

Image Formats

Overview

Selecting the right file or image format is a crucial decision that can significantly affect how our brand is perceived. Each format—whether it’s JPEG, PNG, SVG, or WebP—has its own strengths, limitations, and ideal use cases. These differences often revolve around file size, compression methods, transparency support, and how well the format preserves image quality.

Using the wrong format can lead to a range of issues. For example, highly compressed images like low-quality JPEGs may appear pixelated or blurry, which can make our materials look unprofessional or outdated. On the other hand, using uncompressed or overly large formats may result in unnecessarily heavy file sizes, leading to slow-loading webpages and poor user experience—especially on mobile devices or slower networks (especially important with the scouting site!).

By understanding the trade-offs and selecting the most appropriate file format for each use case—such as SVGs for logos and icons, PNGs for graphics with transparency, and WebP for optimized web images—we ensure that our content looks sharp, loads quickly, and consistently reflects the high standards of our brand.

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To maintain a polished and professional visual identity, it’s important to choose the right file format for each type of image or graphic. Each format comes with its own set of strengths and limitations related to quality, file size, scalability, and transparency. The table below outlines the most common image formats we use, what they’re best suited for, and when to use them to ensure our brand assets look their best across both digital and print platforms.

Format	Description	Use for
JPG/JPEG	Format originally developed for photographic images. Uses adjustable lossy compression to reduce file size, which can degrade quality at high compression levels. Best used when smaller file sizes are needed and slight quality loss is acceptable.	Photos (preferred). Use WebP for photos over web.

Format	Description	Use for
PNG	Supports lossless compression, preserving full image quality. Ideal for images that require transparency, sharp edges, or crisp detail, such as UI elements, icons, and illustrations. Typically larger in size than JPG, making it less ideal for full-resolution photographs.	Use when SVG/JPG/WebP doesn't work: graphics where raster detail is needed (e.g. shadows), screenshots or photos where exact color is needed.
SVG	A vector-based format ideal for logos, icons, and scalable graphics. Maintains sharp quality at any size since it's based on shapes and paths instead of pixels. Not suitable for photographs or detailed raster images.	Graphics (preferred)
WebP	A modern image format designed for the web. Offers superior compression compared to JPG and PNG, resulting in smaller file sizes with excellent quality. Supports transparency and animation. Widely supported in modern browsers.	Photos/graphics on websites (preferred)
GIF	Primarily used for simple animations and short looping visuals. Limited to 256 colors and uses LZW compression, which is technically lossless but results in reduced visual fidelity due to the color limitation. Not suitable for high-resolution or color-rich images.	Simple animations. For longer or higher-quality animations, consider MP4/WebM.

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