

Photoshop Save for the Web functionality

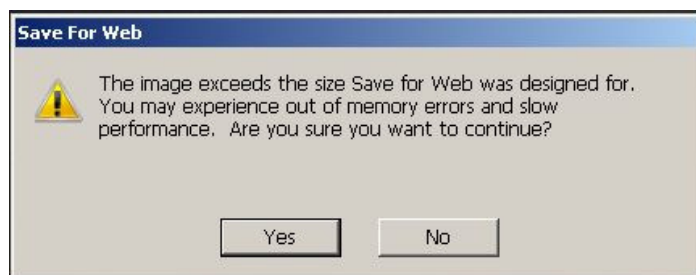
The purpose of Save for Web is to reduce the file size of images for transmission over the Internet and storage on web servers, with no perceptible loss in quality. With Broadband this is not so critical as it was with dial up, however web sites charge for storage so the smaller the better.

STEP 1

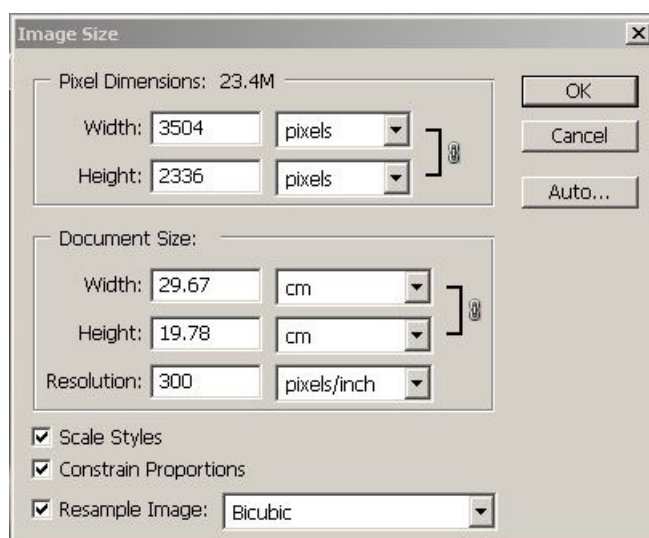
First of all – image sizing. What size do you want the image to display on screen?

- A 1024 x 768 screen will be 1024 pixels wide & 768 pixels wide ie 786,432 pixels in total
- An image 500 pixels wide will take up half a 1024 screen.

I have found that a large image like the one below (3504x2336 px) is too big for Save for Web to handle – you will get the following message so change your image size before using Save for Web

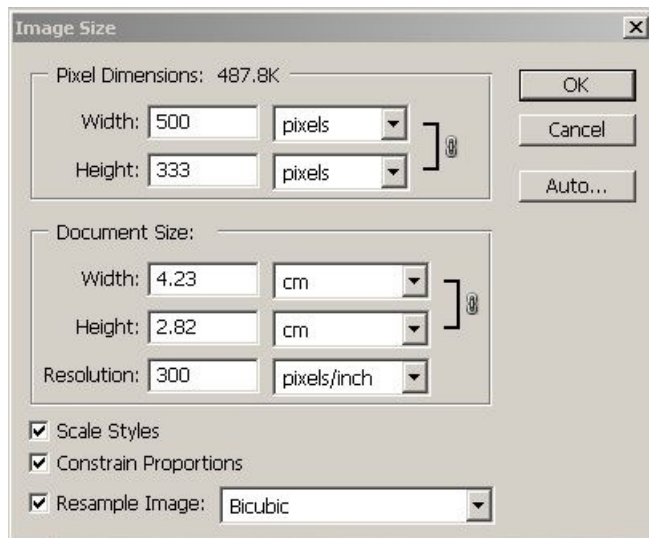


When saving for the web ignore the document size measurements and use the pixel dimensions. The Image Size dialog box below shows the sizes for a raw image before image sizing.



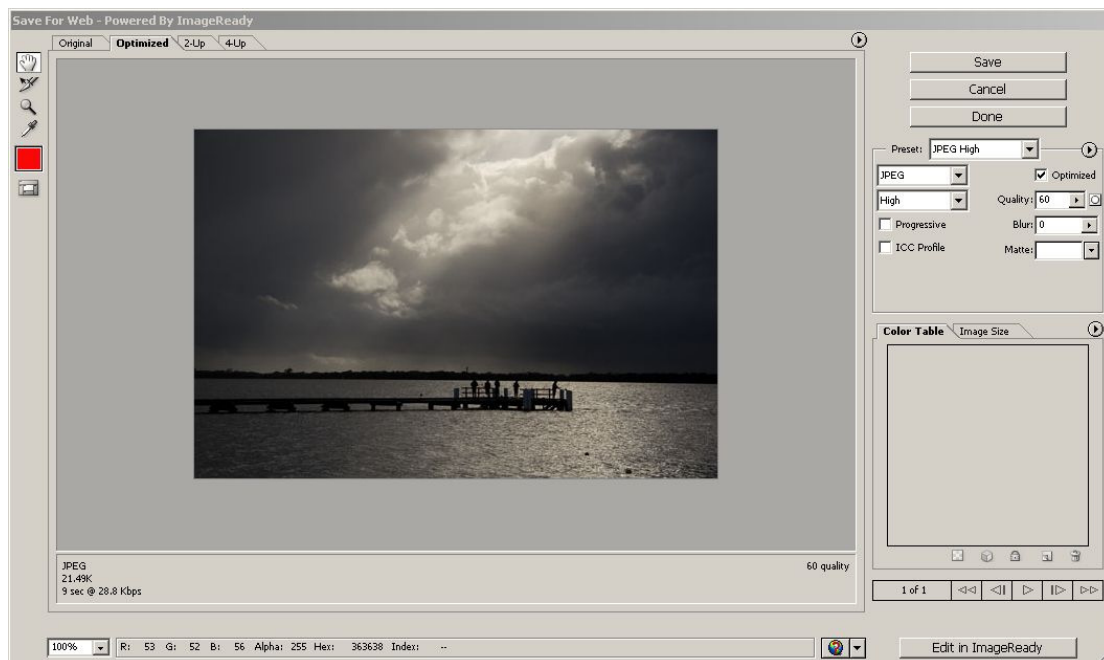
The one below shows the same dialog after sizing to 500 px wide. The pixel dimensions are width=500, height=333. Note the change in document size.

Had we changed the resolution to say 72ppi then the document size would be bigger because there would be less pixels per inch. However this is unimportant in this case as we are not printing but displaying on screen. Note the resolution is still 300 ppi. Save for Web will adjust this.



STEP 2

Go to File, Save for Web

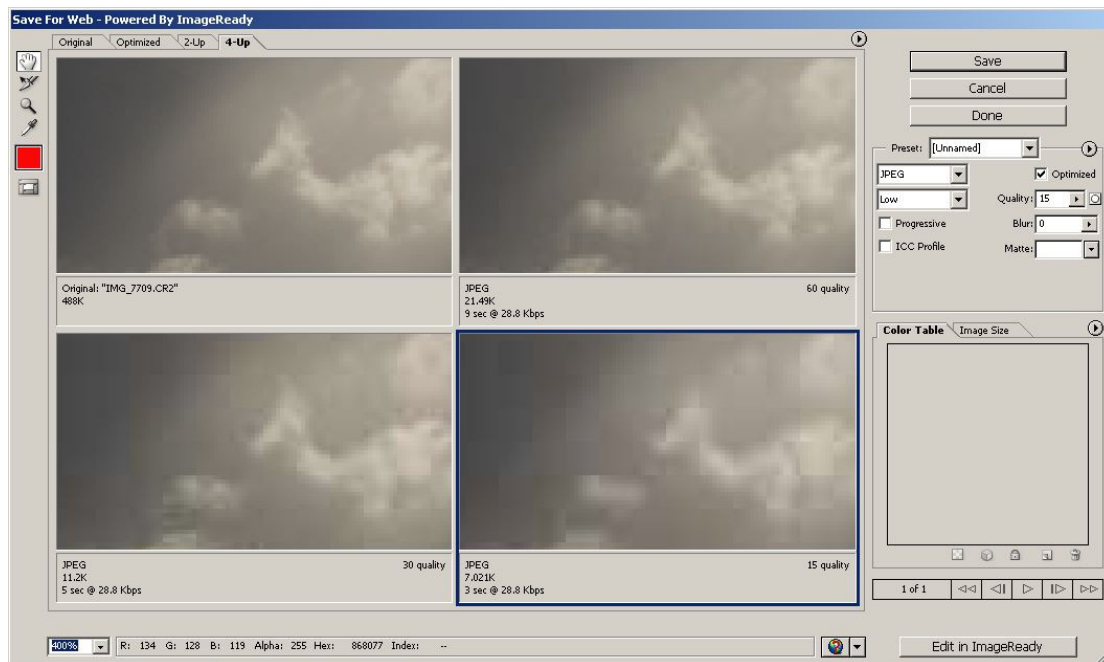


There are several options on the dialog box. In the top left are:

- Original – you can view either the original image or the version being saved for the web by clicking on Original or Optimized. Optimised is the default view.

- 2-up – display 2 versions of the same image so that you can compare effects before saving the one you want
- 4-up – Same as above but with 4 versions (see below)

Notice the original & 3 versions all at differing quality. In this case the zoom percentage has been changed to 400% to show the quality – you can see the pixelations in the 4th image at a quality of 15.



At the top right are presets that can be applied to save time – try them out to see what changes they make.

It's important to use the right file type for the image.

GIFs:

- Are better for line art, vector items and text heavy items. Images like banners with large areas of the same colour and sharp divisions. If you use JPG for these you will see areas where the pixels become fuzzy.
- only use 256 colours and uses dithering to try to match colours that are not in the GIF palette.
- use lossless compression.

JPGs

- are better for photographs where there are many colours and gradual changes in colour.
- use 16m colours.
- use lossy compression.
- Using Save for the Web discard EXIF metadata. The properties of the image file will not contain metadata about the camera, setting etc. If you want to retain this data, use Save As, not Save for Web

JPG Options:

- Choose from the quality picklist below the JPG box or the quality slider to the right. The quality will change accordingly, ie low will be a quality of 15, medium is 30, high is 60, very high is 80.
- Progressive: The image is displayed progressively online. Viewers see a low-resolution version of the image before it downloads completely. The Progressive option requires use of the Optimized JPEG format. Note: Progressive JPEGs are not supported by some browsers.
- Blur: Specifies the amount of blur to apply to the image. This option applies an effect identical to that of the Gaussian Blur filter and allows the file to be compressed more, resulting in a smaller file size. A setting of 0.1 to 0.5 is recommended.
- ICC Profile: Preserves the ICC profile of the artwork with the file. Some browsers use ICC profiles for color correction.
- Matte: If your file has a transparent background, this specifies a fill color for those pixels. Click the Matte color swatch to select a color in the color picker, or select an option from the Matte menu.

GIF Options:

- Lossy: Reduces file size by selectively discarding data. A higher Lossy setting results in more data being discarded. You can often apply a Lossy value of 5–10, and sometimes up to 50, without degrading the image. The Lossy option can reduce file size by 5% to 40%.
- Selective, Perceptual, Adaptive, Restrictive: Specifies a method for generating the color lookup table and the number of colors you want in the color lookup table.
- Dither: Specifies the level to which the GIF format will try to match colours that are not in the GIF colour palette. Higher Dither values will result in a larger file size.
- Transparency and Matte: Determines how transparent pixels in the image are optimized.

Using the Optimise Menu:

To the right of the Presets pick list is a right arrow. This is the Optimise menu. A quick way of optimising the image according to the file size you want.

Image Size Dialog

The image size can be adjusted here by changing the width & height accordingly.