

Instructions for
using Paint.Net
and making
covers for your
book.

<http://lboeckl.50webs.com>

Creating Covers

In creating the covers for your book you have several different ways you can choose to design your cover. The first and simplest method is to select one of the covers designed by Lulu. If you select one of her covers and then essentially the only decision you must make is whether or not to have your name and title of the book on that cover. There is nothing you really have to do other than press a few buttons. The second way is to select one of Lulu's designs from her gallery and then download and customize it to your liking. This will involve using the Paint.Net program but is still very simple to do with the checklist and instructions. The third way to go is to create the covers in the Paint. Net. Program and then upload them. A little more complicated but still a very manageable set of work items. The only thing you won't be able to do with all three of these options is too design anything for the spine of the book. If your book is long enough Lulu

will allow you to select the text and color for the spine but no custom images. If you really want a custom image on the spine then you would be required to do what they call a one piece cover and that is complicated. It is complicated because there are many variables involved, including calculating the actual spine width of your finished book. Upon determining those numbers you would then have to tackle making a cover with those numbers correctly factored in, that it is centered in all three sections of the book exterior. This was written for you to succeed in getting published and for sale onto Amazon therefore I am not going to introduce a topic where I am not 100% confident that I can checklist it and that you could do it without having to struggle or fear that you can do it.

As you might have guessed then the chapter will be divided into three sections addressing the three different types of cover projects. I recommend you review all three sections. Let's get started.

Checklist Step 2.0: Reviewing Lulu's own cover designs.

The decision you must make here is predicated on whether or not you like Lulu's cover designs. In order to do this you must now go to Lulu's website and look over her covers.

__ Go to Lulu's website and scroll down the left hand side banner. Under Book FAQs there is a link to book cover FAQs. Click it.

__ The first answer in the FAQ has a link labeled “View the gallery covers here”. Click it. A window will pop up after 15 or 20 seconds showing you all of Lulu’s cover designs. Once you have reviewed them you must make a decision as to whether or not you want to use one of them. If you do want to use one of Lulu’s stock covers unmodified, then the only thing you need to know is how to determine Hex color values for your spine and rear cover. Therefore I do recommend that you review the next checklist in order to see some other options available to you and how to determine matching colors for your books spine and rear cover.

Checklist Step 2.1: Modifying Lulu’s covers.

If you have found one of Lulu’s covers that you really think speaks to your book then let’s download it and talk about the issues surrounding using one of Lulu’s covers.

__ To download a cover by Lulu, click on the link just below the image labeled “download this cover”. It will pop up in a window a few moments.

__ Right click anywhere on the displayed image and another smaller dialogue box will pop up next to your pointer.

__ Select copy image from the window. You have now copied the cover into the memory of your PC. It is not stored anywhere yet so don’t shut down your PC till you saved the image in memory.

__ Open the Paint.Net program.

__ Go to heading labeled view. Select it and then select Ruler. You will see a ruler across the top and the left side of your screen in the program.

__ Go back to that same heading and make sure the setting is inches and not pixels. If the pixels entry is checked then click on the inches entry just above it to change what type of numbers the ruler will show you. You will need this to make decisions as to what is centered on your cover.

__ On the headings at the top of the program select Edit.

__ Then select Paste. Just paste, not any of the other option. Once you do this the cover will appear in the paint program. Now that you have the image in the program you can see that is much larger than what you need for a book cover. How did I know this?

__ Go to the menu heading at the top of the program and select “Image” and then select “Resize” from the menu. This will bring up the resolution and the size of the image you have selected. You can see both the pixels and the size in inches. The size you need for our cover is a width of 6.25” by a height of 9.25”. Before you change any of the settings however you need to increase the resolution to 300 pixels per inch.

__ Highlight the 96.00 number already in the resolution

box and then type 300.

__ In the Resampling box uncheck maintain aspect ratio. If you didn't do this then when you changed a dimension in the Print Size box the other dimension would automatically change to a size that you don't want.

__ Now in the Print Size boxes go to the Width box. Highlight that number and type in 6.25.

__ Now in the Print Size boxes go to the Height box. Highlight that number and type in 9.25.

__ Click Ok and the image was resized for you. I recommend saving that image right now.

__ Click on File and select Save As. When the window appears then you must give your cover image a name.

__ I recommend saving the file as a PNG file for now but you could also save it as a JPG. Lulu will accept either format for your covers. I get nervous with JPG though because it does compression on your image and I don't know if that could affect the image quality. With that your image is now saved onto your PC.

With this paint program you can do many things to that image. You could draw on it. You could paste other images onto it and of course you can title the image anything that strikes your fancy. Just remember that this image is a quarter of inch (0.25") to big for your book. It will be trimmed down when it is printed

so make sure that you don't get close to the edge of the image when you are laying it out for use in your book. The second issue that I want you to understand is regarding cover colors. Not the marketing issues but the technical issues. I have read that due to the technology of POD printing that sometimes when darker covers are selected that you can get a light line where the spine meets the front and back covers. I don't know this to be true but just some cautionary advice.

Let's go over some instructions on how to modify your cover that you saved in the previous step. If you would like to type some words on your cover do the following.

__ In the lower left is a box which allows you to pick colors. In the upper right side that is a box labeled "more". Click on it now. You now see more information about any color you will select.

__ Click on color in the big round circle or from the box beneath that circle in order to select a color for your words that you are going to type on your cover.

__ Click on the symbol that looks like a capital A on the left hand side toolbar labeled "Tools". It is about two thirds of the way down in that toolbar.

__ There is a box labeled "Font" above the image. Select the font you would like to type in.

__ To the right of the Font box is a number box. You can select up to 72 from the box by scrolling down the

right side of it. What I want you to do is now type 140 into that box. This way you will be able to see what you are typing.

__ Move your pointer to the middle of the image and type testing 123. You can now see that text on the image. A few notes for manipulating your text in this program. When you move your pointer over the symbol that looks like a cross, your pointer turns into a hand. When your pointer is a hand you can drag your text anywhere on that image. If you look on the right side of the screen you will see a box labeled “History”. At the bottom of the box is where you can undue what you have just typed. This is very handy for quickly making corrections when you make mistakes.

Hex Color Values:

Pay particular attention to the box on the middle right labeled Hex. When you click on a color either in the big round circle or from the box beneath that circle, the color you selected will produce a specific Hex code as to what that color is. It is displayed in the Colors box whenever you have selected a color. You don't need to know what the hex code is for the letters you typed but you will have to know what colors blend well for your spine and your rear cover. That is because Lulu requires that input the hex value for what colors you want on your covers. The other method they give is to select from a few colors in a box from her website but it really is limited. Don't use that method. Instead use the method where you tell her what hex values you want. To show you how to determine the colors that match your cover and their values let's do the following.

__ Select the Paintbrush symbol for the Tools toolbar.

__ After you have selected the paintbrush you need to increase the brushes size you need in order to see it on the cover. Go to the Brush Width box above the image and select 100. That's really big, you should see this color very easily now.

__ Go to the colors box and select a color you think might look good for the spine of your book.

__ After having selected the color now go to the left side of your image and you will see the pointer turn into a bulls eye. While holding down the left mouse button drag the line all the way down your image. You should see very clearly now if you have found a good complimentary color for your book. If you hate the color go back to the History box and select the undue button and then continue choosing other colors till you have found that you want for your spine. Once you have found that color then write that number down! In fact I would copy it from the Color box and paste it into your book, labeling what that number means. I recommend that you should now paste that hex color value onto the copyright page somewhere. I will include a step later to make sure you have removed that from your book before it goes for publication (**Checklist Step**). Once you have found the perfect color you need for your books cover, you really don't want to loose it.

Checklist Step 2.2: Custom Cover

The reason I had you look at how to manipulate Lulu's cover was so that you didn't have to explain the same material twice in this section as well. You can go straight into making a totally custom image rather simply and quickly now.

___ Open up your paint program and select File and New. In the dialog box that popped up make sure that you change the resolution to 300 and input the values of 9.25" for height and 6.25" for width.

___ You are now looking at a blank canvas so to speak. If you want a color field then select the color you want the color field to be from the Colors box.

___ Then select the paint bucket from the Tools toolbar and move your pointer into the image somewhere.

___ Left click the mouse button and you should see your image get completely repainted the color that you chose for it.

You can do other things too. You have reviewed these possibilities in the previous checklist so no need to repeat them here. There are some other possibilities that I didn't mention though. You can do things like open pictures up into the paint program and copy all or part of them onto your covers. To copy or all or part of another image into your cover image do the following steps.

___ Go to your tools toolbar and select the Rectangle

tool in the left hand corner. Move your pointer into an image that you want to copy.

__ Holding down the left mouse button highlight the areas of the picture you would like to copy. Release when you have the portion of the picture you would like to copy.

__ Go to the Edit menu and select copy.

__ Open up the cover image you want to paste the detail into.

__ Go back to the Edit menu and select paste. You can then move the image around your cover wherever you would like it to be by holding down the left mouse button while you move the detail around.

You can see just how easily you can get very creative for covers that are custom or by modifying Lulu's own cover designs. Since you will need to spend some time here I recommend that you do. I also recommend that you play with the image editing program. I won't detail the functions but it is quite powerful and can do anything that you can think of to an image for you. So explore it so that you are comfortable with it when you really get serious in producing your covers. In the next chapter you will take everything you have created and upload these files to Lulu. I hope you are as excited as I am at this point as you are not very far from ordering your proof copy of your book!

