NJCU Web Design

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Web Site Essentials

File Preparation

In art-making there are no rules about right and wrong ways to go about doing it. Design has rules, but most designers would say the rules are made to be broken, meaning inovation. In web site-making **there are plenty of rules, not to be broken**! In Illustrator and Photoshop, you can make something that turns out pretty amazing, without quite understanding how you did it. In Dreamweaver you could end up with a **broken link**! You can work all night long on your greatest ideas, and end up at presentation-time with a **blank screen**. So right here, and now I want to emphasize **the rules**, so you will end up with a happy-happy web experience!
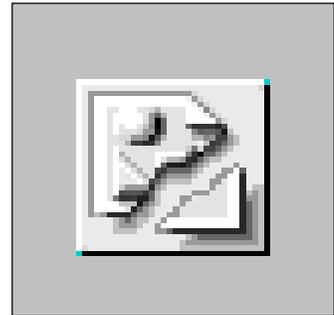
This is what a broken link looks like

World Wide Web Rules for Naming Files

1. Only use lower-case letters (a through z).

2. Never use spaces in file names.

4. Use the underscore or the hyphen for spaces.

5. Periods are only used to separate the name from the file extension, such as .jpg, .html, .gif, .swf, Do not use periods anywhere else.

6. Do not begin a file name with a number. Numbers can appear after letters.

7. If your number of files will exceed 10, use a zero in front of the single digits, as in "photo-02," "photo-03". This will make your files appear in the right order, instead of 11 coming before 2.

Summary:
Never use any characters besides:
   a-z, 0-9, and the **underscore** and the **hyphen** when naming files and folders/directories.
   No spaces or tabs.
   No commas or apostrophes, No slashes or quotes, No # & % + * = @ ~ ^ $, o < > ( ) [ ] { } : ; ? !
   No other unusual characters, or letters with umlauts, or other foreign accent marks.
   All file names (html pages, images, folders etc) should be lower case, with no spaces, no caps and no special characters.

Good File names: index.html, second_page.html, justinbieberrocks.html,
Bad File names: Index!!!.html, 12 grøøvey projects.html, i.heart.special.characters$%?&#.html

The first page of your website, or the "cover" or "home" page *will always be named* **index.html**

A **web page file** name will always end in **.html**. Once you create a page, you can place things on it, like images and text, or even animations, or videos, and /or links to other pages. These other kinds of files will have other extensions, like .jpg. But a jpg cannot be a page, it has to be placed on a page.

.ppt (Powerpoint) Files or **.doc** (Word) documents: again, you have to **make those pages INTO html** pages before the web will accept them.

Organize Your Files

Proper file management is probably the biggest obstacle to beginning web designers. On the privacy of our own computers, we have a tendency to be somewhat sloppy about where we save files, and rely more heavily than we should on the "find" feature. Disastrous for the web!
You have to be organized, or you will be very frustrated later, when your other good design work can't be seen, because the web won't display it properly. Don't let poor file management ruin your website experience! Learn the rules, put things where they belong, and stick with it!

Proper File Management
There are several different ways to approach organizing yourself for web design, and lots of ways **which will not work**. But the following is the protocol you will use in our class:

One Central Folder for your web site in progress. name it whatever you like.
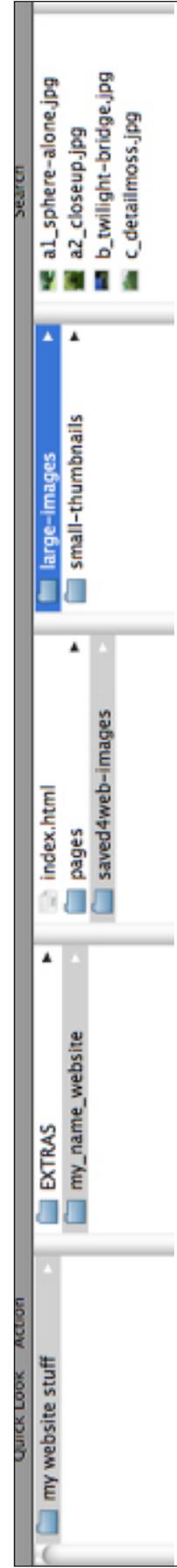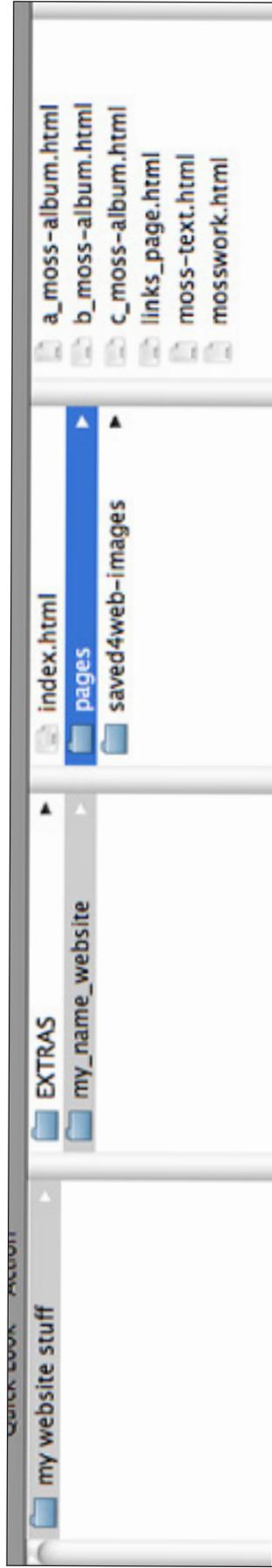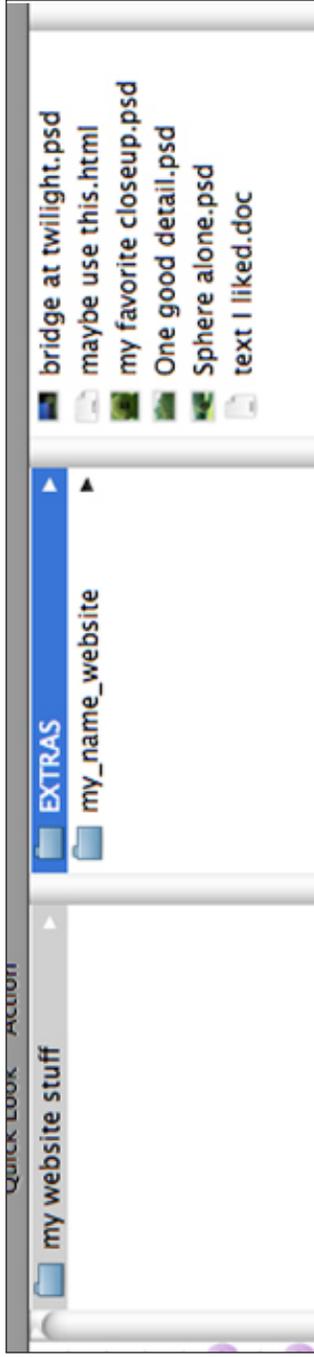Two folders inside that folder.

- One called **EXTRAS:**
  This folder does NOT get uploaded to the internet. It is where you keep your original Photoshop, Illustrator, Flash files, etc., word and text files, and things you may or may not use.

- Second folder, called **your_name_website**
  This is technically your **Local Root Folder.** It will be uploaded to the web, and everything inside should be ship-shape:
  Inside your **local root folder** you will have
  1. One page-file (called **index.html**, which is your home page, or sometimes called a cover page), and also two folders:
  2. One folder for your **saved4web-images** (all resized, optimized and *saved for web* format, only!). Name it: **saved4web-images.**
  3. Another folder for your **pages**. (all **.html** files). name this folder: **pages**.
  4. Dreamweaver will probably automatically generate other files you will see in this folder. Don't worry! Those are good things. Just be responsible for the above.
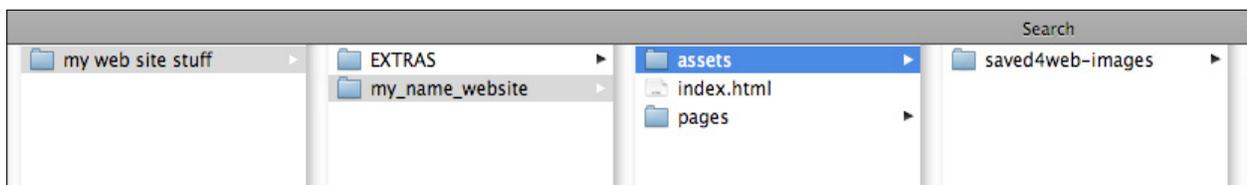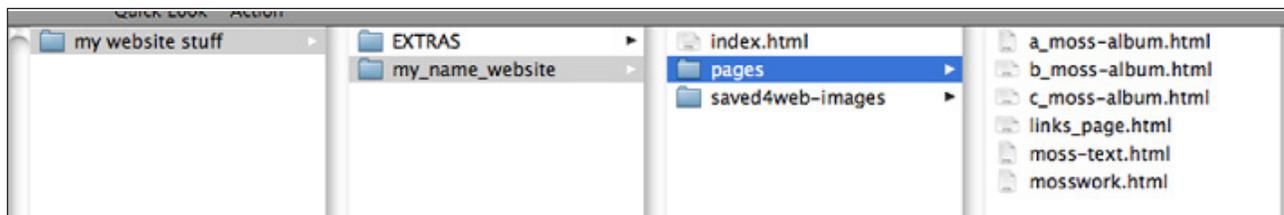
These all show correct ways of naming and organizing your files for this class.

The EXTRAS folder is different because it never gets uploaded to the web server.

QUICK LOOK   ACTION

my website stuff

📁 EXTRAS
📁 my_name_website

- 🖼️ bridge at twilight.psd
- 📄 maybe use this.html
- 🖼️ my favorite closeup.psd
- 🖼️ One good detail.psd
- 🖼️ Sphere alone.psd
- 📄 text I liked.doc

QUICK LOOK   ACTION

my website stuff

📁 EXTRAS
📁 my_name_website

- 📄 index.html
- 📁 pages
- 📁 saved4web-images

- 📄 a_moss-album.html
- 📄 b_moss-album.html
- 📄 c_moss-album.html
- 📄 links_page.html
- 📄 moss-text.html
- 📄 mosswork.html

QUICK LOOK   ACTION

my website stuff

📁 EXTRAS
📁 my_name_website

- 📄 index.html
- 📁 pages
- 📁 saved4web-images

- 📁 large-images
- 📁 small-thumbnails

Search

- 🖼️ a1_sphere-alone.jpg
- 🖼️ a2_closeup.jpg
- 🖼️ b_twilight-bridge.jpg
- 🖼️ c_detailmoss.jpg

Save Yourself Some Trouble

Moving files around can destroy the links. Changing the name of a file will destroy the links. That's why you will want to **do it right the first time.** Moving files within Dreamweaver, using the **Files Panel** in Dreamweaver, will update links, but it is best to plan and organize in advance, and then as you re-size and re-format images, **save to the proper place**. And as you build pages, save those pages to the proper place. Be sure to test and re-establish links if you have changed something.

Optimize Graphics and Images for the Web

Getting your **images ready for the web** is an important step. Before you begin inserting images into your pages, you want to make sure that they will ultimately be web friendly. For this class, I would like you to use the following Browser-Friendly conventions.

The Types of Images the Web Understands are:

.jpg or .jpeg (*Joint Photographic Experts Group*):
jpegs are best at representing tonal color information. In general, if you are using a "photo" type image, chose **jpeg** as your format.
Also, please make a mental note: these are not the same jpegs you have been saving and using all along. They must be re-formatted in the *Photoshop > Menu Bar > File Save-for-web-and devices* routine, or they won't work in all web browsers. We'll go over this in class.

.gif *(Graphic Interchange Format):*
gifs are best at representing areas of flat color. Illustrations, logos, and vector-art are best represented as **gifs**.

.png *(Portable Network Group):*
png graphics are very useful. They were created as an alternative to **gifs**, an improved **gif**.
Png files are the most accurate at maintaining color consistency amon browsers and monitors because they have updated color sync information embedded. When a specific color is critical, try a **png**!
Also, **png** supports transparency in photos on your web page.

.swf *(Shockwave Flash)*
swifs are flash animation files that most web browswers can dispaly without a problem. It does require a plugin, but the updated releases of all major browsers include the flash plugins.

The types of images the Web DOES NOT understand are:

.psd (photoshop document): If you try to insert an original Photoshop file into your **html page**, the internet will laugh in your face! Instead, follow the "**Save for Web**" instructions (SEE BELOW) and convert your images to be web-friendly, web-acceptable.

.tiff (tagged image file format): TIFFs are large image file formats for high quality printing, not for web use.

.ai (adobe illustrator): similar as photoshop. Easy to convert to "Saved for Web" format, which you must do before you insert onto a web page.

Saving Images For Web in Photoshop

The steps in order:

1. **Make a "saved for web" folder and name it "assets" or"images".**
2. **Change your image size and resolution to fit it's destination (the place on the web page)**
3. **Save for Web and Devices**
4. **Choose GIF, JPEG, or PNG format.**
5. **Carefully put file into the "saved for web" folder, because you can't tell by looking at it later whether the file has been saved in the correct, optimized, web-safe format.**

Again, the steps in detail:

1. ## Set up your web site folders ahead of time to prepare for saving the files.
    Name one folder "assets" or "Images" and only place "saved for web and devices" images into this folder.

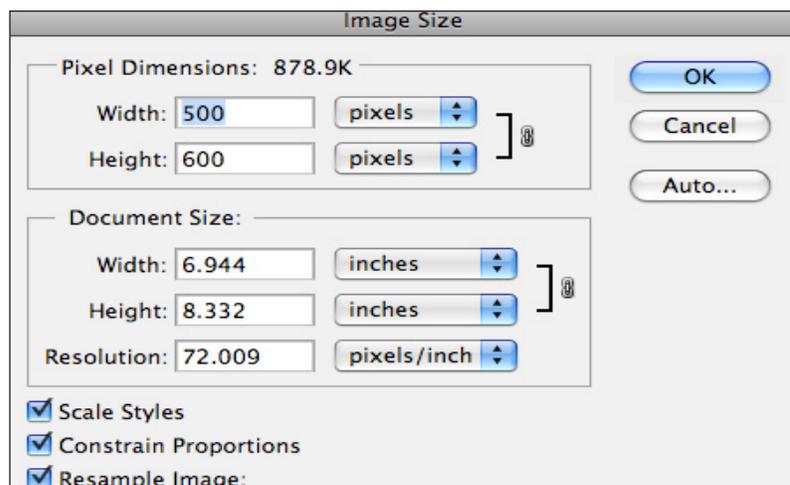## 2. Change your image Size and Resolution
All measurements for the web page will be in units of pixels.

What are typical dimensions for a site? It's become very complicated by multiple different-sized devices. Even cell phones differ in the number of pixels they display (Apple new vs. Apple last year, vs Android this year, etc.). Some typical screens are 1280 pixels by 800 pixels, but even so, many commercial web sites are 549 to **620 pixels** high ("above the fold" or above where the viewer need to scroll) by **975 wide,** including ads on the far right side. So if the viewer's computer has a narrow old screen, the ads to the right are the thing that won't fully show. The popular size is the grid which uses 960 pixels. The depth/height is usually 500 to 549, leaving room for the viewers bars of favorites and tabs etc.

You will want your images smaller than the dimensions of the overall page, to include room for the margins of your "page", or web site screen window, and your viewer's url address bar, and other tool bars, not to mention the text and design elements which go on that page.

Resolution: It used to be we said that Screen images were always saved as **72** pixels per inch. Now it doesn't matter! Just think in terms of pixel width, and you will be fine.

Look at the pixel size, not the inches!

Image Size

Pixel Dimensions: 878.9K

Width: 500 pixels
Height: 600 pixels

OK
Cancel
Auto...

Document Size:

Width: 6.944 inches
Height: 8.332 inches
Resolution: 72.009 pixels/inch

☑ Scale Styles
☑ Constrain Proportions
☑ Resample Image:

3. Save For Web
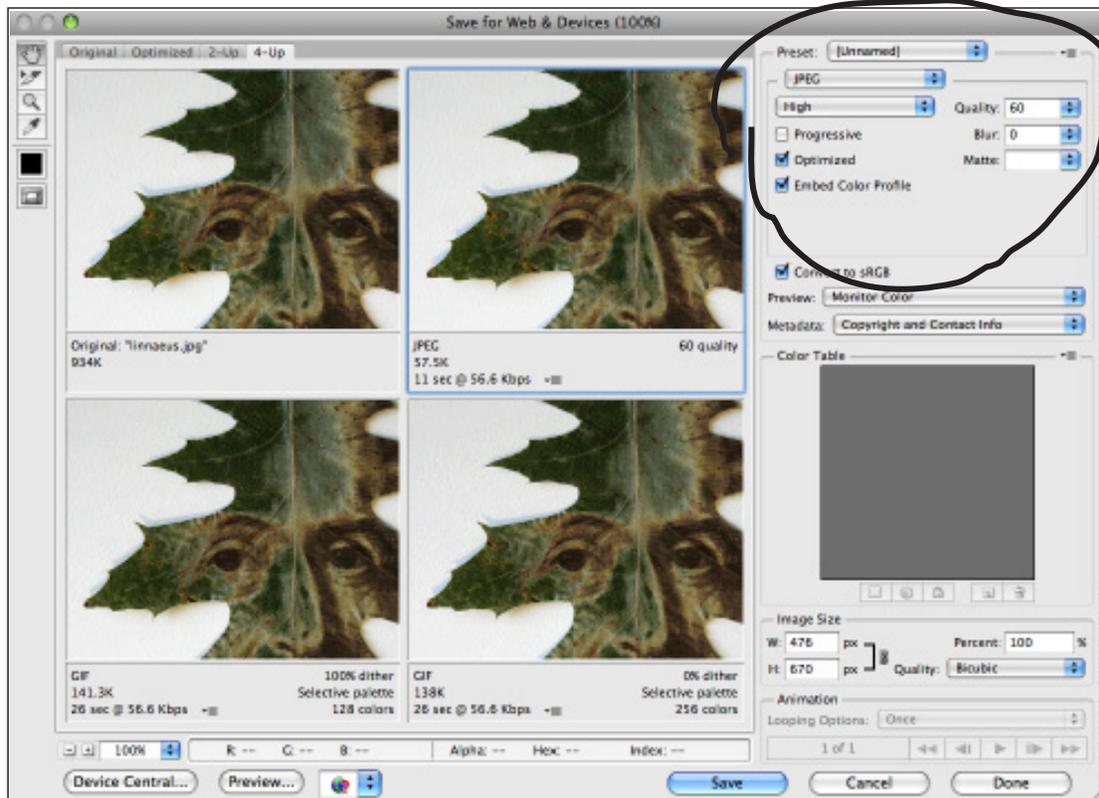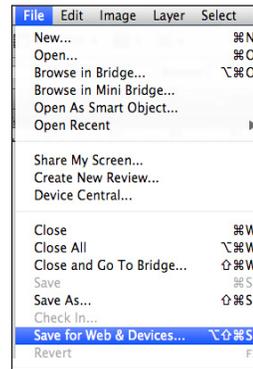See **File > Save for Web & Devices**
(not the same as "Save as")
Which opens another window (see below)

Compare different formats for saving your image.
See the size of your image in either two or four
boxes to the left, read size under each image.

4. Choose GIF, JPEG or PNG
In this window you can check the size of your image. The smaller the file size, the faster your images will load. But maintain a high quality.

Typically:
Raster images should be **JPEG**.
Vector images should be **GIF**, unless they have gradients.
PNG: could be either **Raster or Vector**, depends on your file.
(**PNG** and **GIF** support **transparency** in images, or areas that are see-through)
If your typical viewer would have **Broadband**, choose **Optimized**. If **Dial-up**, choose **Progressive**
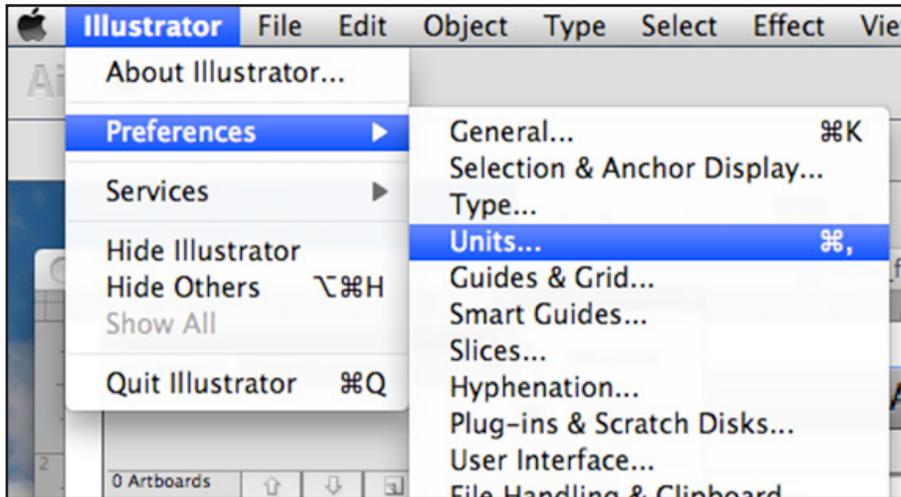
5. Make sure you put it into the correct folder!
As you "Save for Web and Devices, choose the destination folder for your image as the one you prepared for "Saved for web".
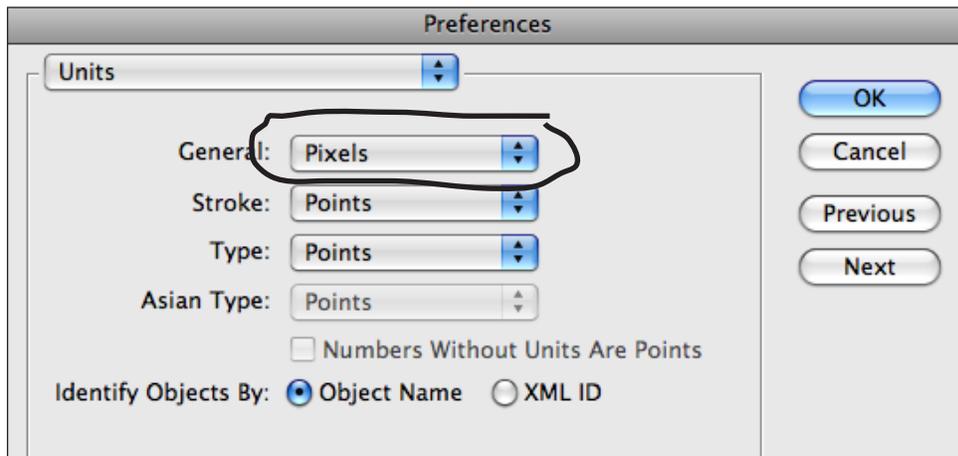
Saving For Web in Illustrator

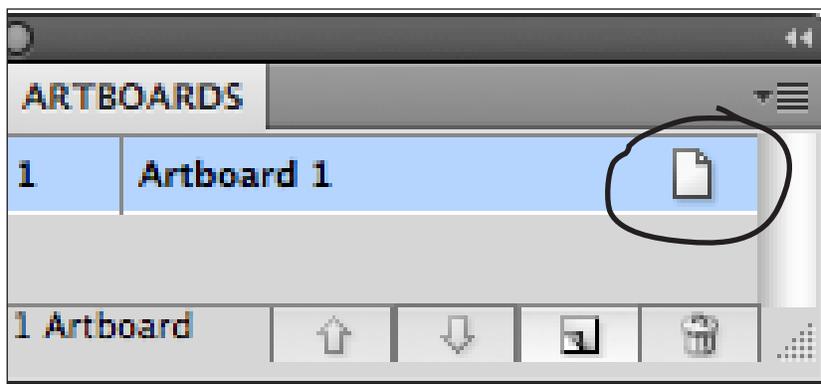Make sure your measurement unit is set for **pixels.**

Menu Bar > Illustrator > Preferences > Units

In the next dialogue box > **General > Choose Pixels.**

Next, make sure the **Artboards panel** is open. Choose Menu Bar > **Windows > Artboards.**

Double click on the rectangle page in the Artboards Panel. In the dialogue box that opens, see **pixel size.**

In the Artboards Options dialogue box that opens, you can check and change the pixel size on the Illustrator page.
Choose an image size for the web page you have planned.
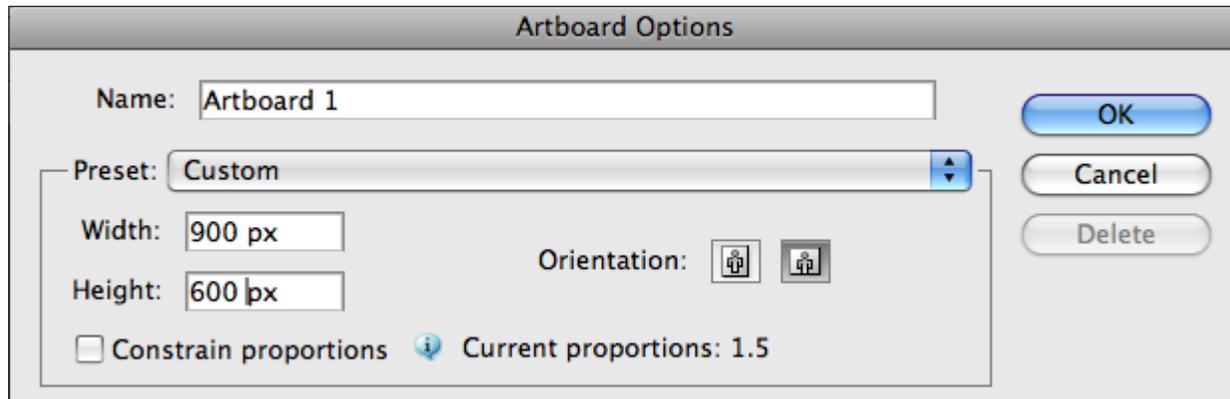
Re-size the image to fit the Artboard:
You also may need to **enlarge or reduce the image** itself to fit on the Artboard page.
You can do this by selecting everything with the **Selection Tool** (black arrow). Then, while **holding down on the shift key, drag inward or outward,** to fit image to the page.

When the image is re-sized:
Choose Menu Bar > File >
Save for Web and Devices.
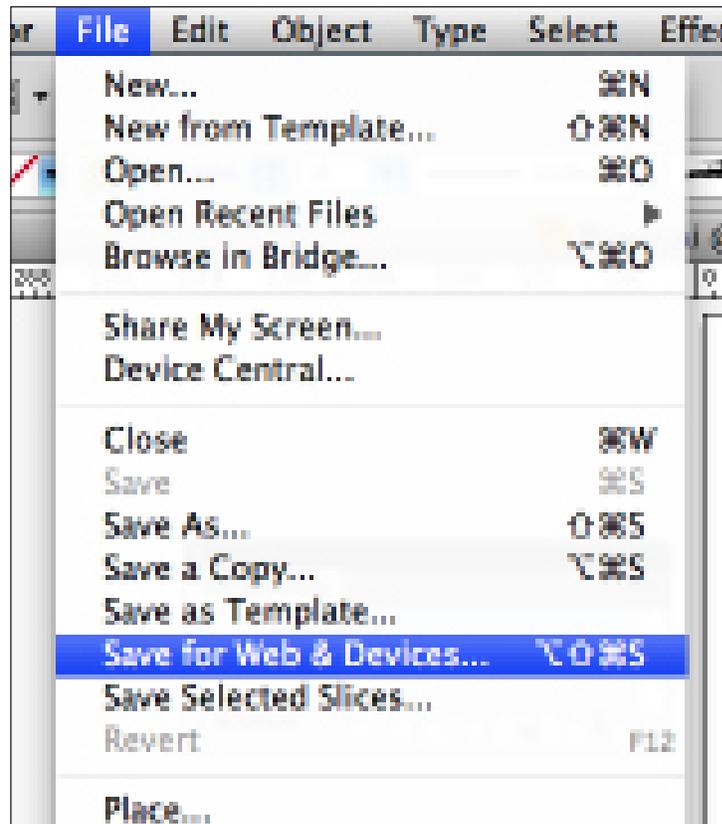
In the **"Save for Web and Devices"** window that opens, try different formats to see which suits you image. Smaller size will load faster, but keep a high quality so images will look well.
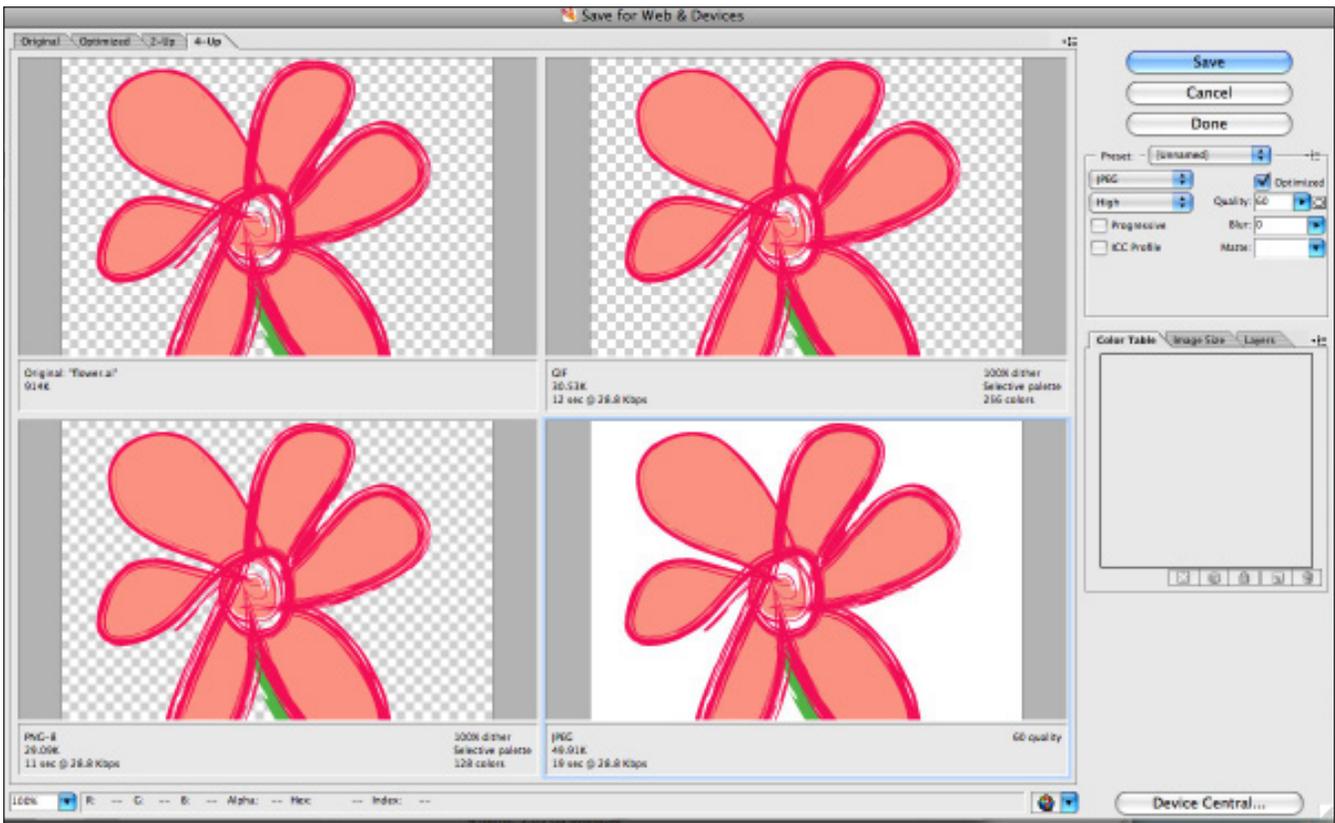
GIF, JPEG, PNG: 8-bit or 24-bit?

8-bit PNG comprises a max. of 256 colors, like GIFs. PNG-24 is a loss-less format and can contain up to 16 million colors. Only 256 are shown with most web servers. So if 8-bit doesn't look good, try jpg. But JPG does not support transparency.

Save to Where?

Be sure to save to the correct location. You should have planned ahead and made a folder for your "Saved for Web" images. Its important to keep these separate, because it's impossible to tell if they have been through this process, just by looking at the file.