

Storing and Sharing Digital Photos

Recommendations for downloading and storing photos

1. Always keep your original photos exactly as they were first downloaded to your computer. For example, if your camera delivers a 1200 x 1400 pixel JPEG image, save and preserve that picture in the same size and format (.jpg) as the camera provided. If you scan a photo or 35mm slide, save that scan exactly as delivered by the scanner. If you subsequently make any crops, edits or modifications to your original pictures save those changes under a different file name (Hint: Get in the habit of simply appending a number or letter to the original file name when you save an edited photo. Eg. If the original photo is named *filename.jpg* then save the first edited photo as *filename-1.jpg* or *filename-a.jpg*. That way the original and all subsequent edits will reside together in the folder)
2. Always back up your photos. Use a backup hard drive or periodically copy all your pictures to a CD or DVD. Think in terms of insuring against the loss of your PC and all its contents.
3. Organize and label your pictures in a way that you will remember years from now. Remember that the PC will arrange your folders numerically and then alphabetically. For example, you could use a numeric system for labeling your folders (2005-01, 2005-02, etc.) based on when the picture was taken. Inside those folders you can create sub-folders for specific events (Becky's Graduation, Family Reunion, etc.). In addition, when downloading pictures from a camera or scanner or e-mail, think of descriptive filename titles to give each group of photos so that – years from now – you will recall the specific event.

File Formats

1. There are a lot of opinions about the proper file format for saving your original or “master” digital photos and scans. Ultimately, you will have to decide whether file size or absolute adherence to the original picture is most important. As an example, a 300dpi scan saved as a TIF can take 14 megabytes (Mb) of memory, versus 6.5 Mb for PNG and 1 Mb for JPG.
2. The reason there are numerous opinions about the “proper” format for saving original images is that JPG is a “lossy” process. That is, JPG uses compression algorithms to reduce the file size and therefore some original data has to be forfeited for the sake of memory space. TIF, PNG, PSD, BMP are considered “lossless”
3. Here are some “friendly” guidelines to follow:
 - If you are saving a picture for future “friends & family” use, save - and preserve - the photo as a JPG file (lowest file space on your computer)
 - If you think the photo will be used later as an “archive” or “master” photo for rigorous (ie. **huge** size print or poster or professional editing) purposes, then save it as a TIF file (largest file space on your computer).
 - If you are unsure as to the final usage of the photo then save it as a compromise PNG (Microsoft) or PSD (Adobe) format – depending on what kind of image editing software you use.

Downloading photos from e-mail

1. Photos in e-mail can appear either as file-name attachments or as visible pictures in the body of the e-mail – or both. To save the photo to a folder on your computer, try ***right*** clicking inside the picture area. This usually brings up a pop-up menu with a choice like “Save Picture As...”. Click on that selection and a Save As dialog box will appear.
2. If there is only a filename in an attachment list on the e-mail try double clicking on the icon next to the filename to open the picture and proceed as above. If the picture will not open then try ***right*** clicking on the filename. This will again usually open a pop-up menu with a choice like “Save File As ...” and you can continue with saving the file.
3. Most important (!) Carefully note where the dialog box is saving your image. If you are not happy with the default folder location – usually it is the My Pictures folder – then change the folder destination. A good idea is to create a new folder with a catchy title like “Pictures from E-mail” as a holding spot for all your downloaded photos until you decide where to store them permanently.

Attaching Photos to E-mail

1. First make sure your photo has been downsized to fit in an e-mail (ie. fit on the monitor of a PC). To check the photo size use Windows Explorer to find the picture filename or thumbnail. Then double click on the filename to open up the Windows Viewer and a full screen view of your photo. Look for a button along the bottom of the Viewer labelled “Actual Size” and click it (or click Ctrl + A). This will show you how big your picture could appear in an e-mail.
2. If the photo is too big you should downsize it (unless your e-mail recipient wants the full size version.) You can do this from the Viewer by clicking on the button labeled “Closes this program and opens the image for editing” which will open the picture in MS Paint. Click on “Image” in the Paint menu bar and select “Stretch/Skew”. In the “Stretch” section of the dialog box reduce the Horizontal and Vertical sizes equally. You might have to do this a couple times to get it right.
3. If you prefer, you can also change the size of the photo via an editing program like Photoshop Elements, Picture It!, Digital Image, etc.
4. If you use Outlook Express or Windows Mail for your e-mail, you can use their built-in photo reducer. See the Article called ***E-Mailing Photographs with Outlook Express or Windows Mail***
5. Most important (!) Always save your reduced-size photo as a new name so that you preserve the original. See first section above about storing edited photos with a new name.
6. After downsizing and saving your picture you will have to use your e-mail program to attach the photo. Every e-mail program has a method for attaching a file but they are all different! Start a new e-mail and look for an ATTACH button somewhere on the menu bar or toolbar of the program. This will open a dialog box asking for a filename to attach. You will have to browse to the actual picture location on your computer so always remember where you stored it.