

## **NO STARCH PRESS IMAGE GUIDE**

Good illustrations can bring clarity, credibility, and style to your finished book. There are many sources for helpful art in your book. You might design and create every figure, sketch drafts for us to finish in-house, or even get permission to use some already-published pieces.

It's important to develop your artwork along with your text, so plan to discuss art development with your developmental editor early in the writing process.

Here are some tips and guidelines for creating and submitting good artwork.

### **Submission**

Your art should be embedded in your manuscript files so your editors can review it, but you should also submit individual files for each figure along with each chapter. To embed your art in Word or OOo, choose Insert ► Picture ► From File and select the correct image.

Name the files with part of the title of your book, the chapter number, and the figure number. For example: `java01_01.png`, `java01_02.png`, . . . `java02_01.png`, and so on.

## Image Types

Most of the illustrations in No Starch books are the following types:

- Line diagrams
- Screenshots
- Photographs

Based on the needs of your book, you may use any or all of these. The following sections cover each type in more detail.

### *Line Diagrams*

Line diagrams are created by an author to show a process or network; they usually consist of boxes or icons, lines, arrows, and text.

#### **Designing Good Diagrams**

Your diagrams don't need to be perfect works of art—but they do need to be clear, organized, legible, and consistent. Here are a few points to keep in mind:

- Label all the elements consistently.
- Use the same icon (whether it is a box, circle, piece of clip art, or other) for the same item in every figure where it appears.
- Diagrams should be read clockwise (if circular/cyclical) or left-to-right and top-to-bottom.
- Use shading, line strokes, and arrow styles consistently.
- Complex illustrations can be confusing, so try not to show too much in a single figure. If you need to illustrate a complicated system, consider using additional “detail” figures to discuss specific areas, like cities on a state map.

#### **Technical and Style Specs**

Ideally, we want line diagrams to be editable so we can fix typos, make font adjustments, and things like that. If you can submit editable EPS files, we're in business! If not, ask your editor about alternatives, and we'll figure out what will work best.

Images will be approximately 4.35 inches wide, so diagrams should be legible at that width (or smaller). It's best to take this size as a standard, so all the image elements (font, icons, boxes, etc.) can be sized consistently in all the figures.

Here are the fonts and styles we use for diagrams:

<b>Font</b>	Futura-Book
<b>Font size</b>	8 pt
<b>Code font</b>	TheSansMonoCondensed
<b>Code font size</b>	7.5 pt
<b>Line stroke</b>	1 pt

If you don't have these fonts available, we can adjust them (as long as the files are editable). Just be sure to use one font for regular text, and a mono-space font (like Courier) for code text.

## Screenshots

Screenshots are images captured from a computer screen, either entire desktops or individual windows and dialog boxes. If your book is a tutorial about a program or features a lot of websites, you will probably want to use screenshots. Try to capture only the screen or window that you want to show. In other words, don't capture the entire desktop if you only want to show the Save As dialog box.

## Callouts and Labels

You may want to label your screenshots with text and arrows, or call attention to a certain area with a circle. If you'd like us to add these elements, submit a "blank" version of the screen along with a clear description of the label you want or a draft version that we can work from. Callout descriptions can be added to your manuscript as Production Directives, which allows your editors to review them.

## Technical and Style Specs

The usual settings we recommend for capturing screenshots are:

Monitor resolution	Whatever you normally use
Monitor color	32 bit true color
DPI	Default (do not resize)
File type	PNG or TIFF

**NOTE** *Don't use JPEGs for screenshots! They will have "noise" or fuzziness around the text.*

The basic idea with screenshots is that what looks clear on your screen will also look clear in print.

Capturing at 32 bit color will give your screenshot the maximum amount of information, which gives it the highest possible quality.

It's important not to resize the image (for instance, do not size it to 300 dpi) because the program you're using to resize it will just extrapolate the data, which can result in an image that is actually less clear.

PNG is a good file type because it is compressed, but losslessly, which gives you a small but high-quality file.

Screenshots should be captured using a graphics program. If you're not sure what to use, ask us for some options.

**NOTE** *Again, be sure any necessary-to-read text is legible at 4.35 inches wide.*

If you're capturing windows with rounded corners, please capture them on a plain white desktop or other white background, to create clean corners and edges. Don't include your cursor in the screenshot. If you're capturing web pages, you may want to consider blocking ads, depending on the content you want to include.

## ***Photographs***

Photos and film/video stills should be submitted as digital files, preferably TIFF.

Here are some tips for taking good digital photos for print:

- Use a high resolution, at least 300 dpi.
- Use enough light, but avoid using a flash if possible. Natural or diffuse light is better if it's available. (This is why professional photographers use those white umbrellas.)
- Use a neutral background (try a white sheet) when photographing objects. Avoid complex patterns like wood grain that might be hard to edit later. Look carefully at the background to make sure that there aren't any distracting elements.

If you have any questions, please contact your editor to discuss specific techniques based on your specific project.

## **Color**

Most No Starch books are one color (that is, black and gray). If your book is one color, keep that in mind when you're creating figures. If you're using different shades of gray in your line diagrams, for example, make sure they contrast enough with one another that the reader will be able to tell the difference, and always use the same grays consistently, just as you would with color. Photos should also have a nice balance of contrast.

However, if your book is two-color or full-color, your illustrations will have different needs. Diagrams will have to use the same colors consistently. Photographs should be vibrant. Screenshots might be called out with color notation.