

Using a Custom Palette Effectively When Working With Nozzles in Painter 6 & 7

Custom palettes are much like Painter's standard palettes. You can move, resize, or close them to save screen real estate and Painter keeps custom palettes from one session to the next.

You can save a custom palette to a file if you wish to remove it from the program and load it again. This feature is useful when you have to reinstall Painter in case of a program crash. Saved custom palettes cannot be used in another version of Painter.

To Create a Custom Palette:

1. Choose **Window > Custom Palette > Add Command**.

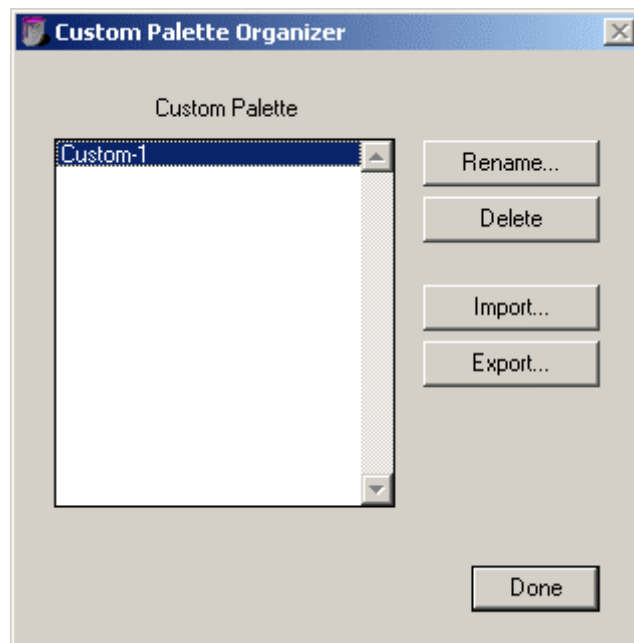
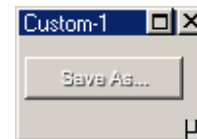
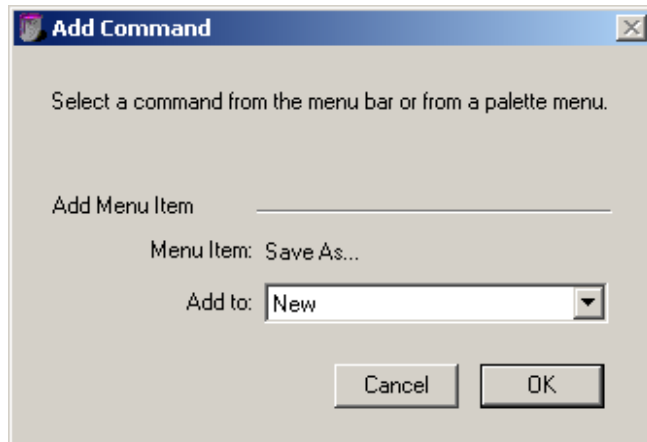
2. Choose **File > Save As**. This command is one I use all the time so a mouse click is saved each time. You don't need to add it in version 8.1 because you can use the shortcut keystroke **Ctrl + Shift + S** to access the **Save As** dialog. It may not seem like much of a difference at the moment. This menu command is loaded into a custom palette when you click **OK**. You will see a Custom Palette in your workspace named **Custom-1**.

3. Choose **Window > Custom Palette > Organizer**. This is where you edit and delete unwanted palettes.

4. The **Custom-1** palette is highlighted in the Custom Palettes window. Click on the **Rename** button. Rename the palette to Nozzle Production or whatever you wish it to be. Click on the **Done** button. Now you are ready to add more items to the palette.

5. Add brush shortcuts to the palette by selecting the brush category icon and dragging it onto the palette. I added the Image Hose and Airbrush icons because they are the ones I use most often.

6. Choose **Window > Custom Palette > Add Command**. I suggest you add the following commands from the Nozzles command menu: All commands except Make Nozzle From Movie unless you plan to do a lot of those types of nozzles.



Go to the Layers palette and add these commands from the Layers menu. **New Layer, Group, Select All, Collapse, Drop and Select** and **Delete Layer**.

From the **Masks** command menu, add **New Mask**, **Auto Mask**, and **Delete Mask**.

7. You can arrange the icons and buttons the way you want them by holding down the **Ctrl** key as you drag them.

a) I arranged mine using the ones I use most often. I placed the two brush icons at the beginning of the first row followed by the **Load Nozzle** and **Set Nozzle Scale** buttons.

b) The second row consists of 3 buttons, the **New Layer**, **Select All**, and **Group** commands.

c) The third row buttons are **Drop and Select**, **Collapse**, and **Delete Layer**.

d) The fourth row contains the **New Mask**, **Auto Mask**, and **Delete Mask** buttons.

e) The fifth row has the **Make Nozzle From Group** button, followed by the **Add Nozzle to Library**, and **Check Out Nozzles** buttons.

f) The final row of buttons are the **Nozzle Mover** and **Save As** buttons.

My palette looks like the example on the right. This arrangement works for me but you might like them another way. If you wish to delete a command button or icon altogether, first drag it out of the custom palette. A new custom palette named **Custom-2** will appear in the work- space. Go to **Windows > Custom Palette > Organizer** and select the name of the custom palette that corresponds to the newly dragged out icon and then hit the Delete button in the Custom Palette Organizer.



In my example there are 7 command buttons that are grayed out. They appear this way because they are inactive. For instance, if you were to drag the apple layer from the **Image Portfolio** onto the empty canvas, the **Select All**, **Group**, **Drop And Select**, and **Delete Layer** buttons would become active. If you drag the orange layer onto the canvas and click on the **Select All** button, and then the **Group** button, all but the mask commands are now active. You can easily see by following this example that you will increase your graphics production, help fine tune your workflow, and aid the longevity of your physical well being. Less clicks or mouse/stylus movement means less stress and longer pain free moments in your work day.

8. To save the finished custom palette choose **Window > Custom Palette > Organizer**. Highlight **Nozzle Production** in the **Custom Palette list** and click on the **Export** button. Navigate to the folder you want to store your palettes in and click on the Save button.

9. Whenever you need to install the palette again in the case of a catastrophic program crash just click on the Import button and select the custom palette file.

Painter 8.1: This version works the same way as 6 & 7. Unfortunately none of the nozzle commands can be added to a custom palette. The best you can do is to add the brush icons and the layer and mask commands. Even with these minimal commands you will, not only save time, but also see the results in your workflow.