Introduction

Hofmann is a computer program made for designing and ordering, in an instinctive, fast and simple way, digital albums and posters. Once you have created the project in your computer, it is sent by Internet to Hofmann, where it will be printed and finished, being sent later to the requested photography store or to a private address.

System requirements

Hardware

Minimum requirements: Processor Intel Pentium II to 400 MHz. RAM memory:512 MB. Free disc space: 1 GB. Monitor colour configuration: 24 bits.
Recommended requirements: Processor Intel Pentium III to 1000 MHz. RAM memory: 1 GB. Free disc space: 2 GB. Monitor colour configuration: 24 bits.

Software

Following operating systems are allowed: Windows XP, Windows 2003 Server and Windows Vista. For previous operating systems kindly download a previous version from:
http://descargas.hofmann.es/VersionAlbum5_9.exe

It is recommended to update the system with last available downloads and updates from www.microsoft.com/windowsupdate

Installation

Program download

The download is very simple: you only have to click on the "Program free download" link on our **www.hofmann.es** website, select "Run" and follow the instructions till the installation process is completed. If you use ADSL connection (broadband) this download will take about five minutes. If you use a dial-up connection this process can last about one hour.

Afterwards, by double clicking on the "Hofmann" icon on the desktop you will open the program.

QUICK GUIDE "Hofmann" for Digital Album & Poster

"Drag & drop" (- - - →) is the most frequent action you will do. It consists of clicking on an element and, without releasing the mouse button, dragging it to the desired location and placing it there. It works for placing photos, layouts, backgrounds, covers and texts.
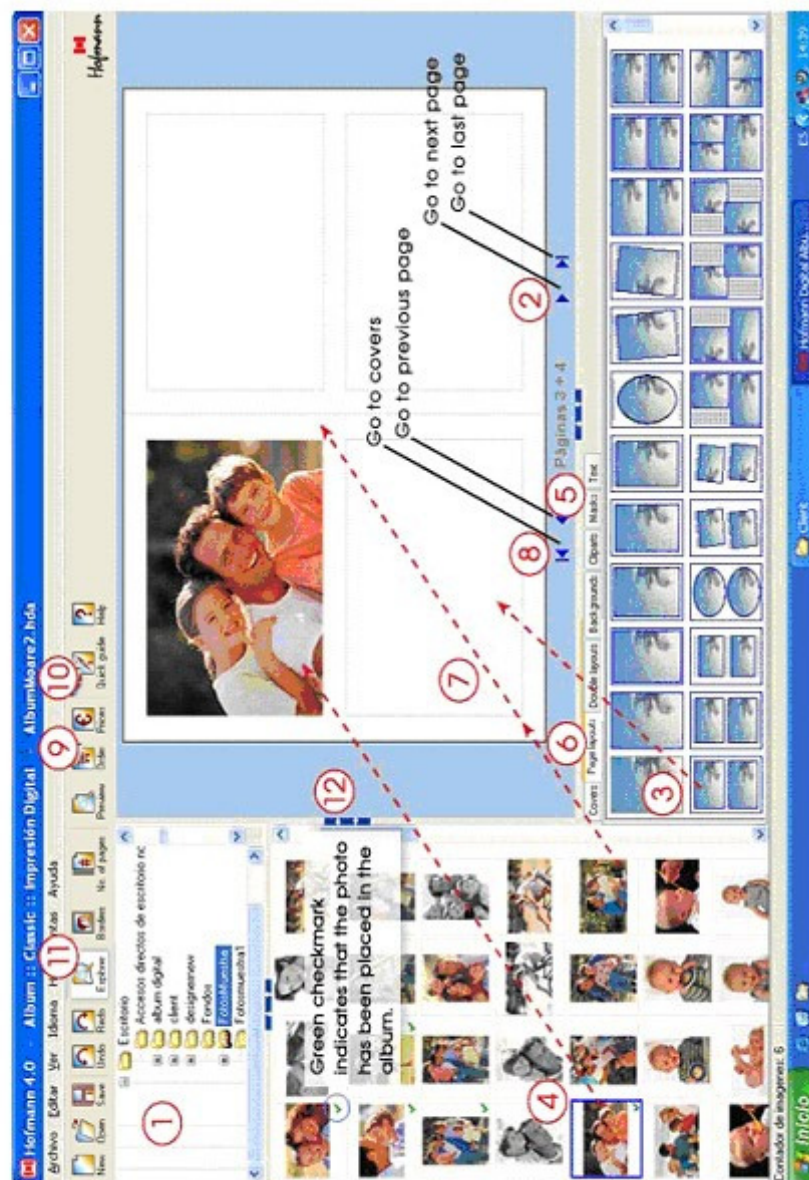

Go to next page
Go to last page
Go to covers
Go to previous page

Green checkmark indicates that the photo has been placed in the album.

STEP BY STEP

① Look for the following red numbers in the scheme.

① Select your folder of photos and they will appear underneath.

② Click on "next page" ▶ to move on to the pages.

③ Choose layouts and "drag & drop" them on the pages.

④ "Drag & drop" your photos on the image boxes of the layouts.

⑤ Click on "Text", "drag & drop" the box on the project, write in the text editor that appears on the left part and click on "accept".

⑥ Click on "backgrounds" and "drag & drop" any of the ones we propose on the project.

⑦ You can also use one of your photos as background by dropping it between image boxes.

⑧ Click on ◄ in order to go to the cover and then "drag & drop" your favourite one on the album. The photo of the palm on the cover indicates that you can place instead one of your photos. "Drag & drop" photos on front, back cover and spine. Write the titles.

⑨ Click on "preview" in order to see how it will look printed.

⑩ After making the whole project click on "Order" and follow the instructions.

OTHER FREQUENT ACTIONS

1. With the mouse placed on any photo:
   - Double click on left button: you enter the photo editor to modify your photos.
   - One click on right button: it enables you to choose actions (rotate image, delete image, border, automatic image improvement, add modify and rotate boxes, move double pages, ...).

2. In order to crop a photo in the photo editor, move the mouse on one red corner until an inclined arrow ↗ appears, then click and drag. In order to move the whole frame to another location click on it and drag.

3. In order to modify the size of a text or image box, click once on the box, go to a blue corner until the inclined arrow appears, then click and drag. You can move it wherever you want: click on it and drag.
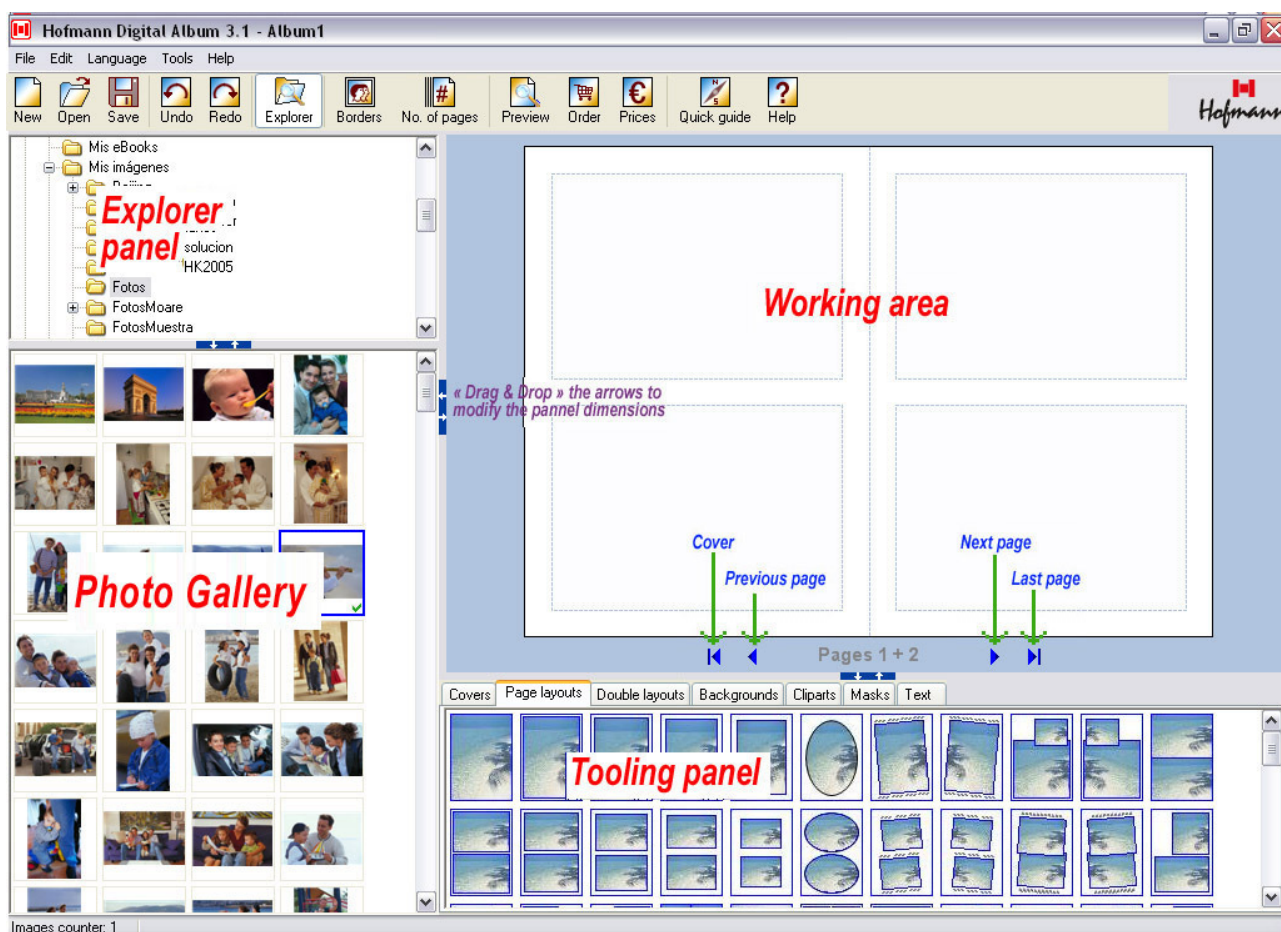
USEFUL ADVICE

1. The image and text boxes of one-page layouts can only be moved within the page. In order to move image and text boxs within a whole double page, add new boxes by clicking on the right mouse button or use double page layouts. Boxes on the cover cannot be moved or modified.

2. If you click on the "Explorer" icon ⑪, the explorer will disappear and reappear alternatively.

3. If you do not place a photo or you do not write text, the background will be printed. For that reason if you wish to have a photo on a double page, then place it as a background.

4. When a photo is placed on a dark background or on another photo, it usually looks nicer if it has a light border (you have to click on the right button and select "border").

5. Text boxes can be placed outside or inside the photos. If you cannot see the text, the problem may be that the selected colour of the text and the background is the same (e.g. white text on white background).

6. Click and drag on ⑫ to organize the working area at your convenience.

7. Exchange two already inserted photos by dragging one onto the other.

Program operation

Once the installation is finished the "Hofmann" icon will be located on the desktop. By double clicking on the icon the program will start. Please follow the instructions of the assistant.

Working environment

The "Hofmann" programs working environment (see following image) consists of the menu bar, the icons bar containing the most frequent actions and a state bar in the bottom part that shows information, as in any other application of the Windows environment. Additionally, it includes an explorer panel of folders, a photo gallery, a tooling panel and the working space for the design of digital albums and posters. The different panels can be organized at your convenience by using the blue symbols with two white arrows that are located between the panels.

This screenshot refers to the digital album, but is also valid for any other product.

Explorer panel

The explorer allows you to select the folder you want to work with. By clicking on it, the photos are automatically shown in the photo gallery. You can work with any common formats used by digital cameras, but also with scanned photo files. This allows you to include your already printed photos in digital albums, posters, canvas or mugs.

Once you have selected the folder and in order to gain space you can hide the explorer panel by clicking on "Explorer" in the icons bar. If you click on the same icon again, the explorer will reappear.

Photo gallery

The photo gallery shows all the images, which are included in the selected folder above. These photos can be dragged onto the project, which consists in clicking on a photo and, without releasing the mouse button, dragging it to the desired location and placing it there.

In order to obtain different information about the image (name, size, resolution and date) you only have to leave the mouse on it.

As it is also useful to know which images have already been used in the album, these photos are marked with a green checkmark.

Click on the main top menu on "View" to put in order all photos in the photo gallery by name or by date. It's possible to change the size of the images shown using a slider at the bottom.

Working area for the design of Digital Albums, Posters, Canvas and Mugs

The program initially opens showing here the album cover, the poster, the canvas or the mugs. In the case of the album the front cover is on the right side, the back cover on the left one and the spine in the middle. However, this working area can also show two pages of an opened album, on which you can drag the layouts, photos, text boxes, backgrounds, masks, cliparts and frames. Under the album you will find the numbers of the opened pages. There are two blue arrows located on both sides so that you can move forward and backward through the pages (see in the previous figure).

Tooling panel (Covers, My layouts, Page layouts, Double layouts, Backgrounds, Cliparts, Masks, Frames and Text)

The tooling panel contains the creative elements like covers, layouts, backgrounds, cliparts, masks or frames which are proposed by the program in order to help you to design your project. Furthermore, the text option enables you to insert your text wherever you want.

The most frequent action you will do is "dragging & dropping": if, for example, you want to place a photo on an image box (placeholder), then you have to click on that image and, without releasing the mouse button, you have to "drag" that image to the chosen place and "drop" it there by releasing the mouse button. You can operate with the covers, backgrounds, layouts and text boxes in the same way.

By the way, you can exchange two already inserted photos by dragging one onto the other.

If you are using the program for the first time, you should simply try everything out. There are no wrong choices and you will soon control all functions.

Covers (only refers to the album)

By pressing on the "Cover" tab you gain access to the different cover designs offered by the program. By moving down the tooling panel scroll bar you will be able to see all of them. At the same time, a predefined cover shows in the working space of the album. You may replace it and use any other desired cover design.

Almost all of the covers contain three image boxes for your photos: one on the cover, another on the lower part of the spine and the third one on the back cover. Their size cannot be modified. These image boxes show a sample image of a palm shade to show you the place where your photos can be inserted. Moreover, there are text boxes on the spine and front cover for the titles.

You can not add any more text boxes or layouts on the covers besides the proposed ones. Like in all other pages, if a photo or text is not introduced, the background will be printed, as you can check by using the "preview" icon.

For inserting one of your photos as full cover, use cover No. 007 (located on 6th place)

Single and double page layouts.

By pressing on these tabs you will be able to see a great variety of single and double layouts which can be "dragged & dropped" on the project. They can be interchanged as many times as you want. In case you already placed some photos, they will be relocated in the new layout.

Additionally, if no photo is placed in a layout, the background will be printed. This gives you the possibility of making nice designs by placing a photo as a background, using layouts with many image boxes and filling only some of them with other photos in order not to interfere with the overall vision of the background photo.

The image boxes of single page layouts cannot be moved within the whole double page. In order to be able to do it, just create a new image box.

Backgrounds

By pressing on the "Backgrounds" tab you gain access to the backgrounds proposed by the program. "Drag & drop" any background you like anywhere on the project and it will be installed there.
If you wish one of your photos to be the background, it is also possible just by dragging it from the photo gallery and dropping it on the project between any image boxes.
In order to place a photo completely on a double page just drag it as a background and do not place any photo on the image boxes of the layouts. This way, only the full background will be printed. Remember to preview.
If you wish to delete a background, place the mouse on it, click on the right mouse button and then select the point "remove background" of the pull-down menu.

Cliparts

By clicking on this tab, you will dispose of more than 200 coloured pictures, which will be very useful to decorate your inserted photos, especially when they refer to birthdays, parties, trips and kids. Drag these cliparts onto the album and modify their shape in order to adapt them perfectly to your photos:

- **Proportional enlargement: c**lick on a corner and drag.

- **Enlarge in only one direction: c**lick on a central dot and drag.

- **Rotate:** right mouse button -> select "rotate box" -> indicate the angle you wish.

- **Flip:** right mouse button -> select horizontal or vertical flip.

It is possible to write on the cliparts by using the text editor. This option is especially used for the dialogue-balloons or speech bubbles.

Masks

There is a great variety of photo border shapes. Dragging a mask over an image will provide the photos with a very interesting border shape. The last masks are very useful for "melting" photos by blurring the beginning or ending, depending on the selected mask.
To remove a mask, click the right mouse button over the image, choose Mask and "Eliminate". It will also disappear by placing the photo again.

Frames

You can choose one of the frames and drag & drop it onto any image box already containing an image.

Text

If you want to add a new textbox on the project, just click on the "Text" tab. A text box will appear underneath indicating you should click on the box and drag & drop it on the project.

The text editor will open in the lower left part of the screen and you will be able to write, select and then format your text, which means that you can select text font, colour, size and text alignment. Click on "OK" and the text will appear on the album. Finally drag the whole text box to your desired location, even within the photos.

In case you would like to move a text box inside the whole double page, then you should always use a new text box, as the boxes of single page layouts can be only moved within that page.

It is recommended to check always that all the text is visible, if necessary by using the preview. If a part of the text is missing, you will have to decrease the font size or modify the box size. Click on the box and locate the mouse on one of the blue corners until the cursor adopts the image of an inclined arrow. Then drag it until the desired size is obtained.
In order to move the whole text to another place (outside or inside the photos) place the mouse in the box centre, click on it and drag it to the desired position.

You may see that the text does not appear on the project. Probably the colour of the text and the background is the same. In this case you should select a different colour for one of them.
If you want to work on an already inserted text, double click on the box. The editor will open and you can modify the text at your choice.
Text from other files (e.g. Word) can be inserted into the text editor, although the original formatting may be altered.
You can insert as many text boxes as you want onto the album. In order to delete one, place the mouse on the text box, click on the right mouse button and select the "delete box" option of the pull-down menu.

Menu bar

Basically all functions can be found on the toolbar and on the right mouse button as well (see explanations in the following chapters). Nevertheless, we draw your attention to these two functions :
In the menu File / Project Settings, there are 3 tabs:
    1 Project settings.- Change from digital to photopaper album and vice versa, and modify the number of sheets.

    2 Borders.- The border's colour and size settings will be valid for any picture you add from the moment of selection.

    1. **Image.**- Allows to set or unset the Automatic Image Improvement tool. Recommended for unexperienced users.

Transformation from 21x29 cm (A4) album to mini album

In the menu **Tools/Transform to mini size**, make a 11x15 cm copy of your 21x29 cm album. This option is especially attractive in case that you are looking for an economic gift idea for family and friends.

Icon bar

The following are some of the usual icons used by the Windows environment and they allow fast access to the most frequent program functions:

New: opens a new project.

Open: opens an existing project.

Save: saves the project to a folder.

Undo: undoes the last operation. The number of tries is unlimited (shortcut Ctrl + Z).

Redo: recovers the last undone operation as many times as it was undone (shortcut Ctrl + Y).

Explorer: hides and shows the Explorer alternatively in order to select the folder with the photos.

No. of pages: the number of pages can be changed.

Preview (shortcut F5): visualizes the project and shows exactly how it will be printed. Within this function you can also move forwards and backwards along the album pages and modify the zoom of the preview at the same time.

Order: click on this button once you finished the project creation. You can only place an order directly from our program via internet.
If any pages or the cover were left blank (maybe on purpose), a checking window will inform about it. Better check it, correct the possible mistake and start the order again. Please make sure that everything is fine, as no corrections will be possible once the order has been sent.
The program will ask for your confirmation to save the project, which we recommend in order to preserve the complete project file.

Please make sure at this stage that you are connected to internet in order to enable our assistant to guide you through the order process. First the project will be compressed automatically, coded without any quality loss and sent to our server via Internet. After indicating your personal data a secure payment connection with VISA or MASTERCARD will be established.

Kindly make sure that you write all data correctly, particularly your e-mail address. Otherwise we will not be able to inform you properly about the order status. Please also allow our program to establish an internet connection, as many users have a protection software (firewall) installed.

Prices: by clicking on this icon a connection with our web page is established in order to see the prices of our products.

Quickguide: the most important features are described in 5 minutes.

Help: a connection is established in order to download the user´s manual.

Mouse

Left button
By double clicking on an inserted photo or a text box the corresponding editor opens (more info regarding the photo and text editor hereunder).
By clicking once on an image box four blue corners and a cross in the centre appear. Drag from one of the corners and you will modify the box size, drag from the cross, then you will move the whole box.

Right button
By clicking once on a photo, text box or background a menu opens up and shows the available options for that element.

Undo: allows to undo the last operation as many times as desired (shortcut Ctrl + Z).
Redo: recovers the last undone operation as many times as desired (shortcut Ctrl + Y).
Cut: copies the selected element and removes it when pasting (shortcut Ctrl + X).
Copy: copies the selected element without removing it (shortcut Ctrl + C).
Paste: pastes the copied or cut element (shortcut Ctrl + V).

Add new image box: opens new rectangular or oval image boxes, which you will be able to move within the whole double page.

Add new text box: opens new text boxes, which can also be moved within the whole double page.

Edit box content: opens the photo or text editor, depending on the box content.

Delete box content: eliminates the box content (image or text).

Delete box: eliminates the box and its content (image or text).

Rotate box: the image or text box can be rotated indicating exact rotation degrees.

Bring to front: if there are overlapping photos, click on any of them to bring it to the front.

Border: here you can apply a border to a photo or delete the border. This option is especially interesting when a photo is placed on colourful backgrounds or on other photos. Select the border colour and its width. These values will also be applied to the following photos you insert. If you choose "Without border", no border will be applied from that moment onwards.

Shadow: clicking on it will show you the options to provide shades with direction, colour and depth.

Fade: this tool produces a transition on the selected part of the image from opacity to clarity. It is very useful to "melt" photos together.

Rotate image: turns the photo 90º to the left or right and also 180º.

Edit image background: if an image has been placed as background, it opens the image editor allowing you to edit it. The program backgrounds are not editable.

Remove background: deletes the inserted background.

Background colour: any colour can be chosen. Click on a little colour box or select the colour palette. Move the black arrow on the right side up and down to obtain different tones.

Go to page: indicates the number of the page to which you wish to go.

Add double page: adds a double page right before the current pages, which eliminates the last two pages of the album.

Remove double page: deletes the two current pages, which adds two blank pages at the end of the album.

Move double page to the left: moves the current double page to the left.

Move double page to the right: moves the current double page to the right.
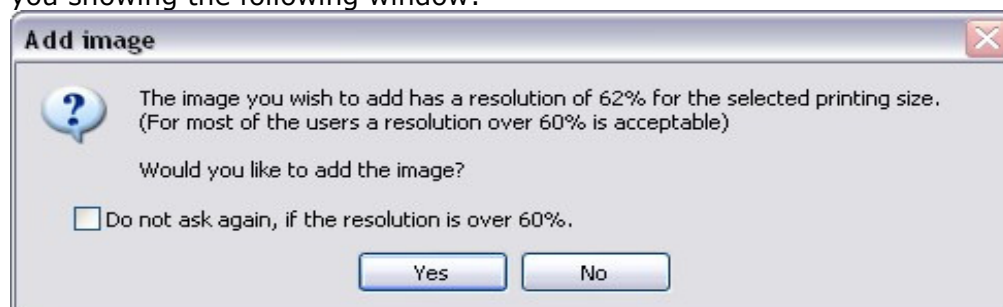
Save template: any double page layouts designed by the user can be saved.

Page numbering: the album pages can be numbered. Different positions, colours and formats can be selected.

Photo resolution

In order to use an image as background, it is convenient that the photo is higher than 3 megapixels.

When a photo is inserted into an image box and it needs higher resolution, the program warns you showing the following window:

If the box "do not ask again, if the resolution surpasses 60%" is ticked, the program understands that these photos are accepted and will only warn, logically, if the resolution is below 60%.

Kindly note that you for using a photo as a background on the double page, it should have been taken at least by a 3 megapixels camera.

In order to know the resolution and the printing size of an inserted photo just move the mouse over it and the information will be displayed as a tooltip.

Furthermore, following symbols may appear on the left down corner of an inserted photo:

⚠ the resolution is between 60% and 90%. This is acceptable for most users. It will not have a major impact on the final quality of the finished album and it won´t be very noticeable to the untrained eye.

⚠ the resolution is under 60% indicating that the printing may not be satisfactory. It is recommended to reduce the box size, unless the photo content is much more important than the printing quality.
These signs are only informative and will not be printed.
When the resolution of the photo is over 90% the triangle does not appear.

Image and text boxes on the cover

The size of the image boxes and text boxes on the cover cannot be altered.
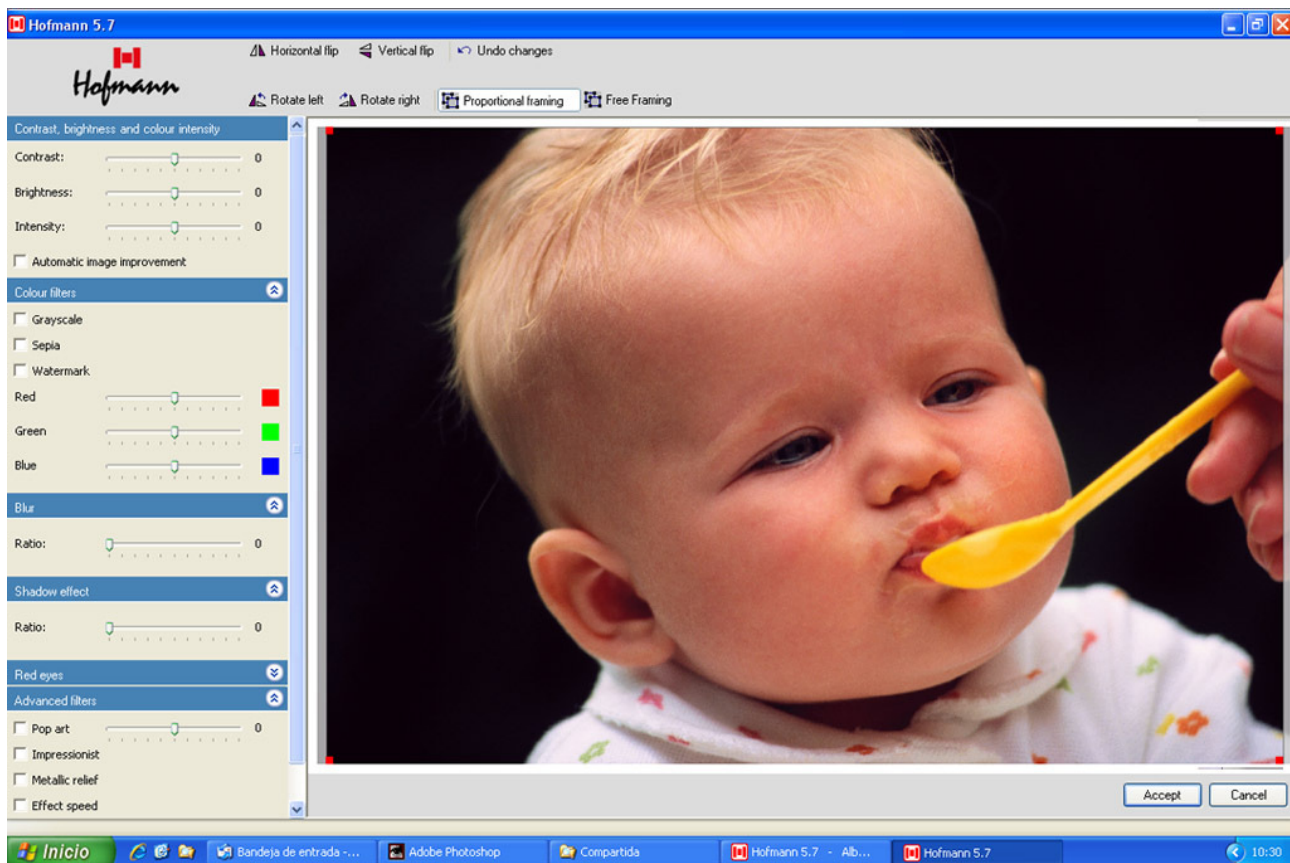
In order to insert text into these boxes or to modify an already inserted text, just double click on the text box or alternatively place the mouse on the text box and click on the right button selecting the option "Edit box content". In any case the text editor opens enabling you to modify, format and delete text. A click on "OK" will close the editor and you will see the result on the album.

You cannot delete or modify these boxes. However, if no text is introduced (or the one already introduced is deleted) no text will be printed.

Photo editor

In order to improve or edit any already inserted photo, just double click on it or alternatively place the mouse on the photo. Then click on the right button and select the "Edit box content" option. In any case you will open the photo editor, which will enable you to rotate and flip images, change the levels for brightness, contrast and intensity, apply colour filters... Please note that no matter what changes are made here, your original photos will never be modified.

The following figure shows the photo editor:
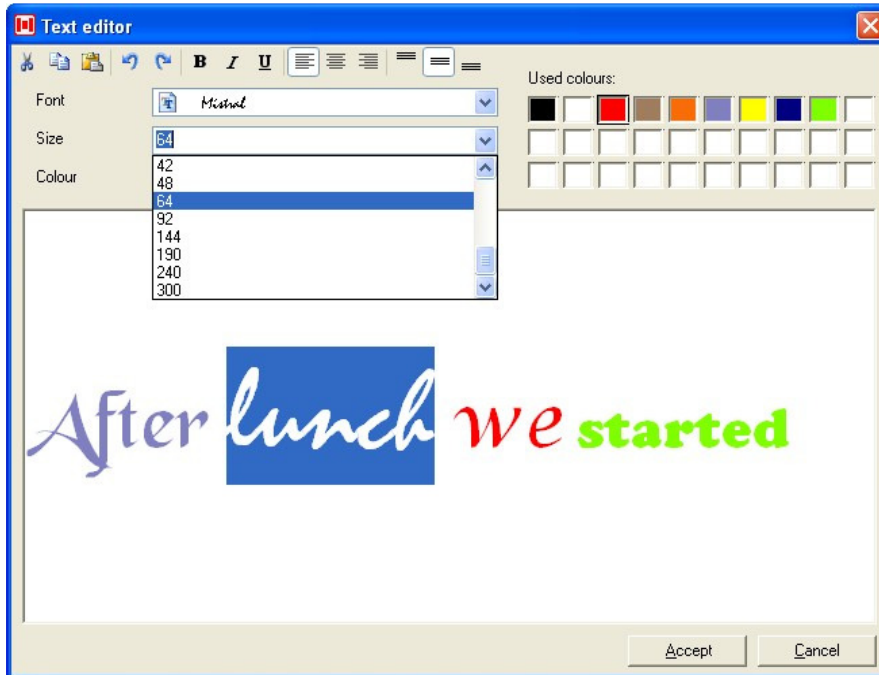
The following actions are offered:

- **Horizontal and vertical flip:** gives a horizontal or vertical "mirror" effect.
- **Undo changes:** it brings the original image back.
- **Left and right rotation:** it turns the photo in jumps of 90º.
- **Proportional framing:** it fits and trims the photo to the image box. If you wish to modify the frame size, locate the mouse on one of the red corners until it adopts the image of an inclined arrow and then drag it until the desired frame size is obtained. To move the whole frame, click on the frame centre and drag it to the desired location.
- **Free Framing:** by using this option the whole photo is always visible inside the image box. This means that it probably will not fill the image box completely, unless both of them have the same side proportions. The photo can be cropped and moved as in the previous section, but in this case the framing is free and will not keep the side proportions of the image box.
- **Contrast, brightness and intensity:** the levels can be varied voluntarily.

- **Automatic image improvement:** the previous levels are automatically varied in the ideal proportions. Usually the image improves.
- **Colour filters:** tones like "Black & White", "Sepia" tone and "Water mark" (this one usually as background) can be applied. Besides there are 3 bars to modify the red, green and blue scales. This is only recommended to advanced users.
- **Blur:** makes the image blurry. This effect is also usually applied to a background photo.
- **Shadow effect:** it confers the image a three-dimensional aspect.
- **Red eyes:** it enables you to correct the red colour of the eyes caused by the flash. Click on the eye centre and then click on "Apply".
- **Advanced filters:** Applies effect filters (pop art, impressionist, metallic relief, etc.) These filters can be applied at all times combined with almost all the program functions.

Text editor

In order to modify an already inserted text, just double click on the text box or, alternatively, place the mouse on the text box and click on the right button selecting the "Edit box content"

option. In both cases the text editor opens in the lower left part of the screen and it enables you to write, select and format the text or part of the text at your choice.

The text editor looks as follows:

The actions that the text editor offers are:

- Cut, copy, paste, undo, redo
- Bold, italic or underlined
- Font selection (type of lettering)
- Font size
- Font colour
- Bold, italics or underlined
- Horizontal alignment in relation to the text box
- Vertical alignment in relation to the text box

The font, colour, size, etc., are visualized inside the editor. In order to change any of these values (size, colour, font) it is necessary to select the part of the text you want to modify. Simply select the desired value and click on the "Accept" button.

The Editor shows text in the selected colour. You will see that the background is not completely white. This is in order to appreciate white text better (white is very used over dark backgrounds).

To make any text changes just double click over the text box and the Editor will show up again.

If you would like to introduce a font size, which is not offered by the pull down menu, select the text, write the number, then press on "Enter" and, after that, click on "Accept".

It may happen that a text does not appear inside the text editor. Most probably the reason is that the chosen colour and the one of the background are the same. If you want to see the text, then select it and choose another colour.

It is always recommended to check that all the text is visible, if necessary by using the preview. If a part of the text is missing, you can decrease the font size or increase or modify

the box size. Click on it and locate the mouse on one of the blue corners until the cursor adopts the image of an inclined arrow. Then drag it until the desired size is obtained.

You can also move the whole text to the desired position (outside or inside the photos) just by clicking on the centre of the box and dragging it.

Contact us

We have gone through the most important elements of the program trying to answer the most usual questions. In any case, we recommend to check regularly (and naturally free of charge) when the program starts, whether there are newer program versions, which certainly will include updated manuals. This way you make sure that you will always create your projects with our most updated version.

However, should you have any further questions or comments, please contact our customer service, which is at your disposal, by email at albumdigital@hofmann.es and we will answer as soon as possible.