Understanding Graphics
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JPG or GIF?

If you have a photo or very complex image, it should be saved as a JPG.

If you have an image of solid colors or text on a solid or simple background, it should be saved as a GIF.

➡ Saving them as the wrong format can cause your image to look bad.

Image Size

Image size refers to two things:

➡ Space the file takes on your computer (kilobytes or megabytes)

➡ The physical size of the image (width x height)

➡ If you have an image that is in the megabyte range, it is too large!

How do I know the size of an image?

Right click on the image in your browser and go to properties. This will show you a number of things including:

➡ File path

➡ Size of image

➡ Physical size of image

Saving the same file as a JPG or a GIF will result in two different sizes, even though they may be the same physical size.

➡ Sometimes choosing the smaller size does not mean you have chosen the format with the best quality.

Physical Size

If you have an image that is large, do not insert it on your web page and then resize it in html

➡ Even though it looks smaller, it still takes the full amount of time to load.

➡ It will look distorted.

How do I have graphics that are large on my website without affecting load time?

If you want your users to have access to the larger photo, make a thumbnail of the smaller image and then link it to the larger image

Making Graphics in Photoshop

You can make graphics in Photoshop that are complex or simple.

Layers

Gives you the ability to "lay" objects on top of each other and to easily make changes later

➡ Be sure to save the original file in PSD format

➡ Don't rasterize the text or shapes; you will not be able to adjust them later

Warping Text

Warping text is very easy

➡ Use with caution

➡ Be careful not to lose readability

➡ Writing text on a path is very complex and needs a program like Illustrator

Anti-aliasing

All computer displays show images in bitmap mode. What this means is that every image is really a bunch of tiny little squares that make up the image

Anti-aliasing is the name for techniques designed to reduce or eliminate this effect, by shading the pixels along the borders of graphical elements

Pros

- Makes fonts look smoother
- Rounded edges look round
- Type is easier to read (for some) because it looks more like what printed type looks like
- It's just plain prettier (some would argue)

Cons

- Small fonts become too fuzzy to read
- Sharp edges may be fuzzy and not precise
- You can't print anti-aliased text as it comes out blurred
- Images are generally larger
- Type is easier to read (for some) because the blurring is reduced and the fonts are clear

Save for Web

To save on load time, Photoshop has a great feature called "Save for web…"

- This feature compresses images at various settings to help your images load quickly.
- You can save GIFs or JPGs.

How to Save for Web

- When you have finished creating your image, go to File > Save for Web

- Choose the setting more appropraite for your image:
  GIF or JPG

- Change the settings to see how long it would take to load

Final Thoughts

Remember: your users are at your website to find content, not a lot of graphics

- When adding graphics, load time should definitely be considered

- Readability is a must

- Ask yourself: "Is this graphic a benefit to my users or just eye candy?"

  o Animations can take a long time to load and are usually eye candy