



Corporate Flow



Illustration



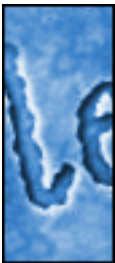
Image Editing



Automation



Web



Text Effects

Canvas Tips and Techniques



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Creative Department**

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Creating Mac Presentation Graphics

What kind of presentation do you create? Did your audience leave the room informed and motivated? Or were they asleep before you moved on to the next slide? How do you avoid inflicting a dull and boring presentation upon your next audience?

Well, you're in luck. Our Canvas design crew have been hard at work and have created this dynamite tutorial. Follow along and learn how to become a presentation-guru by using Canvas to create some exciting graphics for your next sales, marketing, or peer group presentation.

In this tutorial we are going to take a look at the two dominant presentation programs for Mac OS — Keynote and PowerPoint — and how they work with Canvas.

Although these software packages contain a lot of handy features, they lack many vector and image creation capabilities, therefore creating a need for a graphic/illustration program. Scientists, engineers, and other technically-oriented professionals often call upon Canvas and its host of vector, image editing, and text features to create the exciting visual components for their presentation projects.

As some of you may already know, presentations are hot! It's no surprise given the proliferation of Microsoft Office in the workplace and the need for high impact presentations. But with so many graphic designers, students, and engineers rushing to import their illustrations and images into presentations several questions come up: What resolution should be used? Which file format is best? How do I keep the file size down? etc. Follow along as we answer these questions and more.

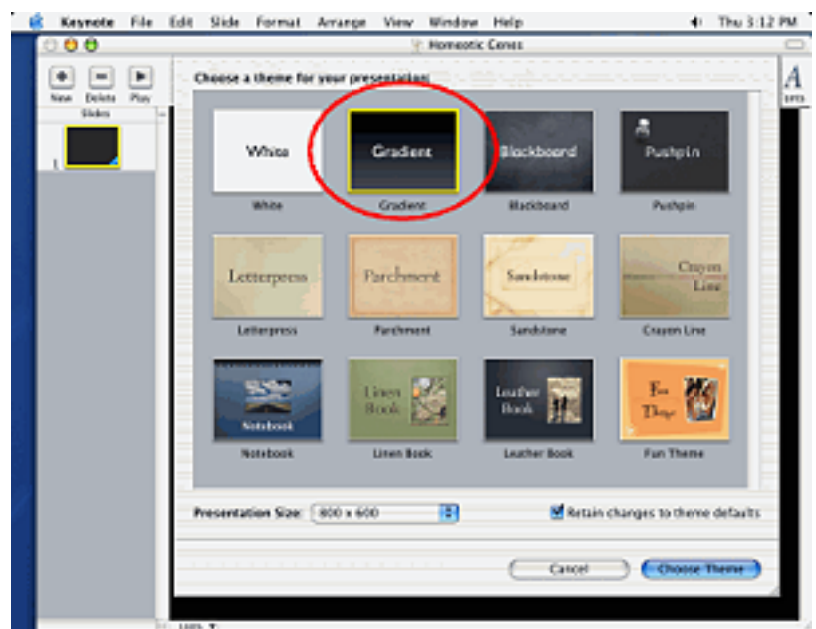
In the following tutorial, we will set up a commonly used presentation background, in both Keynote and PowerPoint, and discuss some of the best methods for exporting your graphics while keeping the file size down.

First, we will look at Keynote. Keynote was developed by Apple. It is touted as the "new generation of presentation software" and is gaining many loyal users due to its ease of use.

Creating a Keynote Document

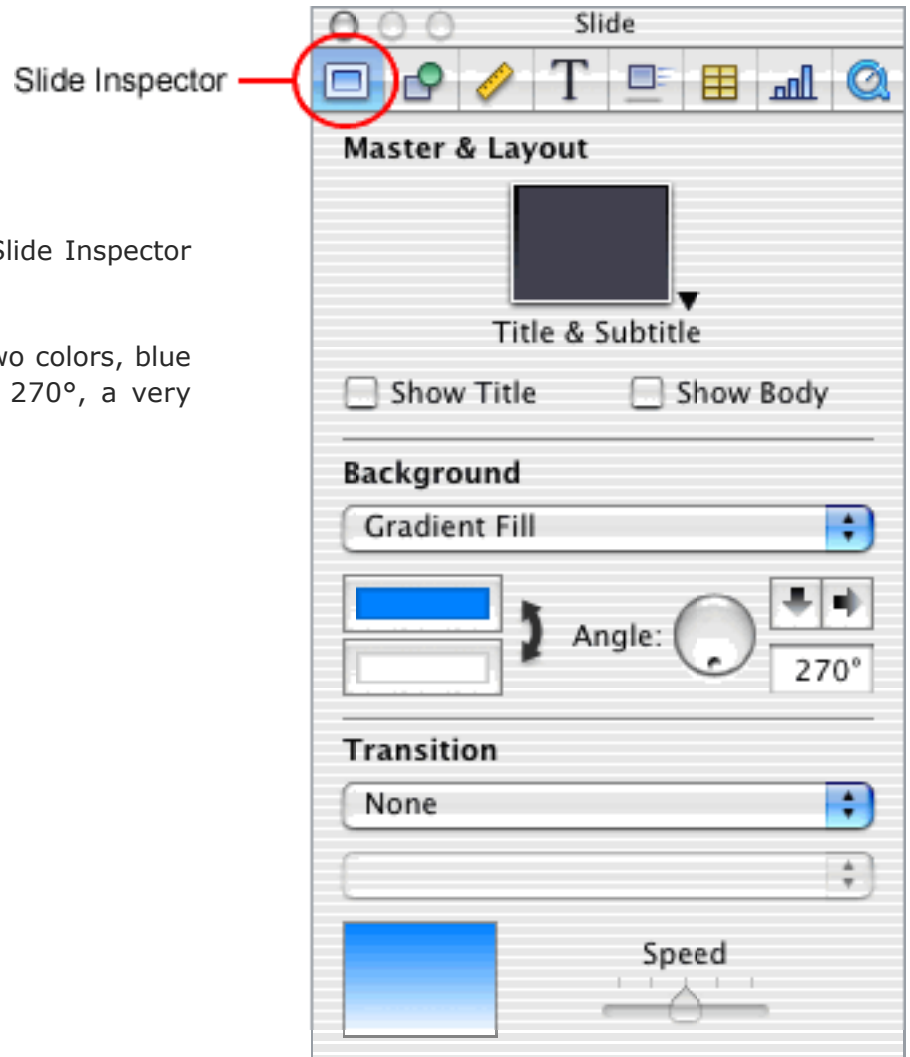
We start this tutorial by creating a new Keynote document and changing the background color to a gradient fading from one color to another. This is a very common presentation effect.

To do this, open Keynote and create a new document. Choose Gradient from your list of themes, select a presentation size (800 x 600) and click Choose Theme.



Mac Presentations (Continued)

After the page appears we are going to change the background gradient colors. To do this, click on the Inspector in Keynote's menu bar.



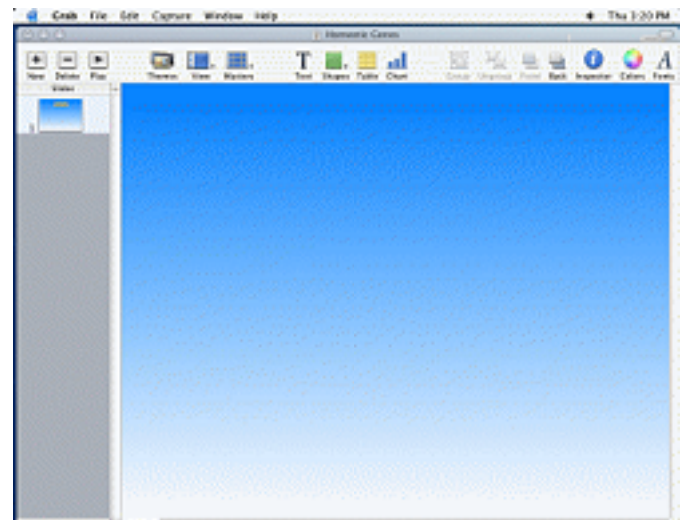
When the Inspector appears, click on the Slide Inspector button to view the slide options.

From this palette we are going to choose two colors, blue and white, and set the Gradient Angle to 270°, a very common presentation style.

This is what our presentation looks like up to this point. Now we are ready to add some Canvas graphics.



Note: We have removed the text boxes in Keynote to keep it simple.

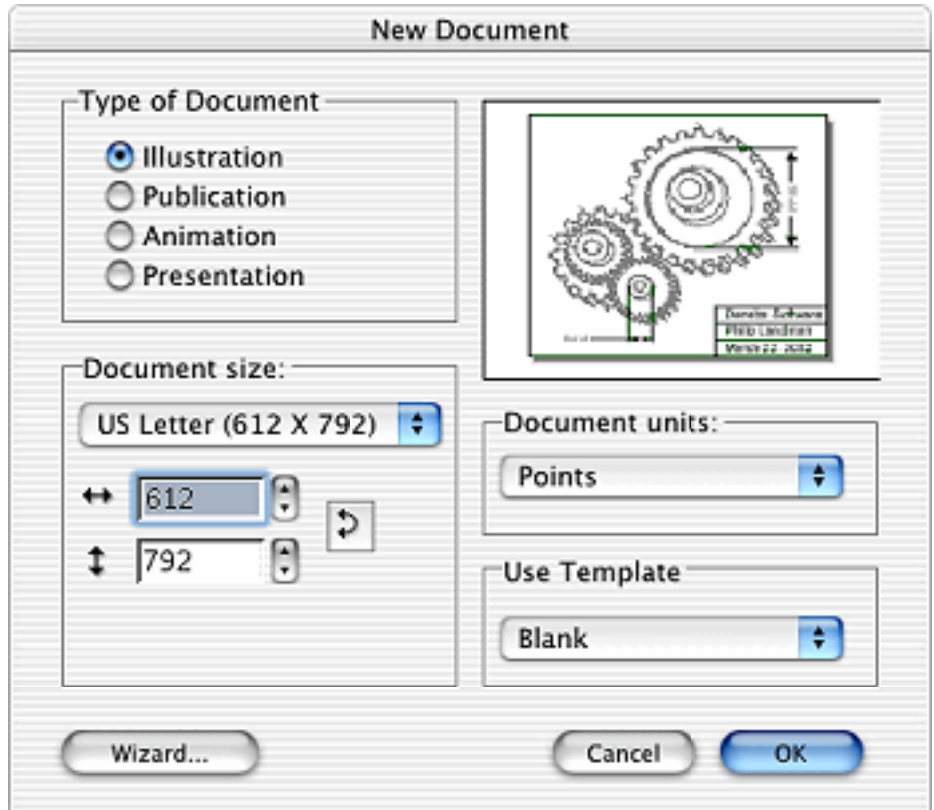


Preparing the Document

Now we switch our attention to Canvas. Begin by opening a new Canvas Illustration file. Choose File > New.

When the New Document dialog box appears, choose Illustration as Type of Document. Note that from within this dialog box, you also have the option to select a different document size.

After you have made your selections, click OK.



Vectors or Bitmap?

Graphic illustrations are used in presentations to help convey an idea or express a mood. Many times graphs are used to put numbers and statistics into perspective and provide a visual representation instead of just displaying numbers to the viewer.

Keynote allows us to use two kinds of illustration graphics, vector and bitmap. You may wonder which one of these is a better format when exporting to Keynote. The truth is that there are different situations that call for different methods, but here are some things to look out for.

Vectors are objects that are defined by anchor points and paths, while bitmapped graphics are digital images composed of pixels. In an ideal world, we would export all Canvas illustrations as vector objects, but the reality is that due to limitations, many of Canvas effects, such as transparencies and SpriteEffects cannot be imported into Keynote unrendered (as vectors). The advantage of using vector graphics is that they are size independent, meaning that they could be resized with no loss in quality. Bitmapped graphics, on the other hand, provide a richer depth of color but are size dependent and appear at the stated 72 dpi size.

Exporting Vector Graphics

To export simple vector objects such as the text box on the right, it is best to keep them as vectors and import them into Keynote as such.

This is easily done by first selecting both the vector objects, the box and the text. Then, choose to Edit > Copy to copy the object to the clipboard.



Mac Presentations (Continued)

Now all we need to do is go back to Keynote and paste the object by pressing Command + V.

The advantage of using vectors in Keynote is that they could be easily resized by simply dragging the handles (seen in Keynote as white squares).

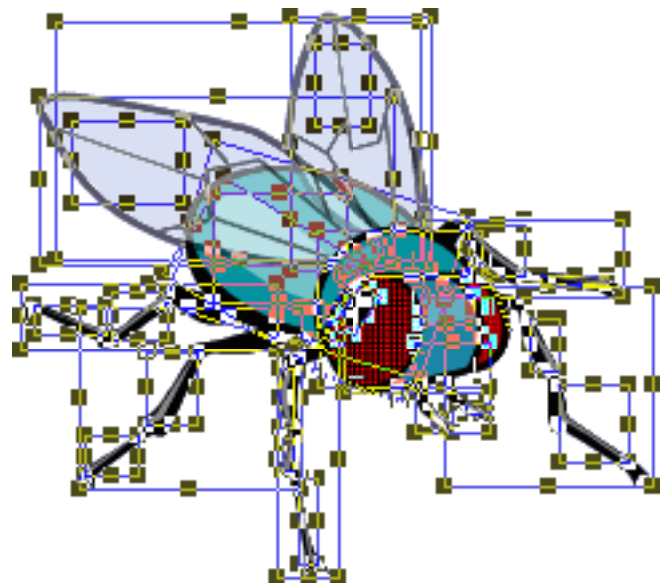
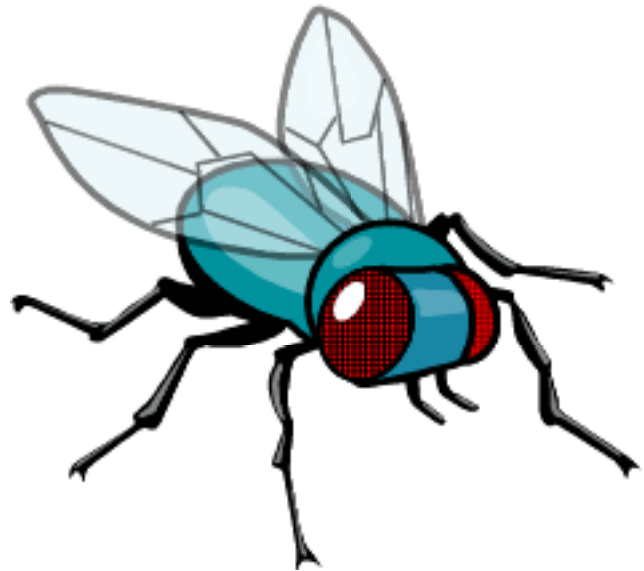
Remember that for vectors to export properly into Keynote they must not have any transparencies, filters, or SpriteEffects applied to them. The vector export option is best used for simple graphics such as page headers, text, and graphs.

Bitmapped Graphics

Next, we are going to work with rendered (bitmapped) graphics. We will take it a step further and add a transparent bitmapped graphic into Keynote. On the right is the illustration we want to add to our presentation.

This illustration was drawn in Canvas and is completely composed of vector objects with several transparency effects. As explained earlier, drawings with effects such as these will not export into Keynote properly as vector objects. For cases such as these, bitmapped graphics are a better way to go.

To export this fly illustration the first thing we need to do is select all of its parts. We do this by dragging the Selection tool across the entire illustration. The selected illustration will look like our example.



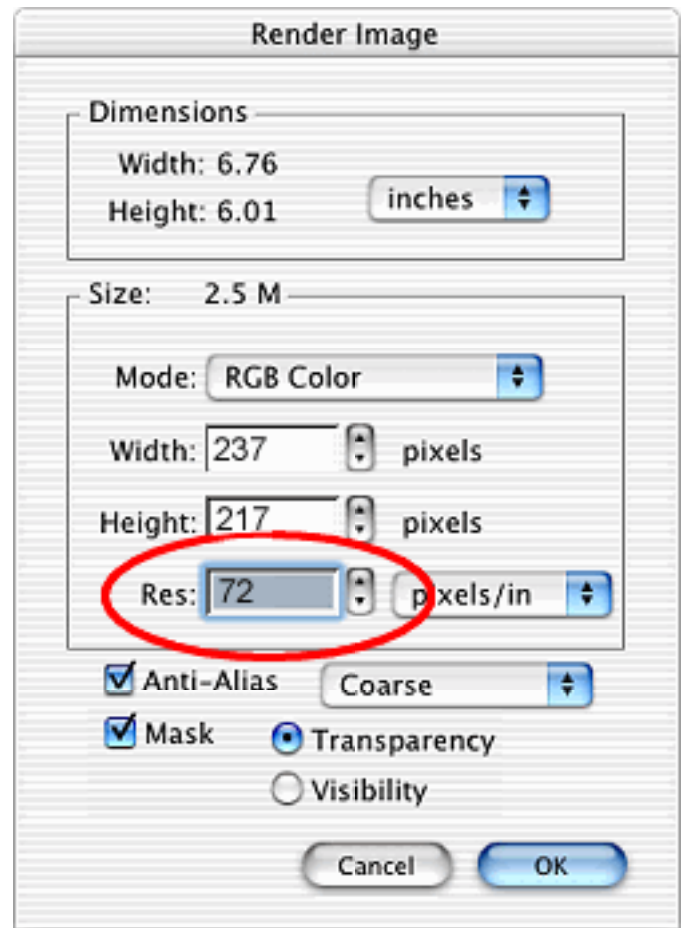
Mac Presentations (Continued)

With all of the illustration's objects selected, choose Image > Area > Render.

When the Render Image dialog box opens, select Anti-Alias and choose Coarse from the drop-down menu. This option will give your illustration a smooth appearance.

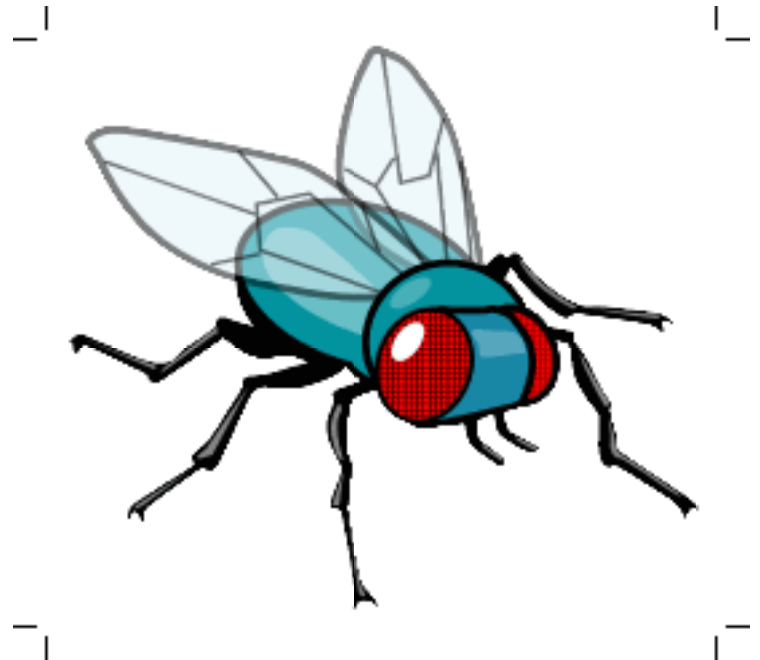
Next, we focus on the resolution. In Keynote, the resolution is based on 72 dpi, so your image will appear at exactly the same size in Keynote as it appears in Canvas with the work area set to 100%. Even though you are permitted to resize images in Keynote, it is not recommended.

Before you click OK, make sure you have also selected the Mask checkbox and Transparency radio button.



Now you have a rendered image of a fly with a transparent background. In this next step, we are going to add an alpha channel that will contain the transparency information.


To do this, first, we double-click on the fly illustration to get it into image edit mode. You can tell it is in edit mode when the crop marks appear at the corners of the image.

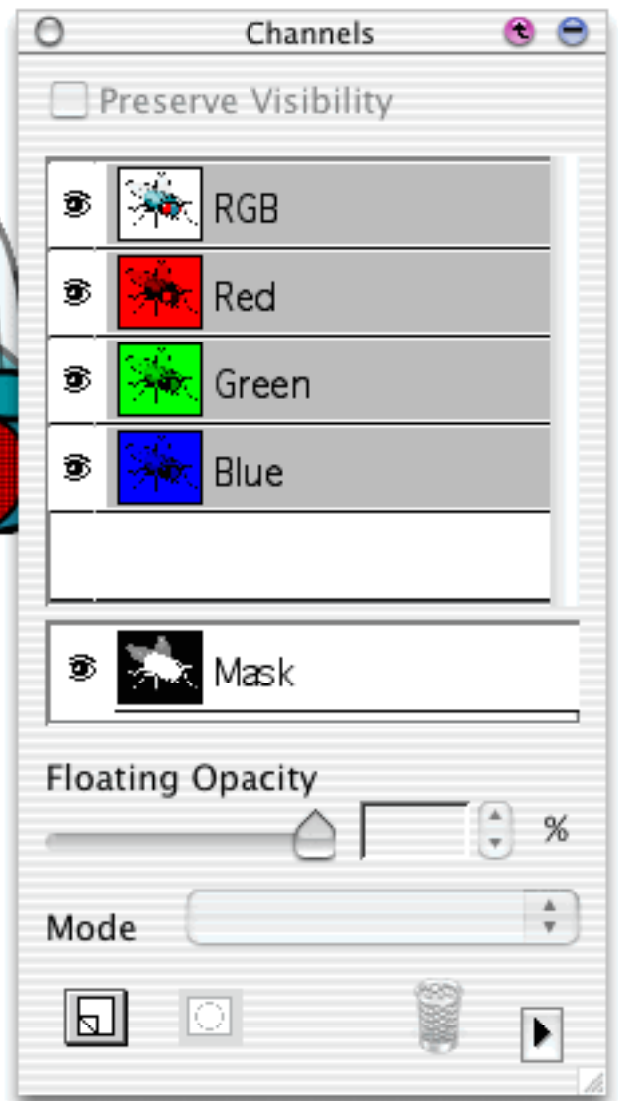


Mac Presentations (Continued)

Now with the image still in edit mode, open the Channels palette (Image > Show Channels).

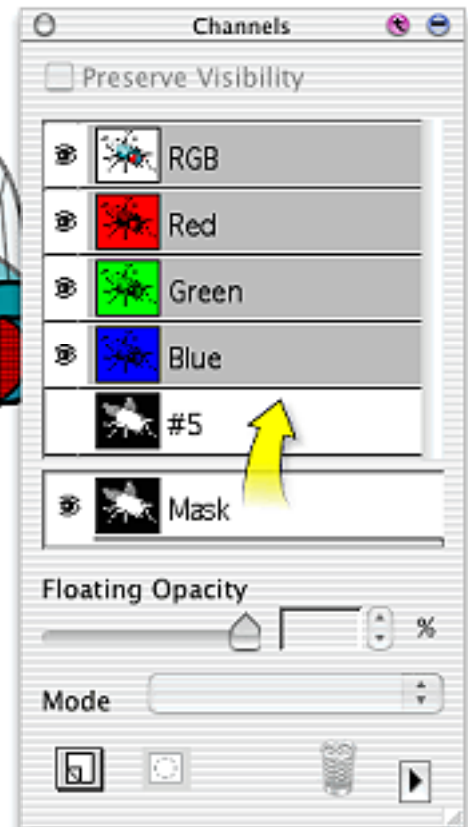
Within the Channels palette you will see the composite, Red, Green, and Blue channels in the channel list. Below the channel list you will find the Mask channel.

 **Note:** for this technique to function properly your image must be in RGB mode.



Now select the Mask channel. Then, drag the Mask channel into the channel list to create a new alpha channel.

The Alpha channel appears as #5 in our example.

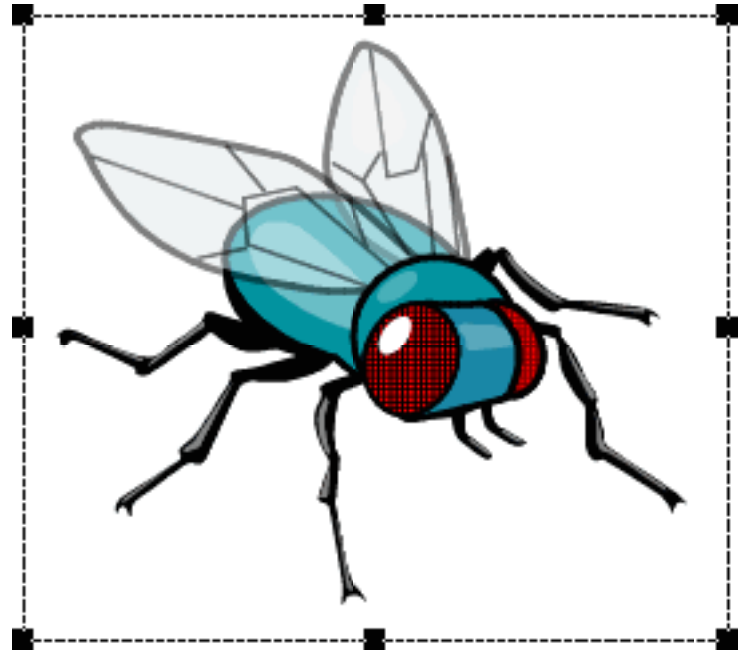


Mac Presentations (Continued)

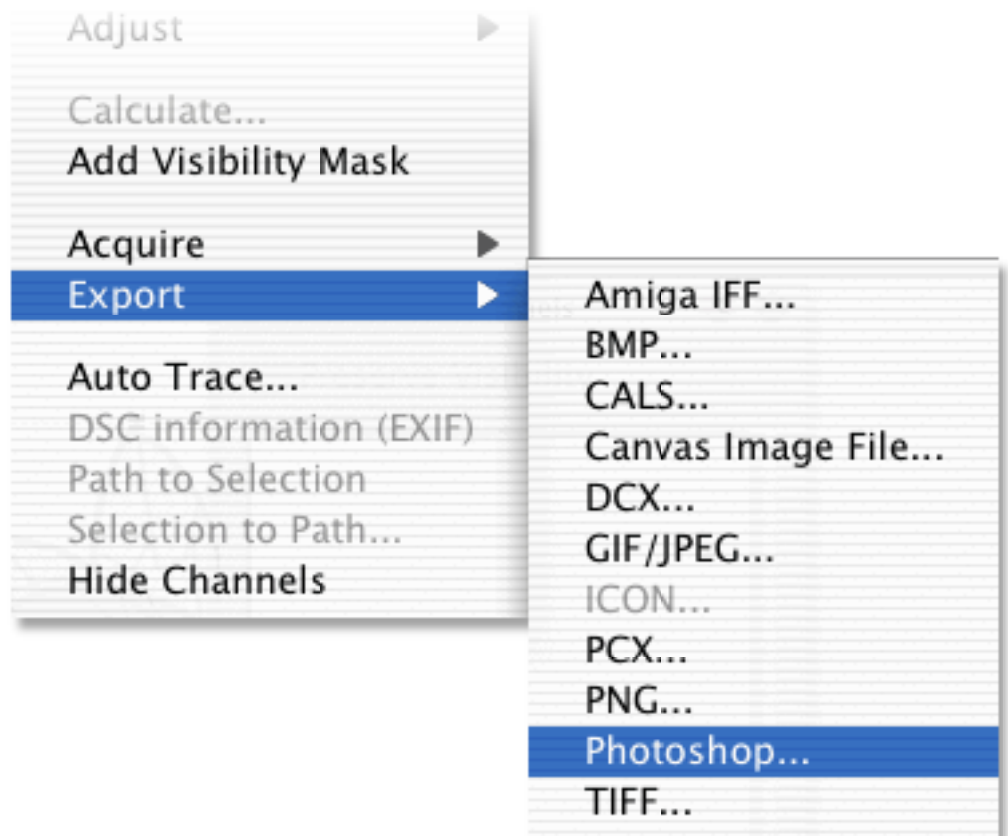
Now that we have our fly illustration rendered and we have created an alpha channel all we need to do is find the right file format that will allow us to create a transparent background in Keynote. Even though Keynote could import all of the common file formats such as GIF, JPG, and BMP, there is one format that will work particularly well and will preserve our alpha channel, .PSD.

Using .PSD (Photoshop format) we are able to easily place a transparent image in Keynote, even partially transparent sections of the image, such as the wings, retain their properties.

To export the illustration, we must first select it using the Selection tool located in the Toolbox.

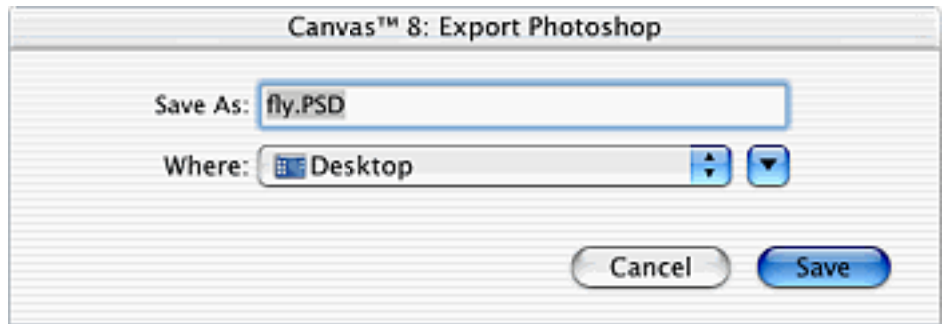


Then choose Image > Export > Photoshop (.PSD).



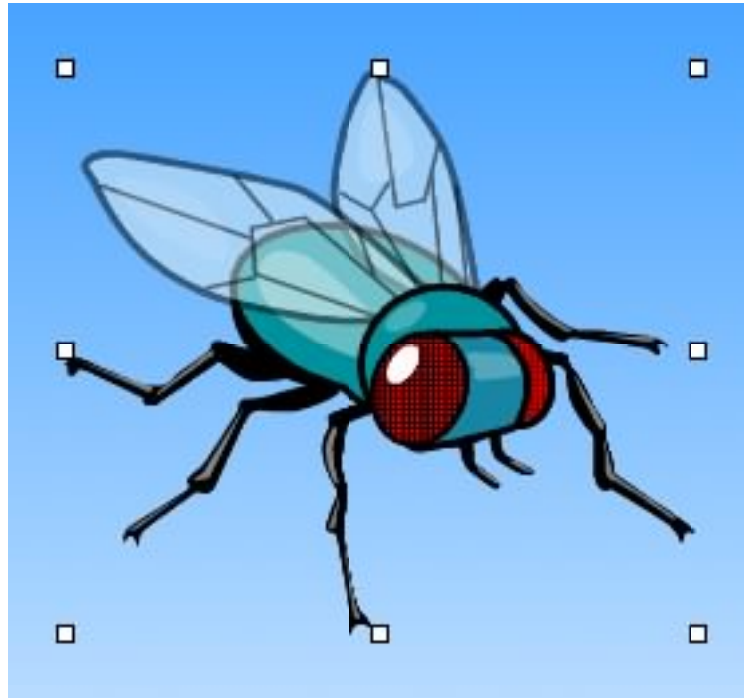
Mac Presentations (Continued)

When the Export Photoshop dialog box appears, you must enter a name for your image (we called ours "fly") and find a location to store it. When you are done, click Save.

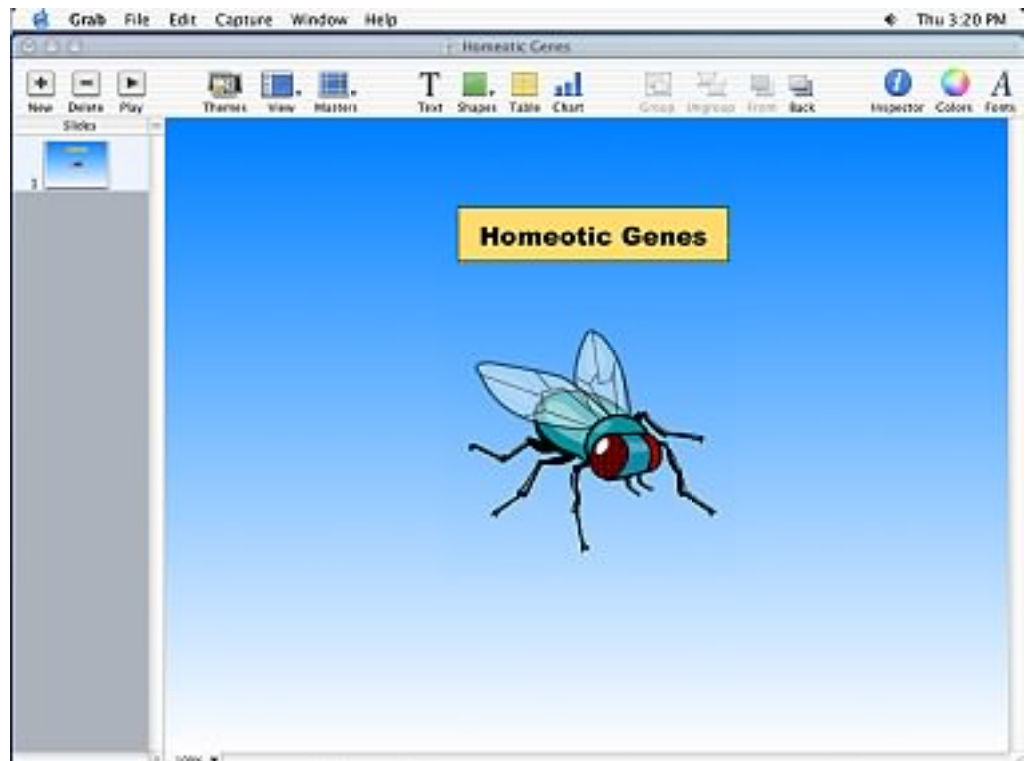


Importing Images into Keynote

To import the fly image we just created into Keynote, first choose Edit > Place > Choose. Locate fly .PSD and click the Place button. Your fly will appear in Keynote with a transparent background. Notice that the background can be seen through the partially transparent wings of the fly.



On the right is the completed slide along with the vector objects we imported earlier.



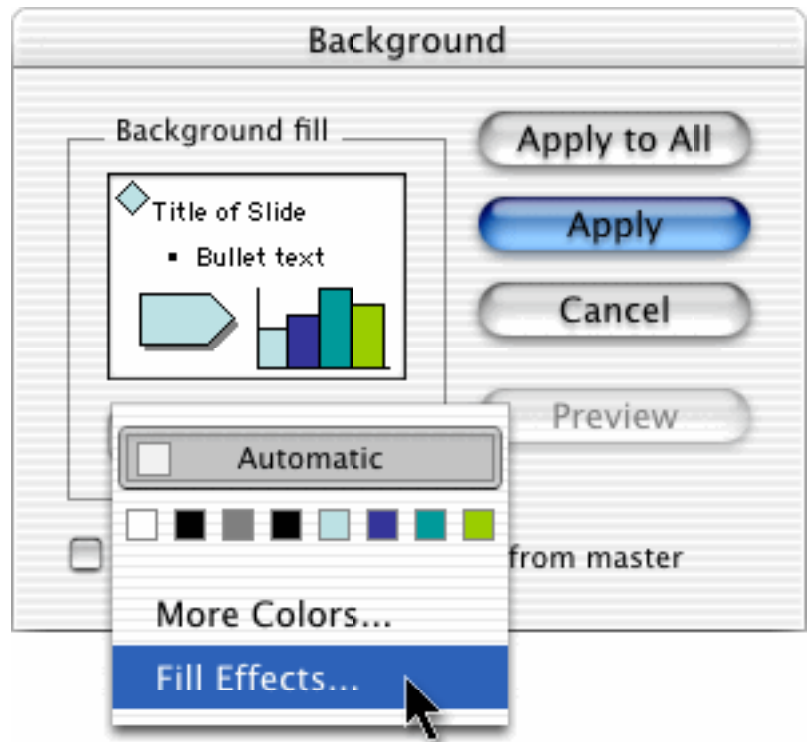
Now we will perform the same operations in PowerPoint.

Modifying PowerPoint's Background Color

We start this section by changing the background color in PowerPoint to a gradient fading from one color to another. This is a very common presentation effect; however, it sometimes poses a challenge to seasoned artists as well as beginners attempting to create illustrations or images with transparent areas. With Canvas this is a very easy problem to overcome.

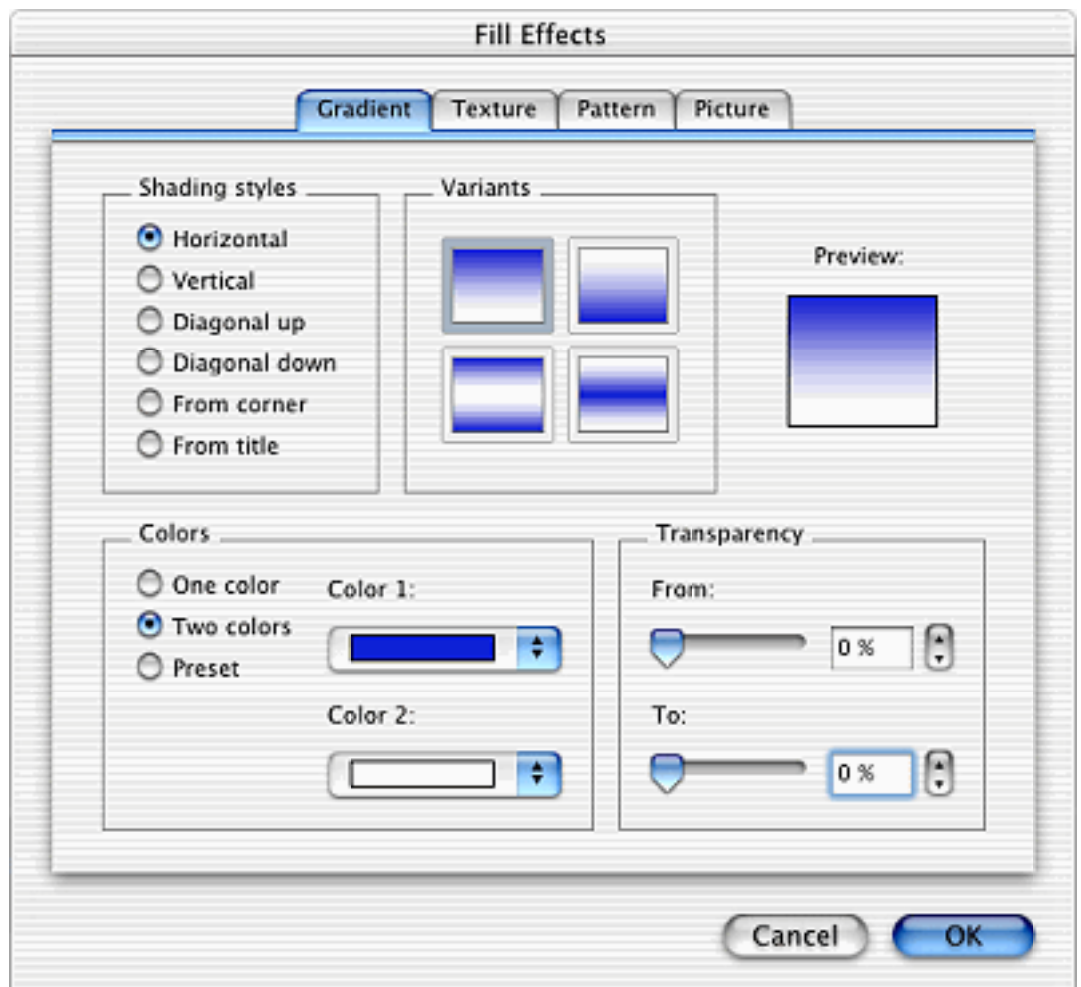
To do this, activate PowerPoint and open a new PowerPoint document. Choose Format > Background to open the Background dialog box (see image on the right).

Next, click on the color bar located in the lower left corner of the dialog box to activate the pop-up palette. Select the Fill Effects option.



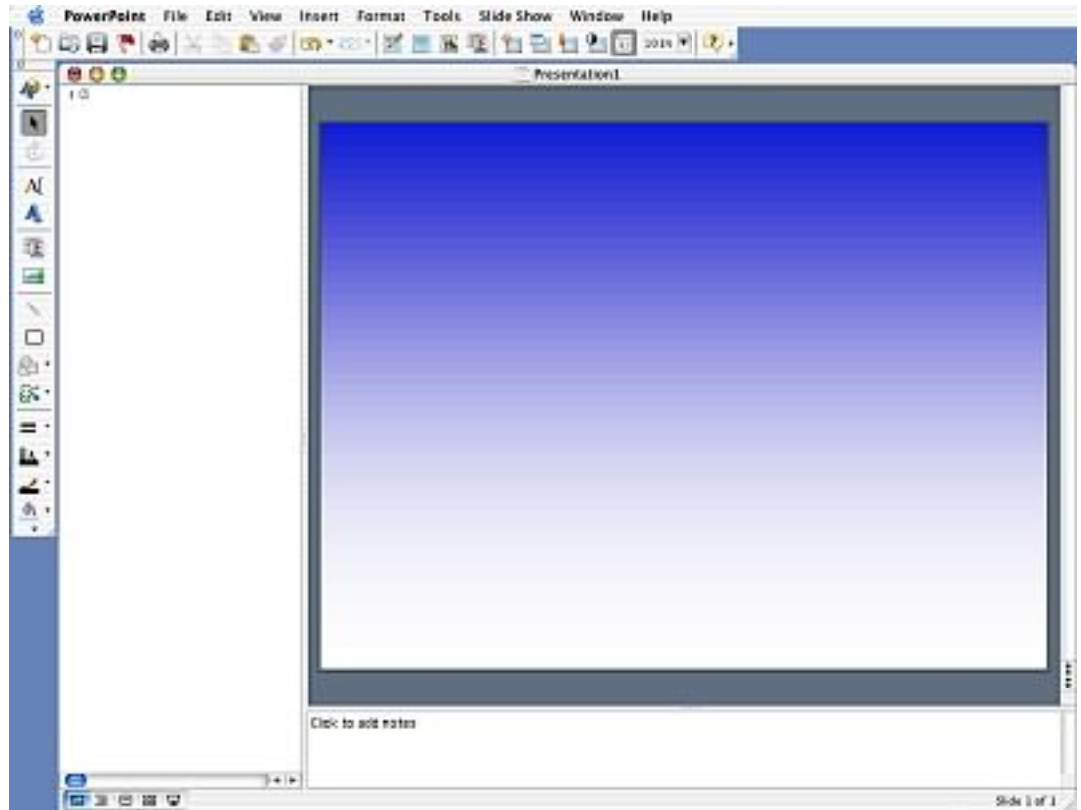
When the Fill Effects dialog box opens, select the Gradient tab and the colors with which you want to work.

We chose two colors, blue and white, with horizontal shading. Click OK when you are done.



Mac Presentations (Continued)

This is what our PowerPoint work area looks like now.



Preparing the Document

Now we switch our attention back to Canvas. Begin by opening a new Canvas Illustration file. Choose File > New.

When the New Document dialog box appears, choose Illustration as Type of Document.

After you have made your selections, click OK.



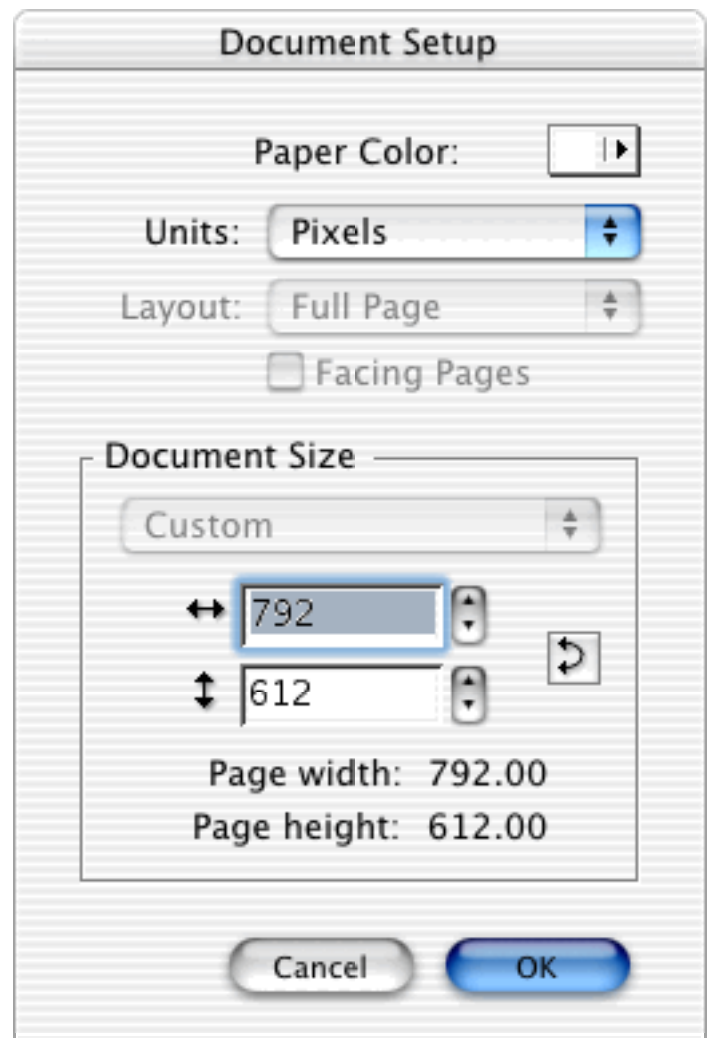
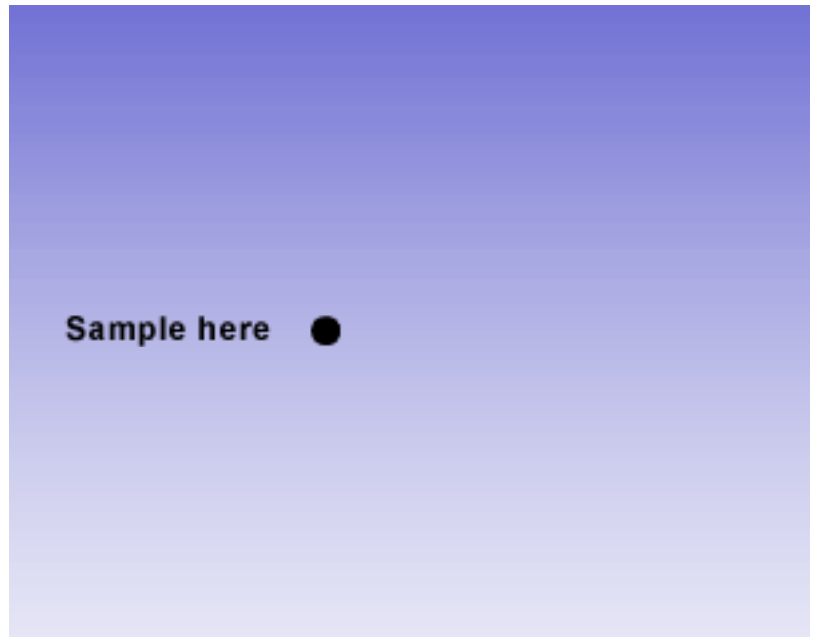
Mac Presentations (Continued)

To create a transparent image that will work with our presentation's background, we need to choose a Canvas paper color that is somewhere between the blue and white colors we chose earlier in PowerPoint. This will prevent artifacts from appearing around our image when parts of it are rendered transparent.

Your color choice doesn't have to be perfect. Below is our choice of color: Red 183, Green 183, Blue 230 (RGB values).

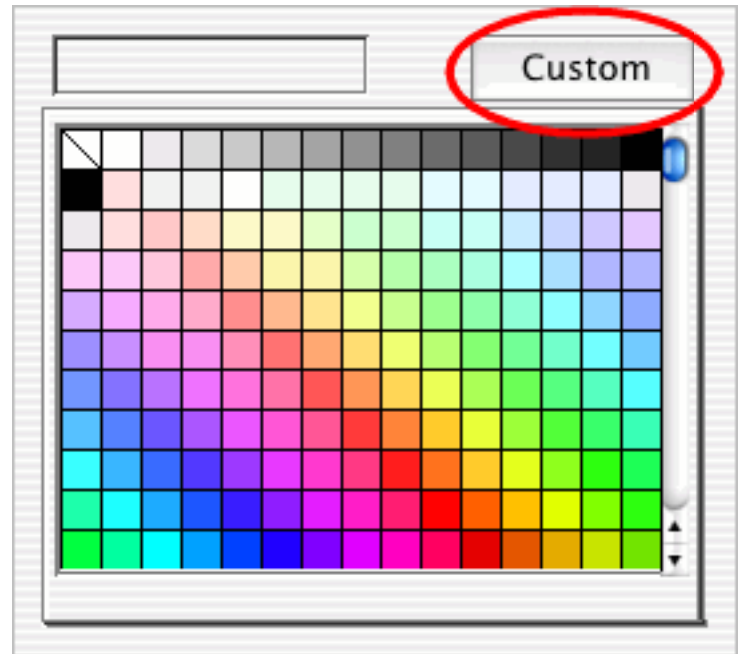


To change the paper color in Canvas go to Layout > Document Setup and click on Paper Color.

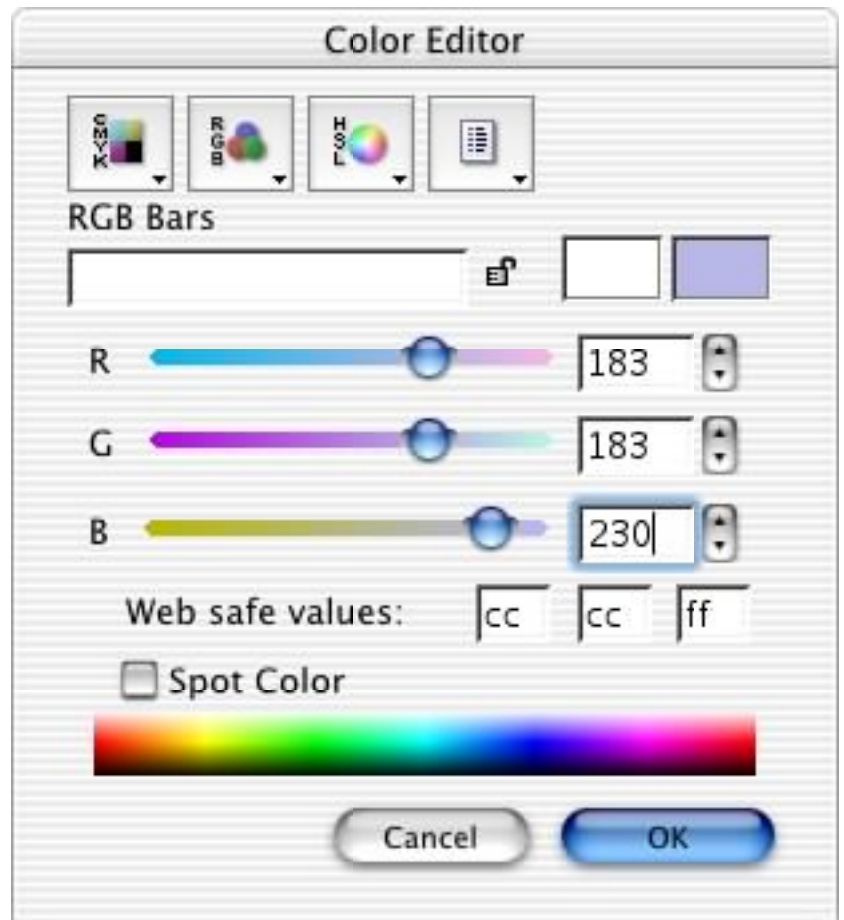


Mac Presentations (Continued)

You could pick a color from this palette or you could choose Custom if you want to select a custom color.

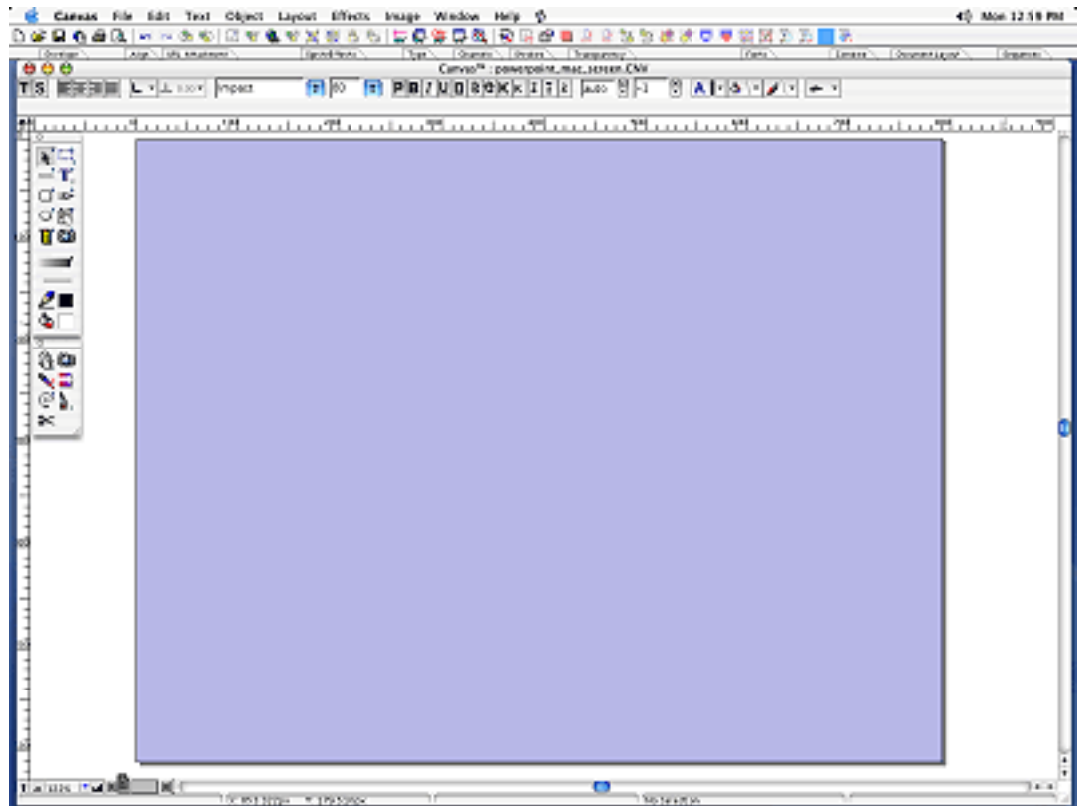


When the Color Editor dialog box appears, you could enter the RGB value we mentioned earlier.



Mac Presentations (Continued)

Your Canvas work area should now look like this.




Exporting Vector Graphics

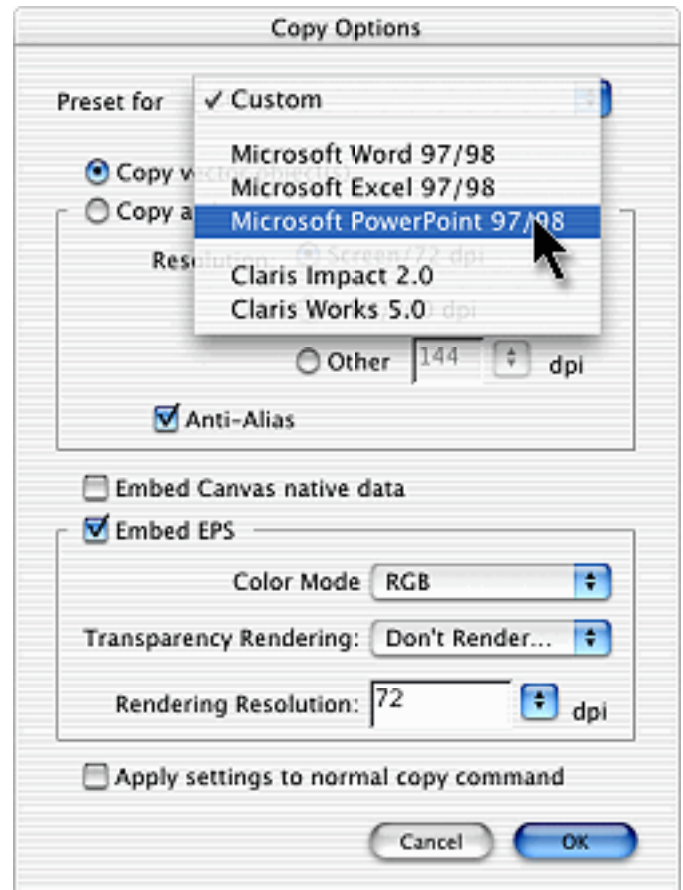
To export simple vector objects such as the text box on the right, it is best to keep them as vectors and import them into PowerPoint as we did with Keynote.

This is easily done by first selecting the vector graphic. Then, choose Edit > Copy Special > Copy Options.



 **Tip:** Remember vectors are objects that are defined by anchor points. The advantage of using vector graphics is that they are size independent and could be resized with no loss in quality.

When the dialog box appears, select MS PowerPoint from the drop-down menu. Choose Copy Vector Object and click OK.



Now go to PowerPoint and choose Edit > Paste and you are done. Your vector objects will appear just as they did in Canvas. The advantage of using vectors in PowerPoint is that they could be easily resized by simply dragging the handles (seen in PowerPoint as white squares).



Note: For vectors to export properly into PowerPoint, they must not have any transparencies, filters, or SpriteEffects applied to them. The vector export option is best used for simple graphics such as page headers, text, and graphs.



Bitmapped Graphics

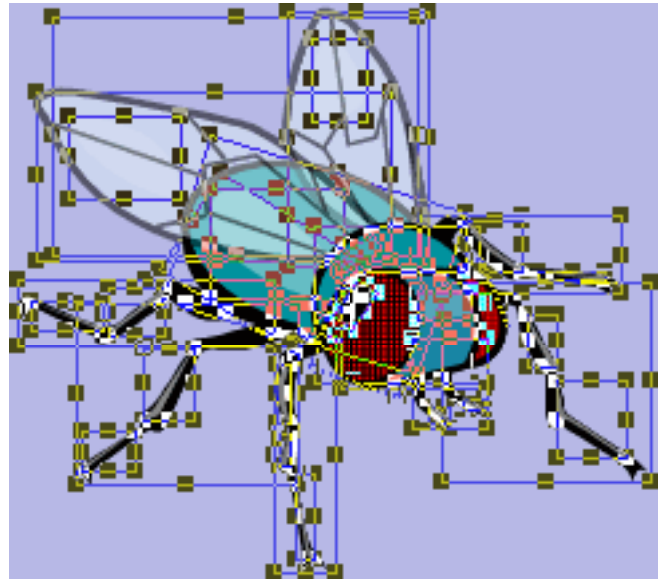
Next, we will import the bitmapped fly illustration we used earlier, into PowerPoint.

As it was explained, vector drawings with effects such as transparencies and SpriteEffects will not export into PowerPoint properly. For cases such as these, bitmapped graphics will work better.



Mac Presentations (Continued)

To export this fly illustration, we must first render it. We do this by dragging the Selection Tool across the illustration to select all of its parts.

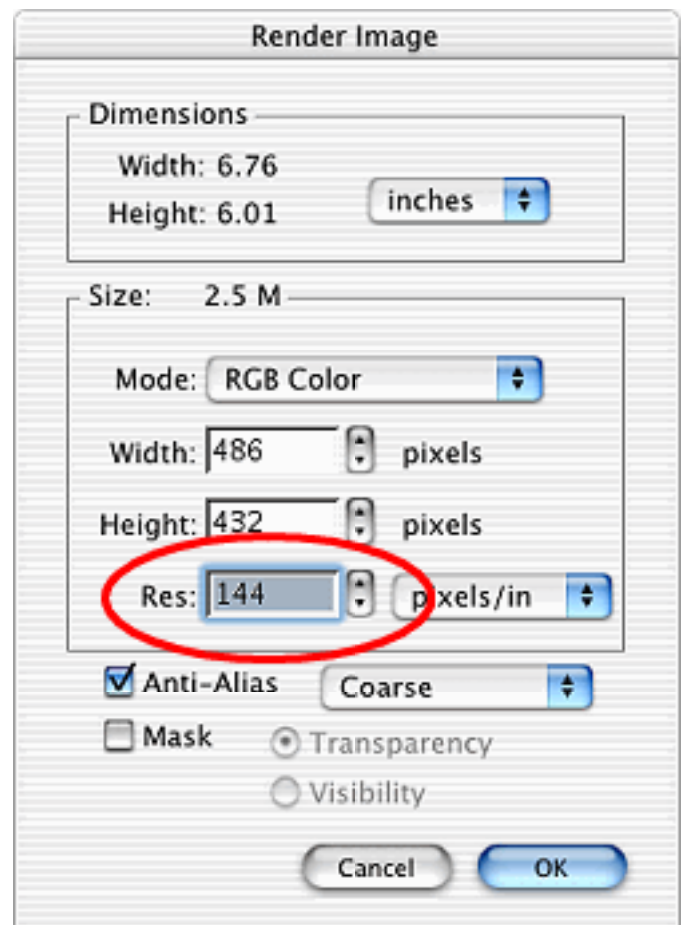


With all of the illustration's objects selected, choose Image > Area > Render.

When the Render Image dialog box opens, select Anti-Alias and choose Coarse from the drop-down menu. This option will give your illustration a smooth appearance.

Next we turn to the resolution. Generally if your PowerPoint presentation is going to only be viewed on a monitor or on an overhead projector, it is best to use a resolution of 144 dpi. This setting will give you good picture quality while keeping the file size down. If you plan on printing your presentation, it is advisable to increase the resolution to 300 dpi. This will yield a sharper image when printed but will also increase the file size.

Make sure you do not have the Mask checkbox selected. When you have made your selections, click OK.



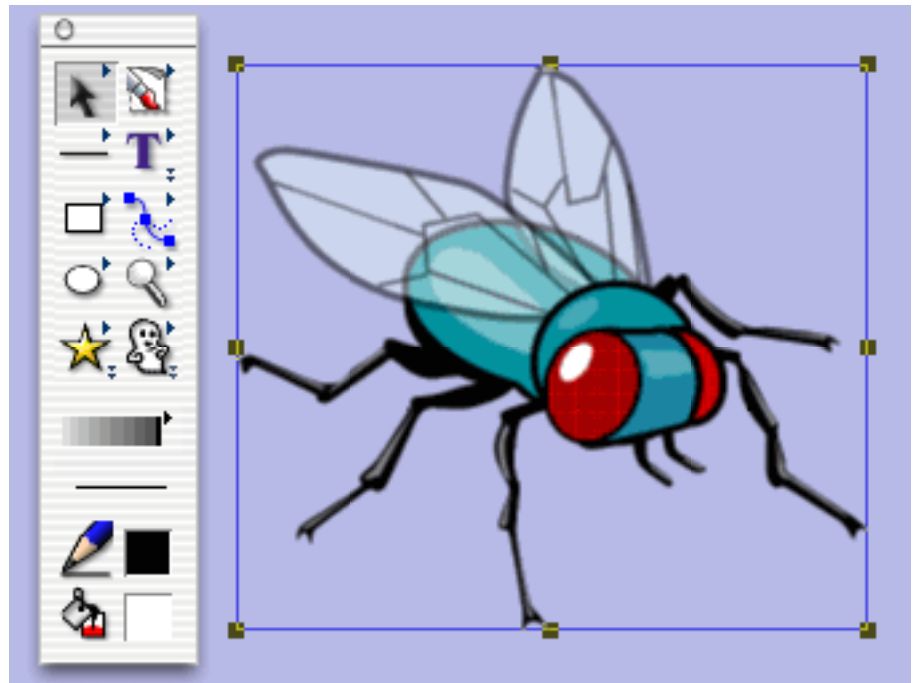
With our fly illustration rendered, all we need to do is find the right file format that will allow us to create a transparent background in PowerPoint. Even though PowerPoint could import all of the common file formats such as GIF, JPG, and BMP, there are two particular file formats that will work exceptionally well: TIFF and PNG. Using TIFF (Tagged-Image File Format) or PNG (Portable Network Graphic), we could easily remove the unwanted backgrounds quickly and easily in PowerPoint, a feature not available to the other mentioned file formats.

TIFF or PNG

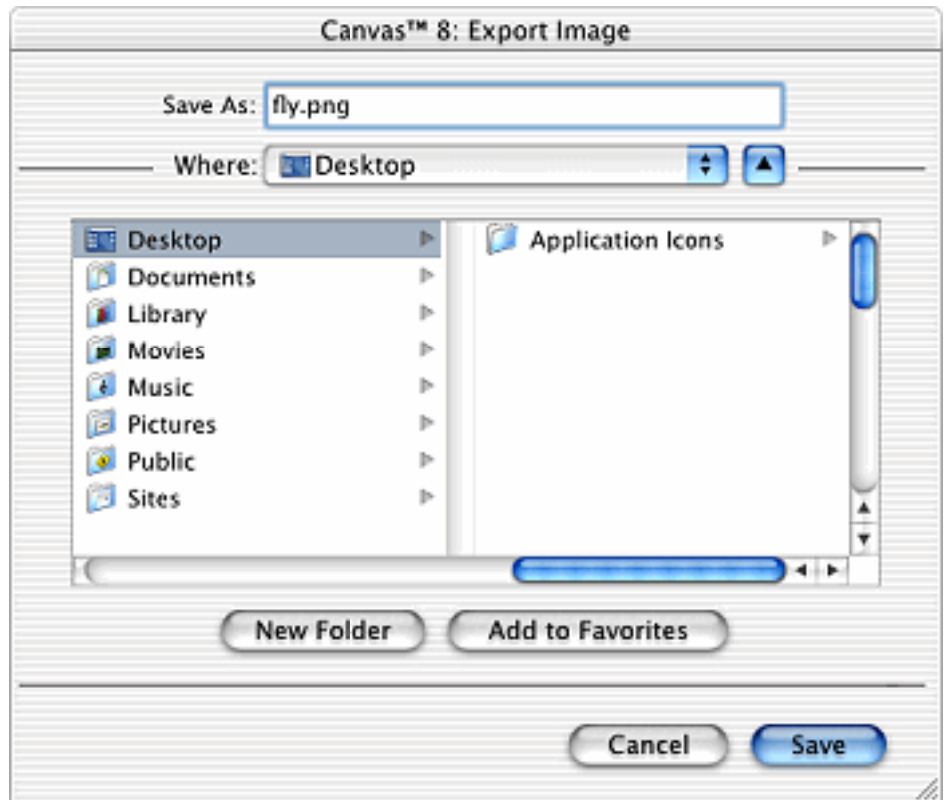
TIFF has been around longer than PNG, which was originally designed to replace GIF on the Web. PowerPoint works well with both of these files when creating transparent backgrounds but generally PNG creates smaller file sizes with no loss of quality.

Mac Presentations (Continued)

To export the image (not the vector illustrations), we must first select it using the Selection tool.

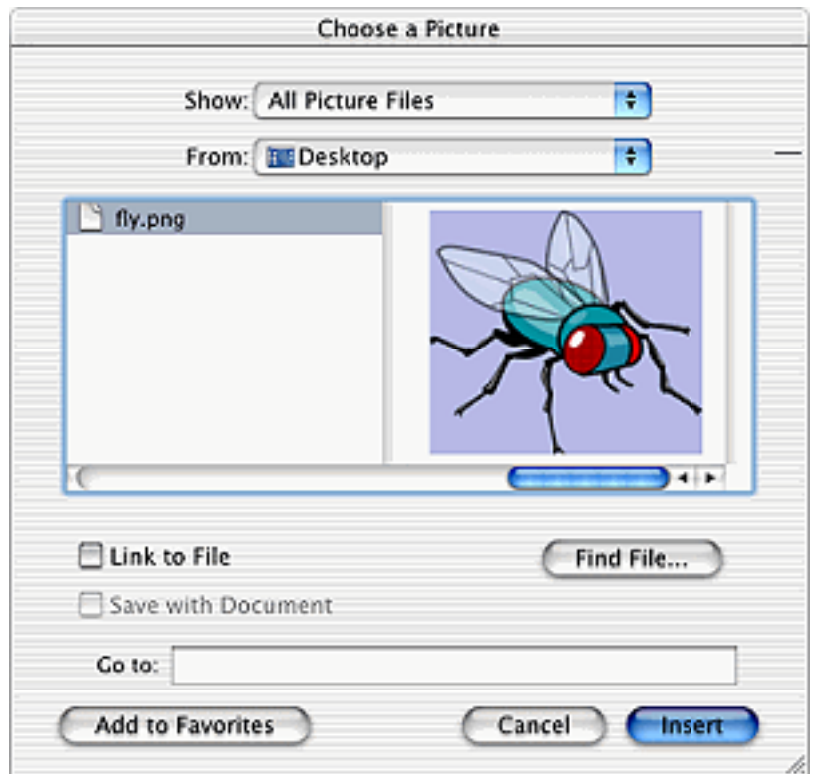


Then we choose Image > Export > PNG. When the Export Image dialog box appears, you must enter a name for your image and find a location to store it. When you are done, click Save.



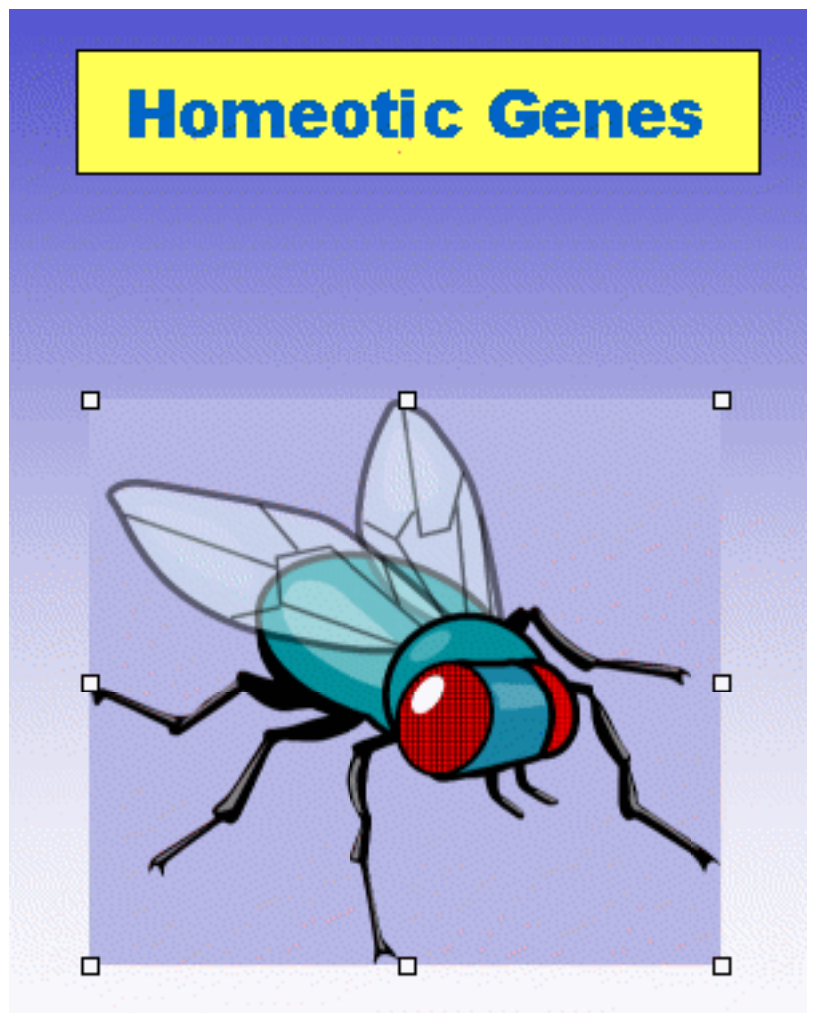
Mac Presentations (Continued)

Now we are ready to import our fly illustration into PowerPoint. We do this by choosing Insert > Picture > From File. We locate the fly illustration using the Choose a Picture dialog box and click Insert when we have located the file.



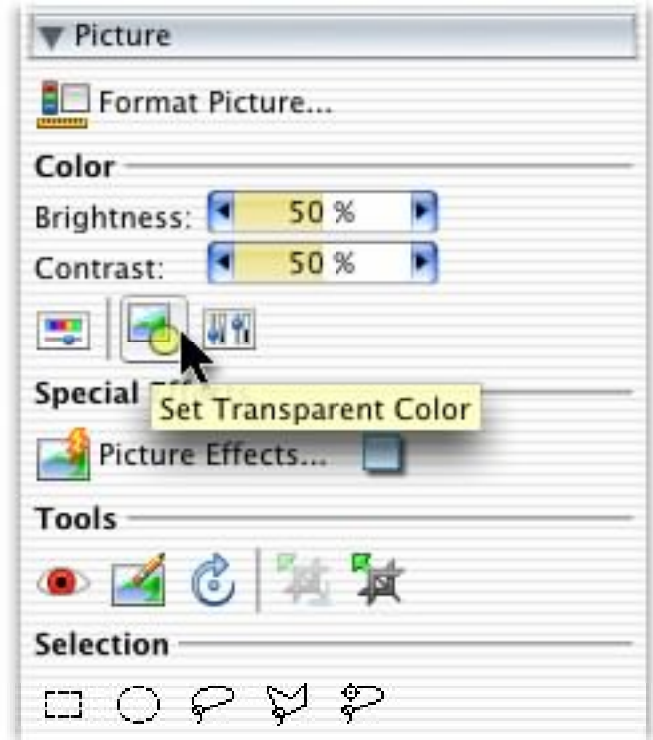
The fly will appear in PowerPoint's work area. On the right is the fly illustration below the vector objects we imported earlier.

Notice the background around the fly is still visible.

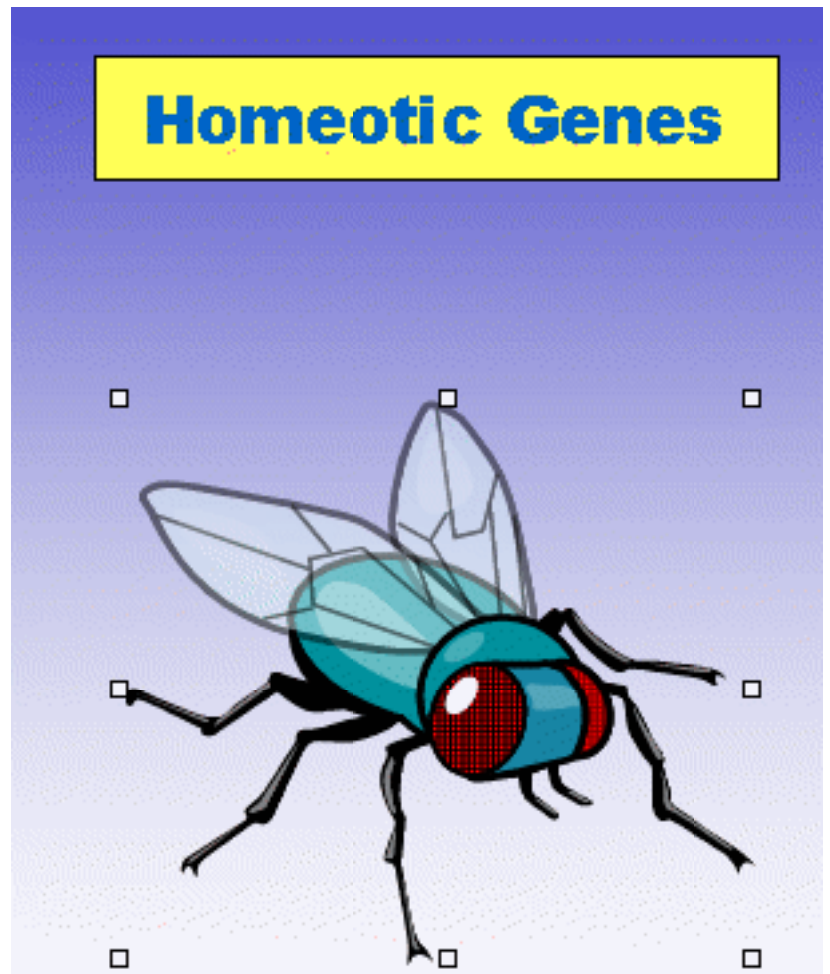


Mac Presentations (Continued)

To remove the unwanted background open the Picture palette in PowerPoint by choosing View > Toolbars > Picture. Then with the image still selected click the Set Transparency Color button in the palette.



Next, click the Set Transparency Color tool on the background area of the fly illustration in PowerPoint to delete it and you are done.



Mac Presentations (Continued)

Here is what our fly looks like in PowerPoint with the background deleted.

Remember that when using bitmap images in PowerPoint it is not advisable to resize the image even though that option is available. If there is a need to resize a bitmap image, it should be done in Canvas, before the illustration is rendered.



Note: remember that you should always save your graphics (vector and bitmap) in a Canvas format in case you need to use them again.

And that is how you import vectors and images into Keynote and PowerPoint. With the popularity of presentations these days, it is just a matter of time before you need to create graphics for a business presentation or college project. We hope that we have solved the mystery surrounding graphics and presentations. Now go ahead and present away!

We would also like to express our gratitude to Matt Winslow for his contribution and help in the production of this tutorial.

