Moose's Software Valley

Mosaic Maker Extractor

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Introduction

Mosaic Maker Extractor is for Windows 95, 98, ME, NT, 2000, XP, etc.

Mosaic Maker Extractor enables you to create mosaics or pull them apart again into their component images (tiles).

A mosaic is a big picture made out of lots of little pictures.

So, with Mosaic Maker Extractor, you can create your own mosaics or extract the tiles from existing mosaics for further use in other mosaics.

To help you understand / use this program, a "Step by Step 'Getting Started' Guide with Screen Shots" is included below.

Note Well: At this stage, this program only supports **Windows Bitmap (.BMP)** files, so any images (in other formats) that you wish to use will need to be converted first by some other program - such as Microsoft Paint (included with Windows) or Paint Shop Pro.

Developed using 32-bit Delphi.

Why I wrote this program ?

I wrote this program because I have recently been reminded of my fascination with mosaics.

In 2000, I attended an art gallery exhibition that featured (among many dozens of paintings) several computer generated mosaics. e.g. a jet fighter composed of 100's of little jet fighter images.

I thought it would be cool to develop a program of my own to generate mosaics like this. However, because of the many other projects I was working on, I shelved the idea.

Then, in early January, 2005, I found a George W. Bush mosaic made up of all the US soldiers who had died so far in the fight against terrorism.

Although I found this image very distasteful and inappropriate, it did help re-kindle my fascination with mosaics.

So, I sat down over a weekend and thought about how to do the job, and pretty soon I had developed a very early, primitive program to do generate mosaics.

Then, when back at work on Monday, I did an internet search for other mosaic making software, and soon found a bunch of programs. The cheapest of these was $29.95 US.

None of these programs included on-line help or any other form of help or a step-by-step help guide, none were intuitive or easy to use, and none allowed you to extract the images from an existing mosaic, and most were severely crippled and nagged you annoyingly when you used them.

So, over the course of the next fortnight, I extended and improved my program, made it as easy to use as possible, added in extra features that were not in any of the other mosaic programs, and added in the ability to extract tile images from mosaics.

The result is Mosaic Maker Extractor.

I hope you find the program easy to use and useful.

Credits / Thanks

Nil.

Installing and Using this Program

To use this program, unzip the contents of the ZIP file to a directory - such as c:\Mosaic_Maker_Extractor\ - and run the executable file : Mosaic_Maker_Extractor.EXE.

If you want the program to run automatically when Windows starts up, then select this option under the "File" menu in the program.

If you would like to be able to run this program by clicking on an icon in the Windows Start Menu, or on the Desktop, etc then you can use the "Create Shortcut ..." options under the program's File menu.

I hope you find the program easy to use and useful.

Uninstalling this Program

At the present time, there is No Uninstall function.

If you ever want to delete this program
from your computer, then :

- Exit the program, and delete it from wherever you installed it on your hard-drive.
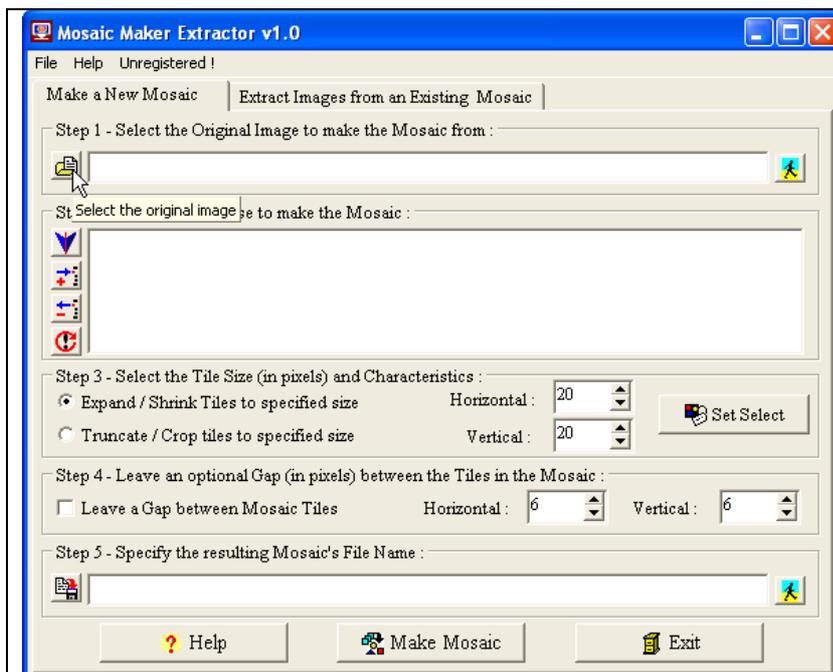
Before doing this however :

- If you have selected / enabled the "Auto-Run at Windows Startup" option (under the File menu), then you should ensure that this option is not checked / enabled (which you can easily do by re-selecting the "Auto-Run at Windows Startup" option from under the File menu).

- If you have used any of the "Create Shortcut ..." options under the File menu, then you should use the "Delete All Shortcuts" option under the File menu to remove these from your system.

Simple as that !

Step by Step "Getting Started" Guide with Screen Shots

In this section, the typical usage of this program will be demonstrated. We will now create a brand new mosaic of an existing image.
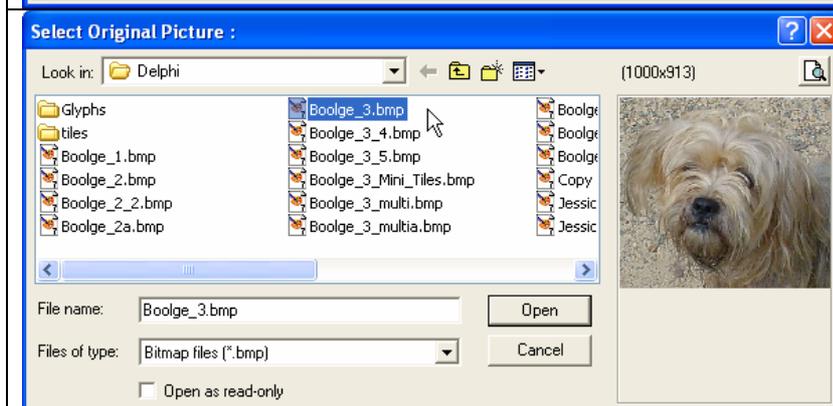
Here we are creating a new mosaic, so we need to use the steps and functionality on the "**Make a New Mosaic**" tab.

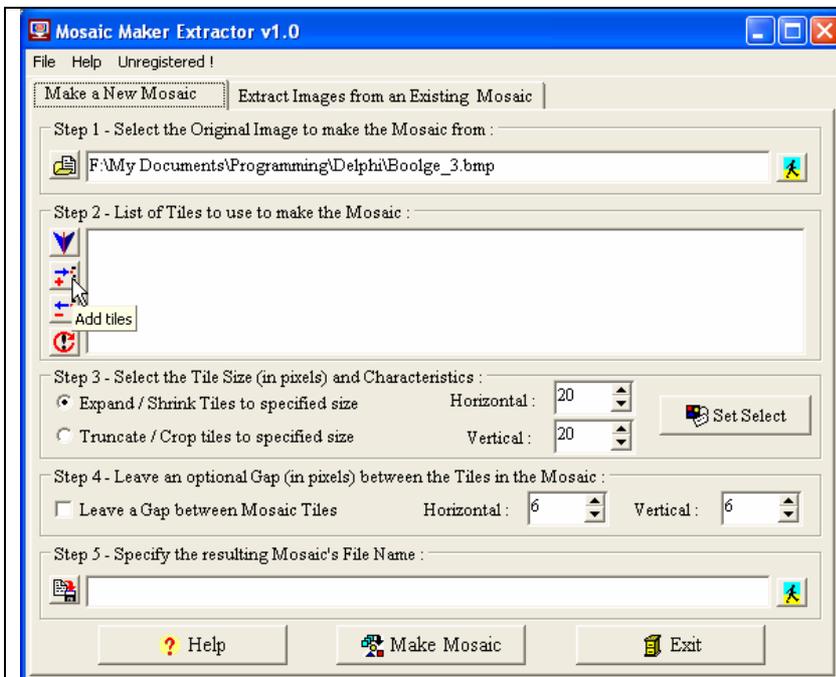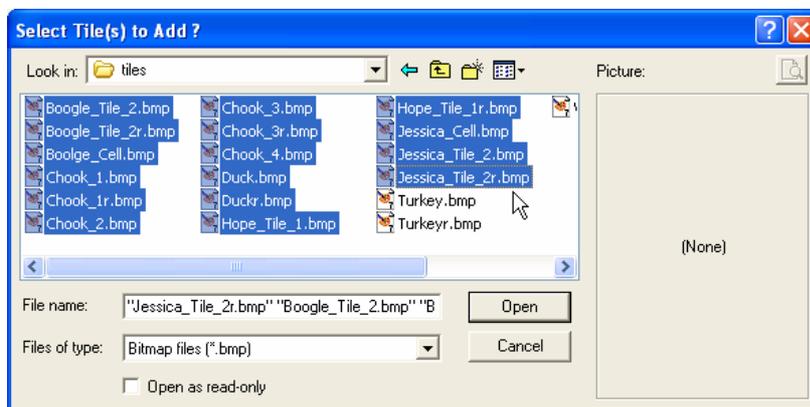|	
	When you first run Mosaic Maker Extractor, the program will appear similarly to the screen shot on the left. The first task (Step 1) is to select the original image that we want to make a mosaic from. To do this, click the little button on the left hand side of the "Step 1" box, as shown in the screen shot on the left.
	When you do this, a "Select Picture" dialog will be displayed allowing you to select the image to make a mosaic from. Here I have chosen a photo of my puppy, Boogle. When you have selected the required image, press the "Open" button to return to the main screen.

As you can see, the selected image file's name is now filled in for "**Step 1**".

Now, we need to select the tiles - i.e. the little images - that will be used to make up the mosaic.

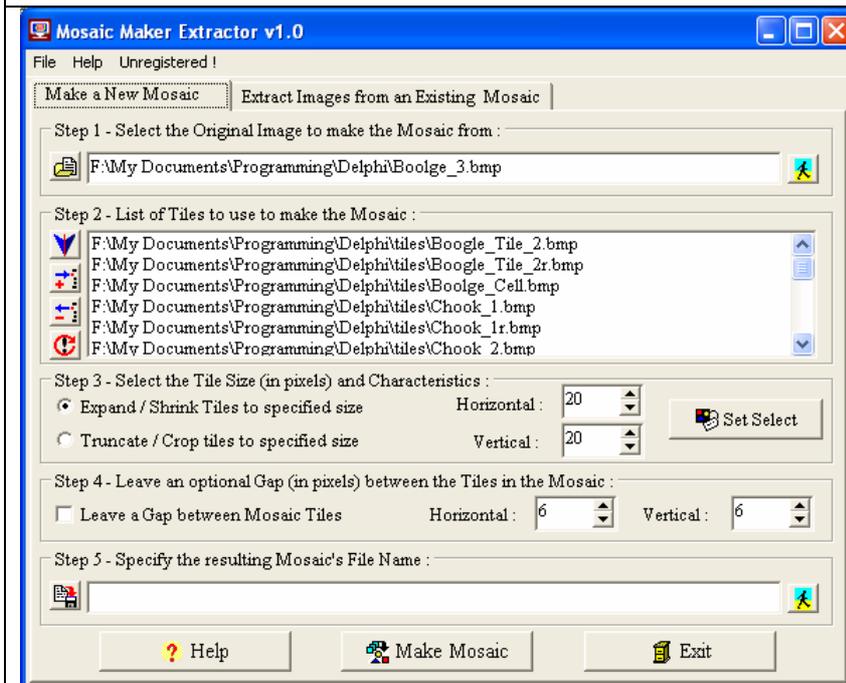Press the add tiles button, as shown in the screen shot on the left.

We can then select one or more tiles to make up our image.

Here I have selected a bunch of tiles.

When you have selected the required tile images, press the "Open" button to return to the main screen.

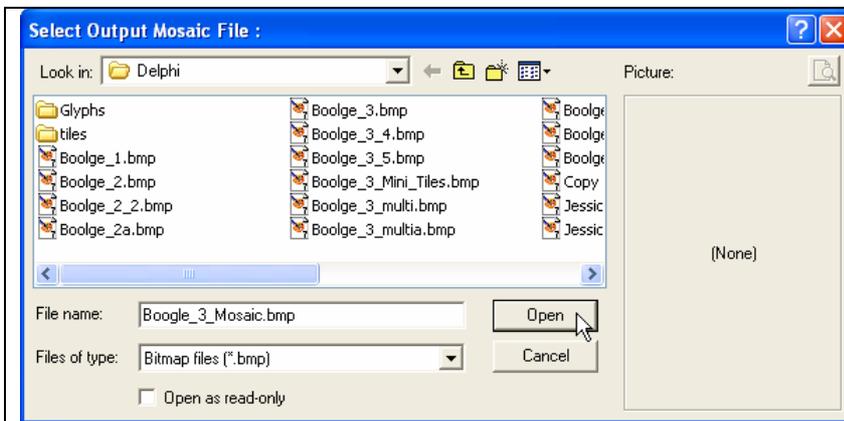Note that we could repeat this step to add images from different drives and directories.

As you can see, the selected tile images file's name are now filled in for "**Step 2**".

In **Step 3**, we can now set the required tile size - i.e. the size of the squares for each cell of then mosaic.
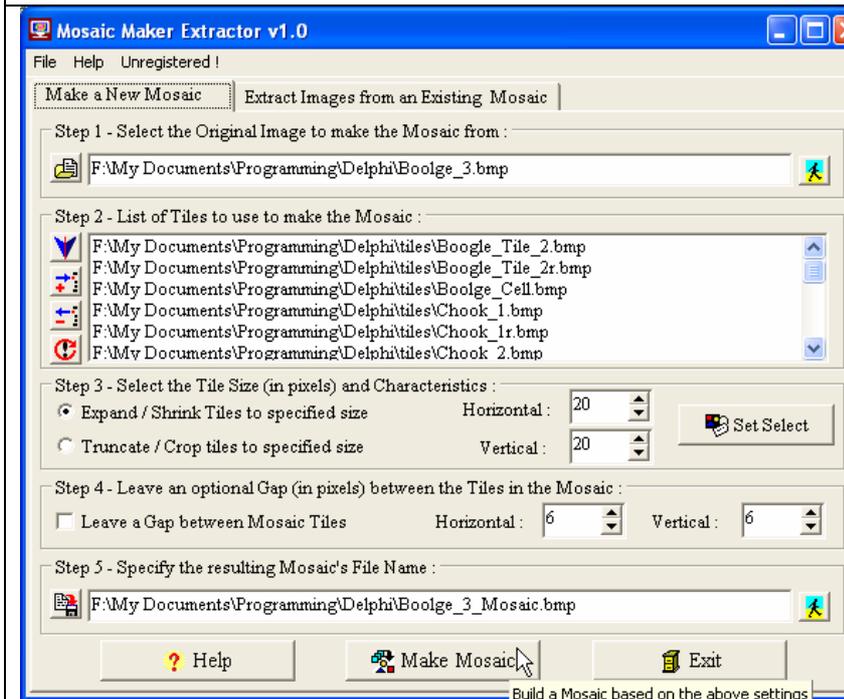
We could also determine what to do it tiles are too big / small to fit in this size.

Finally, in **Step 4**, we could leave a gap between tiles in the finished image.
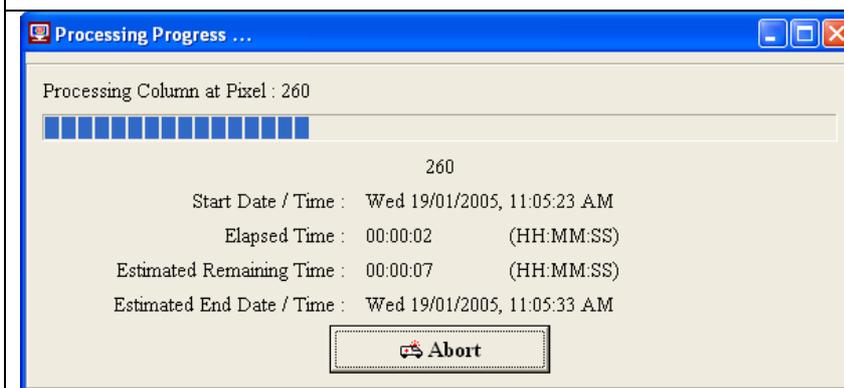
Now we need to enter the destination file name for the Mosaic image.

We can do this by entering the path and file name directly or by pressing the little button on the left hand side of the **Step 5** box and entering a file name or selecting an existing file to overwrite.
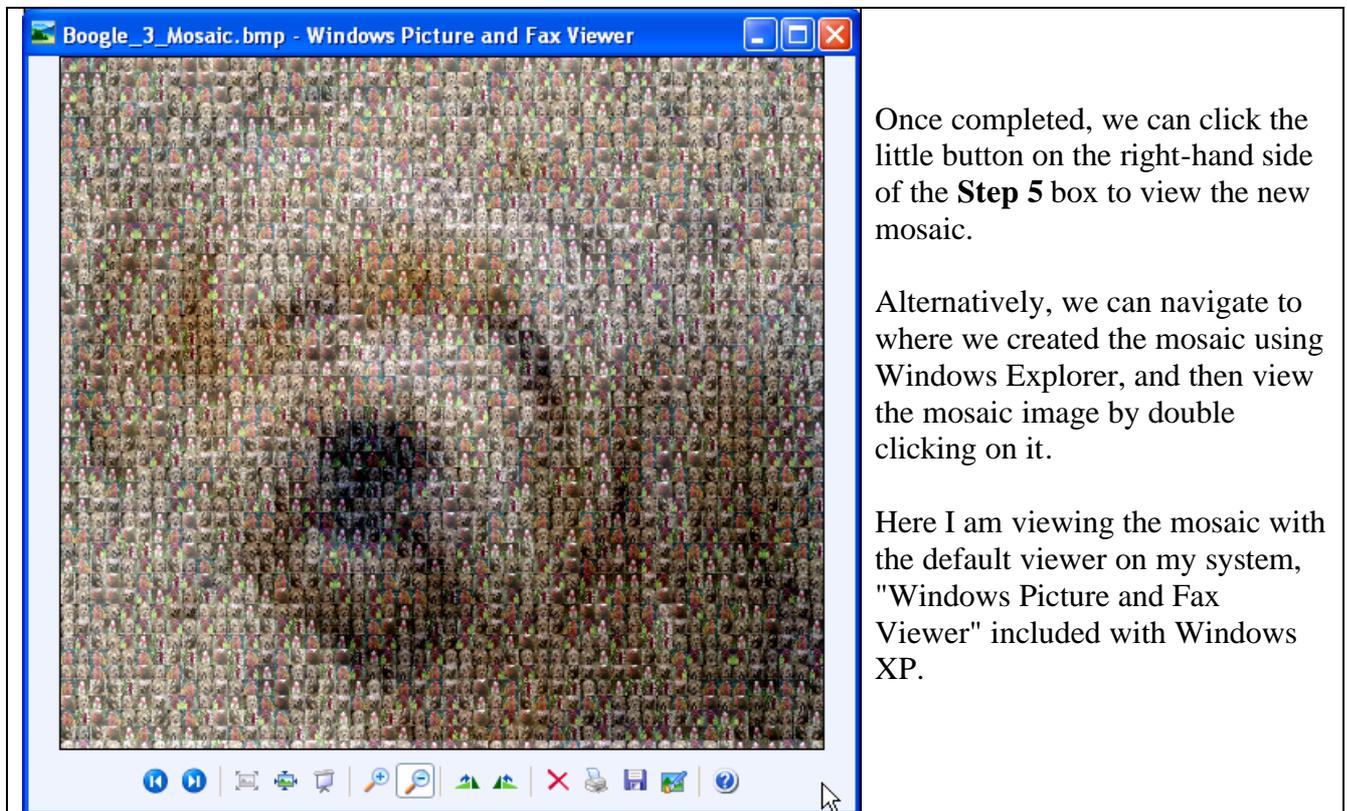

OK, we have entered all the required details for this mosaic.

Now all we need to do is click the "Make Mosaic" button.

As the mosaic is being created a progress dialog will be displayed - telling you when the process started, when the process will be finished, etc.

You can abort the process if desired, or continue until completion.

Once completed, we can click the little button on the right-hand side of the **Step 5** box to view the new mosaic.

Alternatively, we can navigate to where we created the mosaic using Windows Explorer, and then view the mosaic image by double clicking on it.

Here I am viewing the mosaic with the default viewer on my system, "Windows Picture and Fax Viewer" included with Windows XP.

By similar means we can extract the tiles from an existing mosaic by following the steps and using the functionality on the "**Extract Images from an Existing Mosaic**" tab.

If there is anything you are unsure about, or if you would like any additional information added into the above guide, then please email me and let me know.

Limitations / Restrictions of the Program

The Shareware version of this program has the following limitations / restrictions :

- A "Shareware" label is displayed in the Menu area of Text Buttons.

- Every now and then a "You have used this program xxx times, Please Register" message will appear on program start-up.

- You are limited to using **2 tiles per mosaic** in the shareware version.

To remove all the limitations of the shareware version, please Register.

If you use this program, please support my efforts and Register.

Shareware Information

This is NOT free software. The price of this software is **$10**. This product is shareware.

This means that you can try out the software for evaluation purposes without charge for a period of 31 days to enable you to decide whether to purchase / register it.

If you use this software after the 31 day evaluation period please do the right thing and support my efforts and purchase the software.

To purchase (i.e. Register) this software, please complete the Registration Form in the file register.txt (distributed with the program), or use the "View Registration Form" option under the Help menu within the program.

The Future

There are many things I could do with this program in the future, for example :

- Add the ability to enlarge / shrink the original image - to make massive or minute mosaics.

  Currently, the mosaic image will be precisely the same size as the original image.

- Add the ability to make specific tiles more or less likely to occur in the mosaic. i.e. change the randomness of particular tiles.

  Currently, if multiple tiles are selected, then each tile has an equal chances of occurring in the resulting mosaic image.

- Add in support for JPG, GIF, etc files.

  Currently, the program only supports bitmap (.BMP) files.

- Add in "view file" buttons for the mosaic and original images.

  This will mean you don't need to navigate to the images (e.g. using Windows Explorer) to view them.

- Anything else ??

If you would like any of these improvements, or would like to suggest more, please email me and let me know.

Depending on how sophisticated the program becomes in the future, and how much work I do, I may end up charging a small fee to people who wish to use the program.
i.e. it may not always be Freeware.

Warranty

This software and the accompanying files are provided "as is" and without warranties as to performance or merchantability or any other warranties whether expressed or implied.

The user assumes the entire risk of using this software.

If you do find any faults with this program, email me and let me know, and I will do my best to fix it ASAP.

Amendment History

Ver	Date	Details
1.0	19-Jan-2005	First Public Release. (60,245 lines of code / comments.)

If this program was not downloaded from my Home Page, then it is possibly an old version. The latest version of this program is available from my WEB page - see below.

Mike "Moose" O'Malley

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Moose's Software Valley - Established July, 1996.
WEB: http://move.to/moose

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