

# Images for the Web

*Vector graphics made in Illustrator, I open in Photoshop when saving web versions. The **SAVE FOR WEB & DEVICES** function in Photoshop is superior.*

## PREPARING IMAGES AND GRAPHICS FOR THE WEB

The three initial things to consider:

- Image size (in pixels) & Resolution (web vs. print)
- File type (jpg, gif, png)
- File size (for speedy loading & optimal viewing on the web)

### Getting Started

First, create a folder labeled masters, where you will store “the master “ copy of each file. In a separate folder, called Web, you will save your web versions of your master files. This is really important, you are essentially making copies to alter for web display, without damaging the originals.

### Resolution

The standard resolution (dpi-dots per inch) for print design is 300dpi (though many printers print only at about 150ppi (points per inch) in CMYK (subtractive color). The standard resolution for web imagery and graphics is 72 dpi in RGB (additive color). Web images and graphics are intended to be viewed on screen, and must be formatted to load quickly. Scaling the resolution of images down to 72 dpi means you will sacrifice some quality for optimal function, but there are ways to prevent your images on screen from becoming too distorted.

### Adjusting Image Size

*Use Photoshop to adjust images, there are a few different ways.*

- From the drop down menu choosing **Image > Image size**. In this dialog box you can adjust the pixel dimensions, inch dimensions, and dpi. This is used when you are making the initial changes of your file (from master to web copy). Change the dpi and input the pixel width required for the space you have mapped out on your site.
- Crop tool. You can input the pixel dimensions you want and the dpi to crop very specifically. This is useful on the fly if you need to isolate a particular section of an image.
- Save for Web interface. From the drop down menu choose File > Save For Web & Devices. This interface allows you to save in different file formats, considering the size that the file will be in these different formats.

### File Types and Uses

**GIF**–Graphics Interchange Format (GIF) is one of the file formats used to display indexed-color graphics and images in HTML documents on the web. Indexed color means that it will only display a maximum of 256 colors. For this reason, GIF is NOT a good format for saving photographic type images with many colors. GIF is good for saving images with flat blocks of color such as logos or simple illustrations. Another very important feature of GIF images is that it allows you to preserve transparency. It uses an LZW- compressed format designed to minimize file size.

**JPG or JPEG**–Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG) format is used to display photographs and other continuous-tone images on the web. JPEG format supports CMYK, RGB (millions of colors), and Grayscale color modes. Unlike GIF format, JPEG retains all color information in an RGB image but compresses file size by selectively discarding data. This is known as lossy compression, and can result in a loss of quality if a high level of compression is applied. In most image editing programs you can specify how much compression/loss of quality you want. Generally, if you choose the maximum quality option, your image will be indistinguishable from your original photograph. However, you can also save your files with lower quality settings that still produces a reasonably good image (or at least good enough for the web) image. Another important difference between GIF and JPG, is that JPG does not preserve transparency.

**PNG**–Portable Network Graphics (PNG) is a little bit like the best of both worlds. It was developed based on GIF, for lossless compression and for display of images on the web. Unlike GIF, PNG supports 24-bit images and produces background transparency without jagged edges; however, some older web browsers do not support PNG images. PNG format supports RGB, Indexed Color, Grayscale, and Bitmap mode images. PNG also preserves transparency in grayscale and RGB images.