

Editing Images with Canva, Part 1: Crop, Resize and Adjust

40 minutes

Following My Interests Online

Outcome 3.8

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

Students set up a canvas in Canva, place an image, crop and resize it, and adjust it with filters, brightness and contrast. This lesson counts towards outcome 3.8: students use these editing skills to build their digital montage in the montage lessons that follow.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
3.8	create a digital montage on a specific topic of interest from images sourced online while applying learning regarding copyright, fair use, plagiarism, and intellectual property ownership

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Use pixels, resolution, cropping, resizing and aspect ratio correctly
- Explain the difference between cropping and resizing
- Crop an image to change what is in frame, and resize without distorting it
- Apply a filter and adjust brightness and contrast deliberately

BEFORE THE BELL

- Canva needs an account, and students sign up free with their school email. Get this done before the lesson rather than during it: if the class signs up inside the period you will lose about ten minutes and some students will still not get in. Check that your school allows the sign-up and that the email domain works. Canva's labels were checked on 14 August 2026 and all of them still exist. Three things sit differently to how you might expect: Create a design is in the top left on a laptop, the crop control is an icon whose label only appears when you hover over it, and you have to scroll down the edit panel to reach Filters. Everything else is where the lesson says it is.

WHAT YOU NEED

Item	Qty	Per	If you do not have it
Chromebook/ Laptop/PC		student	
Canva account (school email)			REQUIRED. Free, but each student must sign up with a school email BEFORE the lesson. Signing up during the period costs about ten minutes and some students will not get in.

Editing Images with Canva, Part 1: Crop, Resize and Adjust

HOW THE LESSON RUNS

4 min	introduction	Start
5 min	content	The words editors use
8 min	activity	Hands-on: Open Canva and place an image
12 min	activity	Hands-on: Crop and resize
9 min	activity	Hands-on: Filters, brightness and contrast
2 min	summary	What you covered

STEP BY STEP

4 min Start Devices with a browser; a Canva account per student.

Both versions are on this step. Version 1 is Shop Street in Galway cut down to a TO LET sign over an empty unit; Version 2 is the whole photo, the street packed with shoppers. Ask the class to look only at Version 1 first and say what it tells them about the town: the usual answer is that the shops are closing and the street is dead. Then turn them to Version 2. Nothing was added and nothing was faked; the crop only left the crowd out.

The same photo is the practice photo for the hands-on, linked in this step, so nobody needs a photo of their own. Check it has downloaded before anyone opens Canva.

5 min The words editors use

The crop-versus-resize distinction is the one to check they have. Ask for it back in their own words before moving on.

8 min Hands-on: Open Canva and place an image

Everyone works on the practice photo from step 1, so nobody needs a photo of their own. Anyone who missed the download can open it from step 1 now.

12 min Hands-on: Crop and resize

The deliberate side-handle stretch is worth insisting on. Seeing the distortion once is what makes the rule stick.

9 min Hands-on: Filters, brightness and contrast

Pushing contrast too far and losing shadow detail is the demonstration. Let them wreck it once.

2 min What you covered

Tell them to keep the design. Next lesson adds text and exports it.