

CrazyTalk 5

Handling the Background image

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Abstract	There are two techniques when dealing with the background image in CrazyTalk 5.0 The first one is how to keep the background 100% static and the second is how to customize your own background image.



Step 1)

Open CrazyTalk 5.0, after fitting an image with a background you may see the background image move with the head and face animation. To keep it the background static click on the BACKGROUND MASK EDITING button from the left hand toolbar to launch the background mask editing menu. For this tutorial we are using the LION model from the Animal folder.



Step 2)

Begin to define the mask area. It is a good idea to begin with a small brush size and outline the head, if you wish to keep the same background that is in the photo then be sure to leave some space between the edge of your characters head and the background. Adjust the Brush Size slider to retain a larger brush to quickly paint in the rest of the mask.



Step 3)

To avoid seeing a sharp edge around your new mask when animated, raise the BLUR slider and then click OK to apply your new mask settings. Notice that the masked area does not animate.



Step 4)

Now switch to a different model, select the SPY DOG model from the Animal folder. Then once again click the Background Mask Editing menu. Then clear the mask with the Clear icon.



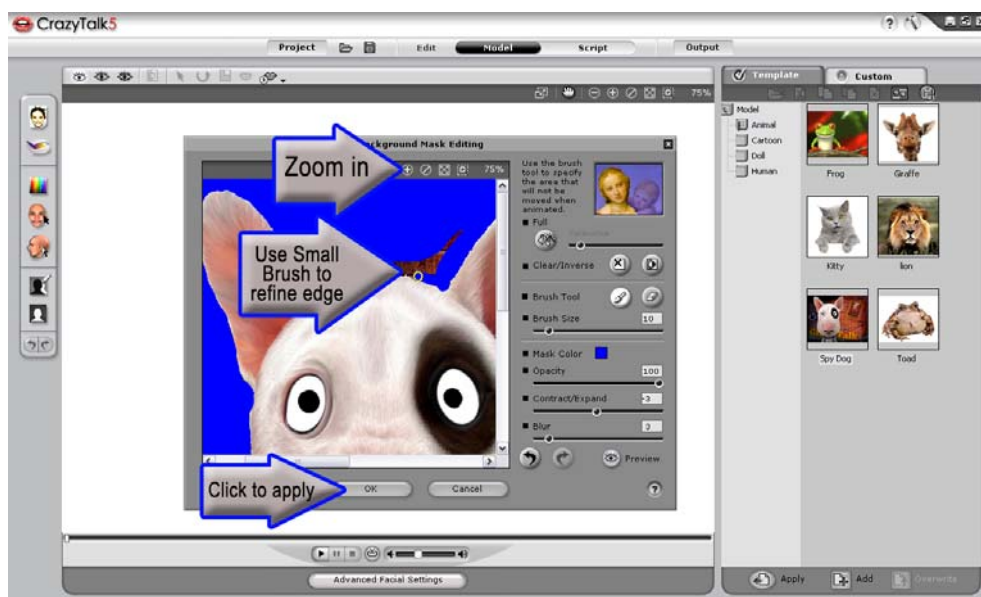
Step 5)

To completely switch out the background for a custom image, the character mask must be exact. To begin use a large size brush and make sure that the Opacity slider is set to 100%. Get a general fit to the mask and then prepare to refine the edge.



Step 6)

Use the Zoom tool to get in close to the image and paint in the edge using a small brush size. Make sure that the entire character is masked and then click OK to apply. Use the eraser tool if needed for over painting to ensure you get an exact fit to the mask.



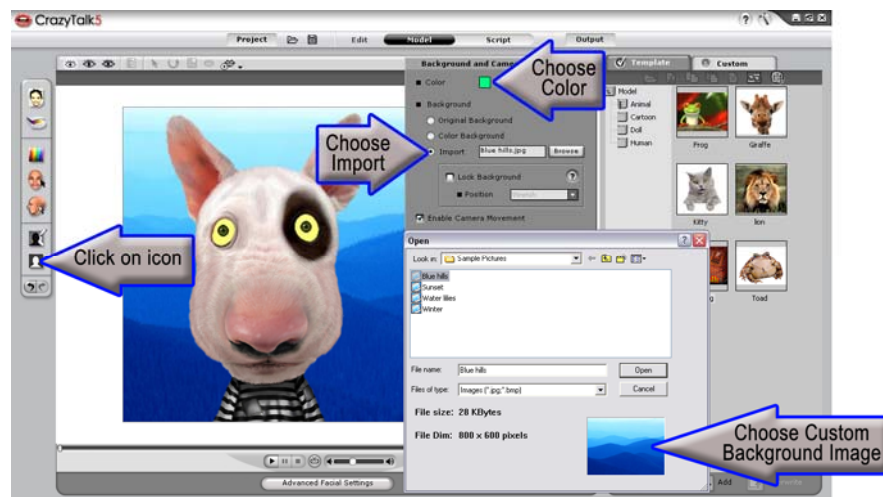
Step 7)

After perfecting your mask you need to check for imperfections on the edge of the mask. If you see that there are rough edges to the character you can easily remove them with the BLUR BLUR and CONTRACT/EXPAND tools. Adjusting the Opacity to get a better look at the mask if need be. Reopen the background mask editing menu and adjust the blur slider until the edge appears soft.



Step 8)

To place a custom image in the background after the mask has been perfected, click on the Background and Camera Movement icon to activate the menu. In this menu you can easily choose a solid color for chromo-keying in an outside video editor, or, click the IMPORT bullet and BROWSE button to add a custom background image to your masked character.



You can use the mask option in CrazyTalk 5.0 to quickly create chromo-key compatible content or completely change the background all together. Masking your images in CrazyTalk 5.0 is easy and offers many options as to how your photographs react in the facial animation environment.