

file formats

name

compression

pros

cons

web

.jpg

Joint Photographic
Experts Group

lossy

Compresses images well for use on the web.

Throws pixels away for compression.
Every time you resave a .jpg, you lose quality
in the image.

.gif

Graphics Interchange
Format

lossless

Good for files with simple shapes and
colours, such as icons. Supports animation
and transparency.

Limited to an 8-bit colour palette
(256 colours).

.png

Portable Network
Graphic

lossless

Saving files with a transparent background
by embedding an alpha channel. Supports
16 million colours.

Larger file size.

.bmp

Bitmap (Windows)

lossless

Can support high quality.

Large file size and may have problems
viewing on an Apple device.

print

.tif

Tagged Image
File Format

lossy + lossless

Can save 8-bit, 16-bit, 24-bit and 48-bit.
Can save with lossy/lossless compression
depending on the settings you choose.
Can save layers from Photoshop.

Used only for print.

.eps

Encapsulated Postscript

lossless

Saving vector drawings for opening
in Illustrator and other programs.
Supports a transparent background.

Not supported on the web.

.psd

Photoshop Document

Embeds fonts as long as no changes to the
text made. Save layered files with lossless
compression.

Although shapes created using the shapes
tools are vector-based, anything you export
will be rasterized.

.ai

Adobe Illustrator

Creates and works with scalable vector
graphics. File size can be quite low.

A complicated vector drawing can be quite
a large file size.