

Working with Backgrounds

Adding a New Background

1. To begin working with Backgrounds, click the **Select Background** button located on the *Sidebar*.
2. To add a new background picture to your project click the **New Background** button.

You can also add a new Background to your project by pulling down the **Background** menu and clicking **New Background** with your mouse, or by pressing **[ALT]+[B], [N]** on your keyboard.

3. Choose a picture category from the **Picture Album** by clicking on its tab. To view additional categories, click the tab labeled: **More**.
4. Highlight a picture by clicking on its preview. To see other pictures within the same category click the **Next** button on the bottom right section of the album.

A larger sample can be seen by selecting the **Big Previews** item located just below the picture album. To return to the standard preview mode click the Big Previews item again.

Opening pictures from another location

Besides providing a large collection of pictures from which to choose from PrintMaster Gold allows you to select pictures from another drive or directory.

1. To open a picture from another location pull down the **File** menu and select the **Open From Disk...** item.
2. Choose the picture location by selecting the drive and directory. Select a picture by clicking on its name in the File Name list—a preview of the highlighted picture will appear to the right.
3. Click the **Open** button or press **[ENTER]** to open the selected picture.

Save Copy of File in Document

This function embeds a copy of the picture files used in your project within the document itself so that the original picture file is not required the next time you open your project.

This feature is particularly useful when using pictures that are selected from a floppy disk or CD. When selected PrintMaster Gold will not require you to insert the floppy disk or CD containing the picture(s) used each time you open your project.

Background Options

The Background menu provides a list of key design elements and commands you can select to customize your Background picture. Many of these same design elements and commands can also be accessed by clicking on the corresponding sidebar button or on a pop-up menu which is activated with the click of the right mouse button.

Color

The color of the currently selected picture can be changed by clicking **Color** in the Background sidebar, or press **[ALT]+[B], [C]** to select this option from the Background menu. The Choose a Color dialog will appear.

PrintMaster Gold includes 84 standard colors designed to print well across a variety of printers. The standard colors are assigned a number for quick selection. For example, to move to color 45 (Sea Green), press **[4]** to move to color 40. Then use the k key to move down to color 45. Most of the pictures included with PrintMaster Gold contain many different colors. What happens when you change the “color” of these pictures?

The answer is that PrintMaster will change all the black parts of the picture to the selected color. The other colors in the picture may get lighter, darker, or change hue depending on the original picture color and the color to which the picture is changing. Only pictures which are all black will completely change to the selected color.

Color Tip #1: Selecting the color *black* restores a picture to its original color.

Color Tip #2: To “lighten” a picture without changing its original color, select one of the gray scale percentages (colors 65 to 84). This is a good way to reduce the print density when you use a dot matrix printer. It also allows you to lighten any picture for use as a softer background. A picture with fine lines or details, however, may appear less sharp whenever you change its color or lighten it with a gray shade.

Color Tip #3: Colors may look different on the screen than they do when printed. Create a project using the colors you're interested in, print it out and keep it as a reference chart.

More Colors

The **More Colors** option lets you pick other colors from the Windows Color dialog or define your own custom colors. Select either a predefined color from the **Basic Colors** palette or click **Define Custom Colors...** to create your own variations. Click the **OK** button to save and apply your custom color to your background picture.

The custom color you define here can also be applied to other backgrounds by simply re-selecting **More Colors...** and choosing the color from the Custom Color palette.

Attributes

The **Attributes** editing command is used to change the printing attributes of the currently selected picture. This option is *only* available by going to the Background menu or on the pop up menu which is activated with the right mouse button. This option is *not* available on the Background sidebar. Selecting **Attributes** brings up the Picture Attributes dialog.

The *Render Method* and *Coloring Book* options can be selected in this dialog. Some options may not be available for certain types of pictures in which case they will be “grayed out”. In general, the Render Method option applies to pictures in a bitmapped format such as TIF or PCX. The coloring book option is available for the CGM pictures.

Use **Render Method** to adjust the way PrintMaster combines colored dots to simulate color shading and gray tones in bitmapped graphics. Most bitmapped graphics have more colors or grays than the output device (screen or printer) is capable of showing. PrintMaster Gold uses two methods to approximate those colors as well as possible on an output device.

For example, consider an image with 256 colors on a printer that supports only 16 colors. PrintMaster makes the 256 colors appear by mixing the 16 colors available. The general name for processing an

image for the screen or printer is “rendering.” The specific rendering methods available in PrintMaster Gold are **Ordered Dither** and **Error Diffusion**.

An **Ordered Dither** uses a fixed set of patterns to blend colors. Each color or gray in the image changes to a pattern of colors on the output device. The appearance of the resulting image is very regular.

Error Diffusion on the other hand, is a dynamic process. It creates patterns “on-the-fly”, and the resulting patterns tend to be more dense and unique. Images often look better with Error Diffusion, though the patterns look very unusual when viewed up close. Also, because Error Diffusion patterns are more dense, the image tends to darken due to bleeding of ink or toner when the image is printed. This means that if you use Error Diffusion, you will probably also need to adjust your printer contrast to lighten the image.

Select **Coloring Book** to print only the outline of the selected picture, with the color fills printed as white. The final printout can be colored using crayons or pens.

Mirror Left to Right

Select the **Mirror Left to Right** command to flip the selected picture horizontally.

1. To use this feature, click the **Mirror Left to Right** button on the Background sidebar, or press **[ALT]+[B], [M]** to select this option from the Background menu.

Flip Top to Bottom

Select the **Flip Top to Bottom** command to flip the selected picture vertically.

1. To use this feature, click the **Flip Top to Bottom** button on the Background sidebar, or press **[ALT]+[B], [F]** to select this option from the Background menu.

Remove Background

Select this option to remove the current border or background from the page.

1. To use this feature, click the **Remove** button on the Background sidebar, or press **[ALT]+[B], [R]** to select this option from the Background menu.