

Saving Files and File Formats Tutorial

By Hummie

File Formats

There are three main file formats that are utilized in digiscrapping. You will recognize a file format by the extension at the end of the file name. An extension is the three letters and/or numbers after a period.

1. **.jpg** – This file format is a commonly known file format as it is the most popular format for photos. This is the file format that you will use for your final layout. It will have all layers merged. You will print from this file format. This is also the file format that you will want to use when sharing your layouts (by e-mail, galleries, etc.). Background papers used in digiscrapping are also this format.

2. **.psd** – This file format preserves layers. You need to retain your layout in this format if you want to edit your layout (you will not be able to edit in .jpg format). The one drawback of this file format is that it is very large. Many digiscrappers will eventually delete this file format when they are certain they are happy with the final layout. For me, I have trouble deleting anything as I feel I can never be 100% positive that I may not want to change it in the future. However, to conserve space on my hard drive, I do eventually move this file format to a back-up and delete it from my hard drive.

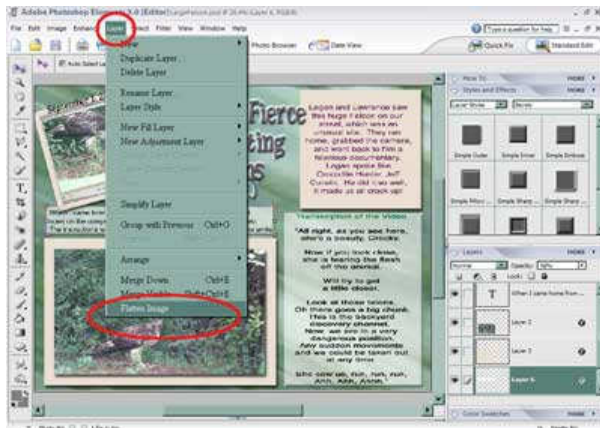
3. **.png** – This file format allows for transparency. Most digital elements (other than papers) are in this format. Since digital files are square or rectangle, there is background surrounding elements (ie. a tag is not square and, therefore, there will be space between the tag and the edge of the file). In utilizing this file format, that background space can be a transparent space. Should you save this file format as any other file format (except .gif), it will insert a default white background behind the element.

Saving Files

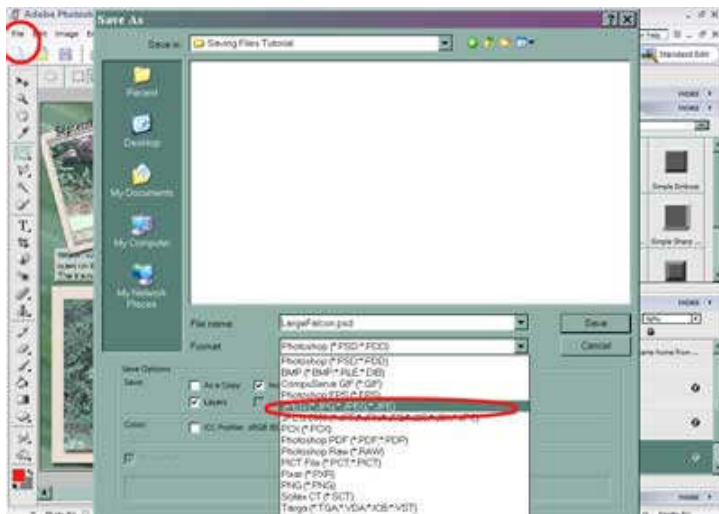
In the First Layout Tutorial, you were shown how to save your file as a .psd file format to preserve layers. This tutorial will show you how to save your layout as a final layout (and printing purposes) and for sharing in galleries or on a website in the .jpg format.

I have heard some say that it is necessary to first flatten your layers before you save them to a .jpg format. There have been some who have complained that if you do not, the text on your layout becomes stretched or fuzzy. I have never had this problem and always skip this step. For me, risking accidentally losing my layers to do a step that is not necessary for me is not worth the risk. However,

you need to be aware that this problem sometimes exists and make the choice for yourself.

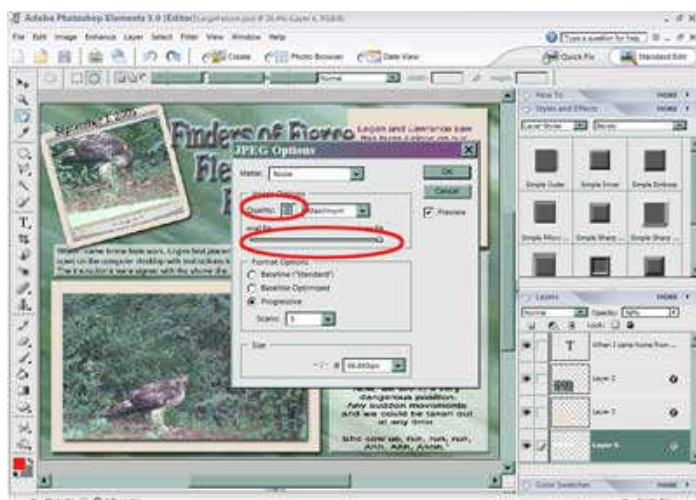


To flatten layers, go to the Layer drop down menu and choose “flatten layers.” This will combine all of your layers into one layer. However, as stated above, be careful not to hit your save button after you flatten your layers. You will want to be careful to follow through the “save as” instructions below and then either 1) close your .psd file and when asked to save, do not; or 2) hit your undo button to bring back your layers before you save your .psd file.



To save your file at the highest quality for preserving your final layout and printing purposes, go to the File drop down menu and choose “Save As.” A pop-up box will open. In the “Save in” box at the top, navigate to the folder where you want to save your layout. In the “File name” box, type the name of your layout. I like to include a date (use periods and not slashes) in the name. In the “Format” drop down menu, choose the .jpg format.

When you use the “Save as” utility, you create a whole new file and it does not change your .psd.

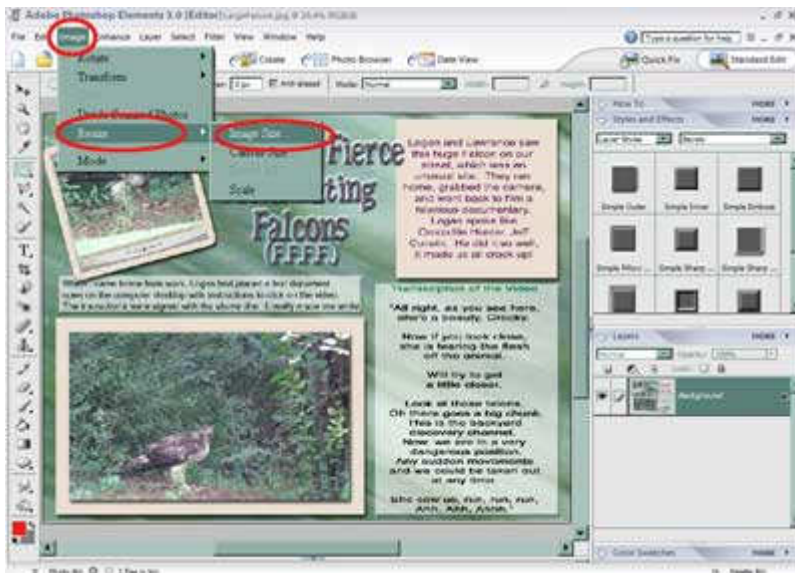


Click on the Save button. A new box will pop up. This can be a scary, strange box for those who have never seen it before. The “Image Options” area is an important area. This is the area that sets the “compression.” To compress a file will make the file smaller,

but it can also deteriorate the quality. There are times when a smaller file will matter, but for printing purposes, you will want to use the highest quality. If you move the slider, you will notice that the number in the “quality” box will change. You can change the compression by either using the slider or manually typing a number in the box. The number should be set on 12.

The default “format options” should be set as “baseline (standard),” which is the top choice (not as in my screencap!)

The default “size” is 56.6kbs (although I suppose you could make it higher, I use this setting).



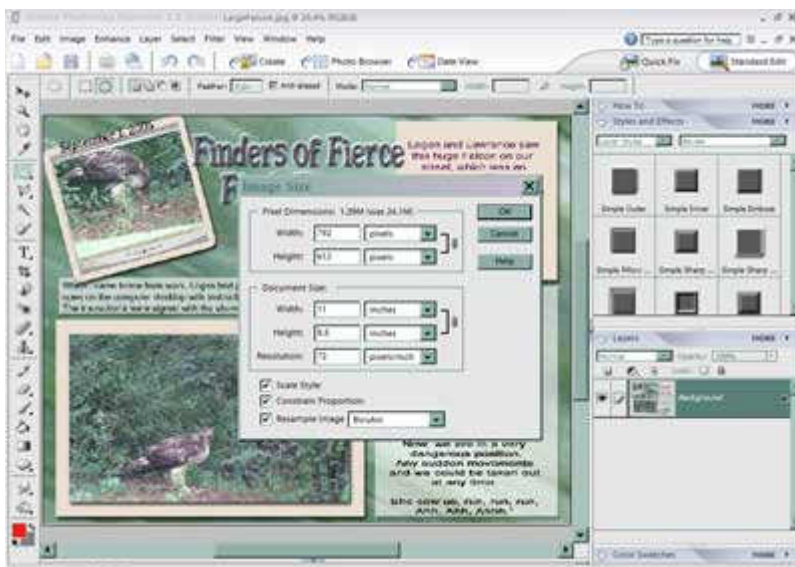
There are several ways to save your files for sharing or for internet purposes.

Some people will save every layout in three ways: as a .psd, as a printable, full-size layout, and as a web-usable size. For me, if I make a web-usable size for e-mailing or uploading, I save it to my desktop and

thereafter delete it after send it or upload it. However, for some people, they prefer to have this size handy for quick sending at any time and make the smaller size with every layout.

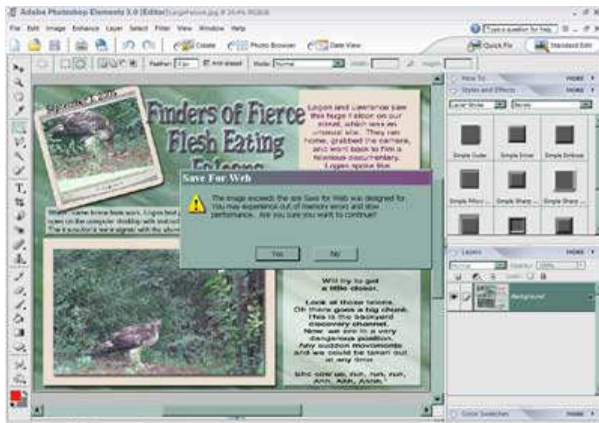
The first method is not the method I would recommend, but some do use it.

Go to the Image drop down menu and choose, Resize, and then Image Size. A popup box will appear.

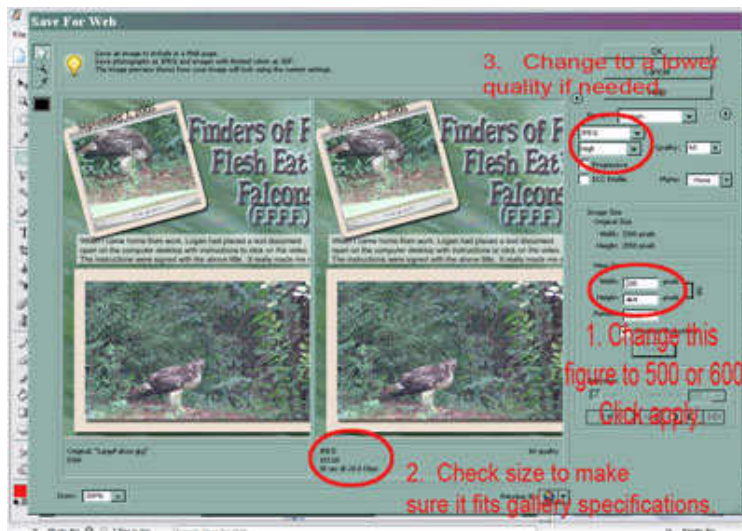


Type “72” in the resolution box and it will automatically adjust the other boxes proportionately. Save your file as a .jpg as described above. However, just as I

mentioned above for flattening layers, there is a great risk at losing your original photo size using this method! Be very careful! I do not recommend doing it this way.



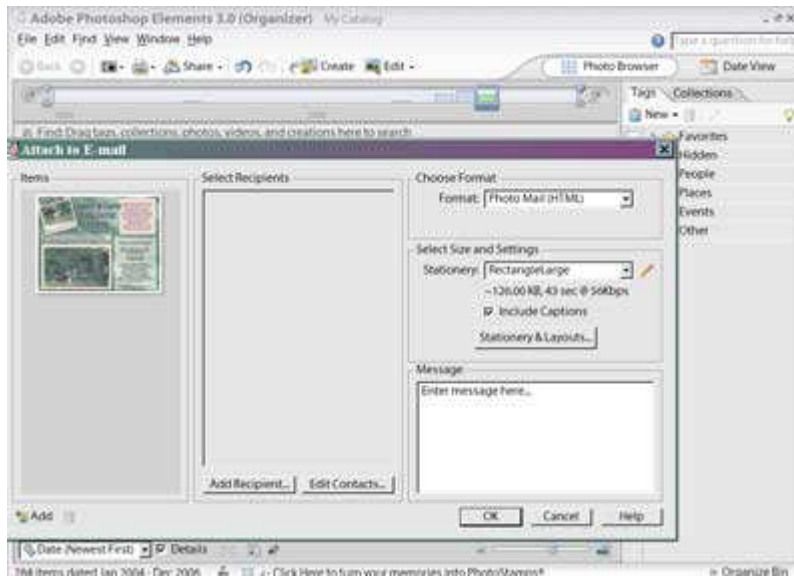
The best way to save your photos for sharing and posting in galleries is the “save for web” utility under the File drop down menu. When you click on the “save for web” choice, you should get a warning message as shown below. Ignore it and click “yes.”



A big popup box will appear. First, in the “new size” box, type in either 500 or 600 (depending on the site you are posting at and their restrictions) in one of the boxes. The other box will adjust accordingly. If you are a rectangle scrapper, put this figure in the box where the original figure is larger. Next, be sure to click “apply”. The previews will change.

Next, observe the size of your new file (as circled in #2 below). Is your new file small enough for the gallery specifications? If so, click okay. If not, change the quality to something lower (as circled in #3 below). When you get your new file size small enough, click okay.

A new box will pop up. Choose where you want to save your new file on your hard drive, change the name, and click okay.



The last method is for sending through e-mail only. Of course, you can send it through e-mail as an attachment after reducing the size in the above method. However, PSE also provides a convenient way to embed your layout right into your e-mail.

In the File drop down menu, choose “attach to e-mail.”

The Organizer will open up (which may take a minute).

You can click on “Stationary & Layouts” and go through a wide variety of choices for sizes, frames, colors, etc. that will effect the appearance of your embed layout in your e-mail. You can save your settings so you do not have to choose them again and again. I prefer to share mine with no frames because often people mistake the frames and/or backgrounds as part of your layout. I also do not choose the largest setting because your reader will have to scroll around to see your entire layout. Now, go play!

Here’s another great trick for sending layouts by e-mail in XP.

Right click on the file in your folder and choose “send to” and then “mail recipient.” A popup box will appear and, if needed, choose “make all my pictures smaller.” Click okay. A compose box in your default e-mail program will open up with the photo already inserted as an attachment, in a reduced size.

