

# Basic Paint Shed

By Colin McKinney



Figure 1: Above: the TGV unit as supplied by *Trainz*; Below: my modification of it using *Paint Shed*.

**T**his tutorial is for the beginner who is investigating *Paint Shed* for the first time. *Paint Shed* is a program that allows you to customise *Trainz* locomotives and rolling stock by changing the colour scheme and (optionally) adding text to the sides, called 'creating a new skin'. Most people will have *Paint Shed* already because it was included with Service Pack 2; however, it is available separately from Auran. For this tutorial, I'll assume that you want to create a new skin for a standard *Trainz* locomotive.

## Preparation

The first thing that you see when you open *Paint Shed* is a screen that allows you to choose the appearance of the *next* screen. For each Interface style (as the next screen is called), there is a choice between two screen resolutions: '800' if your resolution is 800 x 600 pixels; or '1024' if your resolution is 1024 x 768 pixels.

Other differences between the interface styles are only cosmetic – the operating functions are the same for all. However, the default option, by its layout, is the clearest about what to do and in what

order. So, for now, in the opening screen choose 'Default 800' or 'Default 1024' and then click on Load. The next image should fill the whole screen. If it's the wrong size, close and start again, this time selecting the other resolution option. Then check the *Auto Load selected interface on Startup* box so that in the future, the selected interface style will be the startup screen every time you begin *Paint Shed*.

## Getting started

**Step 1, Create.** Click on the clearly marked *Step 1, Create*.

Perhaps the trickiest thing in *Paint Shed* is the next screen, where you choose the vehicle that is going to be modified. The trouble is, the names in *Paint Shed* don't always match the names in *Trainz Driver* (for example, the first on the Driver list, AN 830 class, corresponds to DL531 in *Paint Shed*), so you may need to do a little searching to find a design you like.

The names next to a 'B' inside a triangle represent the Base model (loco or rolling stock) that is available for adapting. Double-clicking on the 'B' icon itself will collapse the list and make it take up less space – but it hardly seems worth the trouble, which is probably why the list defaults to its expanded form.

A sub-list of each 'B' design details one to three templates (identified by a 'T' inside a triangle). It is one of these templates you will select now. Generally, these templates are labelled *Checkers*, *Simple Stripe*, and *Swoopy*. Where there is only one, it is always *Simple Stripe*. With very few exceptions, Base names that have only one Template are locomotives, and those with three Templates represent rolling stock.

For this tutorial, I have selected the TGV Base design, Simple Stripe Template (the only option for this loco) – see figure 2.

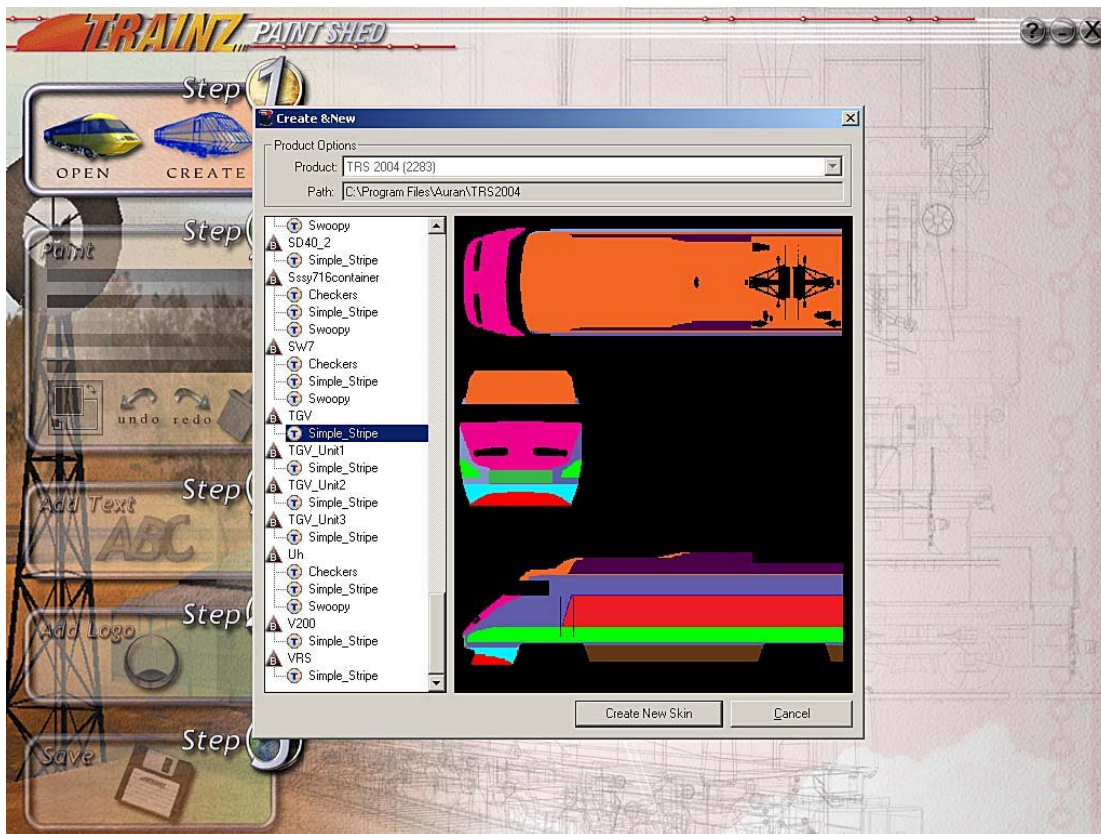


Figure 2: Selection of Base type and Template.

As soon as a template is selected, a schematic coloured diagram of the basic train design appears in the black panel next to the index list of Base designs and Templates. We are now ready for the next step: click *Create new skin*.

A new monochrome diagram appears, slightly larger than the previous one, and looking a little more like the vehicle selected, because it shows extra details like wheels, windows, and pantograph. Press the spacebar once and the previous diagram returns. Repeated pressing of the spacebar toggles between the more detailed monochrome picture and the coloured diagram. These coloured areas show you which parts of the loco may be coloured in the next stage.

## Adding colour

**Step 2, Paint.** Now click *Step 2, Paint* on the main menu at the left of the screen. You can select two colours from the palette, one by left-clicking on a colour of your choice (a small 'l' will appear on the selected colour) and another by right-clicking another colour (a small 'r' appears). You can now apply either of these two colours to part of the TGV loco in the monochrome picture on the left by left-clicking or right-clicking on the diagram. Note: some parts of the loco can not 'take' colour (e.g., the bogies). Press the spacebar

every time you need to check which parts of the loco it is possible to colour.

Note that the right part of the screen is divided into several boxes, each one showing a different aspect of the vehicle (front, rear, top, left, and right). Left-click once in a box to select that box, then use the left or right button to apply a colour. When (for example) the 'front' box is selected and the roof painted, notice how the same colour is applied to whatever part of the roof is visible in the other boxes too. Figure 3 shows a partially completed skin.

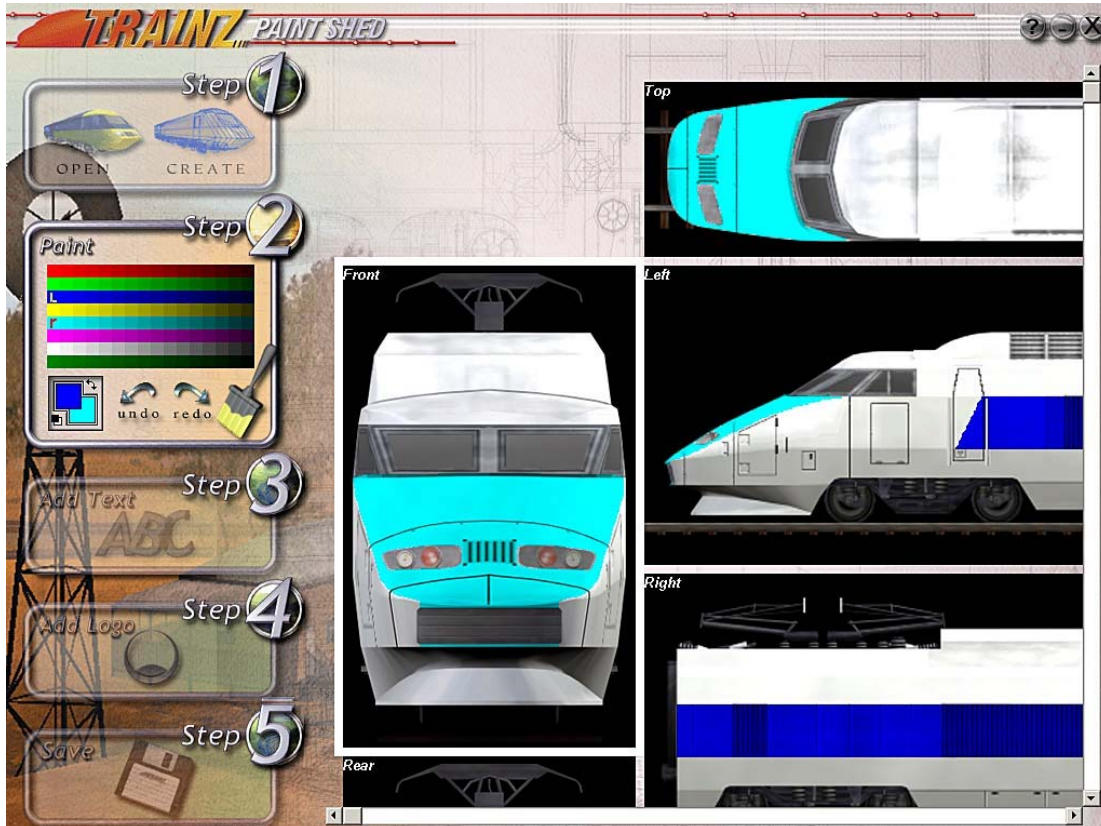


Figure 3: A partially coloured TGV.

To paint the entire vehicle the same colour, select the paintbrush icon with the right or left mouse button (whichever one represents the desired colour). The Fill operation can not be undone, as the warning dialog box tells you, although it is possible to first fill with one colour and then change selected parts of the train afterwards.

In this example (and so far in this explanation) only two colours have been used. However, note that at any stage you can increase the number of colours you use in two ways.

First, you can click the L or R mouse button on any of the other colours in the palette, that is, you don't have to use only the first two that you used. As well as the small 'l' and 'r' in the palette, the

two larger squares at the bottom left corner of the Step 2 box show the colours selected.

Secondly, you can double-click (left button) on either of these larger squares to bring up a full display of all possible colours. If you are familiar with programs like *Paint*, *Photoshop*, or *Paint Shop Pro*, you can use precise colour definitions to, say, match a photograph's colours exactly, by defining the exact hue, saturation, and luminosity parameters (or RGB values). Or you can have fun in a less scientific manner, by just moving the markers around with the mouse pointer, and – either way – clicking 'Add to Custom Colors' when you have found a colour you like. Any new colour you create in such a way is added to the special palette of custom colours so that you can return to it any time. You will also find that a newly created colour is also automatically added to the colours in use, and is set ready for you to apply after you click OK.

When you have finished the paint job, you may want to add some text. Before proceeding with this, click once in either the 'left' or 'right' boxes to highlight that view.

Another option would be to add no text and go straight to Step 4 or Step 5.

## **Adding text**

**Step 3, Add Text.** Click the *Step 3, Add Text* button on the main menu at the left of the screen.

Two decisions have to be made: what text to add, and where to place it. For this example, I want to add the name of a fictional rail company, 'CRM Rail', to the sides of the locomotive. Highlight the words 'Type your text here' and then type whatever words you want to have on the loco's sides. Like most word processors, the highlighted text is automatically replaced by the text you type. Make basic text modifications using the Quick Font Options, or click on More Font Options for other changes. Click on Color Options to open a palette from which you can choose a text colour.

Cloning Options helps with the positioning of the text. For now, click the button next to *Clone to Opposite End* – the purpose of this will become clear shortly.

Once all the text choices have been made, click OK.

Notice how the text appears in two views: the one highlighted just before clicking Step 3, and its 'opposite' (e.g., both left and right views). However, the text in the highlighted box has a dotted rectangle around it. Move the mouse pointer to this text and move it down to the vehicle. Notice how the text in the other box also moves: it is showing a precisely symmetrical view of the position of the text you are moving, on the other side of the vehicle – refer to Figure 4. Thus text positioned at the front in the left view will also be on the front of the opposite, right, view. This is what the Clone to Opposite End selection, referred to previously, does. (I like using this option, but if you don't, then click either *Clone In Position*,

which means that text placed at the front on the left view will be at the rear of the vehicle on the right side; or *None*, which means that text is placed manually wherever you put it, on either the left side or the right).



Figure 4: Part-way through the process of adding text.

One option at this stage is to finish the project and save the new skin (Step 5). However, it is also possible to add a logo, so let's consider that now.

## Decoration

**Step 4, Add Logo.** It is possible to add one of a large number of ready-made logos. It's not difficult to customise your own logo, if you've a mind to – see the section at the end of this article.

Logos can be added to the sides of a vehicle by following a procedure very similar to adding text. For this project, however, I want to add a single 'Auran' logo to the front of the loco.

Start by highlighting the box that shows the front of the loco, then click on *Step 4, Add Logo* from the large menu on the left of the screen. Expand the 'logo auran' file to reveal three versions, labelled 'logo auran 1b', 'logo auran 1a' and 'logo auran 1c', each one representing a different sized version of the same logo. Choose one – in the example the smallest version was picked – see figure

5. Because only one image was being added, 'None' was picked under Cloning Options before clicking Add. Note that when adding the logo (or the text, in step 3) the keyboard arrow keys may be used to move the logo (or text) in very small increments up, down, left, or right.

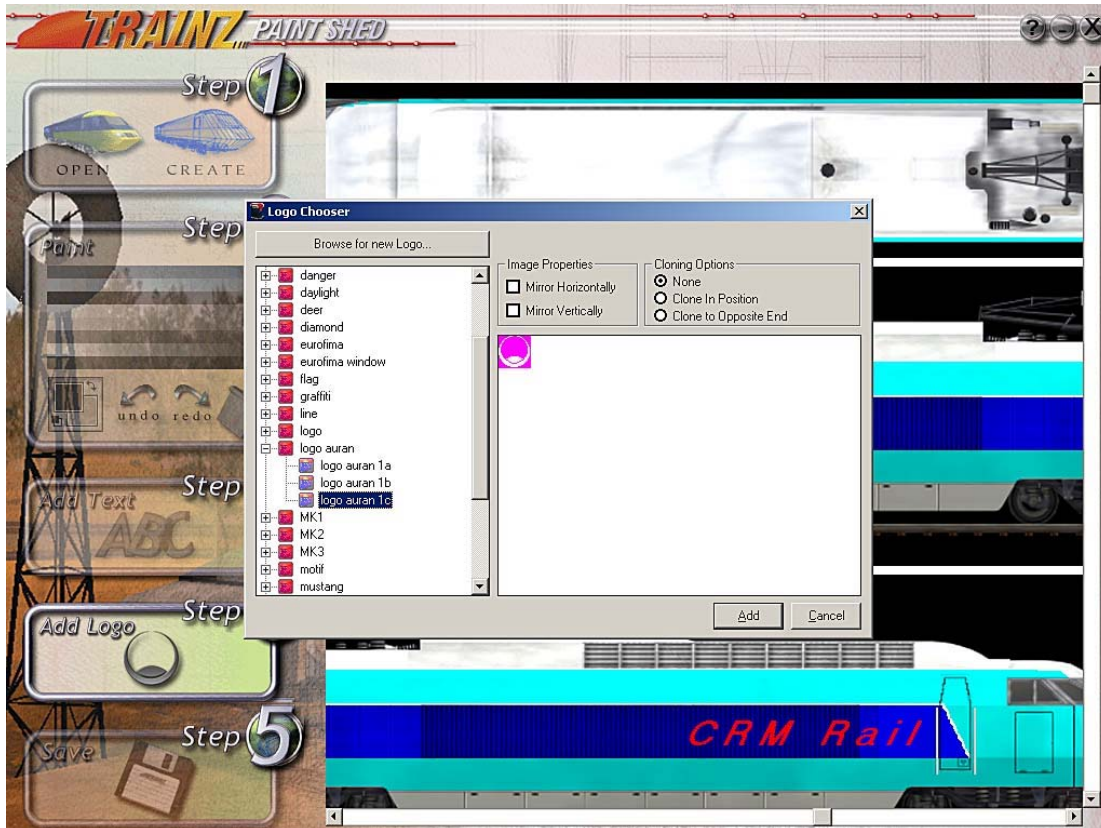


Figure 5: Selecting the logo.

Note also that there are some restrictions regarding where logos may be placed. For example, a logo can go only on a surface that can be painted. Secondly, a logo seems to 'stick' to only a more or less vertical plane. In an earlier attempt, I could not apply the logo where I first wanted it, on the front of the TGV loco below the windshield, presumably because this part of the vehicle slopes back sharply. The logo could be successfully applied lower down, however, on the 'nose' of the loco which is closer to being vertical – see figure 6.

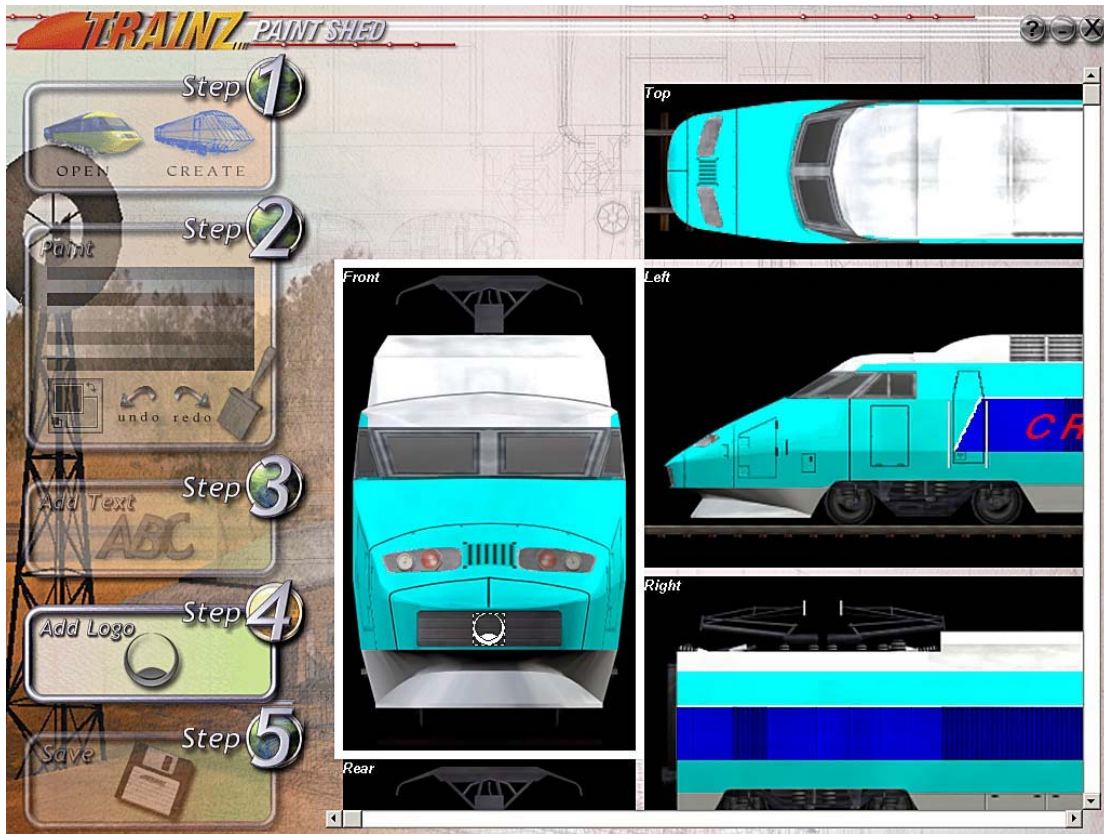


Figure 6: Positioning the logo.

Although the term 'logo' normally refers to a design of some kind, for the TGV passenger units the windows are treated as logos and are added the same way. A selection of windows can be found in the TGV logo folder. This task is not part of the present tutorial, but it's what I had to do to get the windows in position for the finished job (see figure 1).

## Finally

**Step 5, Save.** Don't change any of the existing entries that you can see after clicking on *Step 5, Save* - just give the new skin a name where the cursor is blinking in the empty box labelled 'Name' before clicking on the Save button.

The new skin will be listed with all the other locos and rolling stock the next time you start *Trainz*, so if you are modelling a 'fictional' train (as opposed to modelling an actual loco) it pays to make up an easily-remembered, descriptive name. The items will be listed alphabetically, so if you want to make a matching series you should make the names similar - particularly the first word - so that they will be grouped together in the alphabetical list. With this consideration in mind, it's easy to check on the names of previously-named skins by clicking on Choose Existing... button, then clicking Cancel before carrying on with the save.

Final note: at any stage, to see previously-saved skins, all that you need to do is go back to Step 1 and click 'Open' instead of 'Create'. This is useful if you need to remind yourself of a colour scheme used earlier that you want to match in a new *Paint Shed* project. And that's it! Good luck with creating your own unique locos and rolling stock.

## Special topic

**Adding a customised logo – a brief outline.** In a program such as *Paint*, found in the Windows Accessories folder, draw your own logo (if your artistic ability is like mine, it's more likely to be a spray-painted squiggle which I'll later use as graffiti on the side of a wagon). Alternatively, use a suitable photograph or clip-art, or something from one of *Word's* 'Insert Symbol' menus (just cut from Word and paste in *Paint*). Note the following:

- reduce the size of the whole page to postage-stamp dimensions, otherwise your logo will be too big for a *Trainz* vehicle
- ensure that the background colour is light purple (in my version of *Paint*, that's the 8<sup>th</sup> colour from the left in the lower row of palette colours, or, if you want to check under Define Custom Colors, it's red=255, green=0, blue=255)

When you have completed your logo, name and save it as a bit-map (.bmp) file in the *Trainz Paint Shed* 'Logos' folder. Now it will appear in the list of logos, listed alphabetically according to the name you gave it, and may be applied in the normal way.

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