



TOP 10 THINGS ABOUT..... Images on the Web

1.	Selective use	Images add visual appeal, but can be time-consuming and expensive to create. Ensure that their educational value justifies the effort. Too many images may cause 'cognitive load' processing issues for users with cognitive disabilities; for others, screen "clutter" may actually distract from, rather than enhance, your intended message. A webpage chock full of images likely won't be as effective as one with selectively chosen images, just as a text-only webpage might not be the best way to get your message across.
2.	Copyright Issues	Many images are available on the Internet, but you need to be careful about copyright issues. Before you use images from other websites, make sure that they are free for your use, or take careful note of any usage restrictions described at the site. For example, some web sites request that you include on your web page the name and link of the original site. You, or your college, may be subject to prosecution for any images you use illegally.
3.	File type	Image files must be one of these types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ .gif: Use for text or graphic images that use lots of solid colour or line drawings. ▪ .jpeg: Use for photographs or complex artwork, e.g., with a gradient. ▪ .png: Use for any type of graphic. You cannot use files created in draw or paint programs (with the .bmp file name extension, for example) unless you have first saved them as a .gif, .jpeg, or .png type.
4.	Resolution	Images for viewing on the web should be created at a resolution of 72 ppi (pixels per inch). If you want the images to look good when printed, the resolution needs to be higher (150 – 200 ppi). You will need to balance between quality and download time, depending on how you anticipate the images will be used (the higher the quality, the longer the download time, but the better they will print). You can select the resolution of your images in a draw or paint program.
5.	Colour use	Choose colours in your images and on your webpage selectively. Too many variations of colour can be difficult to view (eg. bright solid or patterned backgrounds with many multi-coloured images on top). Dark text/images on dark backgrounds or light text/images on light backgrounds, flashing images or text – all of these are hard on the eyes, and take the attention away from your message.
6.	Alt tag	Always include an Alt tag for each image. This is text that appears on the screen while the image is loading, i.e., on a slow computer and/or slow Internet connection. It is also used by screen reading software to describe the image to a visually impaired user. Most web-editing software and learning management systems will provide a text box for you to enter an Alt tag.
7.	Size & resizing	Use the smallest image size possible. Large image files will cause delays in loading your web page, and may frustrate users. Although you can resize an image in your web page, it's best if you can reduce the file size itself, using a draw or paint program, such as MS Photo Editor, Adobe Photoshop, or Windows Paint to resize the image before saving it as a .gif or .jpeg.
8.	Height & Width tags	All images on your webpage (including small buttons or icons) should include "height" and "width" tags. If you use a web editor such as Dreamweaver, it will take of this for you. These tags determine how much space the images will need on the webpage and they let the browser know how the page will be organized. This means that, when the page is loading, large images may load more quickly, and text will load first, so the viewer can start reading the text while the images are still loading.
9.	File structure	It's a good idea to store all the images for your webpage together in one folder called "images". That way they're all in one place and easy to find and easy to link to. It's also a good idea to place your images folder in the same folder as your html files.
10.	Linking	To insert an image in a standalone web page (html file), you'll want to link to your images using "relative referencing" (eg. images/cat.gif) rather than linking to an image on your computer's harddrive (eg. C:\My Documents\cat.gif). Many webpage editors are set to link to the file's location on your harddrive by default, so be sure to check. When inserting an image in most learning management systems, a copy of the image file will be stored in the system's database for that course. The LMS will link to the appropriate database location.