

# Common Graphics File Formats

File Format	Description
<b>BMP</b>	<b>(Bitmap)</b> a full-color format commonly used for editing raster graphics in Windows. BMP files are larger than files saved in most other formats because most bitmap files are not compressed.
<b>EPS</b>	<b>(Encapsulated PostScript)</b> Used for both Windows and Macs. Retains image quality very well. Images can be black and white, grayscale, or color. Best for print.
<b>TIFF</b>	<b>(Tagged Image File Format)</b> One of the most widely used high-resolution formats for both Windows and Macs. Images can be black and white, grayscale, or color. Does not lose much image quality. Best for print.
<b>PICT</b>	<b>(PICTure)</b> A format defined by Apple for the Mac. Widely used with Macs, but less so with Windows. PICTs can be used by any graphics software on a Mac.
<b>JPEG</b>	<b>(Joint Photographic Experts Group)</b> Used mainly for Web images or for photos that will be viewed on a monitor. Best for images with many colors, or grayscale images. JPEG images are not as clear and sharp as the original image. Not commonly used for line drawings, text, and graphics. Graphic artists sometimes save high-resolution photos as JPEGs because of the high compression ratio it offers.
<b>GIF</b>	<b>(Graphic Interchange Format)</b> Also used for Web pages or on-screen display, but unlike JPEGs, GIF images only support up to 256 colors, the basic colors available on a monitor. Best for black-and-white or grayscale images, or images with a few simple colors.
<b>PNG</b>	<b>(Portable Network Graphics)</b> A new bitmapped graphics format similar to GIF. Good for color images, PNG has become a preferred format for the Web over GIF formats because GIF uses a patented data compression algorithm called LZW. In contrast, PNG is completely patent- and license-free.
<b>WMF</b>	<b>(Windows Metafile Format)</b> A format developed to exchange graphics information between Microsoft Windows applications by simply cutting and pasting. WMF files can hold both vector and bitmapped images.