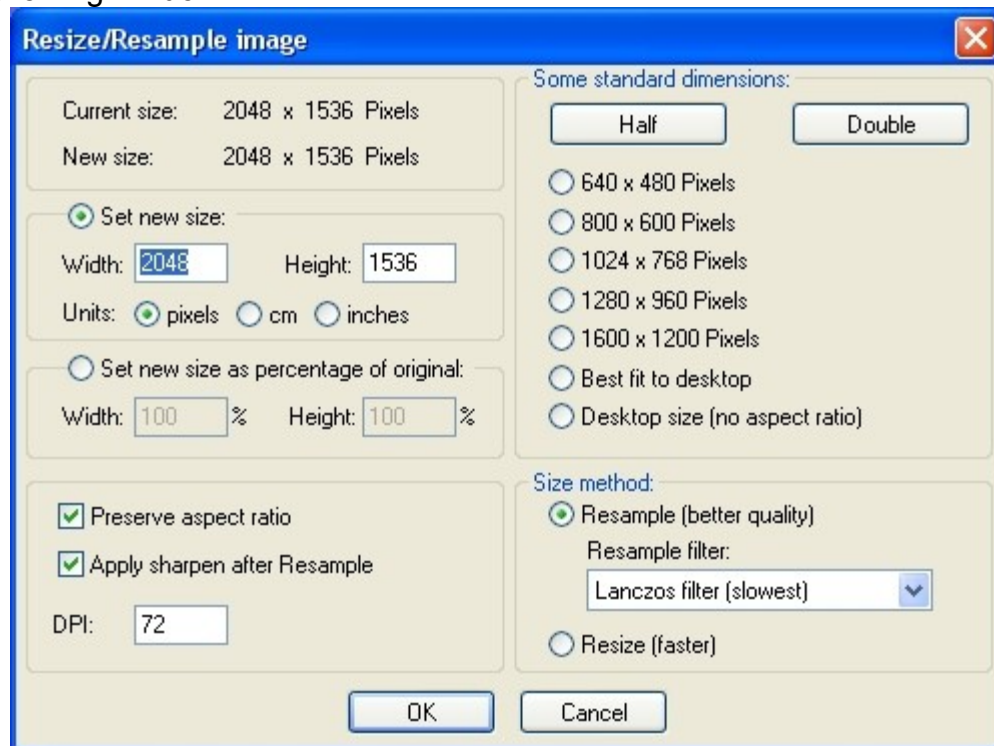

Cropping a picture:

To crop a picture: Make a selection on your picture of the area you would like to keep. Click on the "Edit" menu, then click on "Crop Selection", the rest of your picture will be "cropped" away and you have this:

Resizing Pictures:

To resize your picture: Click on the "Image" menu, then click on "Resize/Resample",
you will see the following window:

Make sure you have a checkmark in the "Preserve aspect ratio" box. That way, when you enter either a width or height in the "Set new Size" boxes, Irfanview will automatically enter the other size for you. This will keep your pictures from being too high or too wide, looking like a fun-house mirror image.

When you resize a picture you lose a little bit of detail, so if you have a checkmark in the "Apply sharpen after Resample" box you will automatically sharpen your pictures.

In the DPI window: 72 or 75 DPI works well for posting online, and will keep the file size (bytes) smaller. 200 or 300 DPI makes finer detail for printing, but makes the file sizes much larger.

As a rule, you do not want to resize a picture to a size larger than it already is because you will lose a lot of the detail, and your pictures will look very fuzzy and pixelated.

The standard dimensions on the right side are very handy. In my opinion, Irfanview should have included a 480x360 size, it's a handy size when you want a smaller size picture.
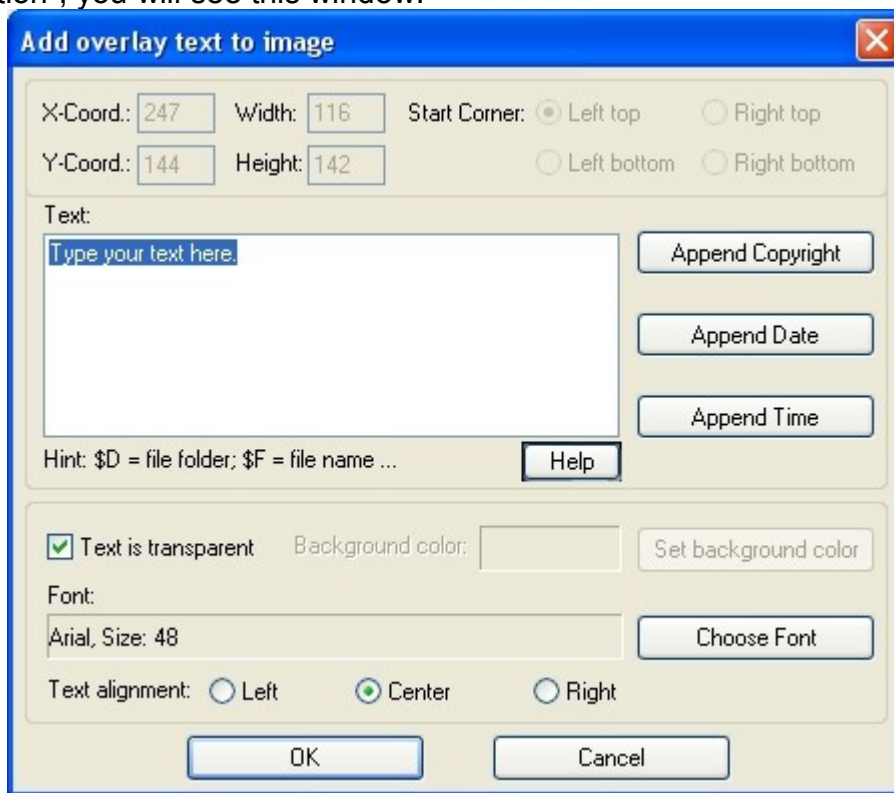
Removing Red Eye:

To remove or reduce red eye: Make a "selection" around an eye or both eyes, then click on the "Image" menu, then click on "Red Eye Reduction". Irfanview will remove or greatly reduce the red eye in your image. I've found that you want to make your selection area as small as possible because removing the red eye will also remove some of the red from the whole area of the selection.

Setting your picture to be your "Desktop Wallpaper" on your computer monitor:

Click on the "Options" menu, then click on "Set as wallpaper", you can pick from Centered, Stretch, or Tile for how you want your wallpaper to be displayed.

Adding text captions with Irfanview:

Make a "selection" where you would like to add your text. Then click on the "Edit" menu, then click on "Insert text into selection", you will see this window:


If you have a checkmark in the "Text is transparent" box your text will be put directly into the picture with no colored background, make sure you pick a color for the text that contrasts with the area of the picture where you are putting it so it is easy to read. Example, if putting your text in a dark area of the picture choose white or yellow text. If it's a light colored area choose black, blue, red, green, etc. If you uncheck the "Text is transparent" box, you will be able to choose a color for the text background in the "Set background color" boxes to the right. You can use blue text on a yellow background, yellow text on a brown background, etc.

You can type your text in the "Text" box where it says "Type your text here". When typing your text, the "enter" key will start a new line.

The text alignment buttons let you choose where your text is put into your selection, to the left side, centered, or to the right side.

To choose your font, click on the "Choose Font" button, and you will see this window:
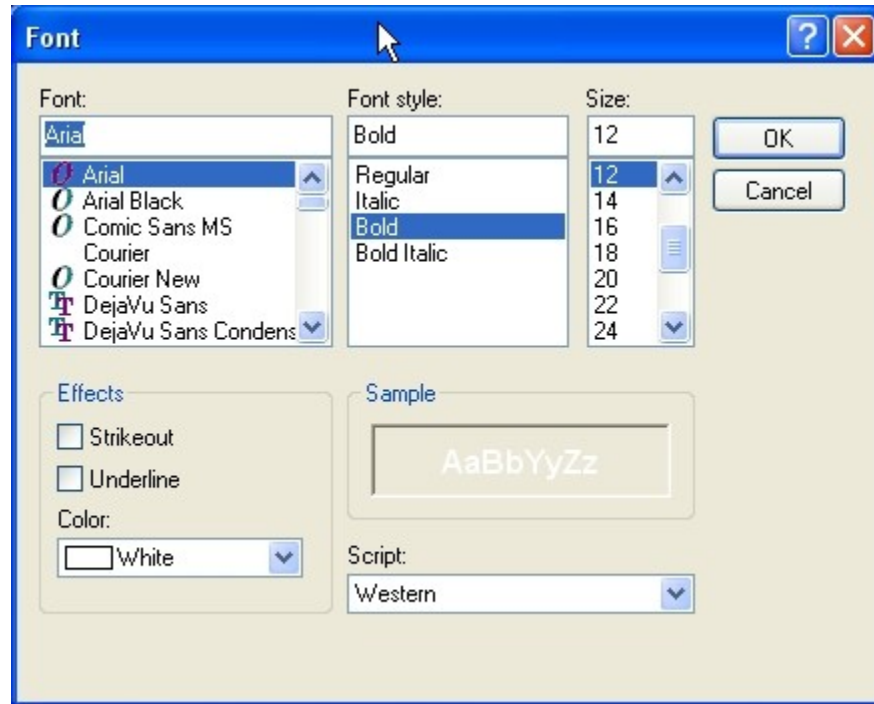

Pick your font, font style, size, effects, and color from this window. If you would like a size that isn't listed in the size menu put your mouse cursor in the square under "Size" and left click, the size will be highlighted, then type in whatever size you would like your text to be. Using the picture of Boots (our cat) that I cropped earlier I'll add a text caption.
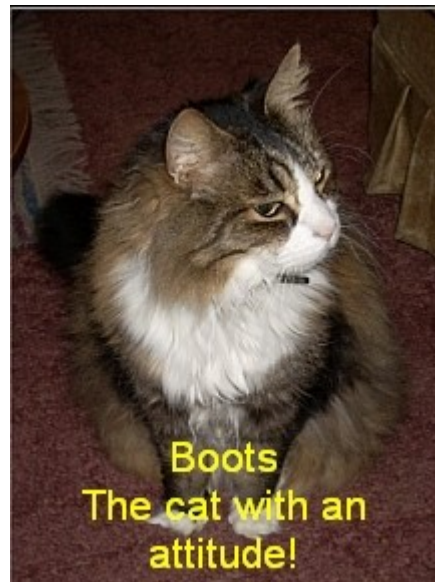
Miscellaneous functions on the "Image" menu:

"Sharpen": Will make a fuzzy or out of focus picture more detailed.

"Auto adjust colors": I have found to be very useful on dark pictures. It brings out the colors and brightens the picture. Here is the picture of Boots after using "Auto adjust colors". Notice how much more detail there is from the bottom skirt of the love seat and the ends of the throw rug behind him.
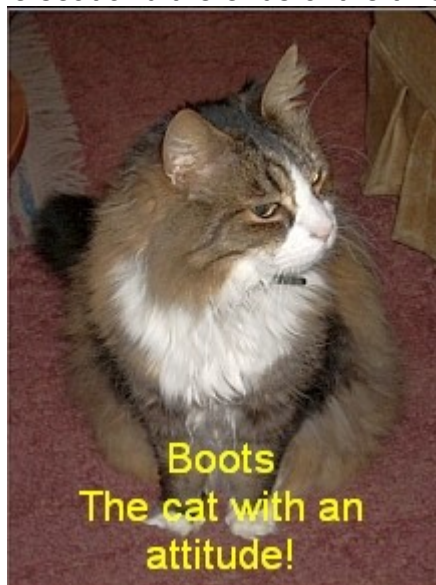
"Rotate Right" and "Rotate Left" will rotate your picture 90* to the chosen direction.

"Verticle Flip" and "Horizontal Flip" give you mirror images.

"Effects" has several special effects that you can apply to your pictures, such as "Rain Drops" (your picture looks like it was taken thru a lens with rain drops on it).

"Swap colors" lets you change the primary colors in your picture.

Acquiring pictures:

You can acquire your pictures directly from your digital camera or scanner into Irfanview. Click on the "File" menu, then click on "Select Twain Source" to choose your source.

To scan an image into Irfanview click on the "File" menu, then click on "Acquire/Batch Scanning" to start your scan.