



How To Create Custom Page Colors In IntelliTools Classroom Suite®

Someone recently asked me how I was able to set the trademark light blue color you see for the border and page color in IntelliTools Classroom Suite® activities you download from the Attic. The answer involves using some built-in settings, plus putting buttons to uses for which they were never designed. Here's how to do it!

Custom Border Color

In Classroom Suite, you can use the **Options/Document settings/Appearance** dialog to change the color of the border around the page. (The border is where the toolbars float.) You can choose solid colors or patterns. A third choice, **Other...**, brings up the **Colors** dialog from which you can tweak settings to get any custom color you want.

Other Uses For A Custom Color

You can drag one of these custom colors to the bottom (Mac) or choose **Add to Custom Colors** (Win) to save it, too. Then you can use it elsewhere in the activity.

You could use your custom color in a button background or text box background, or even for some fancy text. You can get back to the **Colors** dialog in the **Properties** window for any of these items, again choosing **Other...** and then pick the custom color you saved. Two of the button styles, **Beveled** and **Flat**, also let you set a custom background color.

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Trick For Setting A Custom Page Background

BUT...For some reason, when you set the **Page Background**, you are limited to the standard solid colors and the patterns. This has always annoyed me, since often I want to match the page color to a custom border color. Here's a way to get around that limitation. You can use this trick to set a page to any background color, but here I will assume you are also matching a page color to a custom border color.

- ✿ Set the border color to the custom color you want, being careful to save the custom color in the **Colors** dialog box.
- ✿ Go to the page where you want a custom color background. Get the **button tool** and make a huge button, covering the page. (This leaves a teeny white frame around it, since you cannot stretch the button to the very edges of the screen.)
- ✿ When the **Button Properties** window opens, choose the **Flat** style under **Appearance**, and change the background of the button to your pre-designed custom color. Alternately, create a new custom color at this point, if you are not trying to match the border color.
- ✿ Close the **Properties** window. Stretch the button to make sure it's just as large as it will go. Leave it unlocked.
- ✿ Finally, under the **Pages** menu, choose **Fix to Background**.

Ta-Da! The page now has a lovely custom background color.

Optional Further Steps

Fill The Thin White Margin If you are obsessive like me, you want to get rid of that teeny white frame. Under the **IntelliPics Studio menu**, go to **Paint**. Get the **Marquee** tool. Capture a nice large part of the custom color area, being careful not to move the selection. Choose **Copy** from the **Edit** menu, then choose **Paste**. This creates a stamp with the custom color. Stamp around the margins, and the white frame will disappear. Return to **Design**.

Color The Thin White Margin Or, if you like the thin frame but want it in some other color than white, go into **Paint** mode and pour a contrasting color. Then go back to **Design** to add items to the page.

Duplicate The Custom Background Page If you want this custom background in several pages, duplicate the page as many times as needed. To save time, be sure to add all the page buttons and text boxes that will be on all these pages before you duplicate.

Alternately, if you want this background on just one other page later in the activity, **Copy** your custom background in **Page Properties/Page Background**, move to the page where you want it, and **Paste** it in **Page Properties/Page Background** on the new page.

Save The Background As A Graphic If you expect to use this background frequently, save your custom background color in a graphic.

- ✿ Copy your custom background in **Page Properties/Page Background** to put it onto the clipboard.
- ✿ Open a graphic editing program such as Paint® or PhotoShop Elements®, open a new document and paste.
- ✿ Crop the image if needed, so it includes nothing but your custom color. In Elements, just choose **New -> Image From Clipboard**, and it will make the new document and paste all at once.
- ✿ Save the graphic, which will be your custom color sample. BMP is a good format to use.
- ✿ When you want to use your custom color page background, load the sample as the **Page Background**. It will be automatically stretched to fit, no matter what page size you are using.

One Caution

Be careful using this background. If you paint or fix an image to the background, it will be changed permanently. Of course, you can just

reload the color or saved graphic. One way to avoid mistakes is to use all floating items on pages with a custom background color.

You won't have any background problems using floating elements like text boxes, buttons, and pictures not added as background. None of these affect the background itself. If you don't want students to interact with one or more of these items, go into the **Properties** of each and remove the checkmarks from **Auto Scan**, **Step Scan**, and **Respond To Mouse**. Although you can still **Control-Click** such an inert item to edit it, it will behave like part of the background for a student user.