

## Tips and Tricks - Photo Re-Sizing

One thing you will often find yourself needing to do when updating your web site is resizing photos.

The photos coming off your digital camera are HUGE, in terms of web use, even if your camera is an older model with a 'small' 2 or 3 mega-pixel sensor. Pictures coming off your digital camera are designed to be printed, which requires a lot more resolution, than viewing on the web.

If you put up a photo that is too large on the internet, it may not fit on the user's monitor. Worse, it will take a long time to load, and the frustrated user may just decide to go somewhere else.

Most of the time, you only want an image on a website to be 600 pixels tall or wide at the most. This is because, many user's computer monitor size is only 1024 pixels tall and 768 pixels wide. Usually, if the photo is going to be used in the content area of the site it should be even smaller say 400 pixels tall or wide, even 250.

Here is an easy to remember set of guidelines to use as a starting point:

- Photo for gallery use - 600px by 600px max
- Photo for use in content area - 300px by 300px

When we say 'max' we mean the largest side should not exceed that value. Unless you are shooting medium format film, your picture is not square. It is either wider (horizontal) or tall (vertical). So if your camera takes pictures at 800 by 600, then the size for the web should be:

- 600 pixels wide by 400 pixels tall (if it is a horizontal picture)
- 400 pixels tall by 600 pixels tall (if it is a vertical picture)

There are tons of software applications out there to manipulate photos. The best and most versatile is Photoshop. This is the high-end program for graphics professionals. We SuperHouse folks use it every day. This program is the most powerful, and therefore, the hardest to learn. It is also expensive (\$699). There is also a slightly stripped-down and simplified version of Photoshop called Photoshop Elements. This program is also very powerful. It is more than good enough for anyone but the professional and serious amateur. It costs \$139.99 (or \$89.99, at the moment it is on sale until April 23, 2009).

But there has to be something cheaper and easier right? Yes. There are lots of inexpensive and even free options. We have come across a program called Mobaphoto. This is a nice little app for simple edits, resizing and renaming photos. We can not officially support or guarantee this program, but we've tested it out, and recommended to some clients. We like Mobaphoto a lot, and it is a great free option for PC users.

<http://mobaphoto.mobatek.net/en/>

Mac users? You are already good to go! You just may not know it yet. Look in your Applications folder. There is a program called Preview there. It comes with all Macs. You can open just about any graphic file in the universe with it. Gotta love Apple. If you look under the Tools menu, there you can perform most basic edits, from rotate to color correction. Preview allows you to save in many formats, and allows resizing. You can do all the basics with Preview, they should probably call it something else, like 'Super Useful Free Graphic/Photo Utility'. I guess it doesn't have the same ring to it. Be sure to drag Preview to your dock, if it is not already there.

Happy photo editing to you! Remember to resize your full-resolution photos. On the web, big is bad.

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