

How to use the NVIDIA Canvas app

NVIDIA Canvas, formerly known as NVIDIA GauGAN, is a free painting application that uses sophisticated AI modeling to turn simple drawings into realistic landscapes.

Sometimes the hardest part of the creative process is simply getting started. It can be quite challenging to stare at a completely blank picture before you start turning your imagination into reality.

Wouldn't it be hard to believe if in just a few simple swipes you could leverage the power of AI technology to turn simple doodles into lifelike images in real time? The good news is that you can do this with the NVIDIA Canvas app.

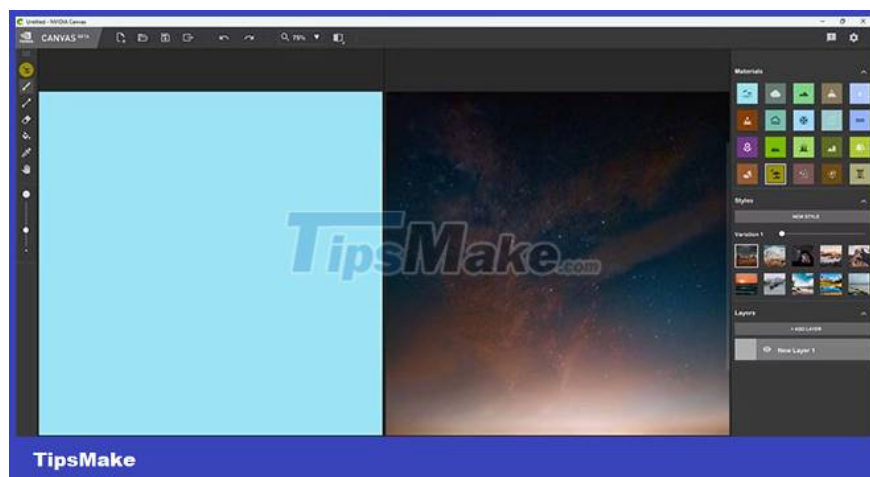
What is NVIDIA Canvas?

NVIDIA Canvas, formerly known as NVIDIA GauGAN, is a free painting application that uses sophisticated AI modeling to turn simple drawings into realistic landscapes. The software is geared towards advertisers and artists, but that shouldn't stop you from downloading and trying it out, as long as you have the necessary hardware.

NVIDIA Canvas is accelerated with tensor cores, found exclusively on NVIDIA RTX GPUs. This means that to run NVIDIA Canvas, you will need a GeForce RTX, NVIDIA RTX, or TITAN RTX GPU.

To get started with NVIDIA Canvas, you can download and install the beta directly from NVIDIA.

NVIDIA Canvas User Interface



When you first launch NVIDIA Canvas, you will feel familiar with the interface, as it is similar to any modern photo editing application, such as Photoshop or GIMP.

Default layout and settings

Starting with the top menu, you'll see:

1. Various file options like **New file**, **Open file** and **Save file** .
2. Export button .
3. **Undo** and Redo navigation arrows .
4. **Feedback** and settings gear icon.



On the left panel is the toolbar, where you will find:

1. **Brush**, **Line** , and Eraser tools .
2. **The Fill**, **Material picker** , and **Pan** tools .
3. Brush size tool .



On the right panel you will find:

1. **Material** palette
2. **Styles** section , with option to import new style
3. **The Layers** section , where you can add additional layers.



In the central workspace you will find:

1. **Segmentation Map** . This is where you will do your drawing.
2. **Output Image** . This is where the AI ??model outputs the resulting image after each stroke, i.e. Auto-paint. Note that in **Settings** you can disable **Auto-paint** and instead choose to call the AI ??manually by pressing **F5** on your keyboard.



Keyboard Shortcuts

In addition to the on-screen controls, you can also use the following keyboard shortcuts to save time.

1. Rotate: Hold down the Spacebar and left-click the drag.
2. Undo: **Ctrl + Z**
3. Redo: **Ctrl + Y**
4. Zoom in: **Ctrl** and **+ . key**
5. Zoom out: **Ctrl** and the **- key**
6. Switch to full screen mode: **Shift + F** or **F11**
7. Exit full screen mode: **Esc . key**

8. Save: **Ctrl + W**
9. Increase brush size: **Ctrl** and **]** or **]**
10. Reduce brush size: **Ctrl** and **[** or **[**

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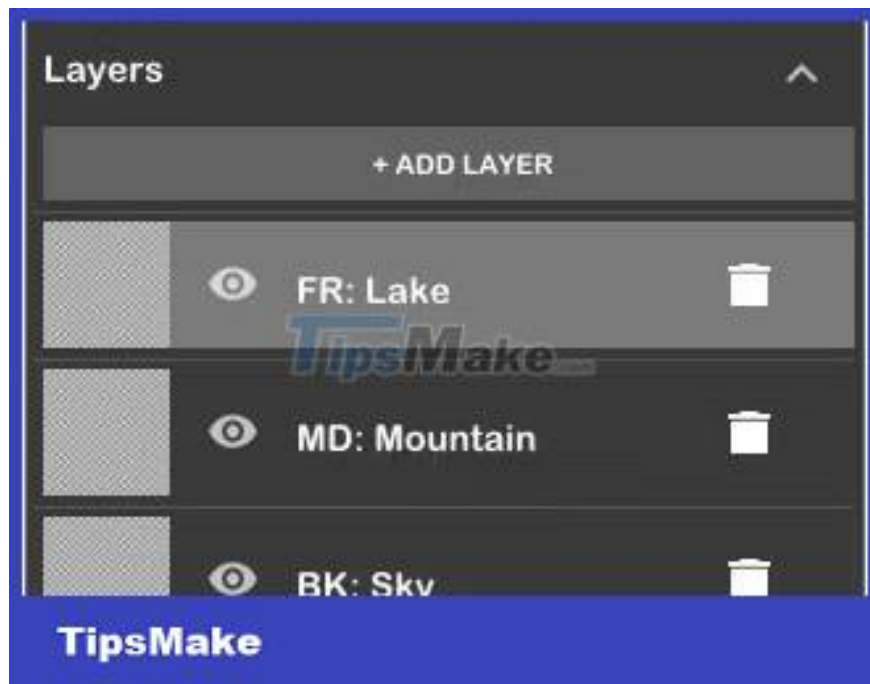
Now that you're all set up and ready to go, let's explore how to use the NVIDIA Canvas app to create some amazing works of art.

Working with layers

Although you can draw everything on a single layer, it is recommended to divide the foreground, mid-ground, and background elements into individual layers.

This way you can isolate an individual layer and make adjustments without affecting the entire image. Also, because layers can overlap, having your image consist of multiple layers helps to blend transitions between elements.

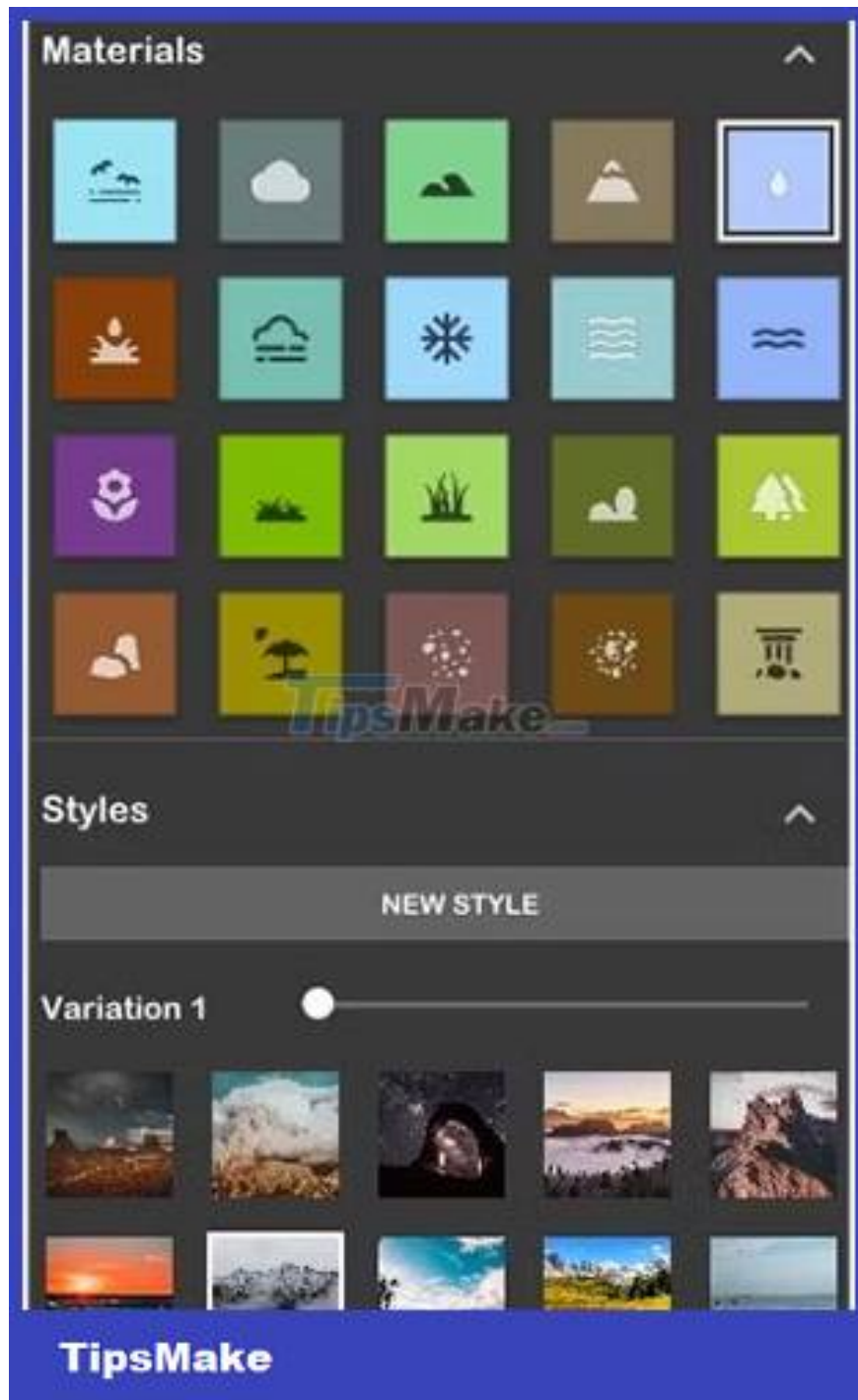
Try making a picturesque mountain scene. We'll start by adding foreground, mid-ground, and background layers for the lake, mountains, and sky.



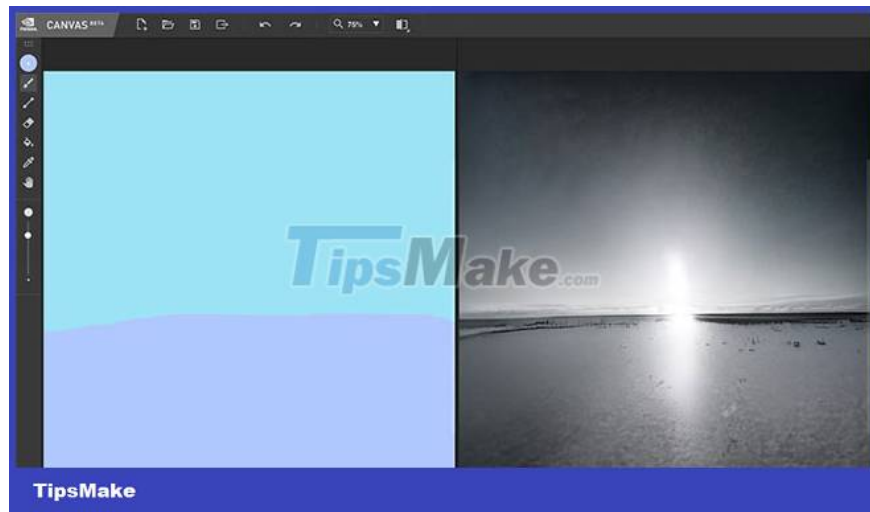
Materials and Styles

This is the heart of NVIDIA Canvas. With **Variations**, you can quickly swap between preset settings to dramatically tweak the look and feel of your images. **The Material** panel is what should be used to add elements like grass, rocks, trees, etc.

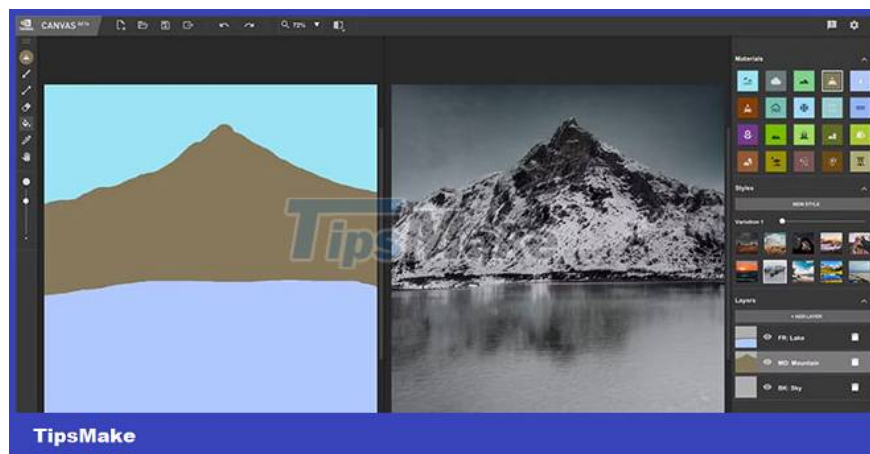
With the foreground layer selected, the example will select the snow variation from the list of defaults in **Styles**. Then, from the **Materials** list, select water.



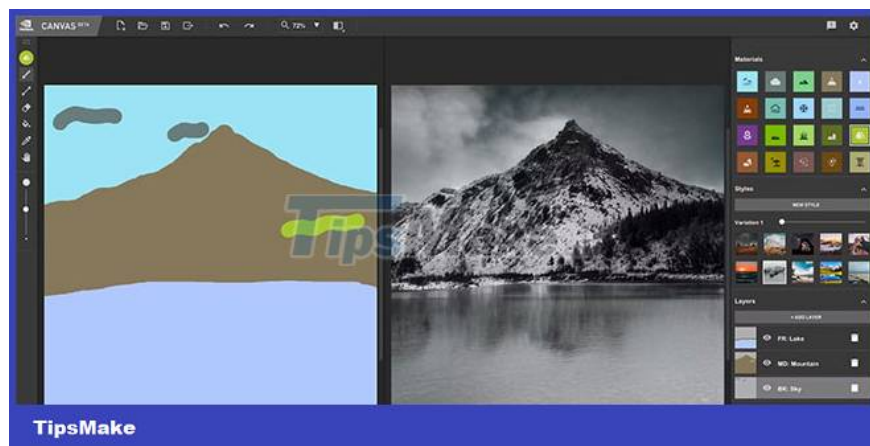
With the **Brush** tool selected, draw a coastline in the center of the layer and fill it with the same material using the **Fill** tool. It will look like the image below.



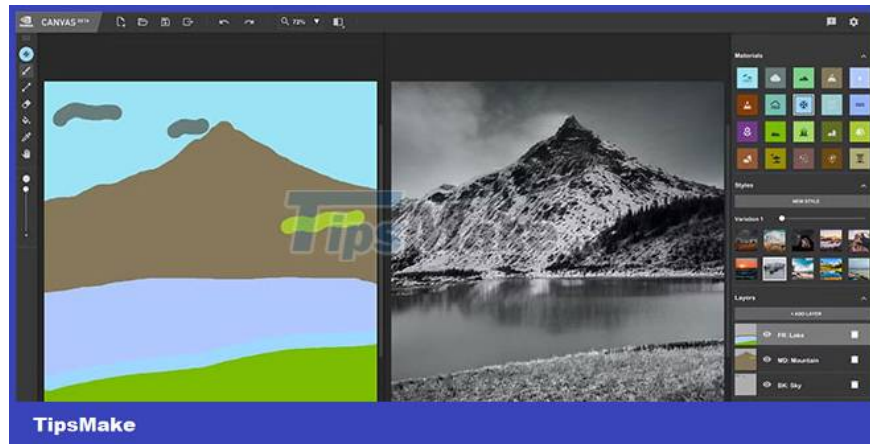
Next we will switch to the ground layer and draw a rough silhouette of a mountain using the mountain material, again using the **Brush tool**. Like above, fill it with the **Fill** tool for a result that looks like this:



With the foreground layer selected, add some trailing clouds near the top of the mountain with the cloud material. For better results, switch back to the ground layer and add some mountain trees using the forest material.



Finally, switch back to the foreground layer, adding a patch of grass and snow to make it look as if the image was taken from the viewer's perspective on the adjacent coastline.



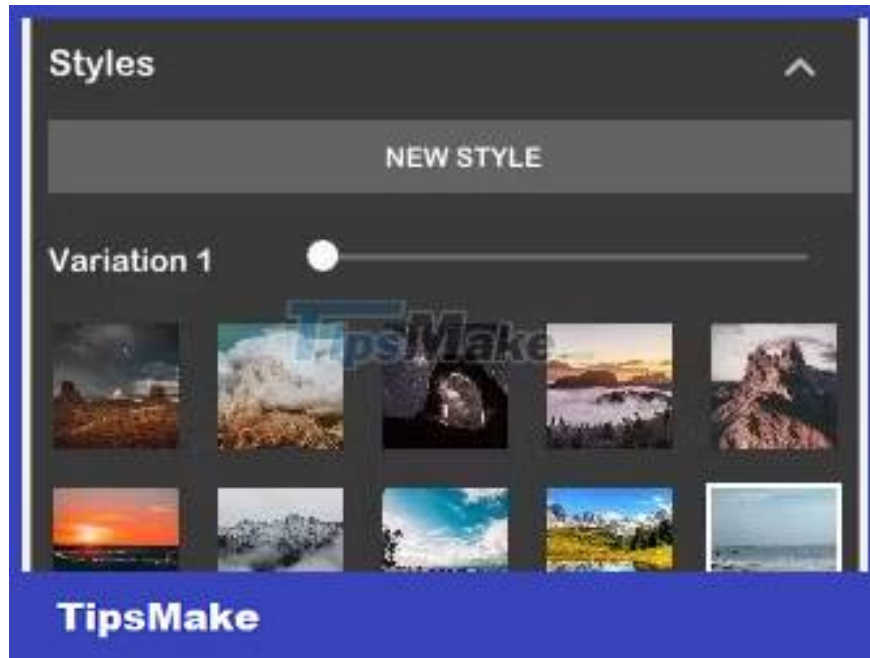
That's all that needs to be done. Images can now be exported as PSD or PNG files, where you can add finishing touches in the image editor of your choice.



Enter a new style

The last NVIDIA Canvas feature we'll look at is the **New Style** button, which allows you to import your own images. The AI model will then do its best to interpret the image, and whatever you draw now will be styled for that image.

To do this, simply click the **New Style** button under **Styles** and **Browse** to browse for an appropriate image.



To test this, the article took an existing image placed on a sandy beach and more or less followed the same process as above. In just a few simple clicks, the AI has created a completely unique image using the same colors, tones, and overall characteristics of the imported image.



What you can achieve with the NVIDIA Canvas application in a short amount of time is truly remarkable. While some of the images the app generates are still a bit weird, there's no denying how close they are to life. NVIDIA Canvas is sure to become a powerful tool for artists, especially concept artists, who can use it to quickly bring ideas to life.

Experience it for yourself and create some stunning views of your own!

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