

Dear very beginners.

I am writing this from my own experience and observations of others to help you along your journey of digital imaging.

Five years ago I bought my first PC and was very anxious to generate award winning slides with just a push of a button. To this day I have not found that magic button. What I did find was a lot of challenges on the way to those awards.

The following paragraphs are meant to help you along and not discourage you; we really want you to enjoy your new hobby.

The very basic and most important skill you need is some basic understanding of how your PC's operates and some understanding of the file system it uses.

To offer a guide line to judge your basic skills I would say: if you got here on your own to read this article and you can create a new folder on your hard drive and give it your name and then transfer this article to it. Then you are ready to go to the next step.

How to get your images into the PC so you can create great slides? For starters I would have Kodak put them on a Photo CD for you. That is good enough for now until you get some experience. The next investment would be a scanner; there are flatbed scanners for hard copy prints and film scanners for slides. Good film scanners can cost as much as PC. Flatbed scanners can be had at bargain prices.

The other important investment is the software program that lets you create all this magic.

The premier program is of course Adobe PhotoShop. It is used by professionals and other digital heads and it costs about \$600 dollars (it is harder to learn than some others).

There are other programs that are easier to learn for first time users like the following list.

Adobe deluxe home edition

Microsoft Picture it

Soap II

The above mentioned programs are menu driven and are easy to follow. They let you alter your photos, create greeting cards using your photos; good practice for the next step in your journey.

The following programs are icon driven programs similar to Photoshop. They are more advanced than the menu driven programs and do basically the same as Photoshop but not as deep.

Photo Impact

Picture Publisher

Jask Paint shop Pro

Photoshop Elements also fits into this category. It offers a lot of the basic tools as the expensive Photoshop plus it has some helpful recipes build in to help you along and it only costs about \$100 dollars instead of \$600.

The next step then would be the all mighty Photoshop. It took me 5 years to get to this point; it was an uphill journey all the way with some very nice rewards along the way. Chances are you get there a lot sooner because you are smarter.

Enjoy the journey. Dieter