

Managing Plugins



Depending upon how new you are to using Paint Shop Pro or any graphics program, you may have heard rumors circulating about filters (also known as plugins). If you are joining your first newsgroup or email distribution list such as YahooGroups, sooner (but not later), you will read about BladePro or Super BladePro, EyeCandy, Sinedots, Filter Factory, Paint Engine, and quite a few more. There are literally thousands of plugins available.

What are filters? Developed by both corporations and individuals, filters are third party plugins that you can install and use in Jasc's PSP, Ulead's PhotoImpact, Corel's PhotoPaint, Adobe's PhotoShop and a host of other applications to enhance the overall power of each program.

What do filters do? A better question is what *won't* a filter do. It won't do your laundry, cook your meals, or do any menial housework. All kidding aside, what filters do:

- Generate interesting patterns and instant backgrounds
- Create unique bevels on frames and text
- Make seamless backgrounds
- Add clouds, smoke, fire, sparkles, page curls
- Build realistic textures such as wood, marble, bricks
- Age, recolor, retouch photos
- Change photos or clipart into paintings, photocopies, sketches
- Spotlights, shadows, and highlights
- Eliminate black or white to create transparency
- If you can imagine it, the right filter(s) can probably do it.

If filters can do all that, why do I need a graphics program? The majority of the filters are not stand-alone applications; hence, you still need a graphics program to use them.

Are they free? Many are, many aren't. Most of the companies that sell filters offer trial versions. In some cases, the trial version is a fully functioning version with an expiration date, but in others, you can only preview what the filter can do. Typically, filter prices start at around \$15 but can cost as great at \$300.00. (United States currency.)

How many filters can I install? As far as I know, there's not a limit. Basically, it depends on how much hard drive space you have and how much money you want to spend. Of course, if you stay up too late one night supporting your addiction, play with a series of different filters and create something really cool, you better take time to write down or type up what you did it or you will drive yourself crazy trying to remember what filter you used.

Before you install filters, here's a few things you need to know

You need an unzipping utility such as WinZip because many of the filters you download will be contained in a zipped file. Click [here](#) to go to the WinZip home page. WinZip and other similar utility downloads can also be found at [Tucows](#) or [ZDNet](#).

Most filters require the use of two dll files: MSVCRT10.DLL and PLUGIN.DLL. Once you obtain either or both of these files, they need to be copied into your \WINDOWS\SYSTEM folder. You can locate this folder through Windows Explorer. Note: Adobe owns the copyright to the plugin.dll file and it can not be freely distributed. However, if you have purchased a scanner in the past couple of years, more than likely it came bundled with Adobe PhotoShop LE or Adobe PhotoDeluxe which both include the PLUGIN.DLL. You can download the MSVCRT10.DLL [here](#).

If you install a new filter while you have PSP open, you will have to close it and then reopen it *before* it will appear effects/ plugin filters menu.

Except for the plugins that came with PhotoShop 6, most filters should work fine in PSP. However, since PSP is a Windows application and not a Mac application if you have a choice of a Windows version or a Mac version of a filter, select the Windows version. If the filter does not specify which platform, you should be able to run it in Windows.

[Part 2: Setting up Plugin Folders for use in PSP](#)

This page is currently located on the web:

http://www.geocities.com/pixel_tickler/managing_plugins.htm

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