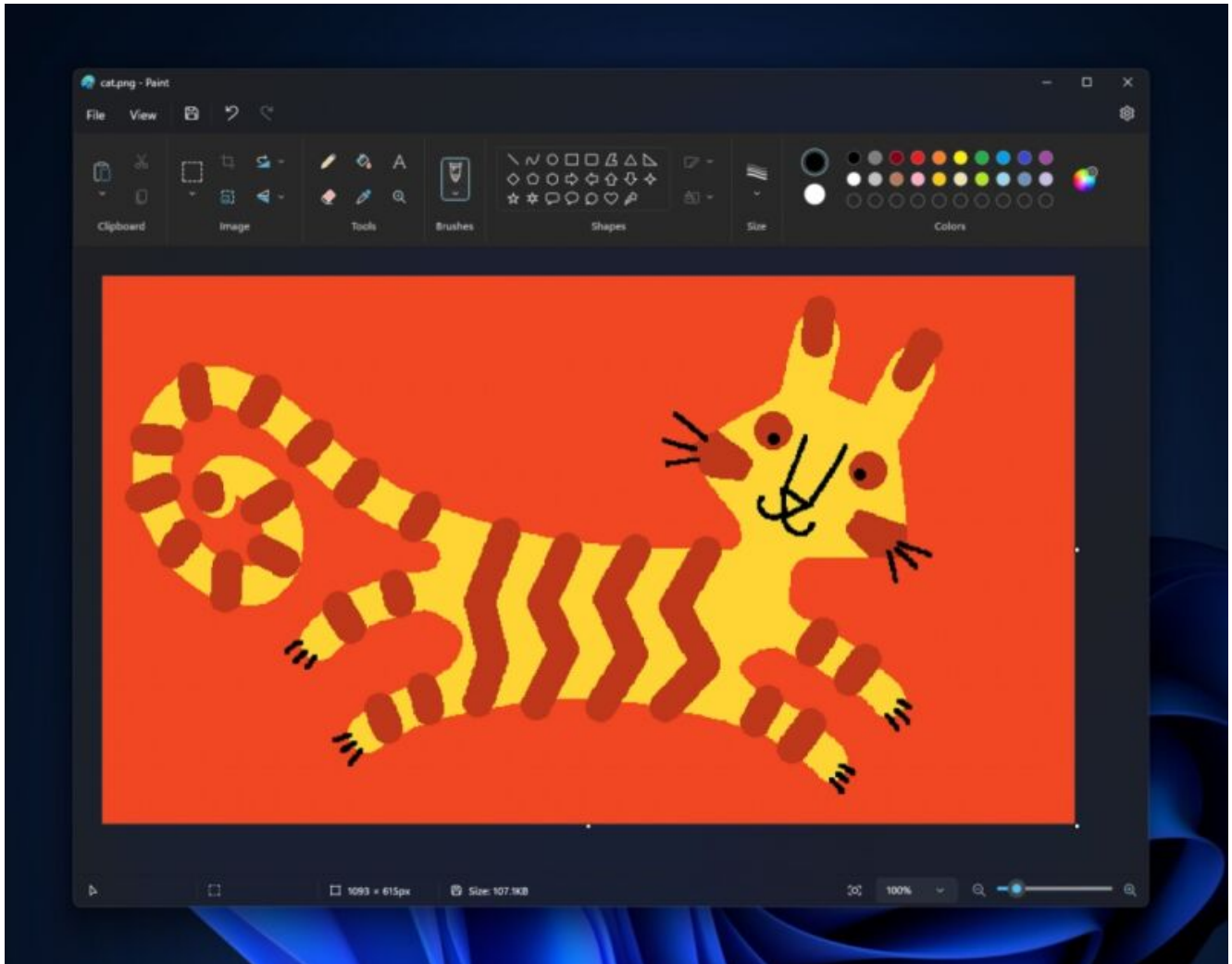


MS Paint app's Windows 11 renaissance continues with dark mode, other updates



Enlarge / Paint's long-promised dark mode is now available to Windows Insiders.

reader comments

42 with

In the summer of 2021, Microsoft's efforts to redesign its software for the Windows 11 era were just kicking into high gear. The company announced an overhaul for the venerable MS Paint that promised, among other things, dark mode support,

but the version of the app that appeared along with Windows 11 in October 2021 was missing the feature.

Now, Windows Insiders in the Dev and Canary channels can finally begin testing a darker version of the Paint app. The update, announced on the Windows Insider blog yesterday, also introduces more granular zoom settings and a zoom slider in the lower-right corner of the app, a new Settings page, new keyboard shortcuts, and “many accessibility and usability improvements to dialogs throughout the app.”

Features rolled out to the Windows Insider channels don’t always make it into the regular builds of Windows 11 that most people use, but these kinds of app updates generally make it out to everyone within a few weeks or months.

Advertisement

Paint’s new dark mode is only subtly different from the version that Microsoft promised and pulled back in August 2021. If anything, the dark mode we’re getting looks a little darker, and the app makes wider use of the “Mica” material that picks up a subtle color tint from your desktop wallpaper.

Updates to the Paint app are notable partly because the app went without updates for so long, and Microsoft even went so far as to announce the end of its development in 2017. The features that have been added to the app during the Windows 11 era have been relatively minor, all things considered, but minor updates are much better than the decade-plus of inactivity the app was subjected to before. Other longstanding built-in Windows apps like Notepad, Sound Recorder, and Media Player have gotten similar attention over the last two years.

Paint’s dark mode is one of several Windows features that Microsoft is currently experimenting with, many of which were announced at the company’s Build developer conference last month. Support for Bluetooth Low-Energy Audio, improved support for compressed archive files, and a developer-centric

app called “Dev Home” are all currently in preview, and the ChatGPT-powered Copilot feature will begin rolling out to Windows Insiders over the summer. A “never-combine” option for the taskbar also restores a much-requested feature from older versions of Windows.

<https://arstechnica.com/?p=1943942>