



Corporate Flow



Illustration



Image Editing



Automation



Web



Text Effects

# Canvas Tips and Techniques



**Creative Department**

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## Creating Animated GIFs

In this exercise, you will learn how to easily create animated GIFs using Canvas' Disperse command and onion skinning.

### Step 1

#### New Document

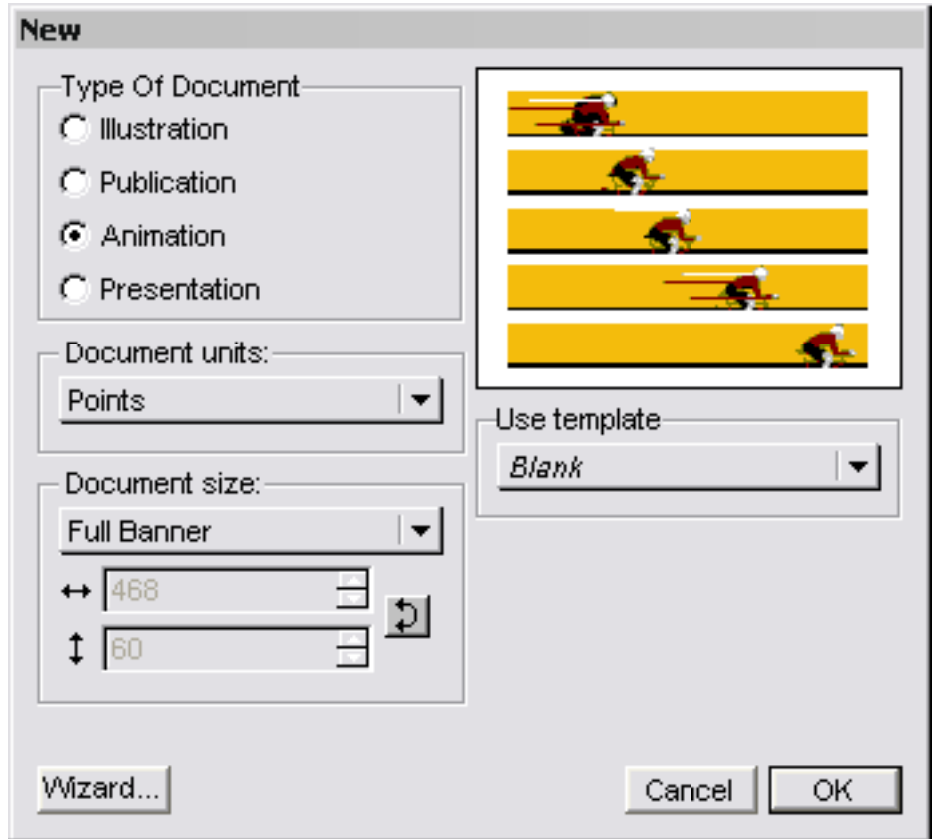
The Canvas the Animation document type is specifically designed to create animated GIFs.

When working on animations, use points as your document units.

Open the Document size menu to see that there are even preset banner sizes available when you create a new animation document.

Let's go ahead and choose Full Banner as the document size. This creates a 468 X 60 work area, which is standard banner size.

Now, we will walk you through a simple example of some of the animation features in Canvas.



### Step 2

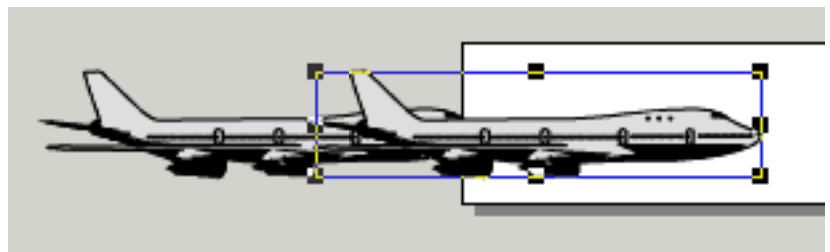
#### Using the Disperse Feature

The disperse command is a feature that could have many uses for creating animations. Here is a simple example that demonstrates how it works.

In this example we will first take this airplane graphic and make a duplicate of it by selecting it and then pressing Ctrl + D (Windows) or Command + D (Mac). By positioning the duplicate and then using the duplicate shortcut keys over and over, we can quickly create a number of airplanes going across the banner.

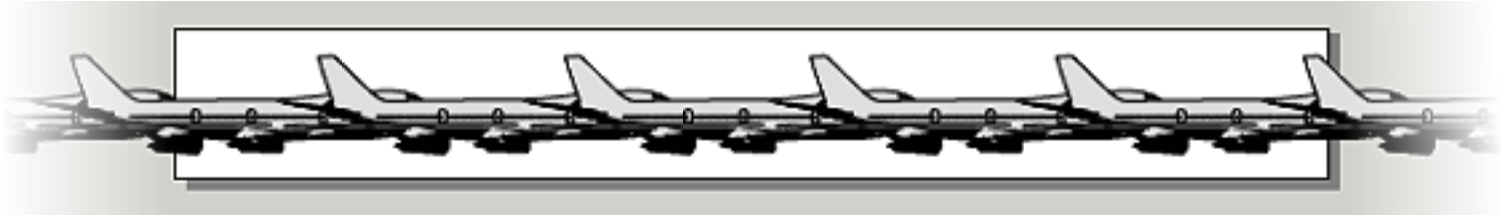


Original airplane graphic



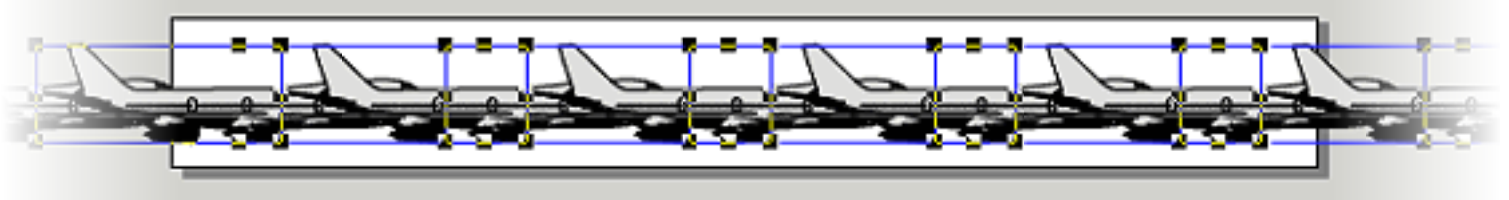
Duplicate and position airplane graphic

## Creating Animated GIFs (Continued)

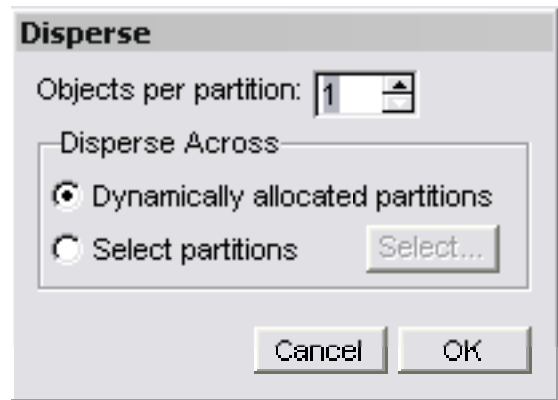


Continue to duplicate the airplane across the work area

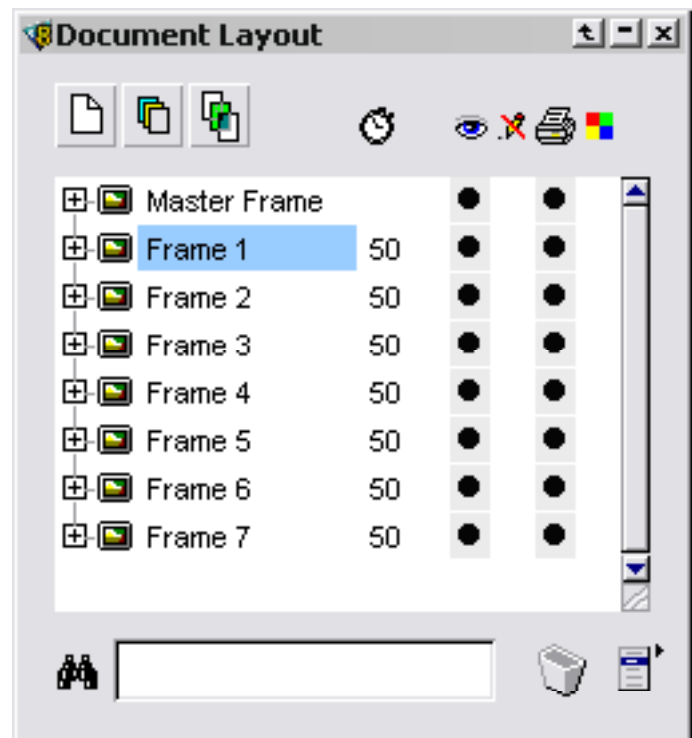
Next, we will select all the duplicated airplanes, except for the first one.



With the airplanes selected, choose Object > Arrange > Disperse. This will bring up the Disperse dialog box. Choose your settings and press OK. With this option, Canvas will automatically generate additional frames and place one airplane on each frame.



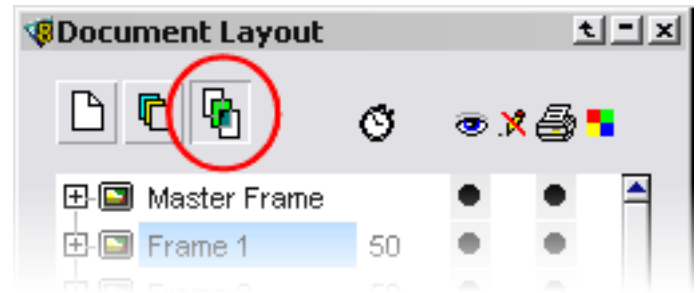
Opening the Document Layout palette (Layout > Document Layout) will reveal that Canvas has created additional frames with successive copies of the airplane graphic traveling across the banner.



## Step 3

### Onion Skinning

Now, let's look at onion skinning. The controls for which are located in the Document Layout palette. This feature allows you to see across frames, thus making it easier to align objects or compare frames so an animation has the proper effect.



We will turn on the onion skinning feature to show the next and previous frames. Now, as we flip through the frames, we could see the airplane on the next and previous frames of our animation. For preference, use this to fine tune the motion of the plane across the banner.



## Step 4

### Motion Blur

Another trick that could help make movement like this look a little better is to use a SpriteEffects motion blur on some of the frames. To make the airplane look like it is accelerating, add more motion blur to each successive frame. To make the airplane look like it is decelerating, do the opposite.

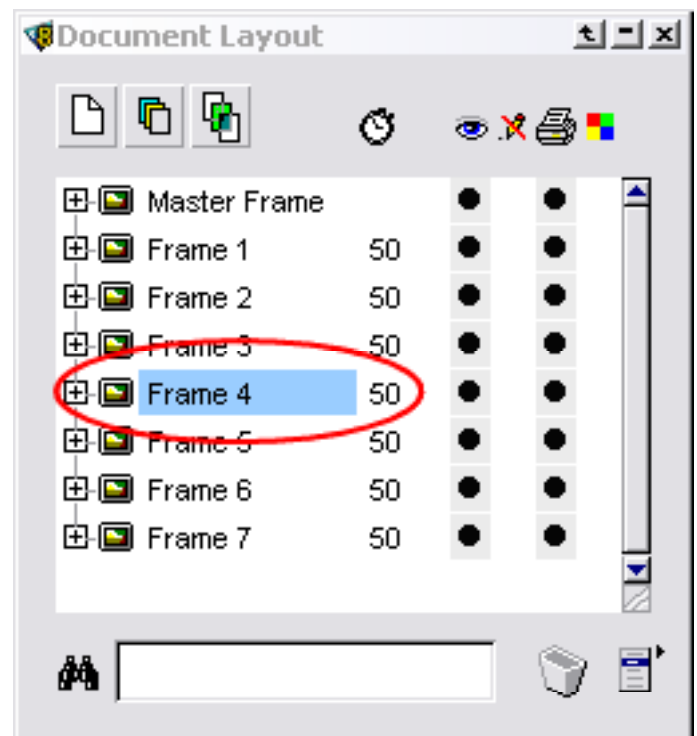


**Note:** This only works well if the frame delay is pretty short.

## Step 5

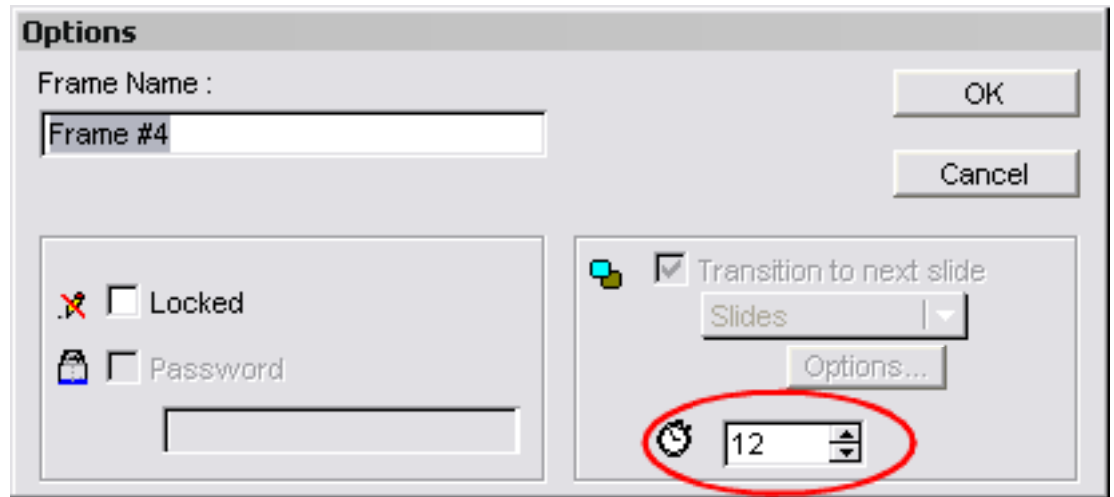
### Frame Delay

To set the frame delay, double-click the frame name in the Document Layout palette.

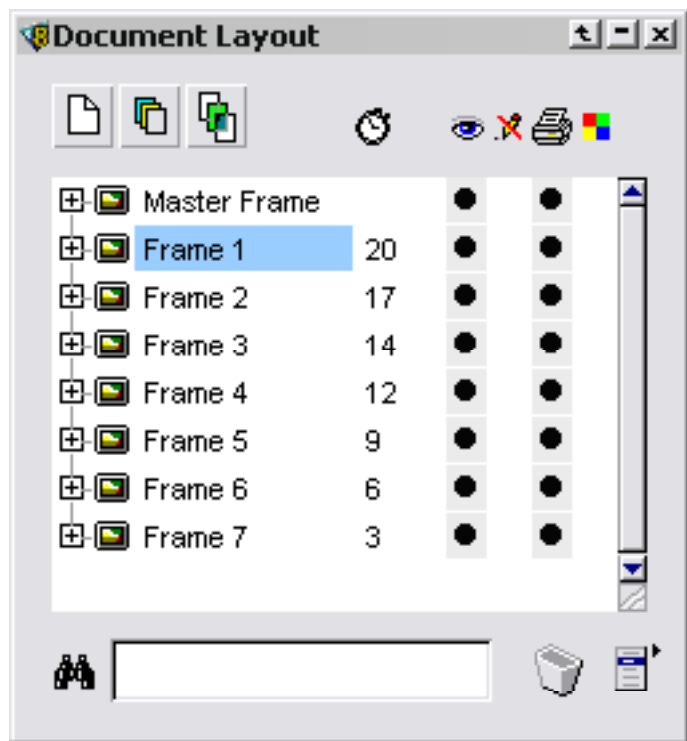


## Creating Animated GIFs (Continued)

This will bring up the Options dialog box. Type the time delay and press OK. Remember that it is in hundredths of a second.



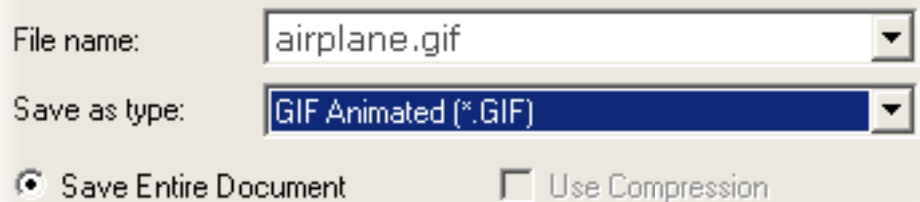
Now that we have adjusted the time delay, we are ready to save the animation and look at the Animated GIF Options.



## Step 6

### Saving your Animation

The final step is to save the frames you just created as an animated GIF. To do this, choose File > Save. Give your file a name. In this example, we will name it airplane. For the file format, select GIF Animated from the drop-down menu. When you are done, press Save.



## Creating Animated GIFs (Continued)

After pressing Save, you will be presented with a Animated GIF Options dialog box. This will allow you to fine tune your animated GIF.

**Transparent Background** - Makes the background transparent.

**Auto Crop** - Optimizes the size of each frame.

**Interlaced** - Causes the image to load into a browser a little bit at a time giving the viewer the impression that the image is loading faster.

**Antialiasing** - Objects will be rendered with an overall softened effect.

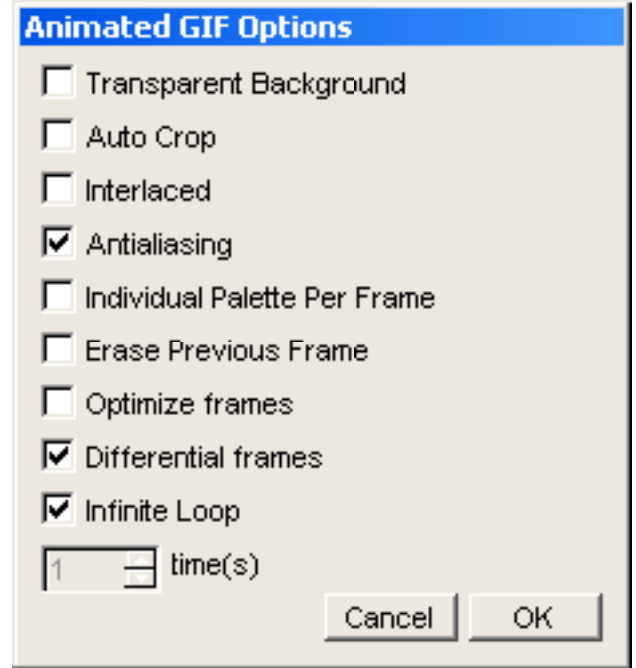
**Individual Palette Per Frame** - If selected, each GIF frame will contain its own palette. This will create larger file sizes. It is recommended only for complex or colorful animations.

**Erase Previous Frame** - Each frame will be erased, and the area will be restored to the background before the next frame is displayed during playback.

**Optimize Frames** - Maximizes the size of frames. This option is recommended for complex or colorful animations.

**Differential Frames** - Searches for the smallest rectangular area possible in the set that contains all of the changes from a previous frame in an effort to minimize the file size.

**Infinite Loop** - Causes the animation to replay itself over and over.



Below is the completed airplane animation. Remember to view the animated GIFs in action, you must use a graphical Web browser such as Internet Explorer or Netscape.

