Flathead Valley Community College™

Worksheet - Website File Naming

Objective: Understand best practices of naming website files.

Rule of Thumb

When naming files for the web, name files in a method that makes sense to a general user and are easy to read. The general rule is to keep the file names descriptive but not too long. The full length of a good URL should be easily under 100 characters.

Table 1: Best Practice for Naming Website Files

Rule	Do it like this...	And not like this....
1. Use hyphens in place of spaces. Never use spaces within, before or after the name of any file that will go on a web server.	gray-frogs-live-longer.gif	gray frogs live longer.gif
2. Avoid special characters. Don't use unusual characters within a file name. Safe characters include: .-_	fuzzy-long-plaid-shirt_0125.jpg	fuzzy{long>>plaid%shirt%0125.jpg
3. Keep you file names short but meaningful. Avoid "stop" words. Stop words include: (and, or, but, of, the, a, etc.)	moon-hits-eye-big-pizza-pie.html	when-the-moon-hits-your-eye-like-a-big-pizza-pie.html
4. Graphic files must end with: ● .gif ● .jpg ● .png ● .svg	hecka-cool-ski-pic.png	hecka-cool-ski-pic
5. Always use lowercase letters to comply with the differences in web servers and to make Google happy.	best-day-ever-montana.html	BestDay-EverMontana.html

Your Turn

Based on the best practices outlined above, it is your turn to apply your knowledge. Rate the filenames in the table below then explain your reasoning.

Options for ratings are:

- Pass
- Not acceptable
- Okay, but needs work

Table 2: Are the filenames below best practice?

Filename	Rating	Explain Why
dogs.html	Pass	Follows all of the rules of website naming.
the-longest-night-in-history.jpg	Not acceptable	The file name has stop's.
statue_liberty_new_york.jpg	Pass	Follows all of the rules of website naming.
DeepBlueOcean.png	Not acceptable	Has capitalization in the file name.
23423490098_567	Not acceptable	The file name has no end file name.
best-beach-ever.jpg	Pass	Follows all of the rules of website naming.
tellmeaStory_456.jpg	Not acceptable	Has capitalization in the file name.
farpoint40_side_jasperred.jpg	Pass	Follows all of the rules of website naming.
carhartt-custom-duck-weave-seat-covers_ssc-ssca_carhartt-brown_main1.jpg	Not acceptable	File name is too long and complicated.
August.mailer.jpg	Pass	Follows all of the rules of website naming.
august-season-pass-sale.3393.html	Pass	Follows all of the rules of website naming.
JordanRosen_Iceland_LaborDay_233324_jpg_Hybris_1600x800_1.png	Not acceptable	File name is too long and complicated.
2540101184_19_png_thumbnail_3.png	Not acceptable	File name is too complicated.
founders-hall-student-housing-fvcc.png	Pass	Follows all of the rules of website naming.

8/31/2017

Information extracted from:

- *Naming Your Files for the Web* by Bernie Dodge
- Moz https://moz.com/blog/15-seo-best-practices-for-structuring-urls