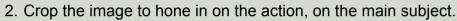# Image editing basics

Formatting images for online use

Whatever your favourite image editing software, you should take care of the following points to help your audience get the most from your online images. Photos, especially those that come direct from a digital camera, are often of too high a quality to use efficiently online. Reducing their resolution reduces their file size and makes them appear faster - with no loss of perceived quality.

Don't just 'save' - export with preview.

Impact

Cropping images to a regular shape (the same ratio of width to height) helps a web page feel consistent.

Squares seem most appropriate for the top-right of intranet pages, while larger rectangles sit most comfortably at the bottom.

Four steps

1. Change the resolution of the image to 96ppi (pixels per inch).
2. Crop the image to hone in on the action, on the main subject.
3. Change either the width or height to the appropriate size; crop again to remove image outside of desired size.
4. 'Export with preview' so you can see the file (at 100% size) as you choose the file type and quality.

Remember

There are two file types to be used:
1. PNG (.png) for graphics, charts, graphs etc.
2. JPEG (.jpg) for photos.

PNG quality goes from 32 to 24, down to 8.
JPEG quality goes from 100% down. Don't go too far down.
File-names for online use should be properly formatted, e.g. **office-building.jpg** or **revenue-chart-sept-09.png**

Programs

Different image editing programs will have different tools in different menus. You need to be confident in looking in the 'Image' or 'Edit' menu (for the 'image size' options) and 'File' menu (for the 'export with preview' command).

About GIFs

GIFs are the poor cousin of PNGs. PNGs tend to give better results than old fashioned GIFs. PNGS offer a better range of colour, smoother curves / diagonals and are often smaller / faster than GIFS.

Copyright

You cannot simply use images that you have found online. While many creators / artists give explicit permission for you to use their work, 99.99% of the images on the web cannot be used without breaking legal copyright.