Make a background transparent in the GIMP
DdeC Sep 18 Gimp 2.8.18

In the graphics document, **select an area** of colour with the Select by Colour tool (or any other selection tool such as the lasso or wand). This is the area you want removed. During selection you can vary options such as Threshold and Feathering.
Then **choose Layer/Transparency/Colour to Alpha...**
Then **delete the selection**.
To take advantage of transparency you need to **save it as a PNG** (or GIF).