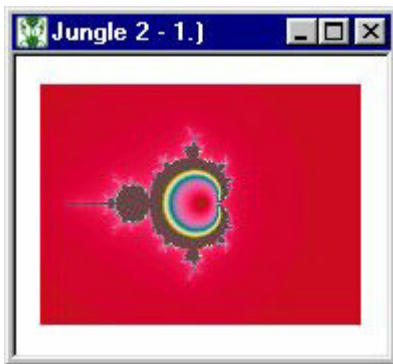



Tiera-Zon Tutorial


Since you are visiting this tutorial, I suspect that you may have been bitten by the "fractal bug". This tutorial is written for a freeware fractal program called [Tiera-Zon](#). Go download the program if you don't already have it since you will need it for this tutorial. This program is not exactly "intuitive" so I have written this tutorial to help you get familiar with the program and how it functions.

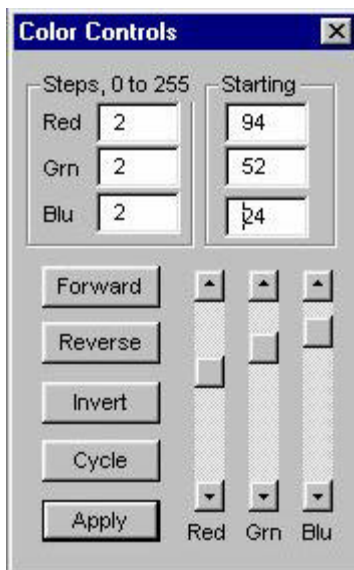
So, lets get started.

Open a new document (CTRL N). Up pops your basic fractal starting point. You might want to open another at this time so you can have two images to work on at the same time.



Now, before you jump right in it's best if you learn how things work. The first thing you might want to do is to change the size of your fractal image. To do this, click on the  button on the left toolbar (or right click and choose "XY Size). I recommend starting with a setting of 256x256 or 320x240 (you can always resize it later) since the larger your image, the longer it will take for it to render. If you set it to 256x256 you have defined a square image. When you "zoom in" later, your image will always stay a square. On the other hand, if you define a rectangle and zoom in, the image stays a rectangle. If you are working on designing a tileable image, you're better off starting with a square image. For purposes of this tutorial, choose 256x256.

OK, now you have your basic image the size you want it and now you may want to change the colors of your basic image. To do this click on the  button on the left toolbar (or right click on the image and choose "Color Controls"). The color control window will pop up:



The "Steps" part of the toolbar determines the intensity of colors. Leaving it at 2 is a good compromise, but of course, experiment! The sliders increase/decrease the amount of red, green and blue in the graphic. You can also just type in the numbers you want. Up decreases, down increases. You can also click on the "Cycle" button and watch your colors cycle through. If you find a combination you like, hit the "Apply" button. **Tip:** If you have several images open at one time, you will need to right click on the image you are working on and choose the Color Controls to activate it for that graphic. If you leave your Color Control panel open on your work space, it will only work with the graphic you were on when you opened it. Lets start with all steps 2 and colors set to R: 94, G: 42 and B: 24.

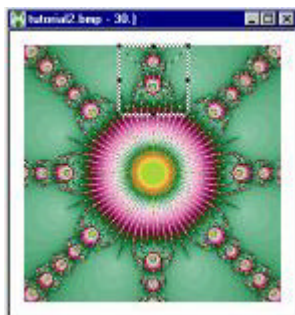
Now, lets get into the heart of the program. The first menu you want to explore is the "Draw" menu. This menu gives you a lot of preset starting points. So, let's start with the Drop-Down menu from Newton/Mandel N/M Sets (just because these are my favorites). Click on the first choice (18). Wow...a completely different image. You will notice that this menu has an Undo choice. If you choose Undo, you will revert back to the basic image. But, with the "Draw" features it is unnecessary because when you choose a new "draw", the program goes back to the basic image and starts again. You can verify this by choosing a couple of "draws" from the menu on one image you have open, then on the other image, go directly to the last draw you chose. You will see that both images are the same. The Undo feature is used mostly to undo filters. There doesn't seem to be a shortcut in this program for the undo key (hint...hint to the author).


Scroll through some of the settings to get the hang of it. Then, choose setting 30. You should now have an image that looks like this:



Now, we're going to pick out an interesting section of this fractal and zoom in on it. But, before we do this, save your image so that we can recall the original image. Choose File|Save and name it "tutorial". Then choose File|Save As and name this "tutorial_1". When save an image in this program, it saves the image and the parameters for the image (the *.zar files). Or, as an alternative, you can save only the parameters (File|Save Parameters). To get your parameters back, just open a new graphic and load your saved parameters (File|Load Parameters).

Ok, now let's zoom in on part of this image. To do this, left click and drag surrounding an area defined as follows:

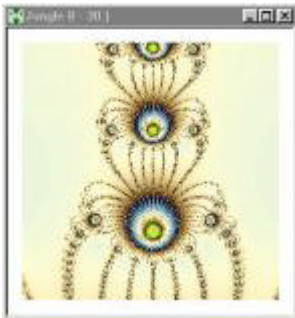


This will create a square selection. You can move your selection by left clicking and dragging it. Try to get it aligned squarely around the central image. Now, right click and choose "zoom into rectangle". If you click on the "New View on Zoom" button  on the left tool bar, the program will create a new image of just the area you zoomed in on, otherwise the program renders the zoom in the current window. It is generally a good idea to have the program create a new graphic for a zoom, since you can't "undo" a zoom. Keep playing with the zooms for practice. **Tip:** If you select your entire graphic and Zoom in on it with the New View on Zoom button depressed, you will end up with an exact copy of the current state of your fractal. This can save you time if you are off on a tangent and you think you might want to go back to your original.

Now, go back to your first zoomed image that should look approximately as follows:



Bring up your color control box again and reset the RGB to R: 35, G: 49 and B: 17. You should now have an image that looks like:



Wow, what a difference color can make! Now, go back to our original image we saved as "tutorial.bmp".

We are now going to work with the filters menu. Start with Filters-1. The filters are divided into sections. This is because each section creates pretty much the same filter effect with variations. If you try a filter in one set that you don't like, undo your work (Undo from the Draw menu) and move on to the next section. Cruise through Filters-1 and Filters-2 and Filters-3, trying out various filters while choosing "undo" to move on to the next filter. Unlike the "Draw" feature that goes back to the base image and starts a new "draw", the Filters build upon each other so you will need to undo each try to preserve your base image as the starting point. The filters under the menu choice "Filters-3" that have an "FD" in them activate the menu to the right FD-Options. These filters build on the FD filters in Filters-3.

Now, let's move on to the Colors-1 menu choices. No need to hit "undo" here. The colors always go back to the base image before applying to the graphic. You can verify this by opening the Tutorial and Tutorial_1 graphics side by side. Then apply a color, move on down and apply a few more. Now, choose the last one you applied and apply it to the other graphic. They should look identical. If you want to go back to your original image, choose the top choice Method 0 [None]. Scroll your way down the color choices to see how it works. You will see that the color algorithms are applied to the basic structure of your fractal with various effects applied (such as swirls). If you come across a color application you particularly like, write down the number for future reference. Or, if you really like the image, save it and then move on.

Next, let's check out the Convolve menu. Be careful with these selections since some "undo" back to your original image. The most useful are the last group, Average, Sharpen, etc. Each of these pops up with a box that allows you to "apply" the effect then "undo" the effect

which takes you back to the original image.

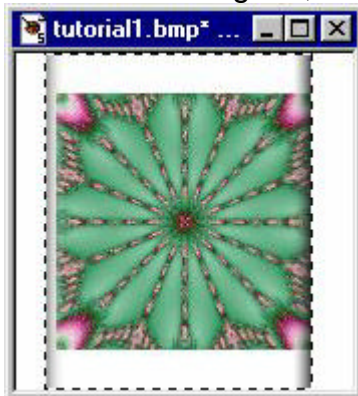
Now, close both your tutorial images and open them again. You will notice that you have check marks by the "Draw" option we chose and would have check marks by the Filter options if we had applied them. But, notice that the "color" button on the tool panel is greyed out. That means that you can't use the panel to change colors. Don't worry, you can get the ability back by "redrawing" the image. Choose another "draw" option, allow it to render, then go back to your original choice (30). Your color controls are back. This also works when you have saved an image with a "colors" menu option. If you "redraw" the image then go back to your original, you will then be able to use the color controls.

That's the basics of the program. This should get you off to a good start creating fractals. The keys to remember are, save images often (you can always delete them later) and zoom in to create new images to work with.

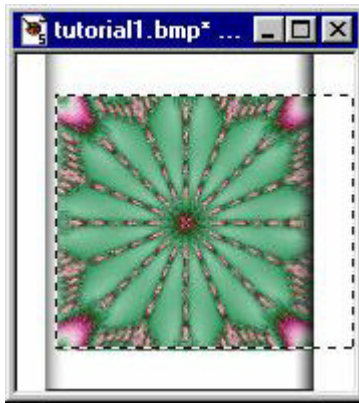
Now, some of you may have noticed the resemblance between our Tutorial image and the sidebar graphic on this page. Well, that's because the sidebar was made from the tutorial image. Making fractals can be a lot of fun, but not very practical. On the other hand, they make great sidebar graphics. To create this sidebar graphic, you will need the [Filters Unlimited](#) plugin. If you don't already own this plugin (it's only \$35), I highly recommend you purchase it immediately. It has 150 great filters built in and the program gives you the ability to import all Filter Factory plugins into one convenient location, rename the filters, move the filters into categories, test the filters with the "randomize" button and save presets of the filters.

To create this sidebar image:

1. Apply the Filters Unlimited filter under Tile & Mirror|Radial Tile with a setting of Rotation: 129 and Zoom: 86.
2. Resize the graphic by 50%.
3. Add symmetrical white borders of 20.
4. Make a selection as demonstrated in the following image and apply the Buttonize Effect set to Height 1, Width 10, Opacity 90, Transparent Edge.



5. Crop your image as demonstrated below:



6. Add a right border of 1,000 and save your graphic.
7. I adjusted the Highlight/Midtone/Shadows because the image was kind of washed out after the resize.

I have created a couple of very nice top border backgrounds with this program, PSP and Filters Unlimited filters. Click on the original image below I created in Tiera-Zon (and then applied Filters Unlimited filters to create the tilable image) to see the background tile I made from the original fractal images.

