

**THE
GRAPHICS COACH**
图 形 学 教 练

Kathy Murray

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内 容 提 要

这本资料丰富的计算机图形学自我培训参考书,从更广泛的角度阐明图形学,如:如何建立图形,了解图形硬件,学会使用图形程序,管理图形文件等等,旨在帮助读者使计算机图象系统发挥最大功效。本书配有一张磁盘,内含三个最新的图形程序,用于 DOS、Windows 和 Macintosh。本书分三部分:第一部分为图形学基础,包括:图形学介绍,如何使用图形,图形程序,图形文件格式;第二部分为图形学难题,包括了解基本硬件、监视器和视频卡、绘画工具、打印机和其它输出选件;第三部分为图形制作,包括图形制作中该做的和不该做的,图形入门,建立和编辑图形,打印图形文件,变换和管理图形文件。

本书适用于计算机专业人员以及所有希望学会用计算机来制作图形者。

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CONTENTS AT A GLANCE

Introduction

Part One: ELEMENTARY GRAPHICS	11
1. <i>Introducing Graphics</i>	13
2. <i>Why Use Graphics?</i>	33
3. <i>Graphics Programs</i>	57
4. <i>Graphics File Formats</i>	101
 Part Two: GRAPHICS NUTS-AND-BOLTS	 127
5. <i>Understanding Basic Hardware</i>	129
6. <i>Understanding Monitors and Video Cards</i>	153
7. <i>Understanding Art Tools</i>	171
8. <i>Understanding Printers and Other Output Options</i>	191
 Part Three: WORKING WITH GRAPHICS	 213
9. <i>Graphic's Do's and Don'ts</i>	215
10. <i>A Graphics Primer</i>	229
11. <i>Creating and Editing Graphics</i>	251
12. <i>Printing Graphics Files</i>	285
13. <i>Converting and Managing Graphics Files</i>	301
 A. <i>Finishing Graphics</i>	 317
B. <i>Installing Programs from the Disk</i>	323
 Glossary	 333
Index	339

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
<i>Welcome to the Personal Trainer Series</i>	3
<i>Why Do You Need a Book on Graphics?</i>	4
<i>Who Should Use This Book?</i>	5
<i>Highlights of The Graphics Coach</i>	6
 Part One: ELEMENTARY GRAPHICS	 11
 1 Introducing Graphics	 13
<i>A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words</i>	14
<i>Graphics Q&A</i>	15
<i>A Quick Graphics Glossary</i>	25
<i>Using The Graphics Coach Bonus Disk</i>	27
<i>Instant Replay</i>	31
 2 Why Use Graphics?	 33
<i>Understanding Graphics</i>	35
<i>When Should You Use Graphics?</i>	37
<i>How Will Graphics Benefit You?</i>	37
<i>Using Graphics To Communicate</i>	39
<i>Using Graphics To Inform</i>	42
<i>Using Graphics To Persuade</i>	44
<i>Using Graphics To Entertain</i>	45
<i>General Graphics Guidelines</i>	47
<i>A Beginner's Guide to Page Design</i>	52
<i>Instant Replay</i>	55
 3 Graphics Programs	 57
<i>Graphics...The Big Picture</i>	58
<i>Introduction to Graphics</i>	58
<i>A Bit map by Any Other Name</i>	60
<i>Object-Oriented by Any Other Name</i>	63

<i>Understanding Paint Programs</i>	64
<i>How Does the Computer See the Image?</i>	66
<i>On-Screen Painting</i>	68
<i>Editing Paintings</i>	70
<i>Using the Eraser Tool</i>	71
<i>Pixel-Level Editing</i>	71
<i>Selection Editing</i>	73
<i>Selecting Graphics</i>	74
<i>Cutting and Copying Graphics</i>	74
<i>Pasting Graphics</i>	75
<i>Saving Paint Program Files</i>	76
<i>Popular Paint Programs</i>	78
<i>ZSoft's PC Paintbrush</i>	79
<i>Fractal Design's Painter</i>	80
<i>MacPaint</i>	80
<i>The Benefits of Paint Programs</i>	81
<i>Understanding Draw Programs</i>	82
<i>How Does the Computer See the Image?</i>	84
<i>Drawing Objects</i>	85
<i>Editing Objects</i>	86
<i>Selecting Objects</i>	87
<i>Changing Object Color</i>	88
<i>Drawing the Object</i>	88
<i>Resizing an Object</i>	89
<i>Working with Text</i>	89
<i>Seeing in Layers</i>	90
<i>Saving Draw Program Files</i>	91
<i>Popular Draw Programs</i>	92
<i>Micrografx Designer</i>	93
<i>Adobe Illustrator</i>	93
<i>CorelDRAW!</i>	94
<i>Aldus Freehand</i>	94
<i>Other Graphics Programs</i>	95
<i>Presentation Graphics</i>	95
<i>Multimedia Programs</i>	97
<i>CAD Programs</i>	97
<i>The Benefits of Draw Programs</i>	97
<i>What Type of Graphics Program Do You Need? (a checklist)</i>	98
<i>Instant Replay</i>	100

4 Graphics File Formats	101
<i>Diversity or Compatibility?</i>	104
<i>An Overview of Popular File Formats</i>	106
<i>Bit map Formats</i>	107
BMP Format	108
DIB Format	108
GIF Format	109
IMG Format	109
JPG Format	109
PCX Format	110
PNT Format	110
Mac Format	111
MSP Format	111
TGA Format	111
TIFF Format	111
WMF Format	112
WPG Format	112
<i>Object-Oriented Formats</i>	113
CDR Format	114
CGM Format	114
DRW Format	115
DXF Format	115
Encapsulated PostScript	115
GEM Format	116
HPGL Format	116
PIC Format	117
PICT Format	117
<i>Understanding Conversion Utilities</i>	118
Paint Shop Pro for Windows	120
Opening a File	121
Graphic Workshop	122
GIFConverter	124
<i>Instant Replay</i>	125

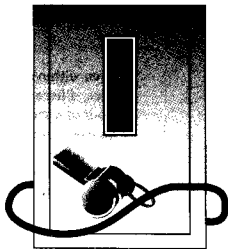
Part Two: GRAPHICS NUTS-AND-BOLTS	127
5 Understanding Basic Hardware	129
<i>A Close Look at the System Unit</i>	130
<i>The Microprocessor</i>	131
<i>How Does the Microprocessor Affect Your Graphics?</i>	134
<i>Upgrading Your System</i>	135
<i>Available RAM</i>	136
<i>What Is RAM?</i>	136
<i>How Is RAM Measured?</i>	137
<i>What Types of RAM Memory Are Used?</i>	138
<i>How Much RAM Is Enough?</i>	139
<i>Room for Expansion</i>	141
<i>Storage Considerations</i>	143
<i>What Is a Hard Disk?</i>	144
<i>What Are Floppy Disks?</i>	147
<i>A System Checklist</i>	150
<i>Instant Replay</i>	152
6 Understanding Monitors and Video Cards	153
<i>Exploring Your Video System</i>	154
<i>Display Basics</i>	154
<i>The Display Adapter</i>	155
<i>What does the monitor do?</i>	157
<i>Important Video Considerations</i>	158
<i>Resolution</i>	158
<i>Monitor Size</i>	160
<i>Refresh Rate</i>	162
<i>Interlacing</i>	163
<i>Color Capabilities</i>	164
<i>A Video Checklist</i>	166
<i>Instant Replay</i>	169
7 Understanding Art Tools	171
<i>Working with the Mouse</i>	172
<i>What Does a Mouse Do?</i>	174
<i>Members of the Mouse Family</i>	176
<i>How Will You Use the Mouse?</i>	177

<i>Using a Graphics Tablet</i>	179
<i>How Does a Graphics Tablet Work?</i>	180
<i>Available Graphics Tablets</i>	181
<i>How Does the Puck Work?</i>	181
<i>Using a Scanner</i>	182
<i>How Does a Scanner Work?</i>	182
<i>What Types of Scanners Are Available?</i>	183
<i>What Can You Do with a Scanner?</i>	185
<i>Choosing Your Tools: A Checklist</i>	187
<i>Instant Replay</i>	190
8 Understanding Printers and Other Output Options	191
<i>Printer Preliminaries</i>	192
<i>Understanding Printer Types and Capabilities</i>	192
<i>Dot-Matrix Printers</i>	193
<i>Ink-Jet Printers</i>	197
<i>Thermal Transfer Printers</i>	198
<i>Laser Printers</i>	199
<i>How Do Laser Printers Work?</i>	202
<i>Understanding Color Choices</i>	204
<i>Laser Printer Considerations</i>	205
<i>Other Output Options</i>	206
<i>What Type of Output Do You Need? A Checklist</i>	207
<i>Instant Replay</i>	210
Part Three: WORKING WITH GRAPHICS	213
9 Graphics Do's and Don'ts	215
<i>A Graphics Rulebook</i>	216
<i>Graphics Guidelines</i>	220
<i>Think About Your Audience</i>	221
<i>Plan the Tone</i>	222
<i>Work Within Space Requirements</i>	223
<i>Use Your Resources</i>	224
<i>What Makes Fine Art Fine?</i>	225
<i>Instant Replay</i>	227

10 A Graphics Primer	229
<i>An Introduction to Graphics Tools</i>	230
<i>Painting Tools</i>	230
<i>The Toolkit</i>	232
<i>The Line Width Settings</i>	236
<i>The Color Palette</i>	237
<i>Specialized Paint Features</i>	238
<i>Drawing Tools</i>	242
<i>The Toolkit</i>	242
<i>Choosing Line Options</i>	244
<i>Choosing Colors</i>	245
<i>Specialized Drawing Tools</i>	247
<i>Instant Replay</i>	250
11 Creating and Editing Graphics	251
<i>Creating Graphics</i>	252
<i>Using a Paint Program</i>	252
<i>Using a Draw Program</i>	257
<i>Editing Graphics</i>	260
<i>Understanding Editing Differences</i>	260
<i>Editing Paint Objects</i>	261
<i>Editing with Paint Shop Pro</i>	266
<i>Starting Paint Shop Pro</i>	266
<i>Loading an Image</i>	267
<i>Exploring the Editing Options</i>	269
<i>Saving Your Changes</i>	270
<i>Exiting Paint Shop Pro</i>	271
<i>Editing with Graphic Workshop</i>	271
<i>Starting Graphic Workshop</i>	273
<i>Loading an Image</i>	273
<i>Investigating Editing Possibilities</i>	274
<i>Editing with GIFConverter</i>	276
<i>Starting GIFConverter</i>	277
<i>Loading an Image</i>	277
<i>Exploring Editing Features</i>	277
<i>Saving the Image</i>	278
<i>Exiting GIFConverter</i>	278
<i>Editing Draw Objects</i>	279
<i>Instant Replay</i>	284

12 Printing Graphics Files	285
<i>Setting Up Your Printer</i>	286
<i>Starting the Print Routine</i>	289
<i>Specifying Print Options</i>	290
<i>Choosing Print Quality</i>	291
<i>Choosing Number of Copies</i>	292
<i>Choosing Print Ranges</i>	293
<i>Scaling Options</i>	293
<i>Choosing Paper Source</i>	294
<i>Choosing Orientation</i>	295
<i>Choosing Printer or File</i>	297
<i>Printing with Paint Shop Pro for Windows</i>	297
<i>Printing with Graphic Workshop</i>	298
<i>Printing with GIFConverter</i>	298
<i>Instant Replay</i>	300
13 Converting and Managing Graphics Files	301
<i>Understanding File Conversion</i>	302
<i>Types of File Conversions</i>	303
<i>A Review of File Types</i>	305
<i>Converting Files</i>	307
<i>Using Paint Shop Pro for Windows</i>	308
<i>Using Graphic Workshop</i>	309
<i>Using GIFConverter</i>	312
<i>Registering Your Shareware</i>	314
<i>Managing Graphics Files</i>	315
<i>Instant Replay</i>	315
A Finishing Graphics	317
<i>Overall Suggestions</i>	318
<i>Publications</i>	318
<i>Preparing a File for Transmission</i>	320
<i>Considerations for Professional Printing</i>	321

B Installing Programs from the Disk	323
<i>Making a Backup Copy of</i> <i>The Graphics Coach Bonus Disk</i>	324
<i>Installing the Programs</i>	325
<i>Installing Paint Shop Pro</i>	325
<i>Creating the Paint Shop Pro Program Group</i>	327
<i>Creating the Paint Shop Pro Program Item</i>	328
<i>Installing Graphics Workshop</i>	330
<i>Unzipping Files</i>	331
<i>Installing GIFConverter</i>	331
<i>Registering Your Shareware</i>	331
Glossary	333
Index	339



INTRODUCTION

You've probably noticed—everything is graphics these days. Road signs let us know where to walk (or where not to walk) by showing us, not telling us. We understand from roadside pictures where people cross, where deer cross, and where parking is not allowed. Almost without knowing it, we've learned another language—this one universal—that relies on common symbols to communicate thoughts and ideas beyond the limited vocabularies of our respective native tongues.

Why pictures? Surely with the information overload in our country and our world, the average person is beyond the level of picture-book communication. But here's the catch: You may be a first-class world genius in Brazil, but if you don't understand the language when you're visiting Italy, finding your way around is going to be difficult. That picture on the door of the public restroom is a great thing to see.

Graphics. The universal language.

Even within our own language boundaries, within our own industries, different words mean different things. When you're up in front of a group of people discussing sales projections for the next quarter, you run a chance of being misunderstood. Perhaps everyone in the room is not as financially savvy as you are. Or, perhaps you were trained in a different environment and are accustomed to using words that make everyone else go "huh?"

Graphics can break that language barrier for you. Show your audience the data trends, illustrate your argument, graph the sales results in different regions. Pictures can state your message clearly, when words just get in the way.

Computers have, in large part, been responsible for the wildfire-like spread of graphics. Mega-popular programs, like Microsoft Windows, provide us with a graphical way of interacting with our computers. Gone are the unfriendly command lines. We no longer have to spend days memorizing DOS commands. With a simple click of the mouse on a small on-screen picture, we can carry out complex and powerful operations.

Artists have been able to trade their airbrushes and sketchboards for graphics tablets and palettes with millions of colors—no mixing required. And no longer is the artwork vulnerable to studio elements, like dust, coffee, or stray toddlers; it's saved on disk, ready to be reopened, revised, and reused at a moment's notice.

Computers have also made it possible for those of us who are not artists to create artwork of our own. We can illustrate magazines and newsletters, create company logos, display graphs for board meetings, and even design elaborate on-screen animation.

But the advantage of having and using graphics in your work brings with it a downside: Where do you start? How do you learn to create the graphics? Of the different kinds of programs out there, how do you decide which one you need?



In *The Graphics Coach*, you'll learn all the basics about creating and working with graphics. What types of graphics is your system equipped to create? What kinds of graphics programs are out there? How can you make sure that the graphics you create in one program will be supported in another? *The Graphics Coach* provides you with basic hardware information about your monitor, video card, and input devices—such as the mouse, graphics tablet, scanner, or light pen—and explores the kinds of equipment on which you may be printing or plotting your work. In addition, *The Graphics Coach* is accompanied by a disk containing three sleek graphics programs—for DOS PCs, Windows PCs, and Macintoshes—that you can use throughout the book to view, edit, print, and convert graphics files.

WELCOME TO THE PERSONAL TRAINER SERIES

This book represents one subject in the new Personal Trainer Series, a common-sense, no-frills approach to shortening the learning curve involved in using today's technology. In *The Graphics Coach*, for example, you'll find a wide range of usable information relating specifically to graphics—how to create graphics, understanding graphics hardware, finding a graphics program, managing graphics files—the list goes on and on. We won't tell you who created the first graphic ever or make you wade through pages of unnecessary descriptions about examples you'll never use; we give you just what you need to know in order to begin using graphics productively in your work.

Think of *The Graphics Coach* as your personal trainer, ready to help you understand hardware and software considerations, answer your questions (see Chapter 1), and lead you through concise, to-the-point examples. You'll find simple, understandable phrasing and clear illustrations to accompany you along the way.



Additionally, each book in the Personal Trainer Series comes equipped with a special disk, provided to help you get a head start on learning the subject area you've chosen. For example, the disk in *The Graphics Coach* provides you with three different graphics programs, which enable you to work with the examples in this book and build your own graphics repertoire.

WHY DO YOU NEED A DOCK ON GRAPHICS?

Graphics is another computing area in which the technology changes faster than we can learn it. The minute we begin to feel comfortable with what we've learned, new features—and improved hardware—bring us additional avenues to explore and conquer.

For users new to the graphics area, mastering the learning curve may seem impossible. Buzzwords fly around the graphics field like lightning bugs in May: Paint, draw, raster, vector, RIP, object-oriented, bit-mapped...the terms all seem vague and provide us with no real clue as to their use or meaning. Why call them draw and paint programs when you can paint in a draw program and draw in a paint program? And what's all the fuss about video cards and file conversions?

Most computer users today have an extremely limited amount of time in which to learn new programs. Why bother learning something new if using it will take more time than the something you're using now? *The Graphics Coach* makes deciphering and understanding graphics possible in a short amount of time by giving you simple explanations and examples that reinforce the concepts you're learning. You won't find a million and one tips for using your particular software program in *The Graphics Coach*—just simple, concise text that helps you learn and use graphics in as short an amount of time as possible.



Most books you'll find on graphics speak to one of two groups of users: people who've purchased a particular program and want to learn how to use it (like PC Paintbrush or SuperPaint), and people who write programs that make use of graphics files. Both of these audiences are important and need books to help them in the mastery of their computing goals.

But *The Graphics Coach* is different.

This book explains the hows and whys of graphics from a more general perspective—not related to a specific program or programming language. From a broadbrush perspective, how can you get started with graphics? What can you do with a stylus? Is it possible that you—the same person who used to cut art class—are now the electronic artist who illustrates articles for the company newsletter?

The Graphics Coach won't teach you everything there is to know about graphics. When you close the back cover of this book, however, you'll have a much better understanding of how you can use graphics in your own applications than you had when you opened the front cover.

WHO SHOULD USE THIS BOOK?

Put simply, *The Graphics Coach* is for anyone who has flirted with the idea of creating home-grown graphics but who has not known where to start. Perhaps, even, you've started creating a few art pieces of your own and want further direction on fine-tuning your computer system and display. Specifically, *The Graphics Coach* includes something for you if you are:

- ★ New to computer graphics but not necessarily new to computers (you may, like many of us, have mastered the basic tasks of several software programs but not previously learned graphics software)



- ★ Responsible for learning a new program in a limited amount of time
- ★ Interested in the possibility of creating your own graphics but overwhelmed by the number of programs and options available
- ★ Confused about hardware issues such as monitors and video cards
- ★ Hesitant to invest in a graphics program until you are certain that the new program's files will be compatible with files you already have
- ★ Uncertain about the best kind of graphics software to use on your particular computer system

In addition to providing the answers to these issues, *The Graphics Coach* provides an accompanying disk that gives you even more value. Now, with the valuable graphics programs on the disk and the accompanying file conversion utilities, you truly have nothing to lose as you begin your graphics exploration. You can be assured that the artwork you create will be usable in other programs.

HIGHLIGHTS OF *The Graphics Coach*

The Graphics Coach is divided into three parts. Part One, Elementary Graphics, explains the basics of working with graphics from a general perspective: What are graphics? Why might you want to use graphics in your publications or in your work? What types of graphics programs are available? What are the differences among the different types of graphics files?

Chapter 1, "Introducing Graphics," takes you through a brief question-and-answer session to find out more about your graphics undertaking. Although the answers to common graphics questions

