

File Format Cheat Sheet

Native File Formats

(saved directly from a specific program)

TXT — plain text, no formatting

RTF — Rich Text Format, preserves some formatting

DOC or DOCX — Microsoft word

PPT — Microsoft Power Point

AI — Adobe Illustrator, vector based

PSD — Photoshop, pixel based

INDD — Adobe InDesign (Current version)

IDML — InDesign Markup Language, aka downsave

HTML — Hypertext Markup Language, the basis of all things web

CSS — Cascading Style Sheets, extension of HTML, used to make the web pretty

Image based File Formats:

JPEG or JPG

- uses lossy compression method (information will degrade with every save and over time).
- Allows for smaller file size through compression and loss of information, which can be controlled by the artist.
- Good for use on the web for continuous tone imagery and preview images for faster loading

TIFF

- Stands for Tagged Image File Format
- Has both lossy and lossless compression (LZW = lossless compression)
- not widely supported in web browsers
- Considered industry standard for printed material

RAW

- Available on some digital cameras, more common on Digital Single Lens Reflex (DSLR)
- Use lossless or nearly lossless compression
- Not standardized, the formats differ by camera brand
- not supported for printing or use on the web, the images need to be converted

GIF

- Stands for Graphic Interchange Format
- Limited to 256 colors (8-bit)
- Good for limited color or simple vector based graphics
- Supports simple animation and uses lossless compression

BMP

- Stands for Windows Bitmap, and works within Microsoft Window OS
- Files are uncompressed and LARGE

PNG

- Stands for Portable Network Graphics
- A step up from GIF, has some transparent background options
- Works best with images that have large areas of uniformly colored areas
- Works well in online browsers

SVG

- Stands for Scalable Vector Graphics
- Works best in interactive code based applications and interactive settings

EPS

- Stands for Encapsulated PostScript
- Self contained files with a low-res preview that can be rendered out to higher resolutions for printing purposes.

PDF

- Portable Document Format
 - Independent of software, hardware, and operating system, a PDF is considered the most viewable file format
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