

Scanning Images

Resolution and File Type



About Resolution

The scan resolution determines the number of pixels-per-inch (ppi) the original image is broken down into during the scanning process. Higher resolution translates to more pixels in your scanned image, larger file size, and a sharper image.

Resolution Settings

The correct resolution setting depends on your source image and on how you plan to use the scanned image. For **archival purposes**, or if you don't know the intended output, scanning at a higher resolution (300-600 ppi*) is a good idea.

Purpose of the scanned image	Suggested resolution	File type
View on computer screen or upload to web page	72 ppi	JPEG or GIF
Scan images for printing	150 - 300 ppi*	TIFF
Scan images for archiving or editing	300 - 600 ppi*	TIFF
Enlarge or reduce printed image size after scanning at 100%	Change resolution setting by the same amount you will change printed image size	TIFF

*Note: These are approx. numbers - printer settings (LPI - lines per inch and DPI- dots per inch) will directly affect the image quality. For detailed information on resolution calculations for printing, see http://desktoppub.about.com/od/scanningresolution/l/aa_scanspi.htm

Choosing a File Type

TIFF - uncompressed/larger file size. Recommended for **printing, editing, and archiving**. TIFF images are high quality, uncompressed images that save every pixel from your original scan.

JPEG - compressed/smaller file size. The JPEG compression algorithm discards some detail from the original in order to create a smaller file. The amount of image degrading depends on the quality settings you choose; if file size is a concern, save your scan as a **high-quality JPEG** for only minor quality loss.

Important! If you plan to edit your scanned images, JPEG is **NOT** recommended - every time you edit your JPEG image and save it, the image is recompressed and the effect is worsened (think of it as taking a XEROX of a XEROX!). Instead, save your scans as TIFF files and work from these master copies as you edit. If you need to reduce the file size, save as JPEG **AFTER** the editing process is finished.