

TEN TIPS FOR USING IMAGES ON THE WEB

1. Use the JPEG (**J**oint **P**hotographic **E**xpert **G**roup) format, with the .jpg file extension, for photographs. It is designed specifically for photographs. Drawings and logos tend to not look very good when saved in the JPEG format.
2. Use the GIF (**G**raphic **I**nterchange **F**ormat) for images that are not photographs, such as drawings, logos, and maps. The GIF format is designed to display such images as clearly as possible.
3. It is OK to use PNG (**P**ortable **N**etwork **G**raphics) in place of GIFs. PNG files are small than GIF files, and PNGs handle color better. But, remember that all new browsers display PNGs, but many old ones do not.
4. Web images should have definitions of 72 dpi (**d**ots **p**er **i**nch). PC monitors display at 72 dpi, Macintosh monitors display at 78. Some people will use 75 dpi as a compromise that is OK. But resolutions higher than that serve no useful purpose because they will not be seen on the screen. The files will be too large and download times too long.
6. Animated GIFs are not your friend. Animated images are now considered to be old fashioned. They are larger than static images and have longer download times, too.
7. Remember that there are only 216 browser safe colors. Browser safe colors are the colors that Web browsers use in common. While a computer monitor may be able to display up to 32 million colors, browsers have the ability to put only 216 of them on the screen consistently. Mixing pixels of several browser safe colors makes up any other color. A solid block of color may look smooth if it is browser safe, but it will appear blotchy if the color is not browser safe.
8. Big images have long download times. Make sure the file size of all images is as small as possible.
9. JPG images are "lossey." This means you loose data each time you save the image when you are working with it in an image-editing program. It is the compression process that causes the image to loose detail each time it is saved. To edit a JPG file, convert it into a native file format for your editor, PDS for Photoshop, for instance, edit the image, and then save the finished version as a JPG.
10. The most important thing you can remember about images on the Web is that planning is essential. Know where they will be used, how they will be used, what physical size they should be, and how the file sizes can be reduced.