

ETAD 803 - Assignment 3 - Manipulating Digital Images

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Design Process

For the main task of Assignment 3, I choose to create a set of instruction for launching, setting up and running a local server for MinecraftEdu. This is a piece of software that my school purchased last year and has seen frequent use by only a very small group of teachers. As one of the main users, I hope to create a set of instructions that will guide the first time user through the steps required to create a server for students to join and work within.

My instructions ended up requiring a large number of screen captures, which all required cropping and had simple icons added to them to guide the learner.

For the final creation and presentation of the instruction set, I chose to use Instructables, a website that allows users to document and share the processes required to create any object, food dish or piece of art. It is a great source of information for the budding DIY'er and it's a tool that I've wanted to try out for some time. This tool allows me to easily share my instructions via direct web link or through the sharing of a pdf document, although that feature is not as 'slick' as the website. The web version also includes a mobile friendly presentation, which is important in my school full of iPads and other portable technology.

Summary of Edits and Manipulation

This summary will be fairly short as there are two main 'bundles' of photos that were edited in the same manner. Each bundle will get its own explanation but, for the sake of brevity, each individual photo will not be discussed as that could get repetitive really quickly.

Photo Bundle 1 - Step 1 (3 Images)

These three photos were taken with a digital camera to capture and highlight the suggested hardware setup for using MinecraftEdu and the related Servertool. Each photo was cropped to focus attention on the subject as opposed to the surroundings. The lighting levels and contrast were adjusted on each in order to improve general quality and two of the three had the tilt adjusted to straighten the final product. Of course, this summary does not discuss the several attempts it took to capture each shot as I struggled to place the laptop in effective lighting that did not produce much glare on the screen. Each image was also further compressed into a smaller file size by adjusting quality levels during the saving process in order to ensure the fastest loading time possible.

Photo Bundle 2 - Steps 2 - 17 (30 images)

The images in this bundle are all screenshots taken using the Command+Shift+4 command on an Apple Macbook Pro. Due to this, there was little need for colour correction and no adjustments were made in this area (to both save time and ensure accurate representation of the tool). Due to imprecise capture of the images, each photo did require cropping in order to remove any unnecessary and distracting background colours or images. Each photo also received colour-coded guiding icons that were inserted as individual layers to ensure control over size, colour and placement. Step 16 also involved cloning a portion of the original image and the enlargement of this cloned section in order to highlight a small portion of the screenshot. As the work progressed, each photo was saved in a more web-friendly format, being changed from a JPG to a GIF to reduce file size. The specific compression and colour settings were tweaked for each photo, before saving, to ensure minimal file size while minimizing impact on overall quality.