Optimize your use of images

Image-related information can be provided for by using the "alt" attribute

Images may seem like a straightforward component of your site, but you can optimize your use of them. All images can have a distinct filename and "alt" attribute, both of which you should take advantage of. **The "alt" attribute allows you to specify alternative text for the image if it cannot be displayed for some reason** (1).
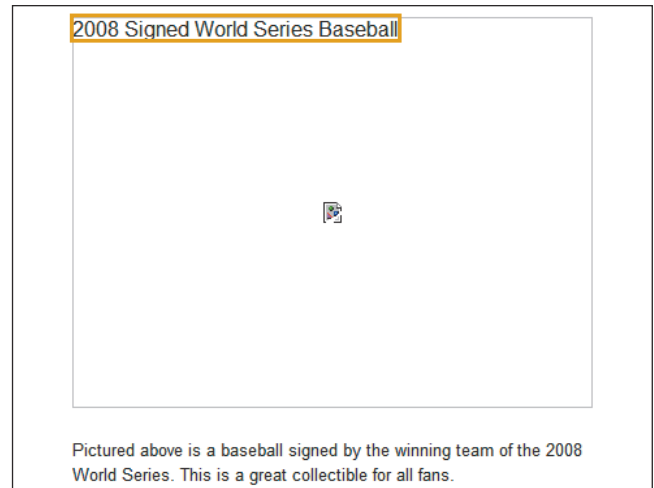
Why use this attribute? If a user is viewing your site on a browser that doesn't support images, or is using alternative technologies, such as a screen reader, **the contents of the alt attribute provide information about the picture**.

Another reason is that if you're using an image as a link, the alt text for that image will be treated similarly to the anchor text of a text link. However, we don't recommend using too many images for links in your site's navigation when text links could serve the same purpose. Lastly, optimizing your image filenames and alt text makes it easier for image search projects like Google Image Search to better understand your images.
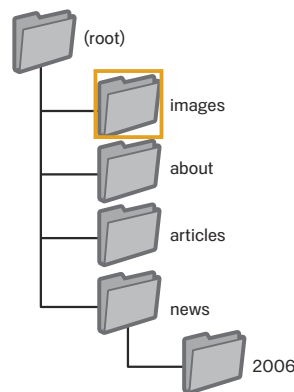
Store files in specialized directories and manage them using common file formats

Instead of having image files spread out in numerous directories and subdirectories across your domain, **consider consolidating your images into a single directory** (e.g. brandonsbaseballcards.com/images/). This simplifies the path to your images.

Use commonly supported filetypes - Most browsers support JPEG, GIF, PNG, and BMP image formats. It's also a good idea to have the extension of your filename match with the filetype.

2008 Signed World Series Baseball

Pictured above is a baseball signed by the winning team of the 2008 World Series. This is a great collectible for all fans.

(1) Our image wasn't displayed to the user for some reason, but at least the alt text was.

(root)
images
about
articles
news
2006

(2) It is easier to find the paths to images if they are stored in one directory.

Glossary

Screen reader
Software for speaking on-screen information or outputting to a Braille display.

ASCII language
Abbreviation for American Standard Code for Information Exchange. A character encoding centered on the English alphabet.