

Optimal images

There are a few things that you can do to speed up your website or improve its SEO but the single most effective change you can make to ensure your website is performing at its best is to make sure all your images are optimised for the web.

What is image optimisation?

Image optimisation effectively means taking steps to reduce the size of your image files as much as possible without affecting the overall quality of the image.

It also means making sure that your image files are optimised to rank well on Google and other search engines.

Size it right first

Avoid uploading very large images and using the web source code to resize it. The larger the file size of the image the longer the page takes to load. A smarter approach is to size it right first.

If you are lucky enough to have access to PhotoShop, you can reduce the image size by using:

- Export
- Save for Web.

Then use the Image Size feature width and height to resize the image.

Other appropriate settings

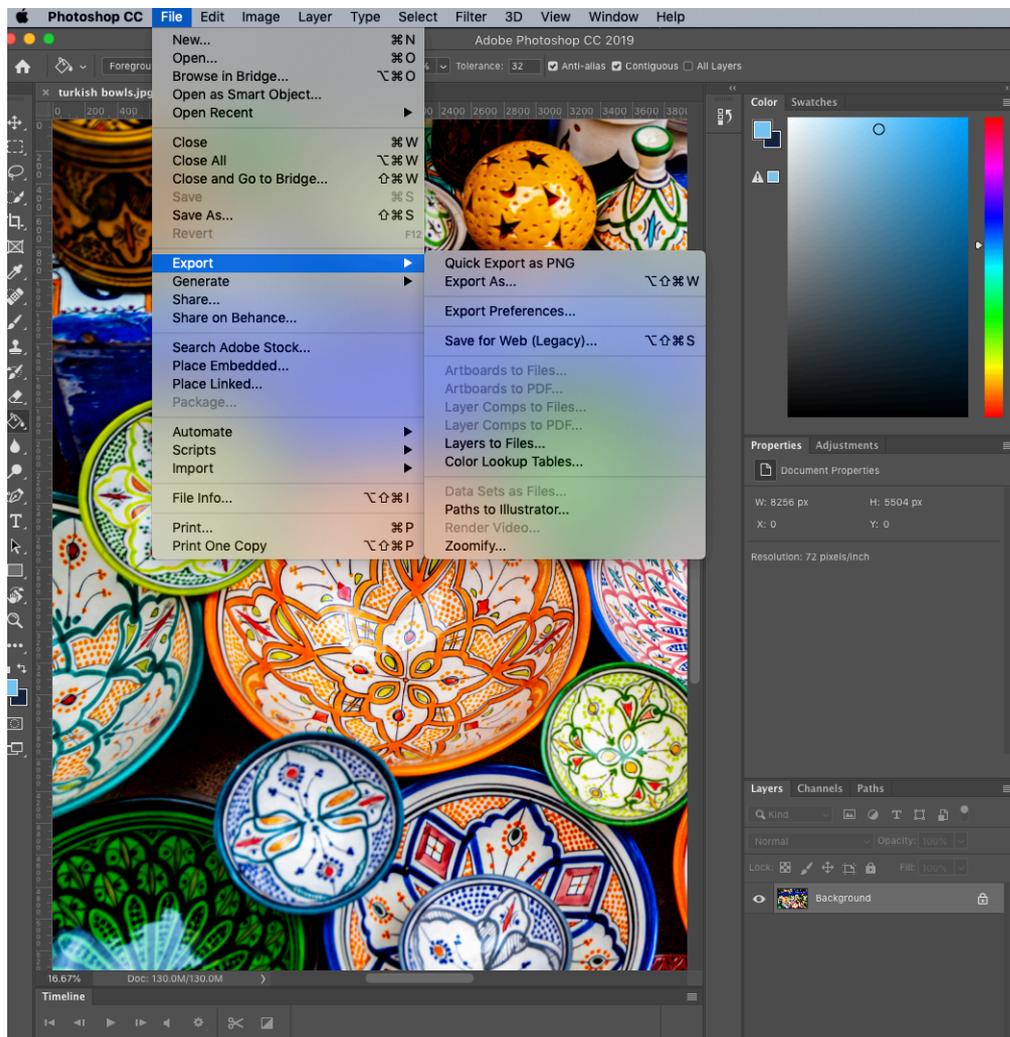
- Quality = 70
- Format = JPEG
- Optimized = ticked
- Convert to sRGB = ticked.

If you don't have PhotoShop there are other free imaging editing programs such as GIMP and Canva.

Download or access here:

<https://www.gimp.org/downloads/>

<https://www.canva.com/>



File types

Here is a brief explanation of some common file types that you can choose when optimising your images.

JPEG (.jpg)

JPEG is the most common online image file type. It has what is referred to as "lossy" compression, which basically means that image quality decreases as the file size decreases.

Because of this, you should always keep the original image file as a backup and edit a copy.



GIF (.gif)

GIFs are often used for image-based animations and to create line artworks often seen in logos.

GIF file types are not recommended for photos because when they are compressed the quality diminishes.

PNG (.png)

The best thing about PNGs is that you can overlay a PNG image onto a transparent background.

PNG images retain a high quality but when compressed they are still bigger in size than JPEGs.

Keep it simple

How many files do you have uploaded to your website that still have the default name assigned from your phone or camera?

If so, maybe it's time to do things a little differently.

Search engines crawl websites for web text but also for image file names. Search engines gather as much information as possible in order to find your web content and rank it accordingly.

One way you can help this process is to use highly descriptive and keyword rich file names. So instead of naming an image of flower arrangements that one of your students made as IMG1234.jpg – think about what someone might type into a search engine to find a floristry course such as flower-arrangement-course.jpg.

Alt tags

If your website is lagging a little and your images have alt tags, you will see that before your image renders on the webpage, it shows what is referred to as the image's alt attribute.

Alt tags or attributes are used as a text alternative to the image if a browser is having trouble rendering the image. Alt tags are an important part of web accessibility. Another way to see if your image has an alt tag is to hover over a web image – the alt tag text should show. Though this is sometimes impacted by settings on your browser.

Note: Don't cram your alt tags with keywords because search engines may penalize you.



Edit Image

File name: hospitality.jpg
File type: image/jpeg
Uploaded on: January 1, 2014
File size: 47 KB
Dimensions: 350 by 167 pixels

Alternative Text

[Describe the purpose of the image.](#) Leave empty if the image is purely decorative.

Title

Caption

Description

Uploaded By learnlocal

Uploaded To [What you can learn](#)

Copy Link

[View attachment page](#) | [Edit more details](#) | [Delete Permanently](#)

If you've some free time in your day – do some spot checks on your website to see if all the images have alt tags.

Need more help?

There are plenty of tutorials available on YouTube. Here is just one example:
https://youtu.be/r8wv_dbwB9E