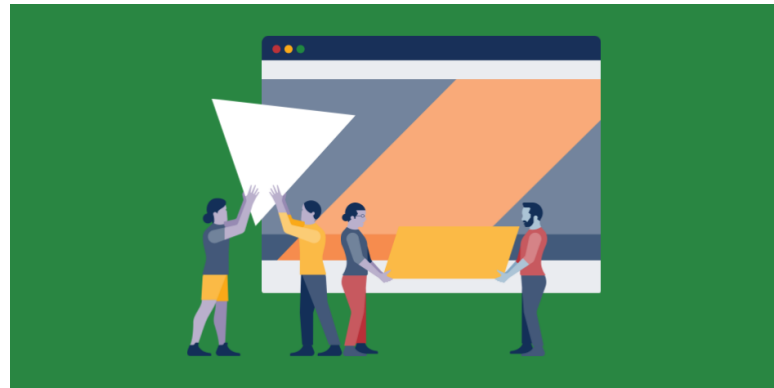# How to Make a GIF: 4 Tried-and-True Methods

Learn how to create a GIF to create eye-catching ads, or to connect with your followers through relatable moments from pop culture.

Jimmy Thomson, Fergus Baird
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If you're on social media in 2019, you need to know how to make a GIF. GIFs are helpful for creating eye-catching ads, or connecting with your followers through moments from pop culture.

Think of GIFs as the midpoint between images and videos. The main advantage of using GIFs is that you can tell a story or emphasize a point in a flash. Plus, they're small files to load, and that makes them perfect for mobile.

GIFs have exploded in popularity in recent years. GIPHY, one of the web's more popular GIF databases, claims to have over 300 million daily active users. In 2018, Google bought Tenor, a keyboard app and GIF archive designed to help users find the GIFs they want. Tenor processes over 400 million GIF searches per day.

This article will show you how to make a GIF using four different methods. Add them to your social media posts to delight and engage your followers.

Let's get started.

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> **Bonus: <u>Get the always-up-to-date social media image size cheat sheet.</u>** The free resource includes recommended photo dimensions for every type of image on every major network.

How to make a GIF with Photoshop

Note: all screenshots used in this article are from Adobe Photoshop CC 2018 (19.1.2 release).

You can use Photoshop to string images together into a GIF. To make the following GIF, Fergus Baird used 20 photos taken in Photo Booth.
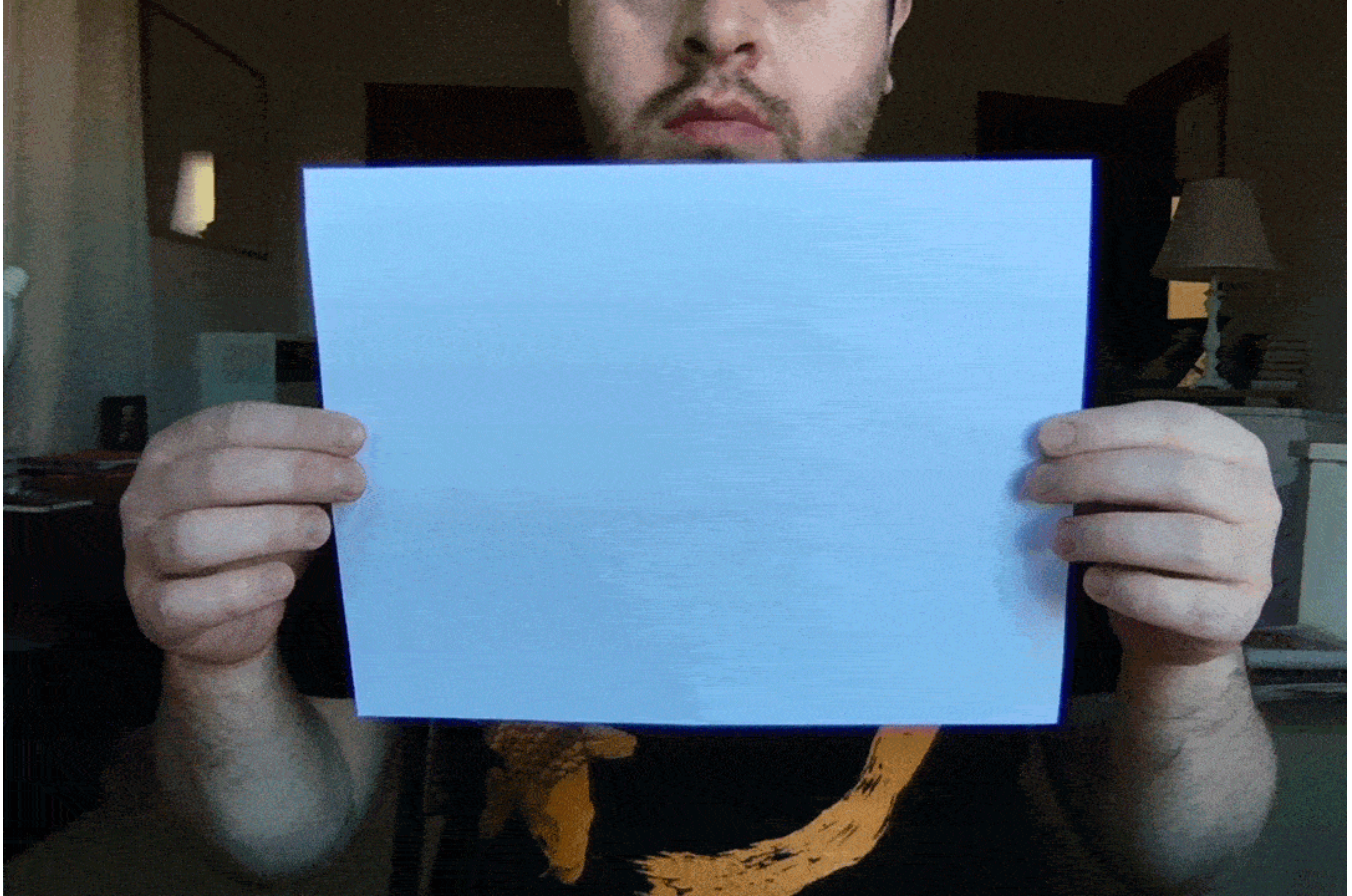
You can also use a short video file to make GIFs in Photoshop. The process is almost the same; only the first step will change.

Choose your own adventure:

If you're starting with a photo series, begin at **Step 1A**.

If you're converting a video into a GIF using Photoshop, start at **Step 1B**.

1A. Starting with photos: Load your deck of photos into Photoshop

In Photoshop, go to **File > Stack > Load Files** into Stack. Click **Browse**, then choose the photos ("layers") you want to use by Shift-clicking on the full list. Each of these photos will be one frame in your GIF.

Tip: If you want to save yourself some time later, number your files (i.e., 001, 002, 003) to make sure they appear in order.
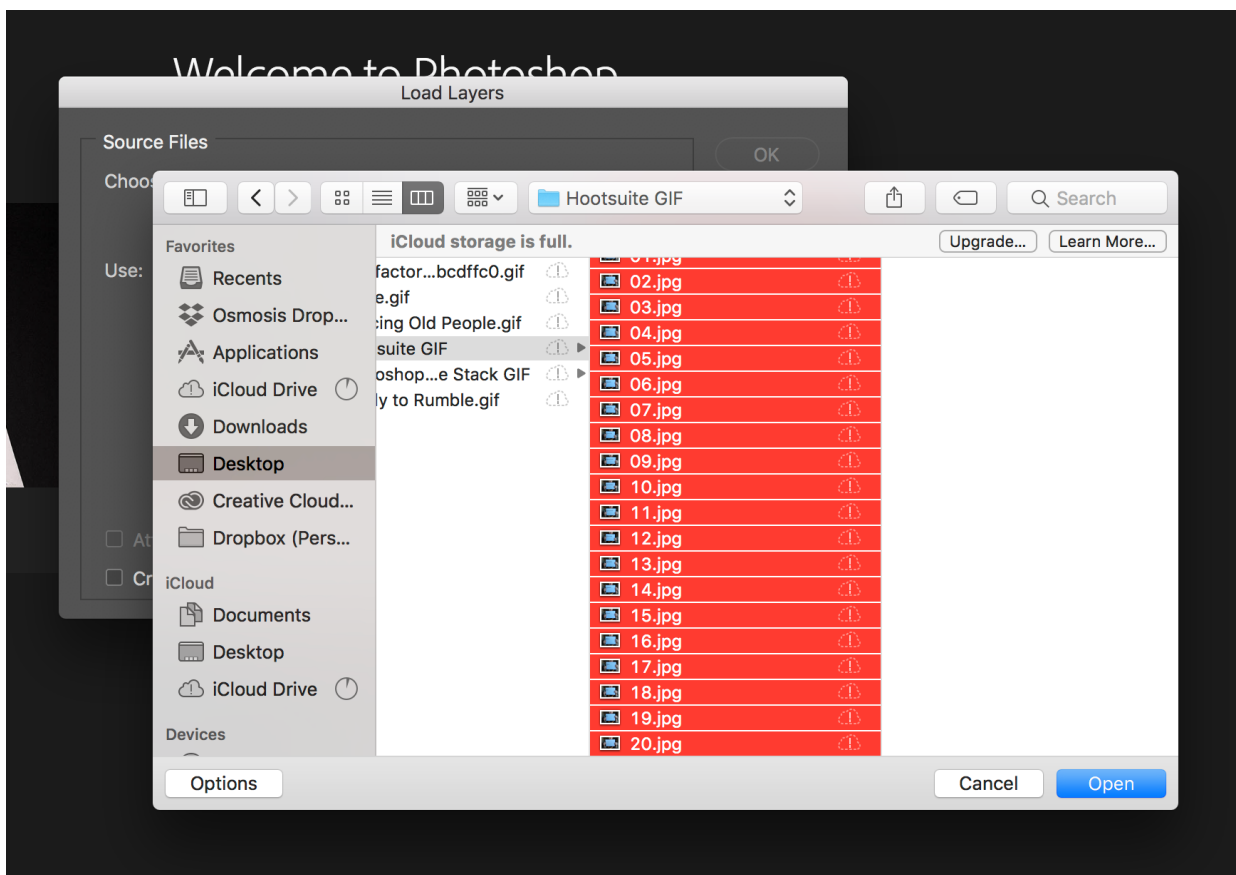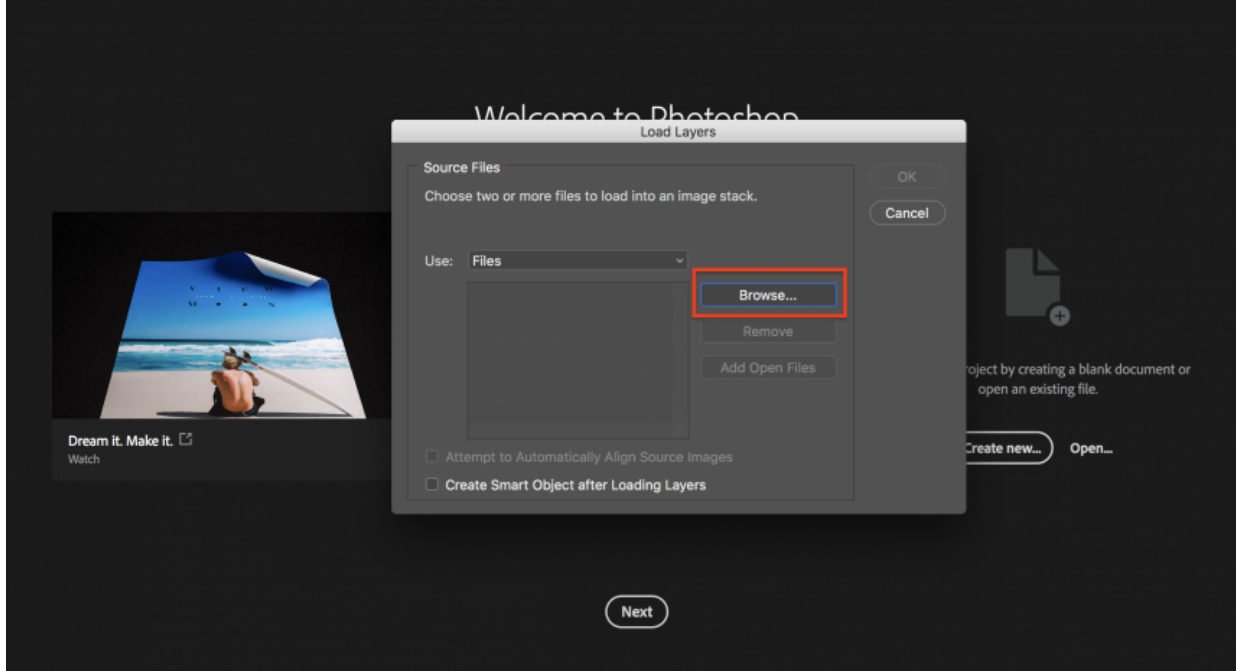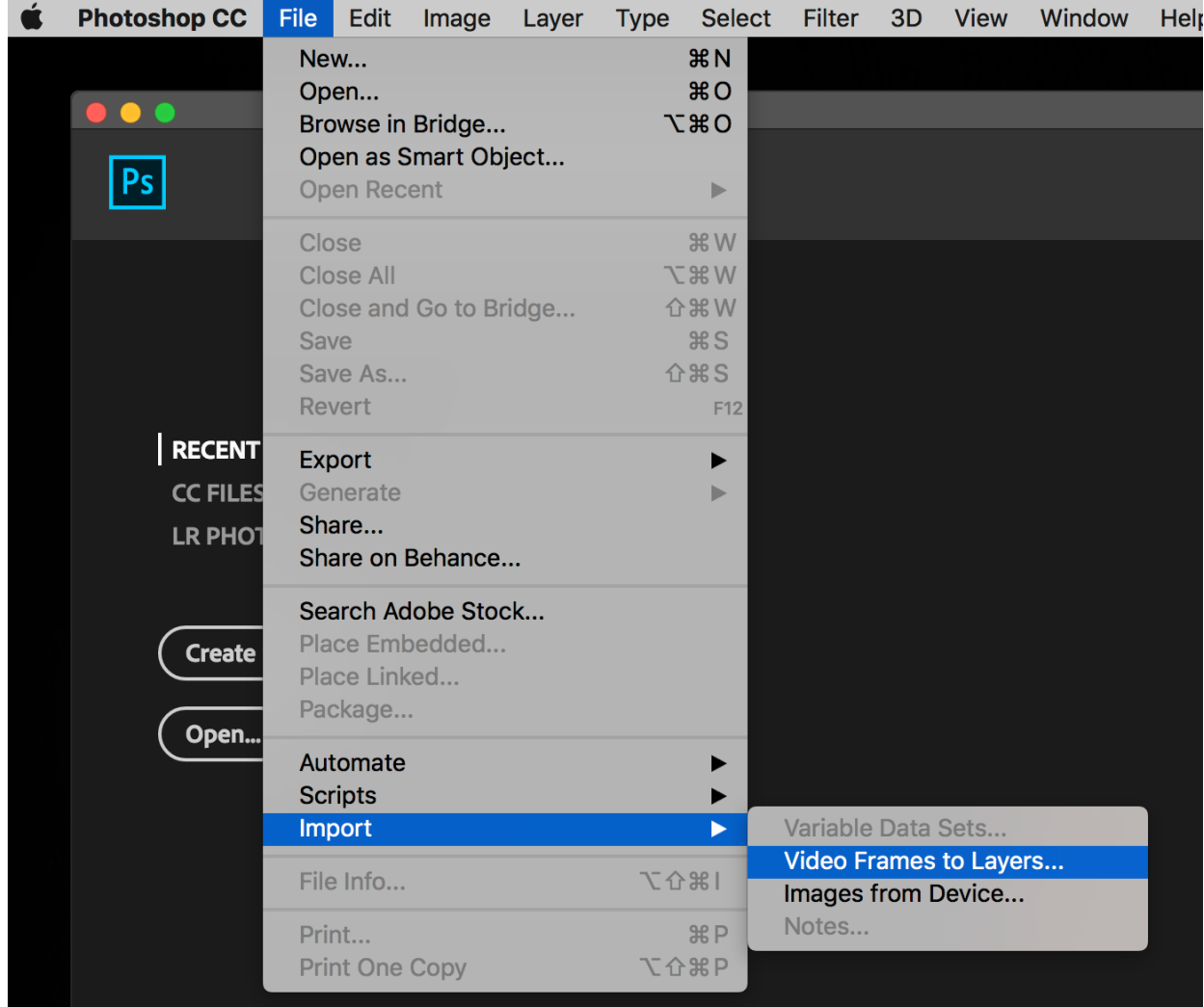
The "Load Layers" screen should look like this one below. Click **OK** and head to step 2!
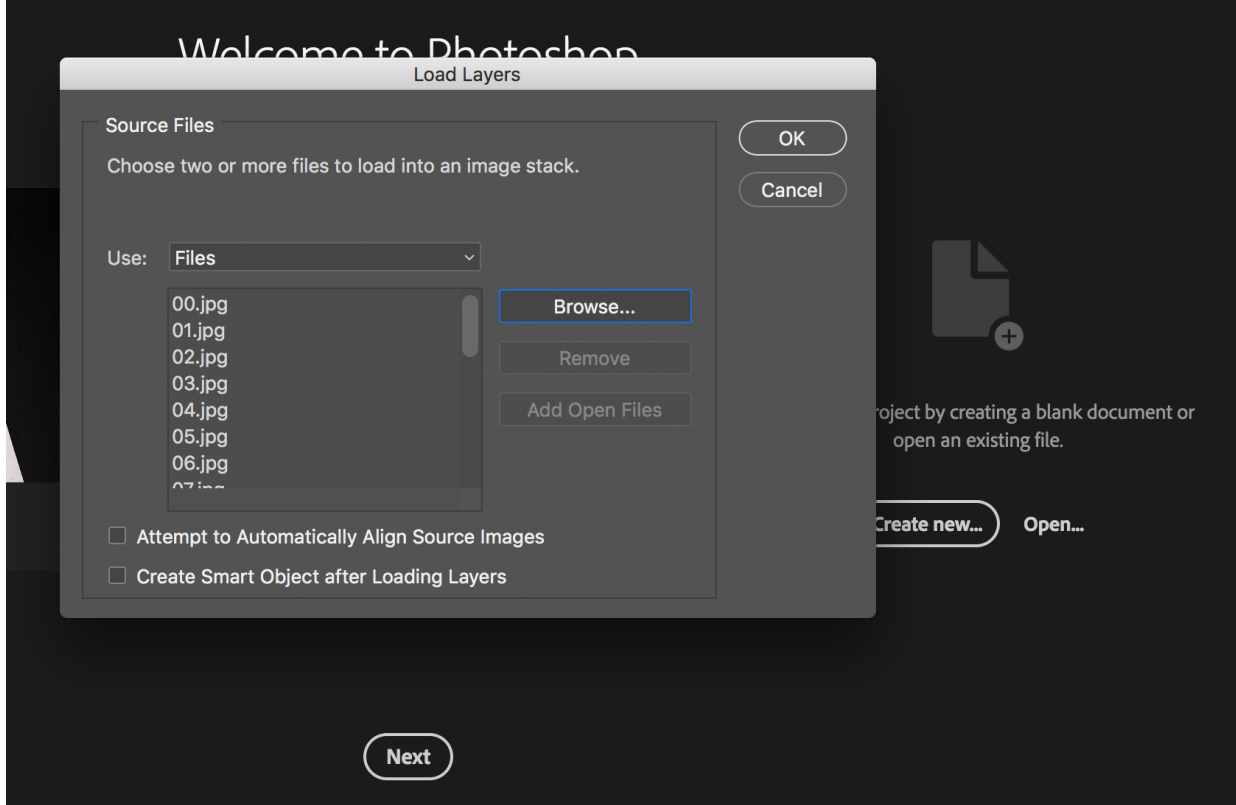
1B. Starting with video: Load your video file into Photoshop

To turn a short video into a GIF using Photoshop, you'll need to make layers out of the existing video frames. First, click **File > Import > Video Frames to Layers…**

A new window will pop up asking which portion of the video you'd like to import. You can select the range using the slider below the video.

Next, tell Photoshop how many frames it should import. It isn't necessary to import every single frame to make a GIF. In this case, we imported one out of every three frames, and only half of the video footage. When you're satisfied, click **OK**.
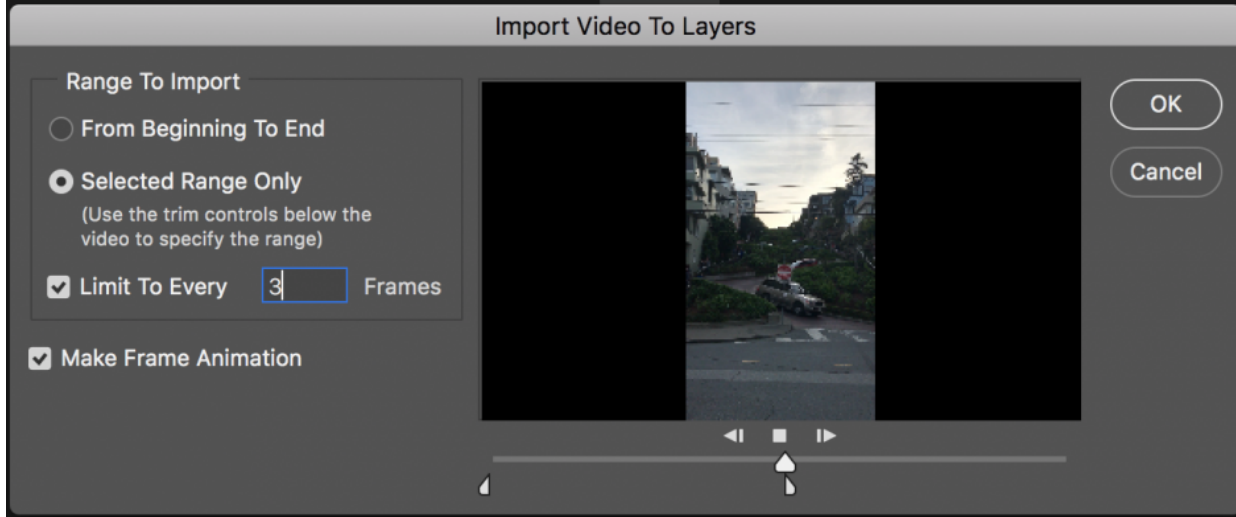
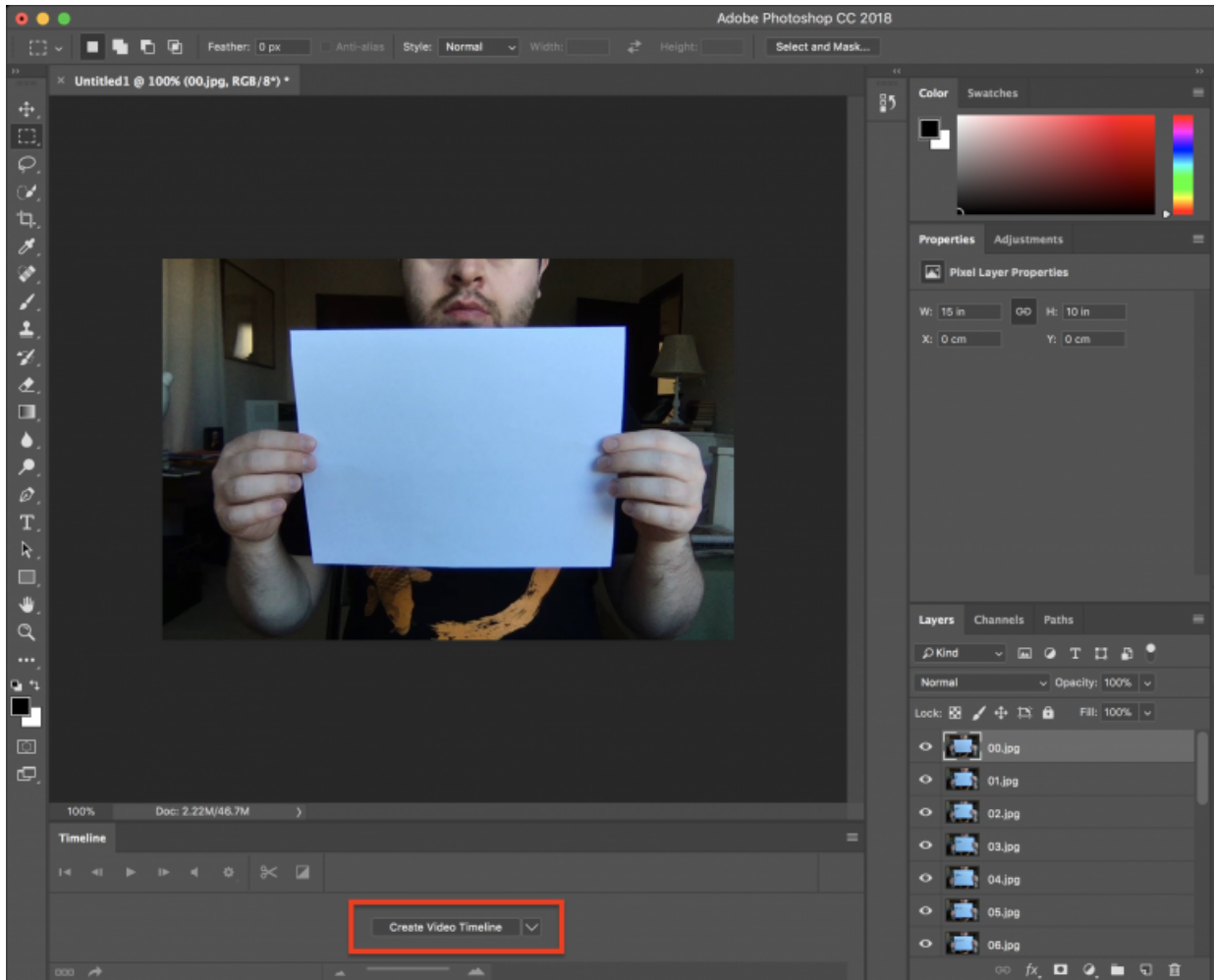Once you've imported your video file into layers, skip to **Step 4**.

2. Create a Timeline for your GIF

Under the "Window" menu, scroll down and click **Timeline**.
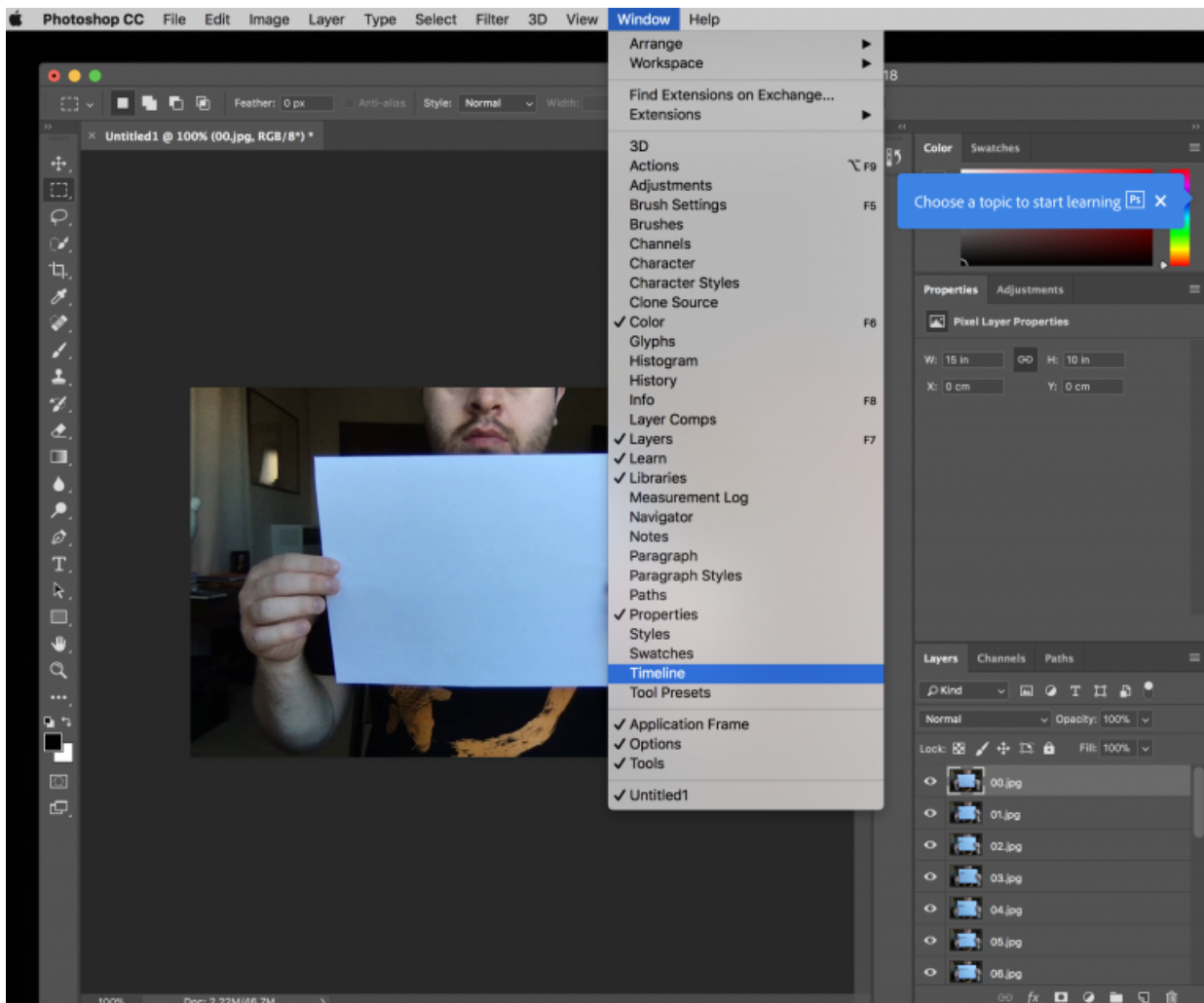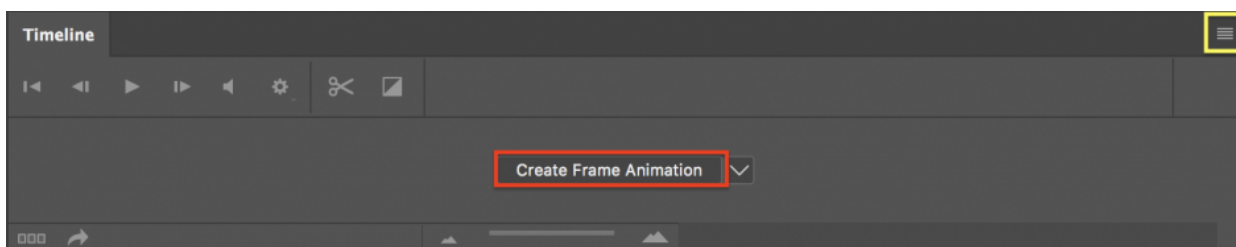

A small box will appear under the first image in your list: **Create Video Timeline**.

Click this and change it to **Create Frame Animation**.

3. Convert your photo layers into a set of looping animation frames

In the top right of the "Timeline" panel you'll see a little hamburger menu (outlined in yellow).

Click on the hamburger menu, scroll down, and click on Make Frames From Layers.

New Frame
Delete Frame
Delete Animation

Copy Frame
Paste Frame...

Select All Frames

Go To   ▶

Tween...
Reverse Frames

Optimize Animation...

Make Frames From Layers
Flatten Frames Into Layers
Match Layer Across Frames...

Create New Layer for Each New Frame
✓ New Layers Visible in All Frames

Convert to Video Timeline

Panel Options...

Close
Close Tab Group

The "Timeline" panel will now show your animation frames in sequence. You can

drag these around to reorder them.

Press the triangular **Play** icon (outlined in red below) to get an idea of how your GIF will look. Also, make sure **Forever** is selected in the drop down menu to the left (outlined in yellow), otherwise your GIF will only loop a set number of times.
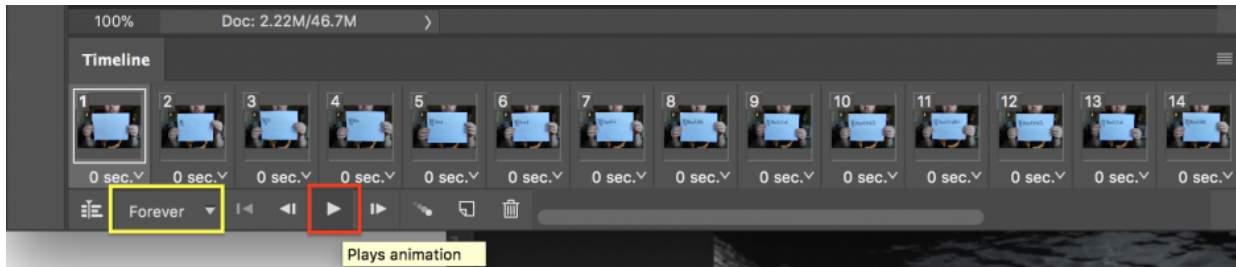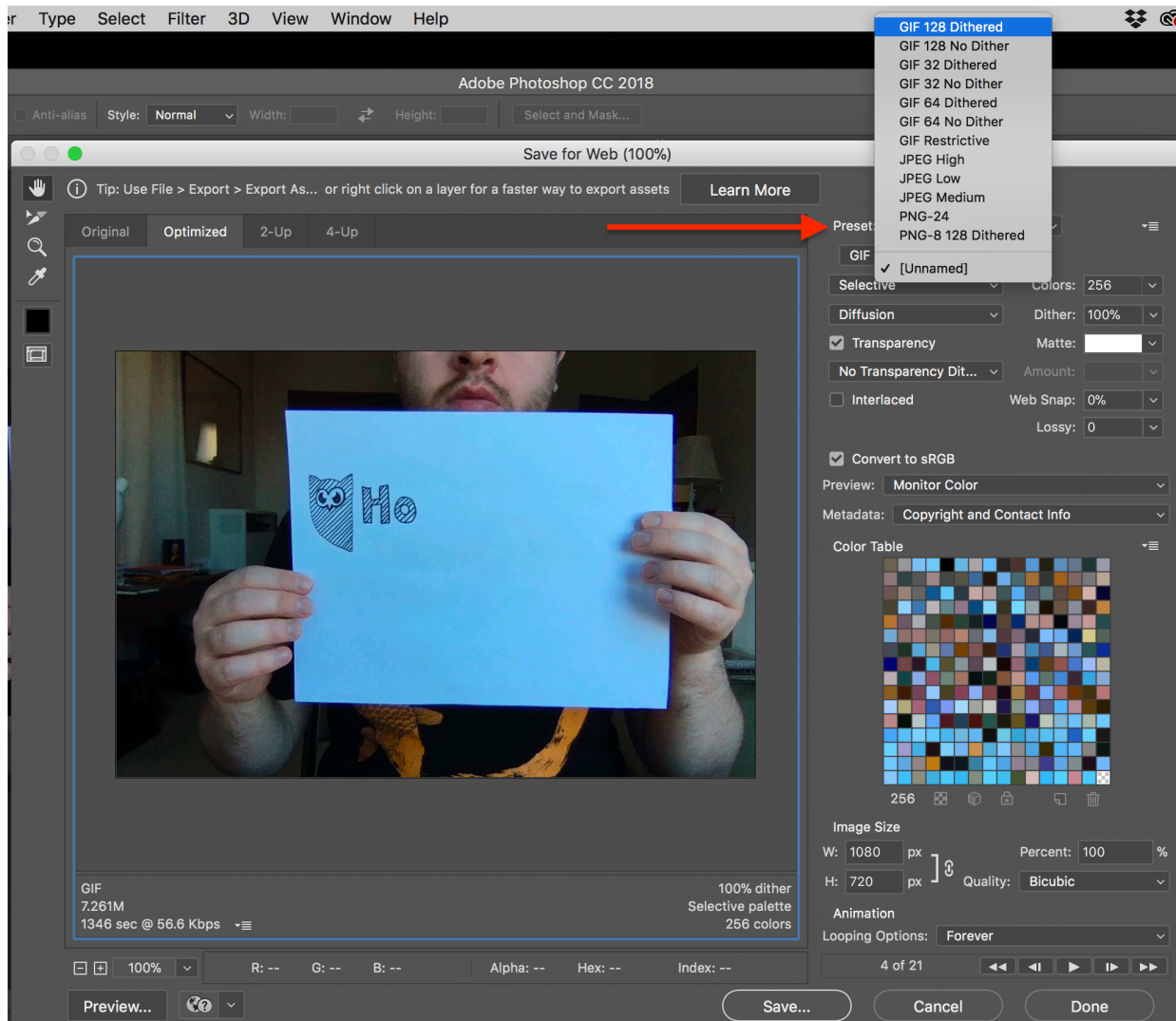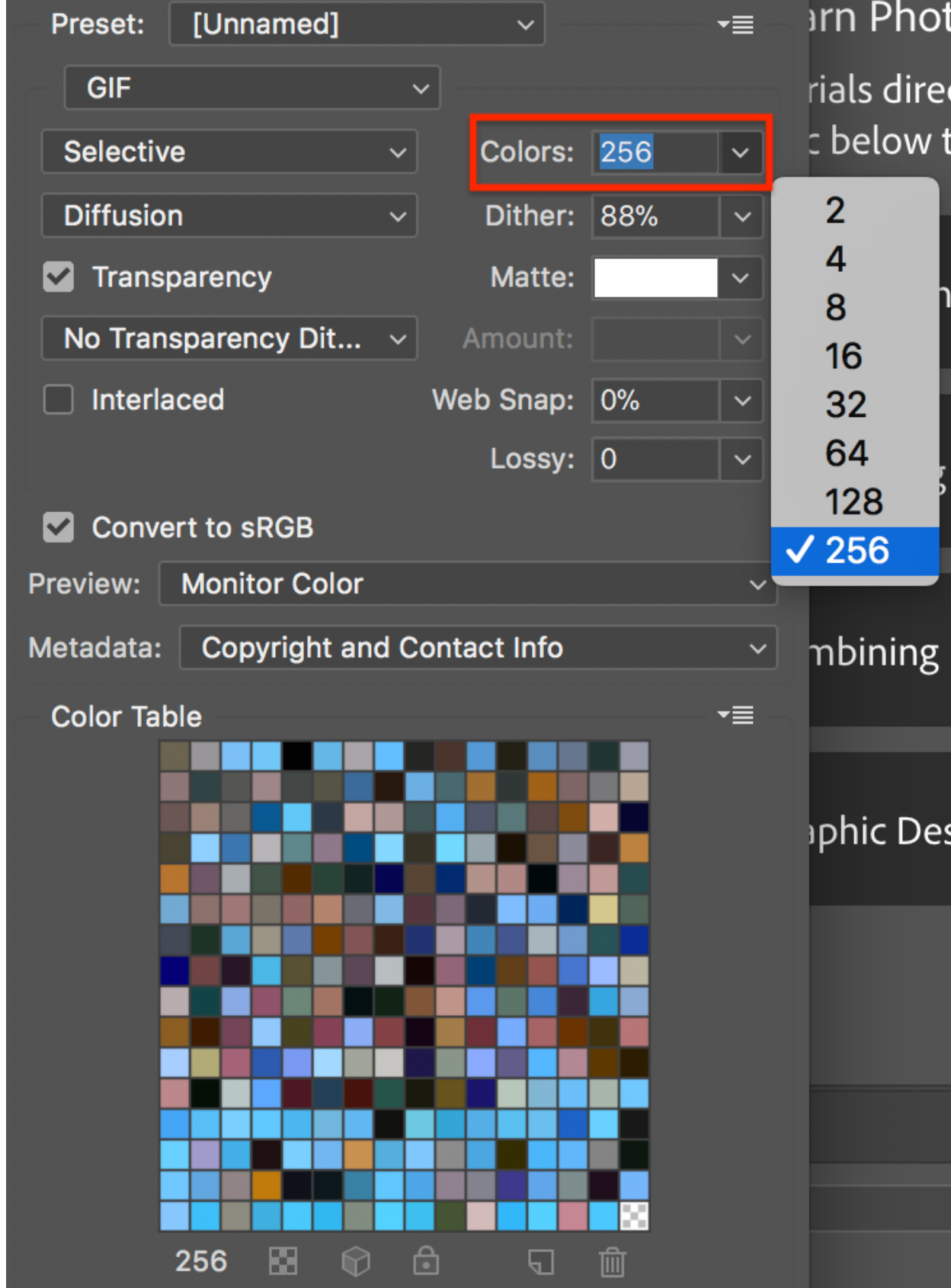

4. Export your GIF

Click **File > Export >** <mark>**Save for Web (Legacy)**</mark>**...**
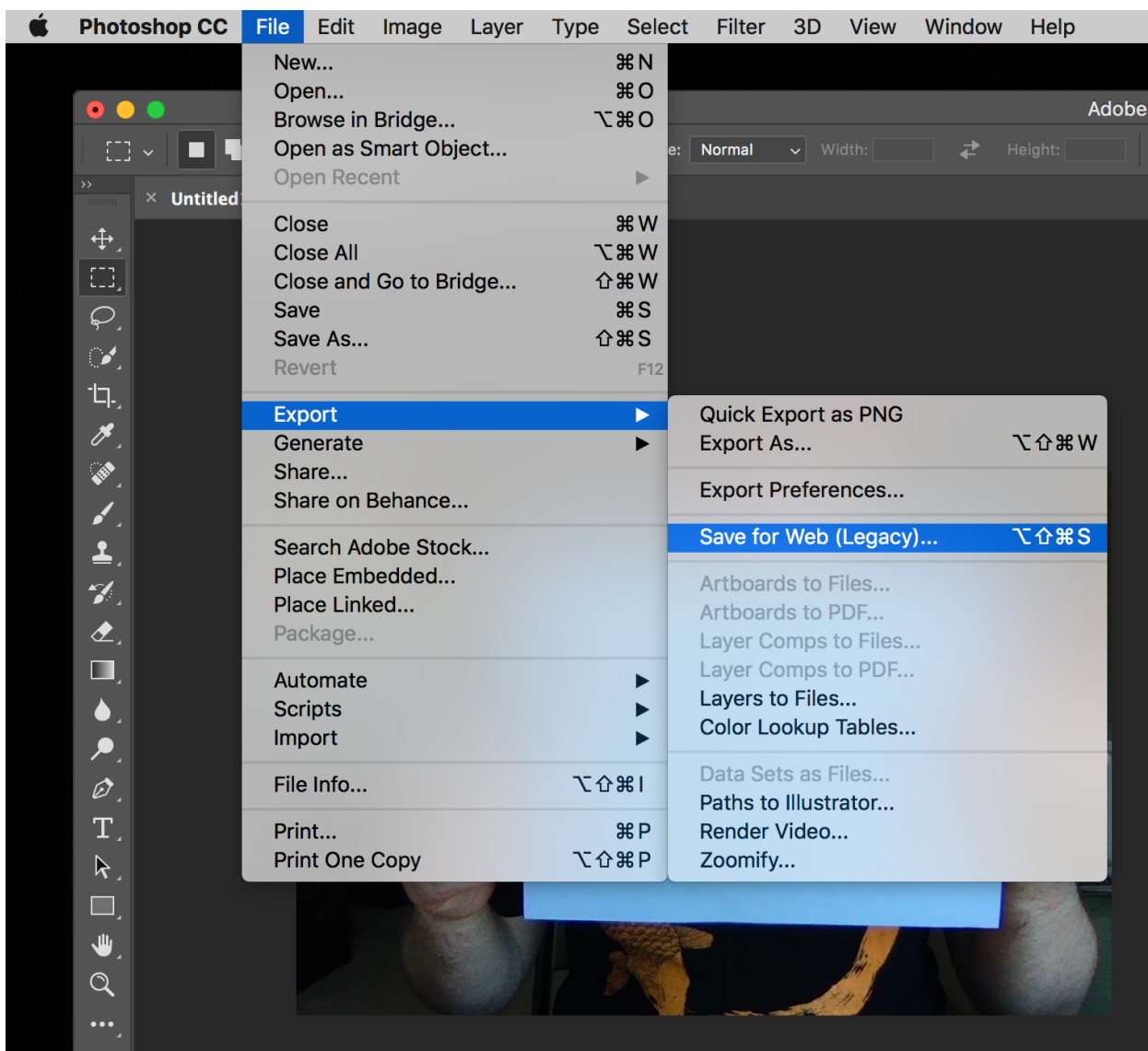
You'll come to this menu below. It looks a little overwhelming, but don't worry. Under the "Preset" menu, select **GIF 128 Dithered**.
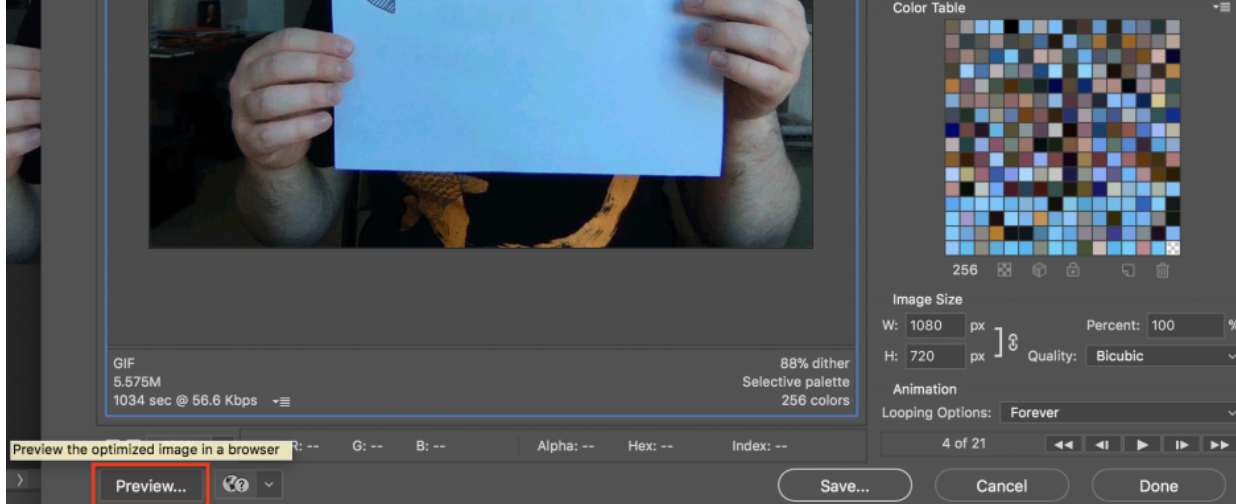

Next, change your Colors setting to **256** (the max number for a GIF).

Now you're ready to export your GIF.

To see how it turned out, click **Preview...** in the bottom left corner. It'll open your default web browser and play a looping preview of your GIF.

Next, click **Save...** to name your GIF file, and download the GIF to your computer.

And that's it! Congratulations! You know how to make a GIF in Photoshop.

How to make a GIF from a YouTube video

If you don't have access to an Adobe Creative Suite subscription, don't despair: there's more than one way to GIF a cat.

1. Go to GIPHY.com and click Create