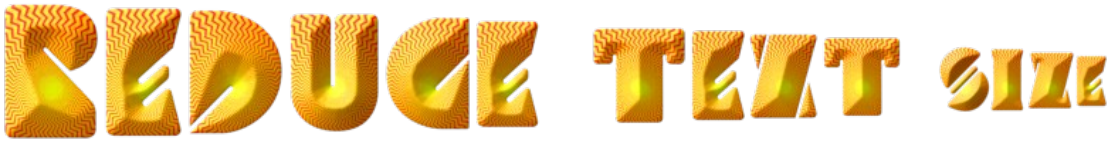
New Guide to FontSlab with tabbed dialog Part 1: Reducing the Size of the Text



FontSlab is my plug-in for manipulating both fonts and custom fonts along a path in Gimp 2.10. It provides a lot of options and is now available in a tabbed dialog version, thanks to the work of MareroQ in bringing Gimpfu3 by Arakne to scripting plug-ins.

There is a zipped Resources folder to accompany this guide that includes:

FontSlab Tabbed v0.17 plug-in
Chunky_SoftRays custom font file
winding path path file

Unpack the resources folder and save it to your preferred location. The plug-in needs to be copied into your user plug-ins folder and the path file should be imported to the image (I used a size of 1000x800) that you create for this project.

Fire up the Gimp, create a new image and add a curving path to your image either by using the path tool or by importing the path file from the path tool dock.



Call up the FontSlab dialog:

Filters>>Custom Fonts>>Using Tools>>FontSlab Tabbed v0.17...

Normally you will have to find the best sizes using trial and error – using the Undo dock (with your keyboard shortcut Ctrl + Z) or simply by deleting the offending layer.

My settings are shown below. If you are using your own resources then enter values just for the options highlighted in red in the dialog screenshots.

From the first tab on the dialog (Colour & Fonts):

Enter the text; I used the phrase, ‘THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD’.

Choose a custom font; I used Chunky_Soft_Rays.

From the second tab on the dialog (Size & Spacing):

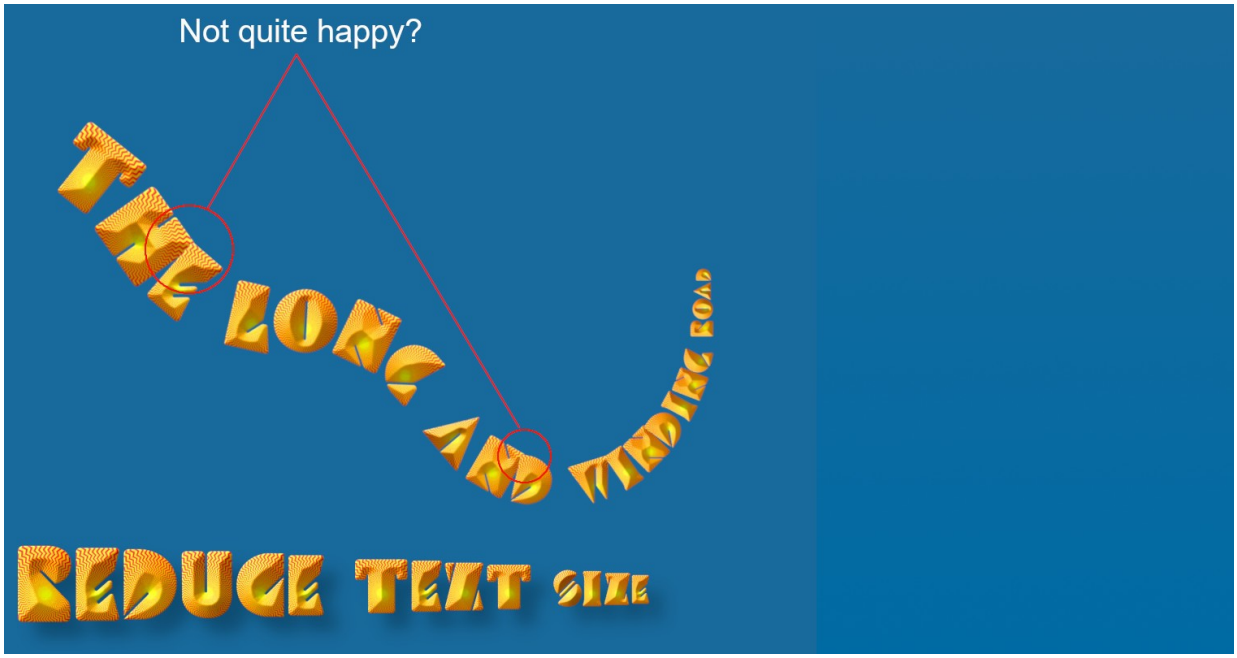
Set the value for the ‘Font size’ option; I used 120.
Set the value for ‘Text size step change’; I used -4.0.

Click on ‘OK’ to commit your choices.

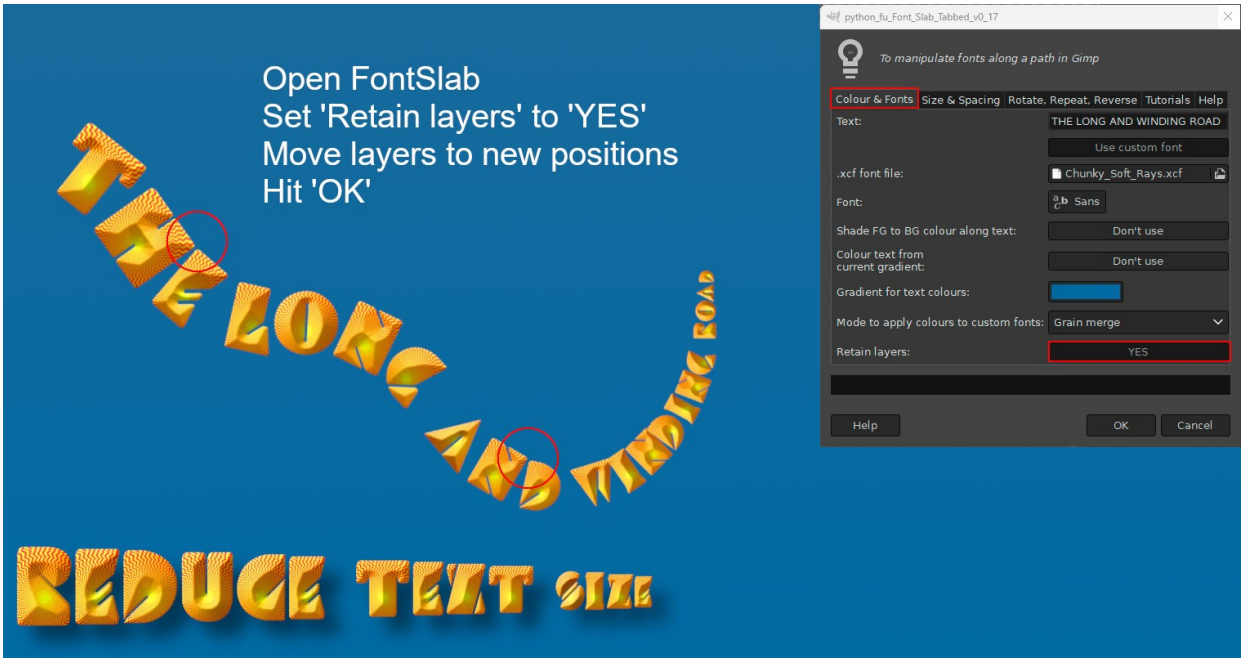


Optional adjustment to letter positioning

If you are not quite satisfied with the outcome - some letters may overlap where a path curve is sharper - there is an option available to add each character as a separate layer which can be selected and moved around independently of the others.



Open FontSlab with the ‘Retain layers’ option set to ‘Yes’ on the first tab click on ‘OK’.



Select the character layer in the layer stack that you want to re-position and drag with your mouse or use the arrow keys to move it.

You can always use ‘Merge down’ or ‘Merge visible layers’ to make the finished layer easier to manage and move around.

The finished text looks better with an added drop shadow (doesn’t everything).

