

## PAINTERS 101

It seems that many people, especially drivers racing in leagues, like to create their own paint schemes. This document and the templates provided (per the table below) have been created to enable drivers to create paint schemes using the same process as we have to create all of the official paint schemes included with NASCAR SimRacing.

The templates accompanying this document are named and used as per the table below.

TEMPLATE	USAGE (assumes latest patch is installed).
EAS - Truck.psd	Craftsman Truck Series - 2004
Chevy - Monte Carlo.psd	NASCAR National Series - 2004 NEXTEL Cup Series - 2004 NEXTEL Cup Series - 2005
Dodge - Charger.psd	NEXTEL Cup Series - 2005
Dodge - Intrepid.psd	NASCAR National Series - 2004 NEXTEL Cup Series - 2004 NEXTEL Cup Series - 2005
Ford - Taurus.psd	NASCAR National Series - 2004 NEXTEL Cup Series - 2004 NEXTEL Cup Series 2005

In addition to this document and the templates, creating the paint schemes will require a couple of tools and some knowledge of these tools. Here's what you need:

### Adobe - Photoshop - 6.00, 7.00, CS or CS2

A 30 day trial version of Adobe - Photoshop - CS2 can be downloaded from <http://www.adobe.com/products/tryadobe/main.jsp#product=39>

Note that Adobe - Photoshop - Elements cannot be used to fully edit the templates provided.

### NVIDIA - Photoshop - DDS Plugins

The NVIDIA - Photoshop - DDS - Plugins can be downloaded for free from [http://developer.nvidia.com/object/photoshop\\_dds\\_plugins.html](http://developer.nvidia.com/object/photoshop_dds_plugins.html).

Creating paint schemes and especially sharing them with others can be very rewarding but it can take even an experienced artist many days or even weeks to create a high-quality paint scheme.

If you are just learning to paint, take your time and be patient. The table below provides some good sources of information for anyone learning how to use Adobe - Photoshop and some of the techniques referenced within this document.

<http://www.good-tutorials.com/>  
<http://www.photoshopsupport.com/>

If you have never painted maps before, start off by experimenting with small changes to the schemes included in the templates and getting those working in the game. As you understand the process better and learn more, you'll find it easier to work up to creating more complex paint schemes such as that of the #24 car.

## INSTALLING THE TOOLS

The tools that you will use to paint must be installed as per the instructions below:

Install Adobe - Photoshop - 6.00, 7.00, CS or CS2 using the instructions provided.

Download and install the NVIDIA - Photoshop - DDS Plugins.

To install the NVIDIA - Photoshop - DDS Plugins, simply double-click on the executable file downloaded and follow the instructions provided. The installation process will automatically detect the location at which you have installed Adobe - Photoshop and recommend the appropriate path for installation.

## RESEARCH & DESIGN

After installing the tools, the next steps in creating a paint scheme are research and design.

If you intend to recreate the design of a real race car, try to find as many photographs as possible.

Search also for sponsor logos and especially good reference for the numbers. The numbers can be especially difficult to find and ultimately you may have to create these yourself using the numbers from fonts that use the style of the number you are looking for.

When looking for reference materials, the larger the source image you can find the better because you will lose a lot of image quality when resizing to make an image bigger, but very little when resizing to make an image smaller.

## THE TEMPLATES

After loading a template, be sure to save it with a different name to avoid overwriting the original template. Always be sure to save your work-in-progress paint scheme in the same (.PSD) format as used by the original template.

From the Window menu of Photoshop, ensure that you have the Layers option checked.

Each Template consists of a WHEELS/TIRES Layer and 5 Layer Sets named UV GUIDES, WINDOWS & DETAILS, LIGHTS & HIGHLIGHTS, DECALS & BASE. Each of the named layer sets contains layers with art in each, forming part of the layer set. The Layers window allows you to expand and collapse each layer set in order to access and edit the layers within.

**Note that the order of the layers and the layer sets is important and must remain in order as provided so that your paint scheme may be exported and displayed correctly in the game.**

Explore each of the layer sets of the template, turning layers on and off to see how each layer contributes to the overall paint scheme.

### **UV GUIDES**

This layer set contains outlines of the 3D model on which your paint scheme is mapped.

### **WINDOWS & DETAILS**

This layer set contains details that are standard to the relevant model, regardless of the underlying paint scheme.

### **LIGHTS & HIGHLIGHTS**

This layer set contains lighting and highlighting details that are standard to the relevant model, regardless of the underlying paint scheme.

### **DECALS**

This layer set contains details such as numbers and sponsors that are most often unique to the paint scheme.

### **BASE**

This layer set contains the base-color and other layers creating patterns that are most often unique to the paint scheme.

The BASE and DECALS layer sets are those that you will edit the most to create your own paint schemes.

Editing the Sponsors layer found within the DECALS layer set is a perfect place to start learning.

To create more complex paint schemes such as that of the #24 car, you would add extra layers to the BASE layer set and then cut out patterns into these layers so as to create the flames etc.

## **INTEGRATING YOUR PAINT SCHEME**

In order to see your paint scheme in the game you must integrate it into the game. In order to integrate your paint scheme, you will need to know where you have the game installed (the default installation directory is C:\Program Files\EA SPORTS\NASCAR SimRacing) and be comfortable with copying and renaming directories and files using windows explorer.

By way of example, let's assume that you have created a Dodge - Charger paint scheme that you wish to apply to the #12 car.

## CREATING A TARGET DIRECTORY

The first thing you must do to integrate your newly created paint scheme is create a new 'Target Directory' for it.

Start Windows Explorer and navigate your hard drive to select the directory where your game is installed using the left window. Upon selecting your game directory in the left hand window, you will notice that the right hand window updates to display a list of the directories and files contained within the selected game directory. Use Windows Explorer to navigate within the game directory to:

### **NASCAR SimRacing\GameData\Vehicles\2005 NEXTEL Cup\Dodge\12**

Upon selecting the directory named 12 in the left window of Windows Explorer, the right hand window will update to display the directories and files contained within the 12 directory.

The 12-01 directory contains three files that comprise the primary paint scheme for the #12 car as described in the table below.

FILENAME	PURPOSE
12-01.dds	Paint scheme.
12-01 Render.png	2D render displayed on MY NASCAR screen.
12-01.txt	Name of paint scheme.

Use Windows Explorer to make a copy of the 12-01 directory and then rename the copied directory to 12-02 and the files within it to 12-02.dds, 12-02 Render.png and 12-02.txt

Within the game, there will now be two paint schemes to choose from for the #12 car. It's time to export your paint scheme to the 12-02 directory to integrate it with the game.

## EXPORTING YOUR PAINT SCHEME

After creating a target directory you must use Adobe - Photoshop and the NVIDIA - Photoshop - DDS - Plugin to save your paint scheme in .DDS format. The steps below assume that you have all of the tools installed and have your paint scheme loaded in Adobe - Photoshop.

**Save the latest changes to your paint scheme in .PSD format. Note that is not possible to convert a paint scheme that has been flattened and saved in .DDS format back to that a fully layered paint scheme in .PSD format.**

Ensure the layer named WHEELS/TIRES is set invisible. (The eye icon for this layer should not be visible within the Layers window).

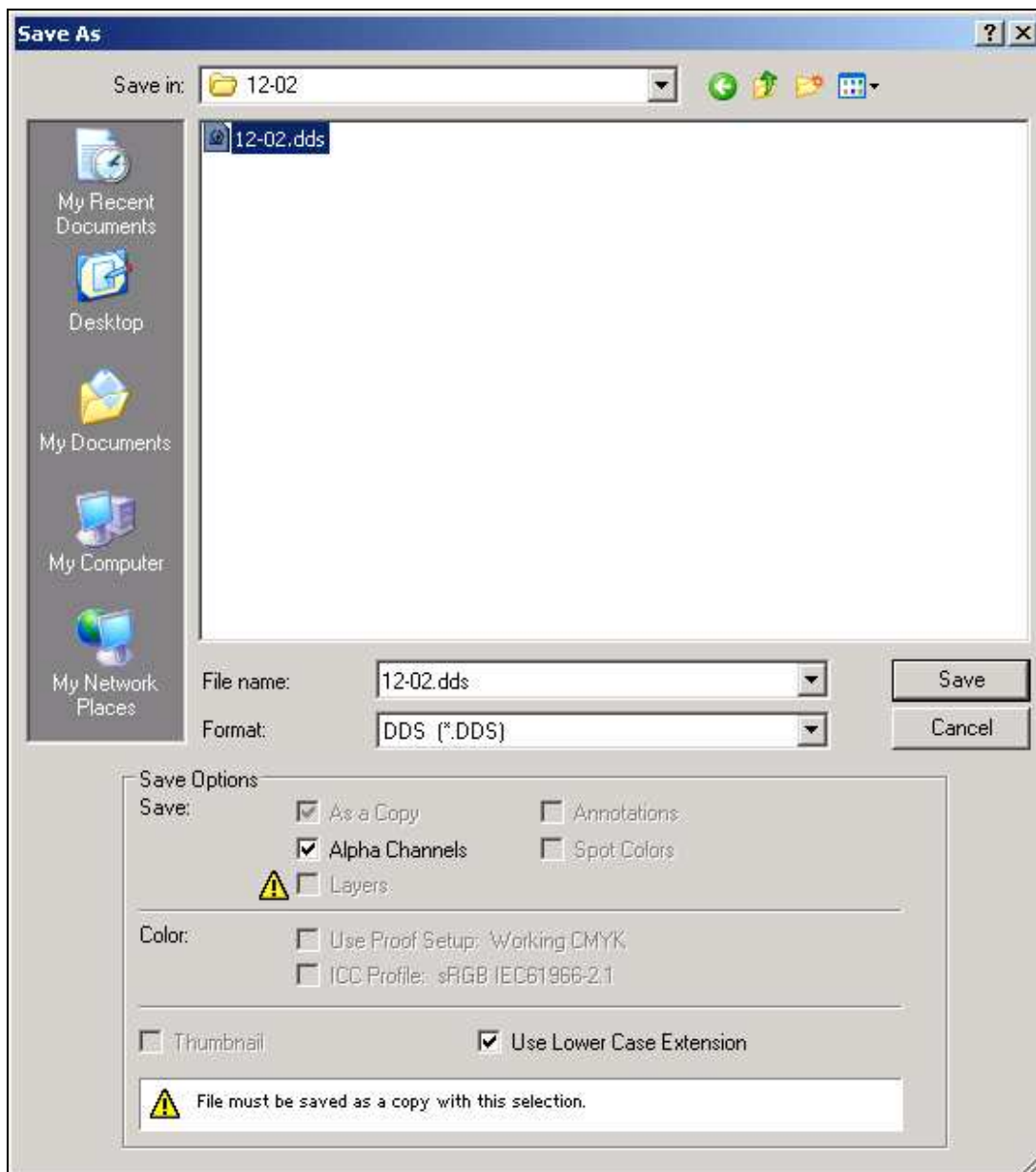
Ensure the layer set named UV GUIDES is not invisible. (The eye icon for this layer set should not be visible within the Layers window).

Select Layer and Flatten Image.

Select OK to discard hidden layers if prompted.

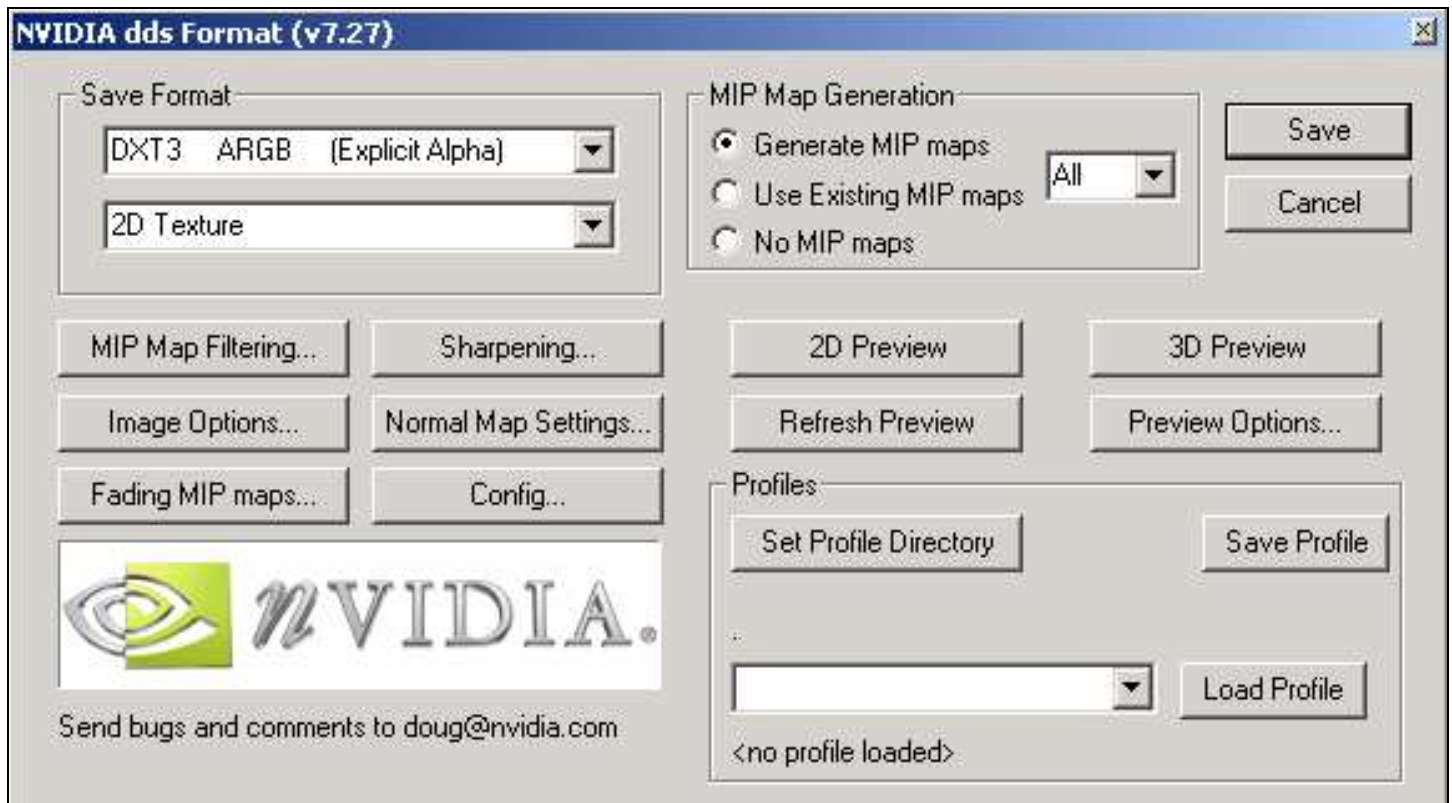
Select File and then Save As.

Set the format to .DDS and use the window above to navigate to your target directory. Select the .DDS file contained there to be updated with your paint scheme. Assuming you created a target directory as per the example here, the file you select will be named 12-02.dds.



Select Save and then select OK when asked if you wish to replace the file that already exists.

Ensure that the selected save format is set to DXT3 ARGB (Explicit Alpha) and 2D Texture and all other options match those shown in the grab below.



Select Save and then select OK when informed that Alpha information will be lost.

You may now exit Adobe - Photoshop.

## NAMING YOUR PAINT SCHEME

It's now time to name your paint scheme.

Start Windows Explorer and navigate to your target directory.

Open the .txt file in Notepad or other similar text editor. In our example we open the file named 12-02.txt.

Enter a name for the paint scheme and your name as the painter as per the example below. Replacing the MY PAINT SCHEME NAME and MY NAME text with the details you desire. Be careful not to delete the speech (") marks - these marks must be present around your text.

```
Description="MY PAINT SCHEME NAME"  
Painter="MY NAME"
```

Save your .txt file and exit your text editor.

## SEEING IS BELIEVING

It's time to take a look at your work in the game.

Start NASCAR SimRacing.

Select MY NASCAR from the main menu.

Set SERIES and NUMBER the same as the target directory that you have created and saved your paint scheme to.

Set PAINT SCHEME so that the name displayed matches that of the name you entered when naming your paint scheme as detailed above.

**Assuming that you have followed this guide, note that the image of the car displayed on the MY NASCAR screen will not match that of your paint scheme just yet.**

Select Done to return to the main menu.

Position the cursor over the car and then press and hold the Left Mouse Button and move the mouse to rotate the car so as to review your paint scheme. Make notes of any adjustments that you may wish to make.

At this stage you may enter any race and your car will use your paint scheme.

If you want others to see your paint scheme in multiplayer races, you must ensure they have a copy of your target directory also. Use a compression program such as WinRAR available at <http://www.rarlab.com/> to compress your target directories before distributing them to other players via email or other if you wish to share.

## MY NASCAR PREVIEW ART

The .png file located in your target directory is a 2D preview image of your car.

You may create this preview image by capturing an image of your car displayed on the main menu, cutting out your car in Adobe - Photoshop and pasting this into the relevant .png.

## FURTHER REFERENCE

Some good sources for fonts are:

<http://www.1001fonts.com/>

<http://www.acidfonts.com/>

<http://www.dafont.com/>

<http://www.fonts.com/>