

Common Image Formats: what to use when

FORMAT	PROS	CONS	BEST USES
Photoshop Document .psd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Files can be fully manipulated with Adobe Photoshop (including layers, transparency, text, etc) Supports a range of metadata 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proprietary format (dependent on a company) Limited compression (large file sizes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use while actively editing images Store a copy of your files in .psd, but save a master/archival copy of important images in another format, such as .tif
TIFF .tif or .tiff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncompressed format (files retain information) Allows a range of metadata 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncompressed format (files are large) Not supported by web browsers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current standard for preservation, long term storage, archiving Master copy of image
GIF .gif	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lossless compression Supported by all web browsers Allows transparent parts of image 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows limited colour (only 256 unique colours), so not good for photographs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web hosting Presentations
JPEG .jpg or .jpeg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported by all web browsers Efficient compression (images take up less space) Open format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lossy compression (images lose information when created and when re-saved) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web hosting Presentations Embedded in documents
PNG .png	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported by most web browsers Allows transparent parts of image Lossless compression Non-proprietary format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not supported by all web browsers (especially "transparency" feature) Compression is not as efficient as JPEG (compressed files take up more space) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master copy of image Sometimes: web hosting (a small minority of browsers users may not be able to view)
JPEG2000 .jp2 or .jpx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers lossless compression (images don't lose info over time) or lossy compression .jpx form uses XML to store metadata Allows transparent parts of image 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not currently supported by most web browsers and various other programs Some versions (e.g. .jpx are proprietary) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibly: Preservation, long-term, archiving Possibly: Master copy of images Note: keep an eye out for wider-spread use and support for this format