Gimp beginner's Guide.

This quick overview of gimp 2.8, is designed to complement the gimp beginner guides at
www.youtube.com/user/terryow100

Unless otherwise stated information in this guide is based on the default settings of gimp 2.8, current at time of writing. Where available, relevant youtubes links are displayed.

As with most programs there are usually many different ways to achieve the same results. Choose a way that suits you, and stay consistent. Be methodical.

When things go wrong, don't forget, you can usually undo the action. You can hold down the control key on your keyboard and press the Z key, or click on the select menu in the menu bar and undo the action.

IMPORTANT – Read this section <mark>before</mark> using gimp for the first time.
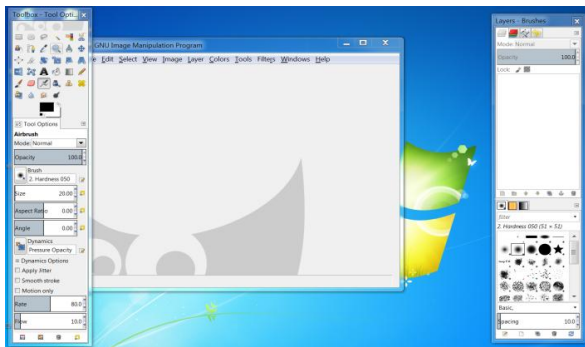

When you first install gimp2.8, it might open in three separate windows. Each window can move and close independently. This is very confusing, and can cause you to cover one panel with another or to accidentally close the wrong panels.

Gimp 2.8 has solved this problem by having a single window mode.
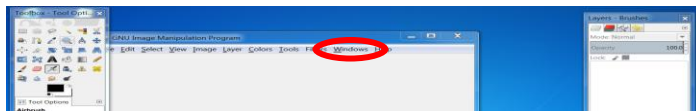
So before you do anything else click on the *windows* menu in the centre panel, and from the menu that appears - click on *Single window mode*.
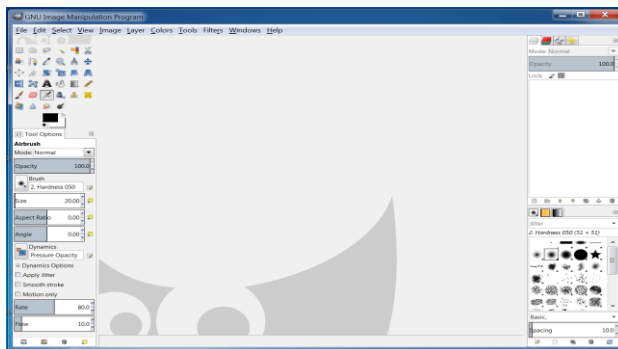
And all of the panels will join together.

Lost layer panel - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dfaR8oiv7k

If you have accidentally closed or lost the layer panel, before changing to the single window mode,
click on *windows* in the centre panel (as above),
hover over - *Recently closed docks*
click on - *layers, channels, paths, undo............*

A quick look around The gimp 2.8 single window mode workspace

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uUvMsWPwEXM

Menu Bar

Tool Box

Tool Options Panel

Layers Panel

Zoom %   Image Window
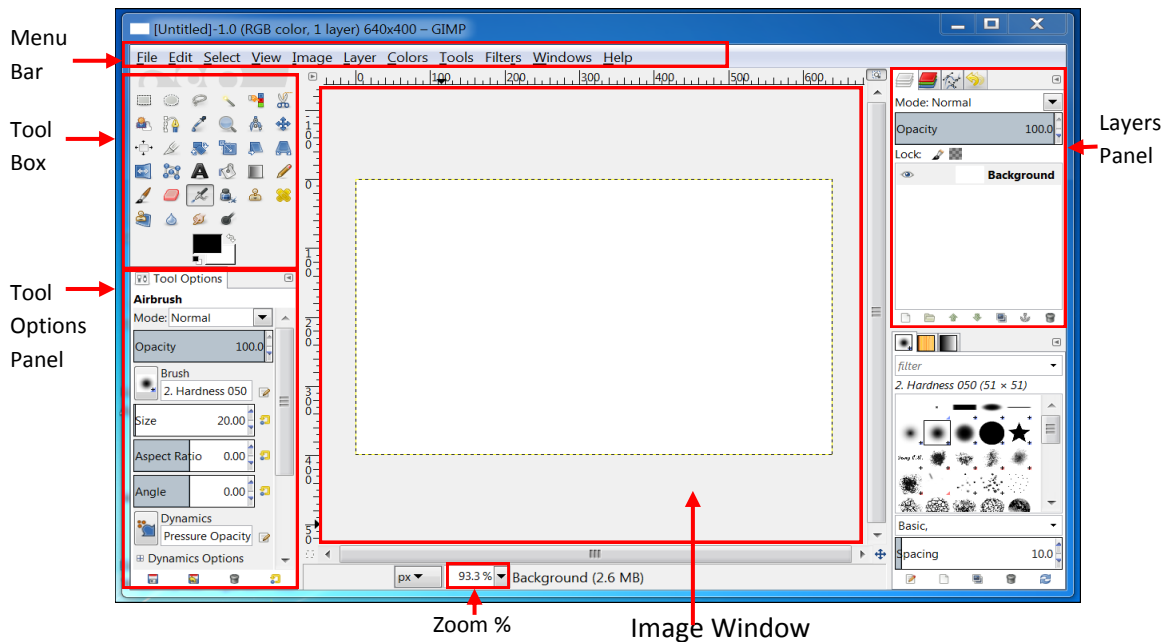
In the single window mode gimp should look something like this.

Along the top is the title bar, it displays the name and size of your project.

Under the title bar is the menu bar, this gives you access to the menus of options.

On the left is the tool box and underneath that is the tool options dialogue box.

In the centre is the Image window, which is where you work on your image.

On the right is the Layers panel.

Along the bottom of the image window the zoom% is displayed (only if you have a project open).

Alter the width of your tool box or layer panel.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H1geM0IU5T0

To adjust the width of your tool box or layers panels, hover your curser over the line between the tool options panel and the image window, or over the line between the image window and the layers panel, and when your curser turns into drag arrows, drag the line in or out.

Open, export and save an image
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mD7k0COhYFc

To start a new project, you can either create a new blank canvas, or open a photo.

To open with a new blank canvas, click on *file* in the menu bar, and click on *new*.

Choose a size or accept the default size, and click *ok*.

Or

To open with a photo, click on *file*, click on *Open* then find and open the photo.

To open additional photos in a project, click on *file*, click on *Open as layers*, and open the photo.

This is your project. You can alter it or save the project as an .xcf file, and it does not affect the original photo, and you can create new photos or images from it.

To turn the project into a new photo in your computer, click on *file*,
click on *export as*, name or rename the photo,
to save it as a jpg photo, check the file is a .jpg
check which area in your computer it is being exported too, and change it if you want,
then click *export* and *export* again, and a copy of the new photo will be sent there.

DO NOT OVERWRITE THE ORIGINAL PHOTO, OR REPLACE IT, unless you are sure you no longer require the original. Create and export a new photo instead.

Jpg files do not support transparencies. (they don't have an alpha channel)
If your image has transparent areas you can save it as a .png file, instead of a jpg, to preserve the transparent areas.

If you want to save the project and keep it open, click on *file*, click on *save*, name it check where it is being saved too, and save it. You can also save it when you close it. You can reopen a project and work on them again later. Gimp projects are saved as .xcf files.

The tool box –

The tool box is on the left of your image window. The tools are probably in the same order as shown, but they may seem different as you may have more or less rows. It depends on the width of your box or panel. To display the names of the tools, hover your curser over them. To select a tool, click on it.

The tool with a rectangle around it is the selected tool.

When your curser is over the image window, it will look like the selected tool.

To deselect a tool, simply click on another. (There is nearly always must be a tool selected)

The tool options dialogue box should be underneath. The options offered vary, depending on which tool is selected.

The Rectangle, Ellipse, and Free select tools -
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Im4Xr3qQUCA

These tools enable you to select and edit a specific area on your image.

To use the rectangle or ellipse select tools, click on it in the tool box, and then drag your curser across your canvas or image to select the area.

When you release the mouse button the marching ants will start running, showing you the selection is complete and you can edit the selected area.

Before you start editing in the selected area you can move the selected area by placing your curser inside it, and when your curser looks like a cross hatch, drag it to the area you want to edit, or resize it by dragging the corners in or out.

You can also select everything outside the area you select by clicking on **select** in the menu bar, and then on **invert**.

When you have finished editing, you need too deselect the area,

Click on **select** in the menu bar => click on **none**.

The free select tool is a little different. First you click on it in the tool box, then you can either click around your desired area, or you can drag your curser around it.

To complete the selection and activate the marching ants, you can click in the first click point again, or you can double click your left mouse button.

Deselect the area by clicking on **SELECT** in the menu bar, and then on **NONE** again.

The pencil, paint and airbrush tools- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=facA3aH8BO8

These tools are similar to use, but they have a slightly different appearance on the same settings.

——————————— Airbrush

▬▬▬▬▬▬▬ Paintbrush
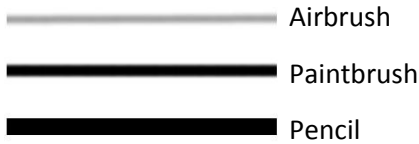
▬▬▬▬▬▬▬ Pencil

The air brush is narrowest and opaque and the pencil is the widest.

To use these tools, click on the one you want, then hold down the mouse button and drag your curser, or to draw straight lines, click the mouse button where you want the line to start, hold down your shift key, then click your mouse button where you want the line to end and release your mouse button.

In the tool options panel under the tool box, you can alter the brush type and size etc.

The eraser tool uses the same options.

The colour tool – change the colour - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMvF4MTThz8
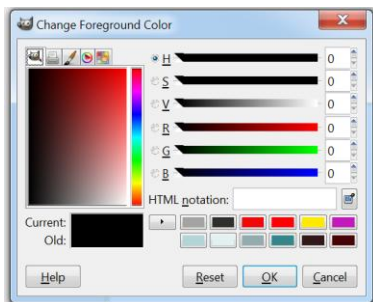
The colour tool is at the bottom of the tool box, just above the tool options panel.

The top square indicates the foreground colour, and the lower square indicates the background colour.

To reverse the colours, click on the double headed arrow, in the top right corner.

To change a colour, click on the relevant square to open a dialogue box.

Click on the vertical stripe to select the colour palette, and then click in the square on the left to select a shade. The colour will not change if you do not select a shade.

Black is always in the top left corner, and
White is in the lower right corner of the shade box.

Click ok to confirm the change.

Click on the small squares in the bottom left corner return the colours to the default settings.

The bucket fill tool

By default the bucketfill tool usually fills with the foreground colour. To fill the entire selection, you will probably need to click on it in the options panel, as by default it is probably set to fill similar colours only.

Besides filling with a solid colour, you can also fill with a pattern. Click on Pattern fill in the options panel, and then to open the pattern menu, click on the pattern icon button below.

The blend tool
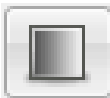
Select blend tool, then select your colours, and drag your curser over the selected area or canvas.

Different stroke directions give different gradient directions, and different lengths of stroke give different effects.

By default it probably blends foreground to background colours in a linear gradient, but you can change the shape type in the in the tool options section. The repeat options also add extra interest easily

The Zoom Tool - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6IeDm2nUt_A

To use the zoom tool, you can drag your curser over the area you wish to zoom up and it will snap to the size of your image window, or you can click on the area you want to zoom up and it will zoom up a little each time you click.

To reduce it again, you can hold down your control key and click on the area again, or you can change the zoom percentage at the bottom of your image window.

There is also a small button at the end of the top ruler in right corner of the image window. It snaps the image up to fill the entire image window.

The Clone and Healing Tools - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2dgD58cJAS0

These tools are very similar except the clone tool copies exactly, while the healing tool does not copy the colour.

To use them you must create the source area by holding down your control key and clicking your left mouse button on the area you want to copy.

Then simply click or drag your curser where you want to copy to.

You can change the brush type and size in the tool options panel.

The Crop Tool - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84bO8RAjZFc

To crop an image, click on the crop tool in the tool box to select it.

If you only want to crop the layer you are on, tick on current layer only in the tool options.

To keep the new image in the same proportions as the original, click on fixed and check aspect ratio is selected.

To change the orientation - click on the landscape or portrait button that you want.

Then drag out a selection and move or resize it.

Press enter on your keyboard to confirm the crop.

The Text Tool - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rp8wRuyfijU

You select the text tool, select the font, select the size and colour, then click on the canvas where you want to place the text, and type it out.

The text is automatically put on a new layer. It will be displayed in the layers panel with a large T and it will be named with the text you typed, but if you alter it, it will be automatically turned into a normal layer.

To move the text after you have typed it, click on move tool, and make sure that your curser is inside a letter, and then drag it. If your curser is not inside a letter itself, the canvas will move instead.

You can alter the text after you have finished and deselected it by selecting the text tool again, checking you are on the text layer in the layers panel, and then clicking in the text box on your canvas. The text box and menus should reappear.

The Scale tool - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQNpIZ5ydbc
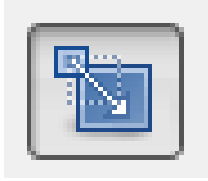
Click on it in the toolbox, and then click on the photo or canvas.
Drag the photo or canvas in or out,
or change numbers and press enter on your keyboard.
If you want to keep your scale in proportion, click on the chain to link it
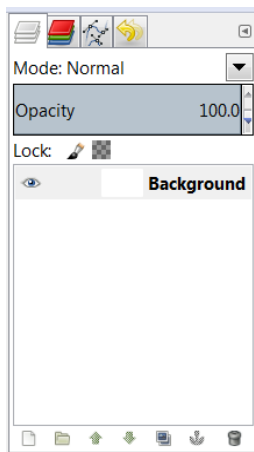
Click on scale to confirm.

The Rotate tool - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCXanTgMv-w

To use the rotate tool,
click on it in the tool box, and then click on the photo or canvas.
Drag the photo or canvas around
or change the numbers and press enter on your keyboard.

Click on rotate to confirm.

Layer Panel - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=al2MlvbA9U8

The layer panel should be on the right of your image window. Each image or canvas you have in a project can be on a separate layer, and each layer can be individually edited. This is the 'magic' of multi layer photo editing programs. If your layers dialogue box isn't displayed, click on the layer icon button along the top.

If you imagine your project is a ring binder or folder of separate pages, and each layer is a page. You can change their order; you can remove some, add more, and duplicate them and more.

You simply click on the layer in the layers panel, and it is selected for working on, even if it isn't visible in the image window.

In this picture, I only have one empty canvas named background.

You can 'Hide' a layer in the image window by clicking on the eye on it in the layers panel. To make the layer visible again click where the eye was.

Along the bottom of the layers panel are buttons you can use to duplicate, move, anchor and delete layers. Simply hover your curser over each one to see what it does.

Occasionally you may edit a layer and gimp puts it onto a "floating" layer. When this happens, you must anchor the floating layer before you can continue.

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<u>Add Alpha Channel</u> **–** to enable deleted areas to go transparent
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsX_2gFwYKU

If deleted areas go white, but you want them transparent - you need to add an alpha channel first. Right click on the layer in the layers panel, then left click on add alpha channel.

<u>Troubleshooting</u>

If a dialogue box opens in an awkward place, simply place curser in darkish bar along the top of it, and drag it to a more convenient area.

If you think a dialogue box should have appeared, check in your task bar, it may have opened underneath your project. Click on the icon to bring it above your project.

The yellow perforated line that appears around layers is a layers boundary guide only, and does not appear on finished photos or images. You can hide it if it is distracting by clicking on the view menu in the menu bar, then clicking on show layer boundary, to untick it.

To deselect a tool, click on another.

If you expect something to happen and it doesn't appear too,

- Click on select in the menu bar and check you haven't accidentally left something selected, or if you want something selected, check it is.
- Check that you haven't got a dialogue box open underneath your window.
- Check that you haven't got a floating layer, waiting to be anchored.
- Check that the layer is visible.
- Check your colours eg, are you trying to use white text, on a white background?
- Always check you have selected the layer you want to edit.
- If you want to bucketfill an area on an image, and it doesn't seem to work properly, make sure **fill whole selection** in the tool options is checked.

If your tool options panel becomes unattached, place your curser in the little icon button in the top left corner, drag it back and it should snap back into the left side.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHtI3wYud9k

When things go wrong, usually you can undo the actions - you can hold down the control key on your keyboard and press the Z key, or click on the select menu in the menu bar and undo the action.