



# Launcher Icons

## In this document

- Goals of the Launcher Icon
- Do's and Don'ts
- Size and Format

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## See also

- Older guidelines
- Supporting Multiple Screens

### New Guides for App Designers!

Check out the new documents for designers at **Android Design** (<https://developer.android.com/design/index.html>), including more guidelines for Iconography (<https://developer.android.com/design/style/iconography.html>).

A launcher icon is a graphic that represents your application. Launcher icons are used by Launcher applications and appear on the user's Home screen. Launcher icons can also be used to represent shortcuts into your application (for example, a contact shortcut icon that opens detail information for a contact).

As described in [Providing Density-Specific Icon Sets](#)

([https://developer.android.com/guide/practices/ui\\_guidelines/icon\\_design.html#icon-sets](https://developer.android.com/guide/practices/ui_guidelines/icon_design.html#icon-sets)) and [Supporting Multiple Screens](#) ([https://developer.android.com/guide/practices/screens\\_support.html](https://developer.android.com/guide/practices/screens_support.html)), you should create separate icons for all generalized screen densities, including low-, medium-, high-, and extra-high-density screens. This ensures that your icons will display properly across the range of devices on which your application can be installed. See [Tips for Designers](#) ([https://developer.android.com/guide/practices/ui\\_guidelines/icon\\_design.html#design-tips](https://developer.android.com/guide/practices/ui_guidelines/icon_design.html#design-tips)) for suggestions on how to work with multiple sets of icons.

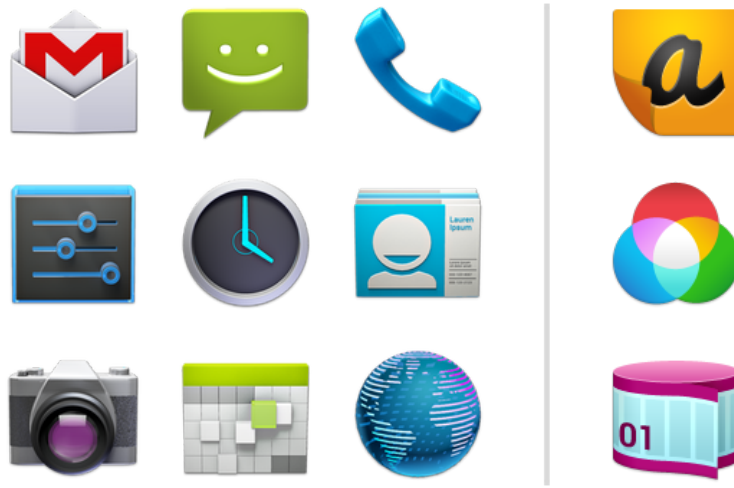
A high-resolution version of your application launcher icon is also required by Google Play for use in application listings. For more details on this, see [Application Icons on Google Play](#) ([#icons\\_in\\_market](#)) below.

**Note:** The launcher icon guidelines pertaining to all versions of Android have been re-written. If you need to review the old guidelines, see the [launcher icon guidelines archive](#) ([https://developer.android.com/guide/practices/ui\\_guidelines/icon\\_design\\_launcher\\_archive.html](https://developer.android.com/guide/practices/ui_guidelines/icon_design_launcher_archive.html)).

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**Figure 1.** Example launcher icons for system applications (left) and third-party applications (right).

Application launcher icons have three primary goals:

1. Promote the brand and tell the story of the app.
2. Help users discover the app on Google Play.
3. Function well in the Launcher.

## Promote the brand story

App launcher icons are an opportunity to showcase the brand and hint at the story of what your app is about. Thus, you should:

- Create an icon that is unique and memorable.
- Use a color scheme that suits your brand.
- Don't try to communicate too much with the icon. A simple icon will have more impact and be more memorable.
- Avoid including the application name in the icon. The app name will always be displayed adjacent to the icon.

## Help users discover the app on Google Play

App launcher icons are the first look that prospective users will get of your app on Google Play. A high quality app icon can influence users to find out more as they scroll through lists of applications.

Quality matters here. A well-designed icon can be a strong signal that your app is of similarly high quality. Consider working with an icon designer to develop the app's launcher icon.

**Note:** Google Play requires a high-resolution version of your icon; for more details on this, see [Application Icons in Google Play \(#icons\\_in\\_market\)](#) below.

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The launcher is where users will interact with the icon most frequently. A successful app launcher icon will look great in all situations: on any background and next to any other icons and app widgets. To do this, icons should:

- Communicate well at small sizes.
- Work on a wide variety of backgrounds.
- Reflect the implied lighting model of the launcher (top-lit).
- If the icon is 3D, use a perspective that doesn't feel out of place with other icons; forward-facing works best.
  - 3D icons work best with a shallow depth.
- Have a unique silhouette for faster recognition; not all Android app icons should be square.
  - Icons should not present a cropped view of a larger image.
- Have similar weight to other icons. Icons that are too spindly or that don't use enough of the space may not successfully attract the user's attention, or may not stand out well on all backgrounds.

## Do's and Don'ts

Below are some "do and don't" examples to consider when creating icons for your application.



Icons should not be overly complicated. Remember that launcher icons will be used at often small sizes, so they should be distinguishable at small sizes.



Icons should not be cropped. Use unique shapes where appropriate; remember that launcher icons should differentiate your application from others. Additionally, do not use too glossy a finish unless the represented object has a glossy material.



Icons should not be thin. They should have a similar weight to other icons. Overly thin icons will not stand out well on all backgrounds.



Icons should make use of the alpha channel, and should not simply be full-frame images. Where appropriate, distinguish your icon with subtle yet appealing visual treatment.

## Size and Format

Launcher icons should be 32-bit PNGs with an alpha channel for transparency. The finished launcher icon dimensions corresponding to a given generalized screen density are shown in the table below.

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	(120 dpi) (Low density screen)	dpi (Medium density screen)	(240 dpi) (High density screen)	dpi (Extra-high density screen)	dpi (Extra-extra-high density screen)	(Extra-extra-extra-high density screen)
Launcher Icon Size	36 x 36 px	48 x 48 px	72 x 72 px	96 x 96 px	144 x 144 px	192 x 192 px

You can also include a few pixels of padding in launcher icons to maintain a consistent visual weight with adjacent icons. For example, a 96 x 96 pixel **xhdp**i launcher icon can contain a 88 x 88 pixel shape with 4 pixels on each side for padding. This padding can also be used to make room for a subtle drop shadow, which can help ensure that launcher icons are legible across on any background color.

## Application Icons on Google Play

If you are publishing your app on Google Play, you will also need to provide a 512 x 512 pixel, high-resolution application icon in the Play Console (<http://play.google.com/apps/publish>) at upload time. This icon will be used in various locations on Google Play and does not replace your launcher icon.

For tips and recommendations on creating high-resolution launcher icons that can easily be scaled up to 512x512, see [Tips for Designers](https://developer.android.com/guide/practices/ui_guidelines/icon_design.html#design-tips) ([https://developer.android.com/guide/practices/ui\\_guidelines/icon\\_design.html#design-tips](https://developer.android.com/guide/practices/ui_guidelines/icon_design.html#design-tips)).

For information and specifications about high-resolution application icons on Google Play, see the following article:

Graphic Assets for your Application (Google Play Help) » (<http://market.android.com/support/bin/answer.py?answer=1078870>)