

Introducing the Windows Photo Editor

Links

This is not a comprehensive guide to using the software.

You may want to check out these videos :-

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VkJag5j5sk4&list=WL&index=10

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oVjo_lNcO9g&list=WL&index=11

Why Use Windows Photos ?



Pros

1) It’s free with every Windows PC.

2) It is simple and easy to use.

3) Its tools will handle most basic edits.

4) It comes with some “presets” for 1-click edits.

5) It has a very good background removal tool.

Cons

1) Some AI features cost money.

2) It can’t handle more complex edits, such as adjustment masks or layers.

3) It only has basic cataloguing of images.

4) No “auto straighten” crop tool

Starting Windows Photos

Assuming you have Windows Photos installed on your PC…

Option 1) Via the Start Menu

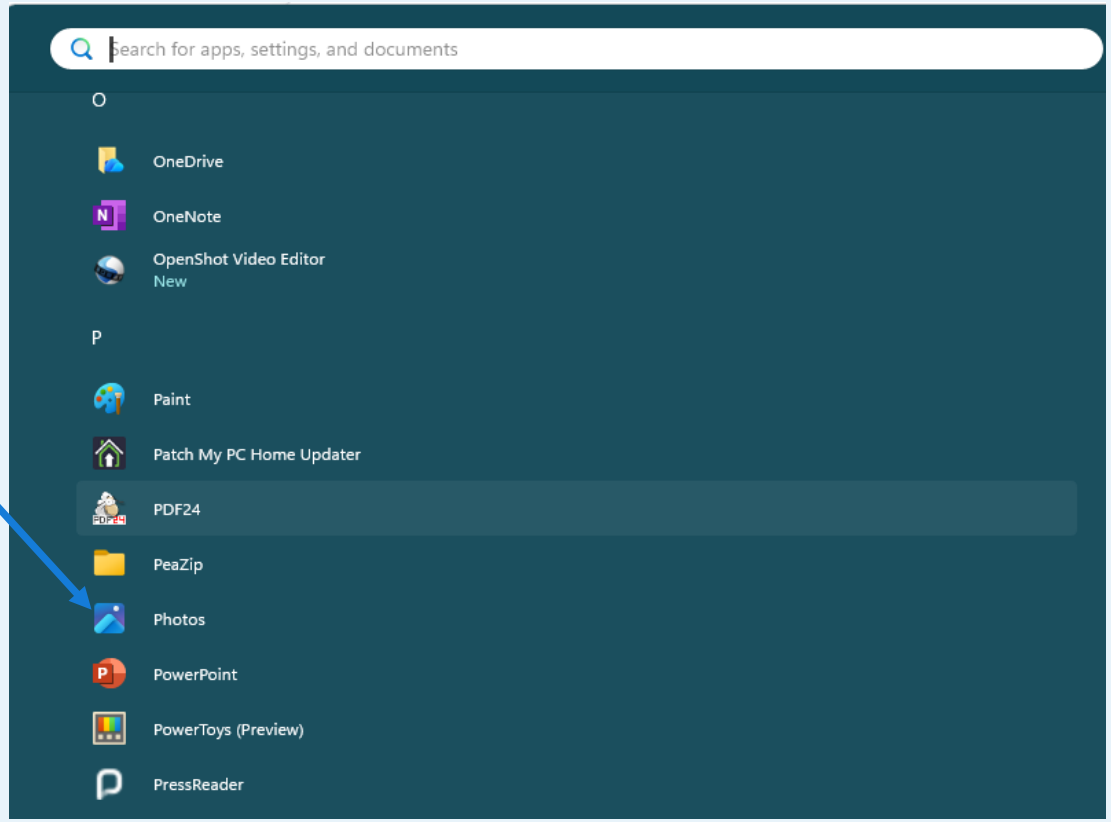
Open the Windows Start Menu (Windows key)

Search for “Photos” under P

If you use it a lot, consider pinning the App to your Start menu.

Or 2) Double click on an image in File Explorer

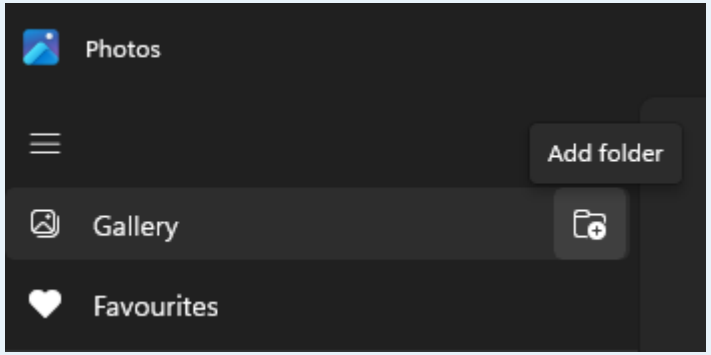
Or 3) Right-click an image in Explorer and choose “Open With” Photos



Using Windows Photos

If you chose option 1, Photos will open its Gallery (catalogue) view.

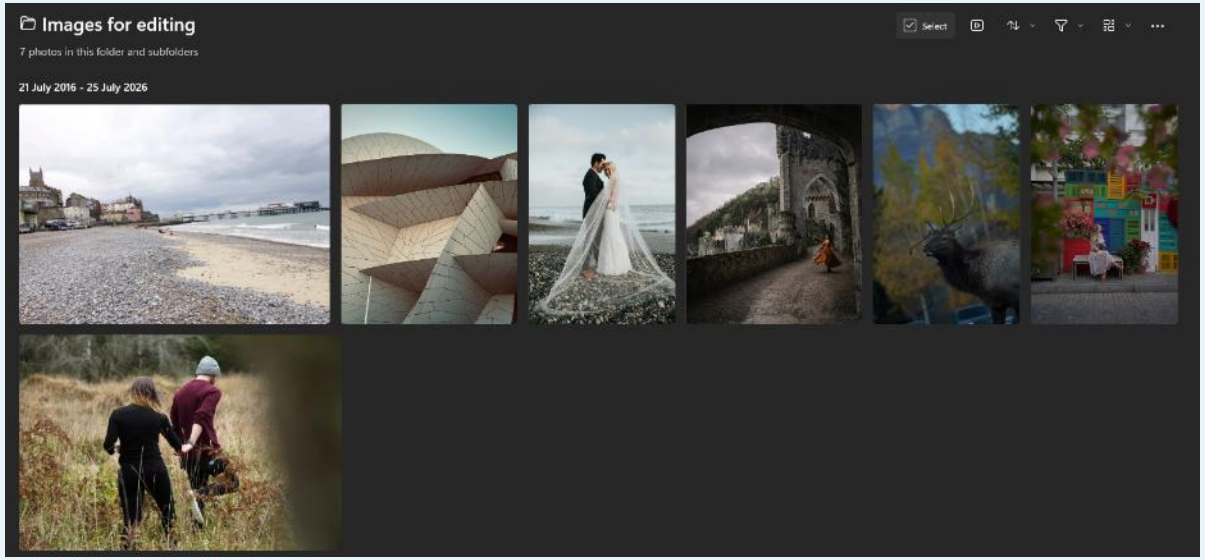
The Pictures folder is automatically included in the Gallery.



You can add a folder using the “Add folder” button at the top.

I’ve already added a folder “Images for editing”

At this stage we’re only viewing the photos.

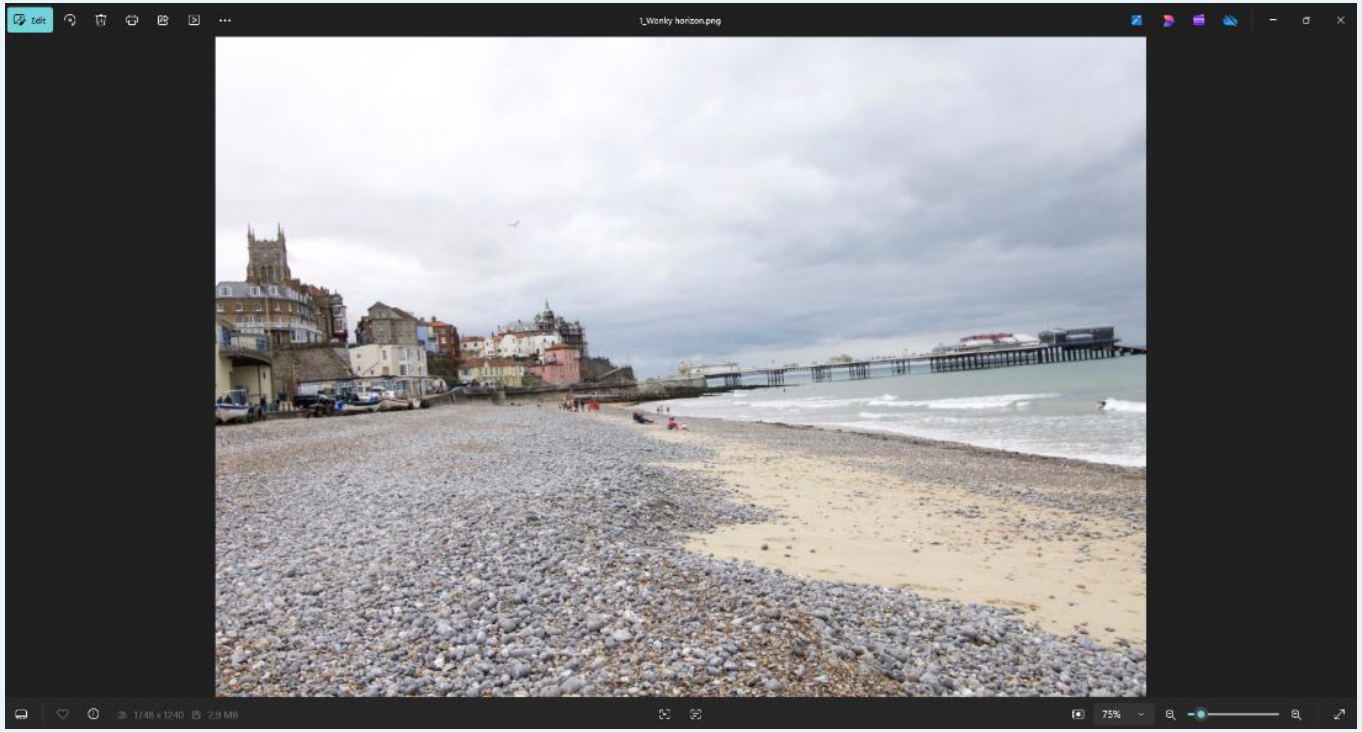


Using Windows Photos

I can select specific images for sharing, or to show as a slideshow.

To edit an image I first double click on it in the gallery.

A new window opens. We are now at the same point as if we used the File Explorer route on a single image.



On the top left are icons for Edit, Rotate, Delete, Print, Share and Slideshow.
Under the 3 dots are the important “Save As” and “Resize” options.

On the top right are icons for Gallery (go back), Designer, Video (Clipchamp) and OneDrive Apps.
We won’t cover these today.

Using Windows Photos

If I click on “Edit”, the Window changes.

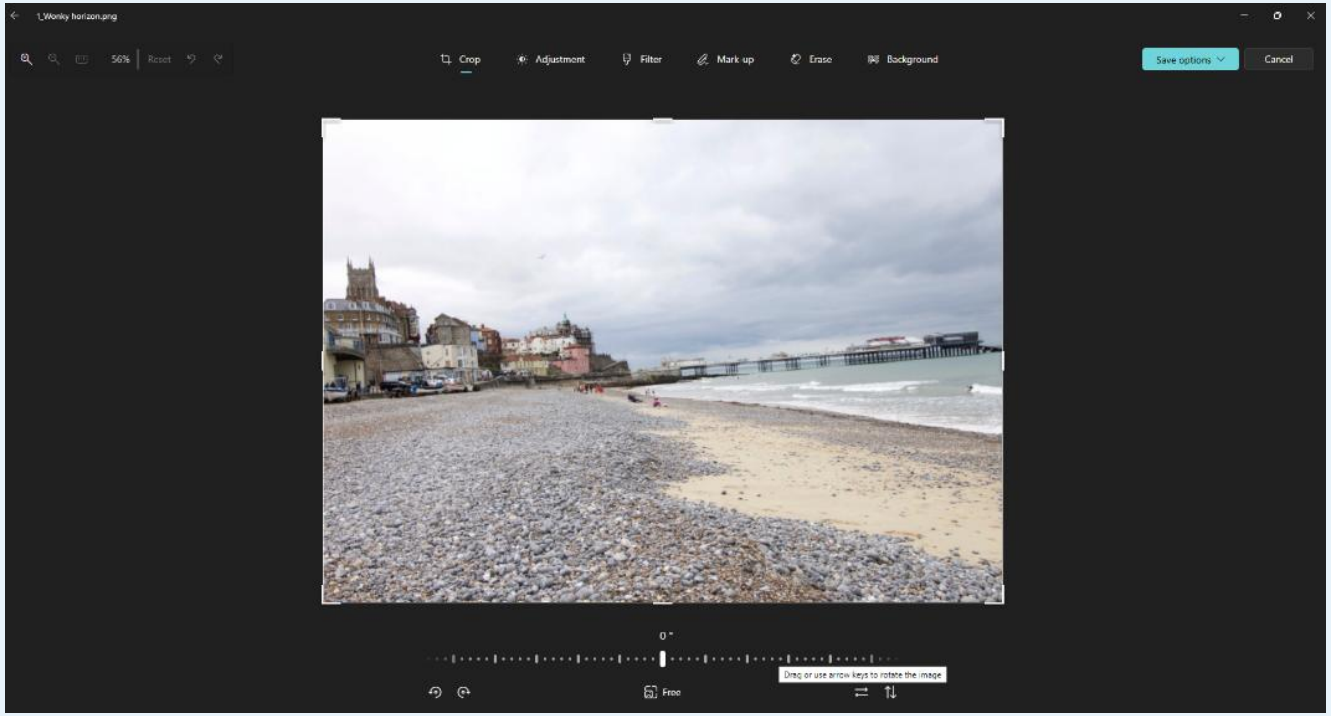
The 1st Edit menu is “Crop”.

Below the image is the straighten tool. Use the gridlines to help you.

Click on “Free” and you get a choice of Aspect Ratios.

Click on one of these and the crop window adjusts. You can also move the window around image.

Click “Done” when you’ve chosen the Aspect Ratio you want.



For A4 prints, the closest ratios are 4:3 or 3:2.

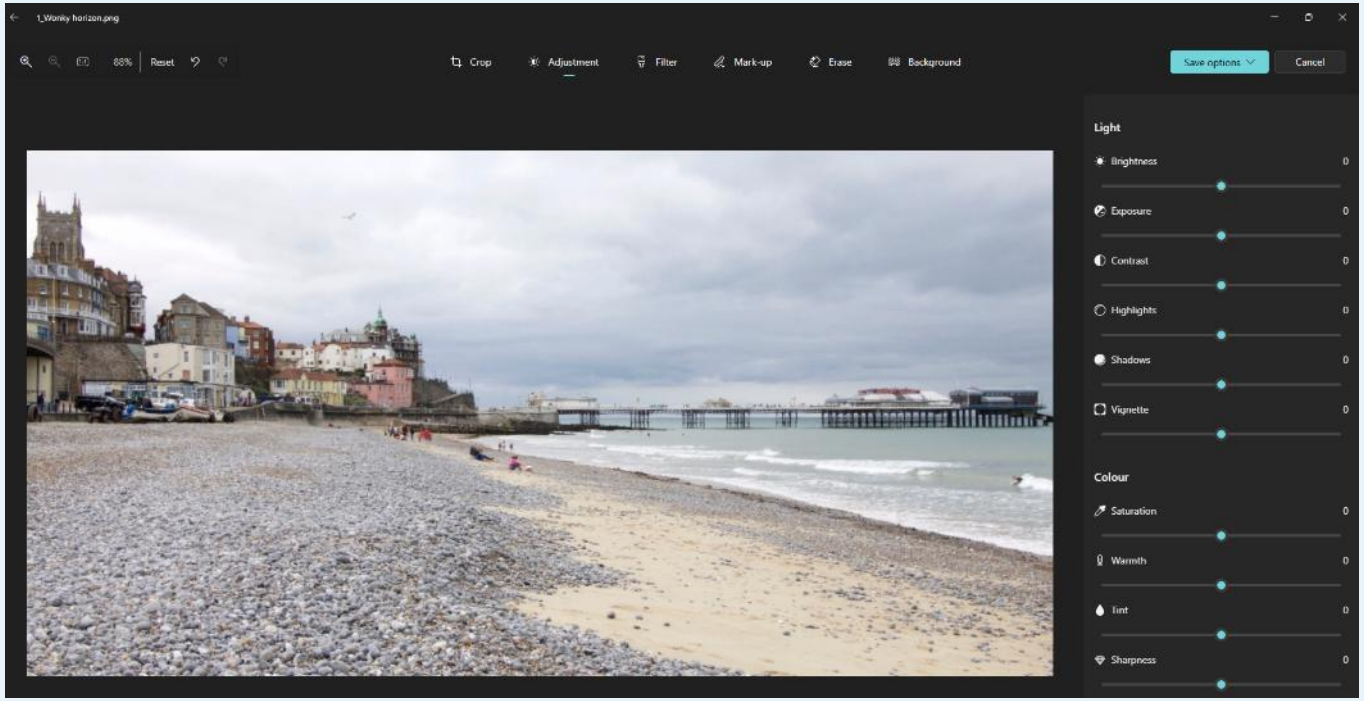
“Free” gives you most flexibility over the crop.

Using Windows Photos

The 2nd Edit menu is “Adjustment”.

Adjustments are split into “Light” and “Colour” menus.

Make adjustments by sliding the blue dot to the left (less) or right (more).



To see your original image (before edits), click and hold anywhere in the image.

Adjusting Light

Brightness: Changes the overall light or dark level of the entire photo; makes subtle changes.

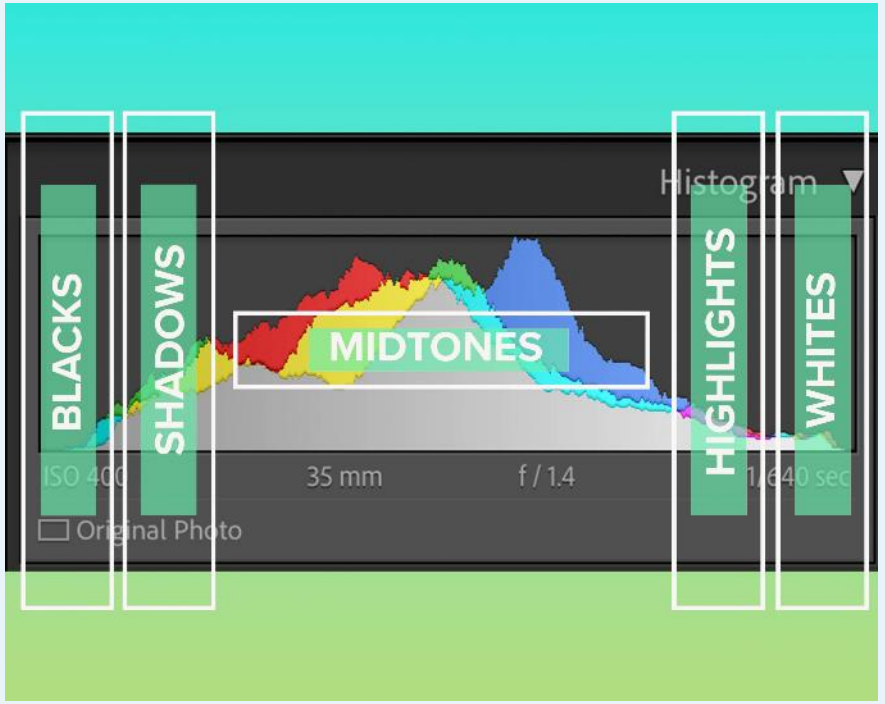
Exposure: Controls the overall light level, focusing mostly on brighter spots; makes significant changes.

Contrast: Makes the difference between light and dark areas bigger or smaller.

Highlights: Adjusts only the brightest parts of the image, like the sky or lamps.

Shadows: Lightens or darkens only the darkest parts hidden in shade.

Vignette: Darkens or lightens the outer corners and edges of the picture.



Keep in mind the tone histogram. The dark parts of the image are on the left of the histogram; bright parts are on the right.

Adjusting Shadow or Highlight areas will not affect the rest of the tones, but Brightness, Exposure and Contrast will.

Adjusting Colour

Saturation: Changes how rich or dull the colours look. Turning it down to zero makes the photo black and white.

Warmth: Makes the colour temperature look warmer (more yellow/orange) or cooler (more blue).

Tint: Shifts the colour balance between green and pink/magenta.

Sharpness: increases clarity by enhancing edge contrast.



Making Saturation zero is a quick way to a B&W image. This option leaves the shape of histogram intact.



Warmth (Or Temp) and Tint are common to most editing software. Warmth & Tint can correct White Balance and introduce artistic effects

Using Windows Photos

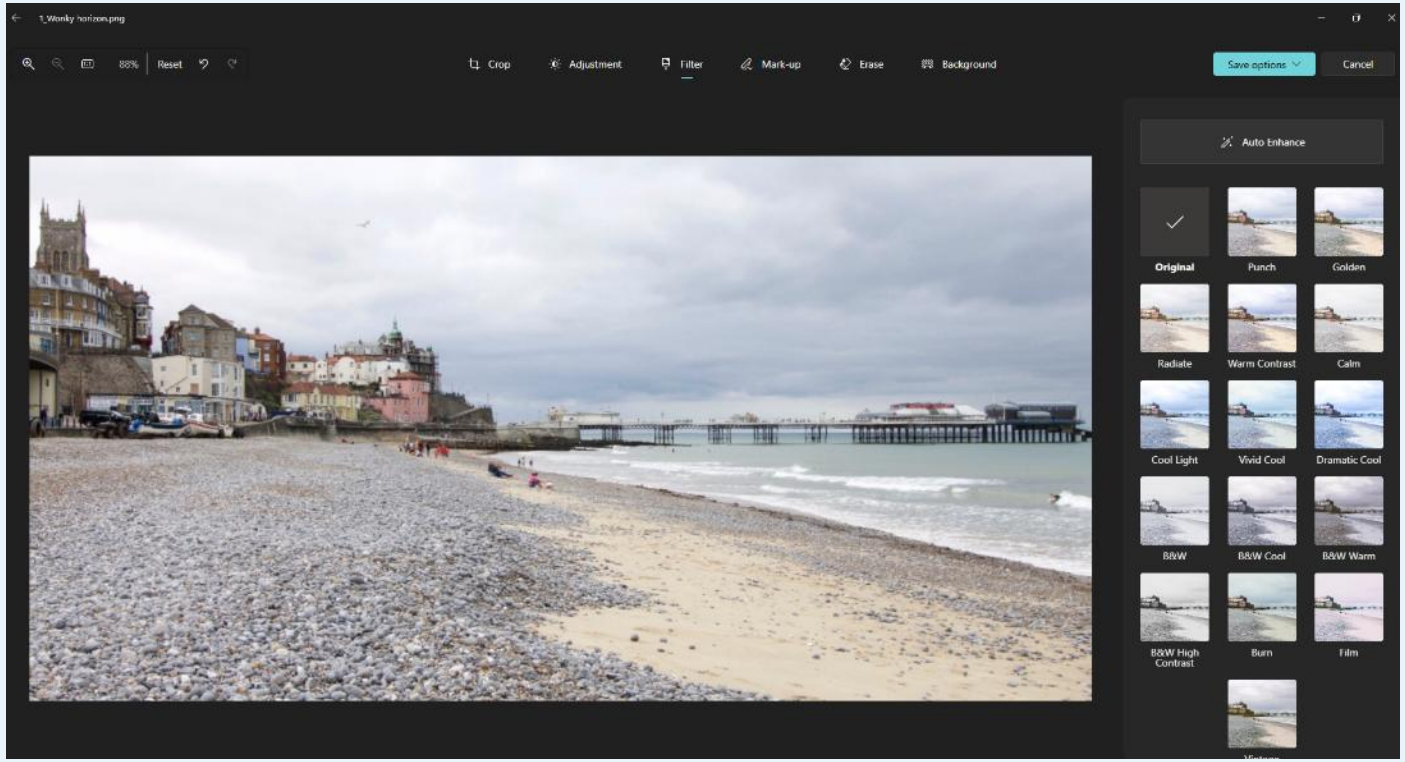
The 3rd Edit menu is “Filter”.

This contains a range of “One Click” presets, or looks.

The adjustments affect your entire image.

You can undo the Preset by clicking on “Original” again.

This is also where the “Auto Enhance” button lives. This will give you an idea what the software thinks needs to be improved !



You can adjust the strength of the Auto Enhance button using its slider. Click on Auto Enhance then the slider will be visible.

Using Windows Photos

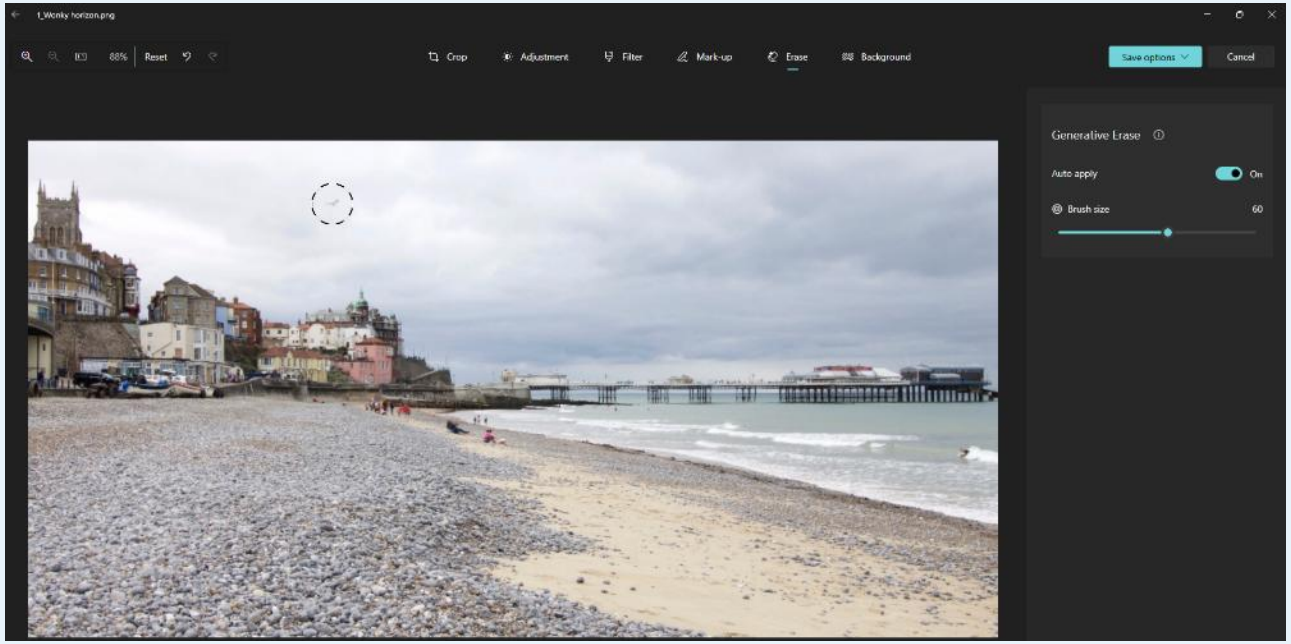
We'll skip Mark-Up and move onto the **"Erase"** option

This contains the AI model to remove distracting things from your image.

The dotted circle is what is to be removed. You can adjust the size of the circle and move it around the screen.

If "Auto apply" is on, click to instantly apply the remove.

Undo arrow (top left) will reverse any changes.



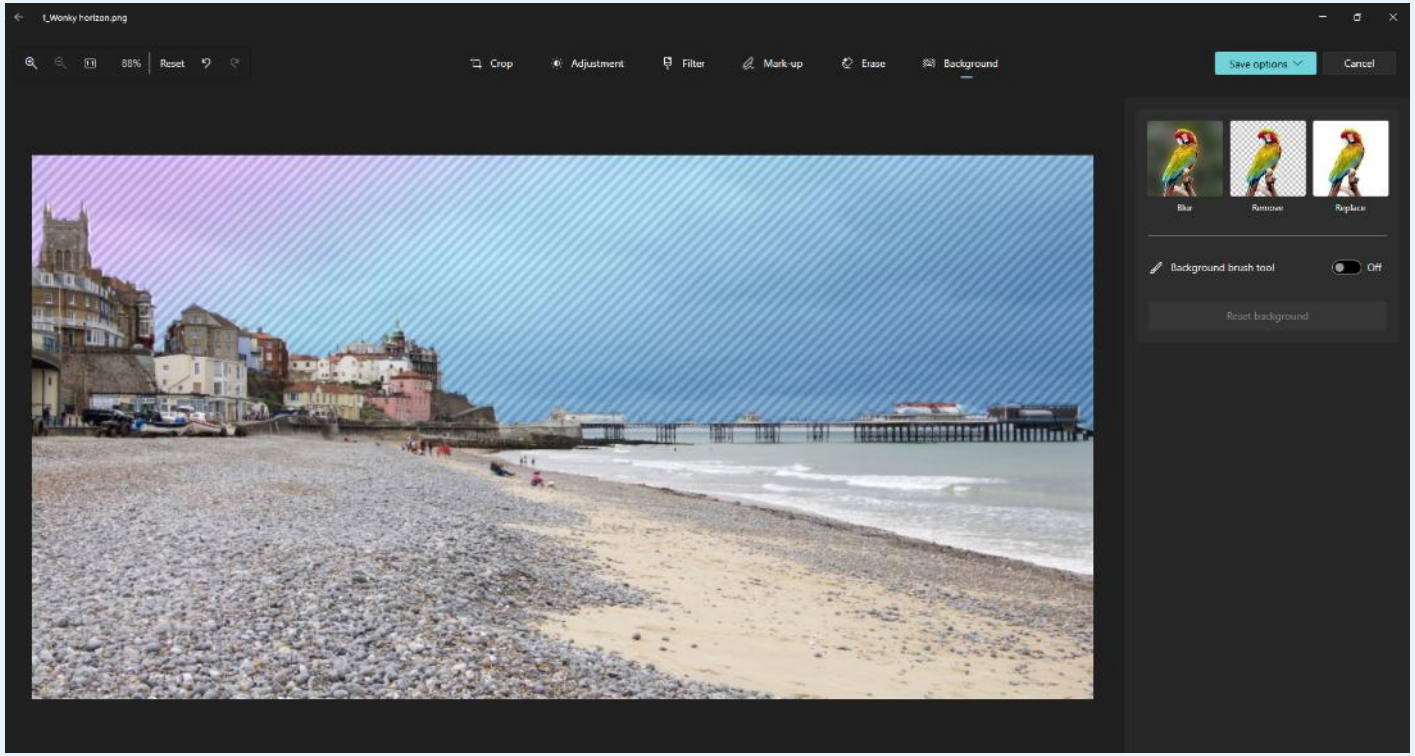
If "Auto apply" is off, you can brush over different areas of the image and remove them all at once. The areas to be removed are shown in blue.

If you make a mistake, click on "Clear" to reset the image.

Using Windows Photos

The final Edit menu is “Background”.

This allows you to select a subject and remove or adjust the background.



What constitutes the background is calculated by the App. You can adjust this using the background brush tool.



If you save the cut-out subject as a “PNG” file, it can be cut and pasted onto other images in MS Paint, Word, PowerPoint etc - but not in Photos !

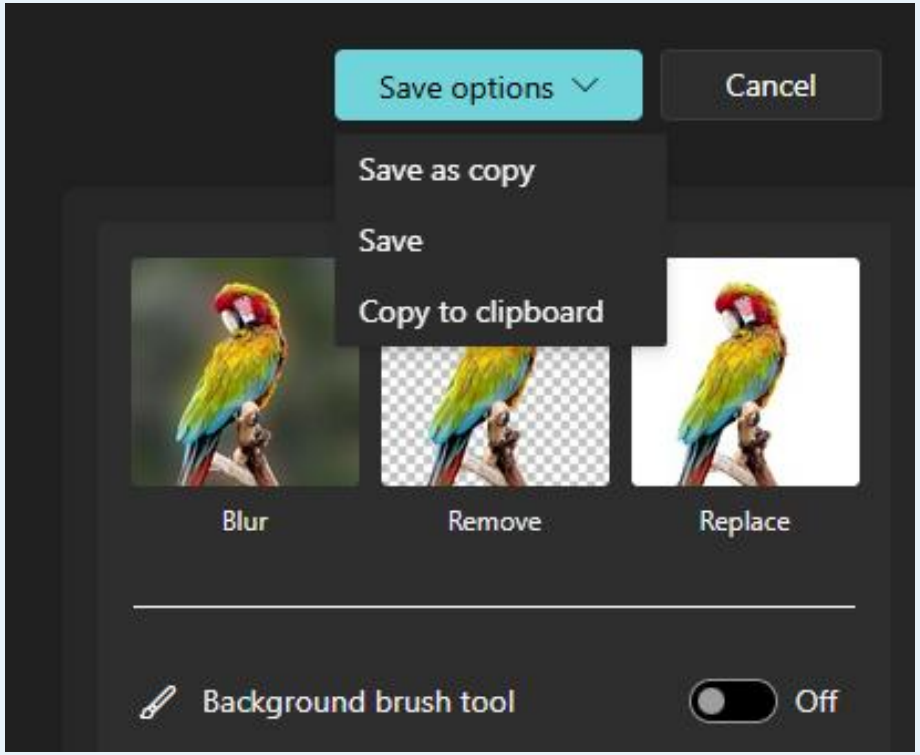
Using Windows Photos

“Save Options”

Remember to “Save as Copy” to avoid overwriting your original image !

Choosing this opens a file explorer window to allow you to set a new filename and/or folder.

If you choose “Save” you don’t get any option to choose a new filename or folder, so be warned !



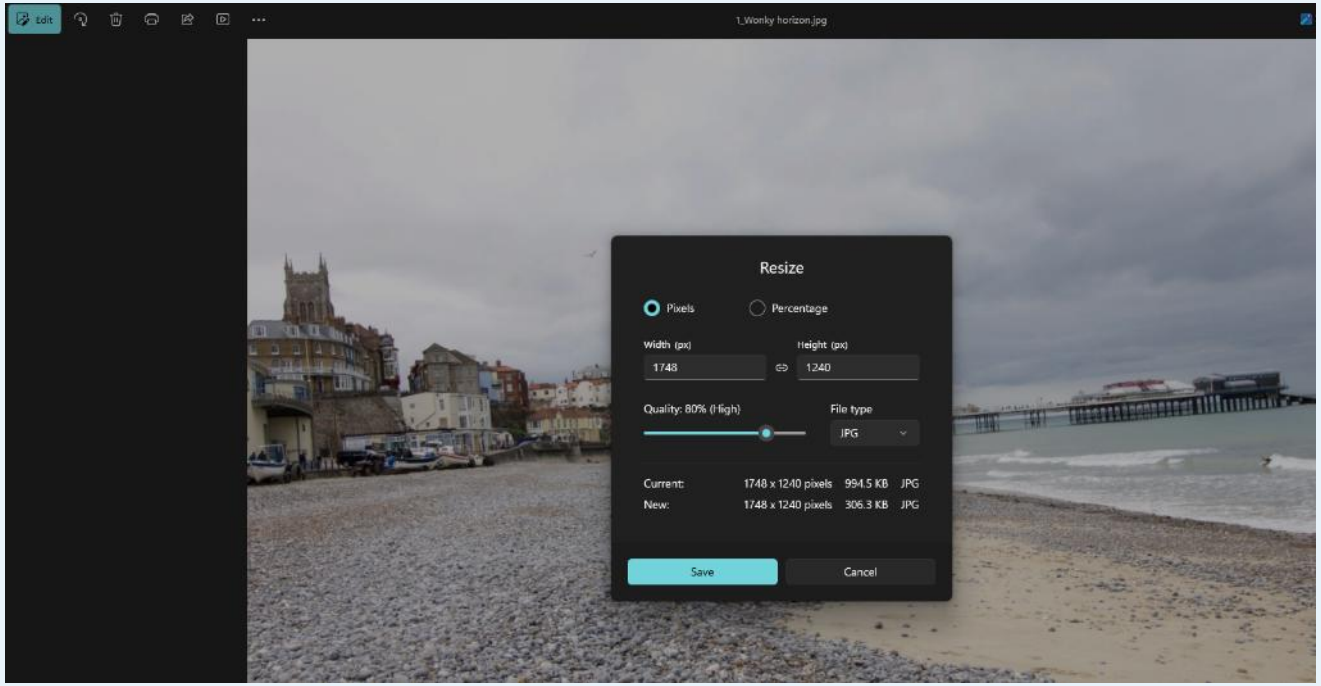
Resizing photos

Before you click on “Edit”, if you click on the 3 dots, one option is to “Resize image”. Click this and a new window will open.

You can resize your image by the number of pixels or by percentage.

You can also adjust the Quality slider (this is the amount of JPG compression applied) and change the file type.

You are shown the current file size and the estimated file size using the changes.



Once you have made your changes, clicking “Save” will open an Explorer window, so you can choose a new filename and/or location. So you can reduce files for emailing and still have the original.

You can also enlarge your image (a bit) !