

Resizing and Optimising Images using Photoshop

A website will only load as quickly as the content on the pages. Making potential customers wait for images to download before being able to browse / shop can cause them to go elsewhere.

Some website layouts may be improved by having a consistent size to your images (for example having them all square). This can give better visual impact than having various sizes of images displayed on the page.

This guide will talk you through how to resize and optimise your website images for optimum file size without losing out on image quality.

Open up the image you will be working with in Photoshop. In this example we are working with a toy truck:

Cropping Excess Space

If you have any excess space on any side of the image you can crop this off using the crop tool as follows:

- Select the rectangular marquee tool from the menu (*image 1*)
- Highlight the area you wish to keep (*image 2*)
- Select 'crop' from the file menu (*image 3*)



image 1

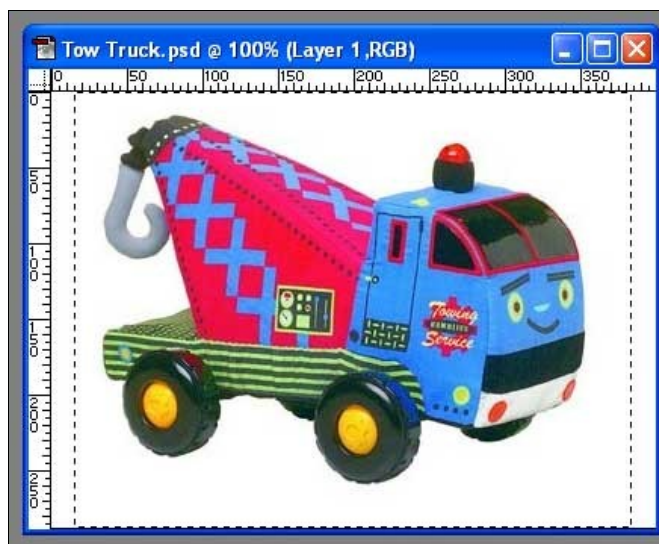


image 2

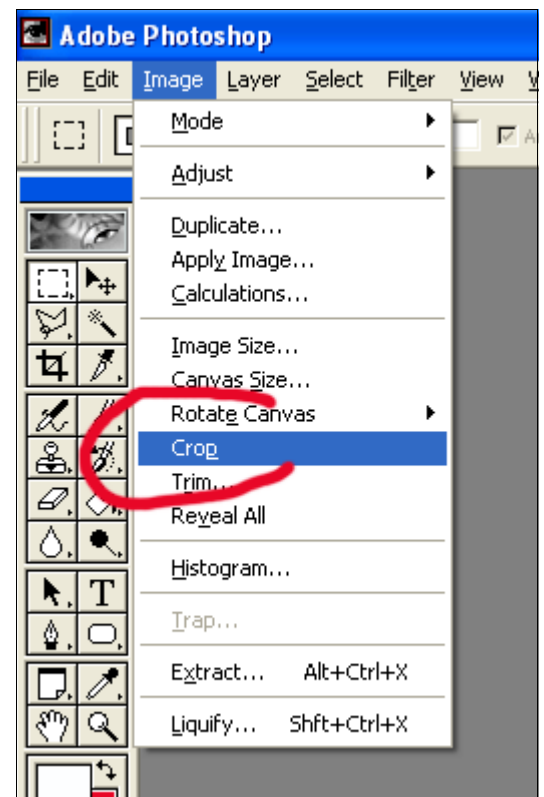


image 3

Making the image a custom size

In this example we will be making our image square, so we need to adjust the canvas size to make both the width and height of the image the same.

- Select 'Canvas Size' from the file menu (*image 4*)
- Change the smaller of the width / height so they are both the same value. In this example the image is landscape so we will be altering the height of the image to be equal to the width (*image 5*)

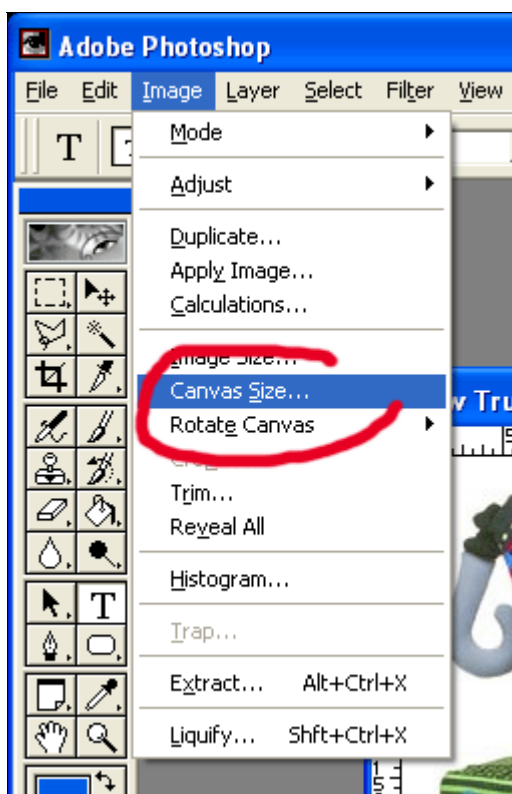


image 4

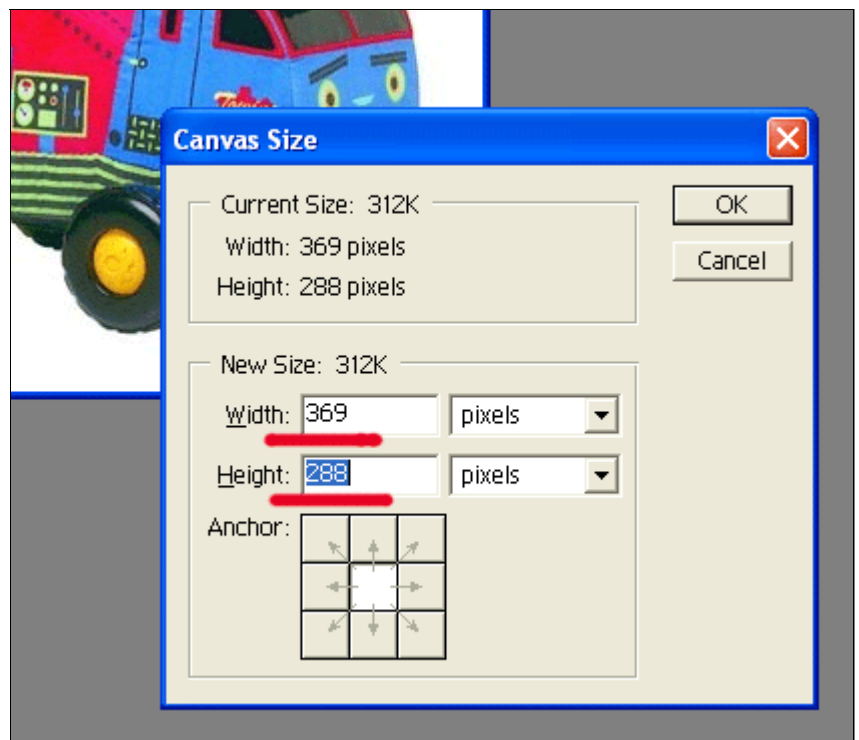


image 5

Resizing a large image

Images taken with modern digital cameras are often very large in physical size (as well as file size). We do not need to display the full size image on a website as we only have limited space, and also it would just take too long to download each image. So we will need to resize the images first.

- Select 'Image Size' from the file menu (*image 6*)
- As you can see in *image 7* there are a number of different options available.
 1. First of all check that the image resolution is 72dpi – this is screen resolution
 2. Make sure you have the 'constrain proportions' box checked – otherwise when you resize the image you may skew it
 3. Alter the width (or height) of the image – we recommend keeping the width under 420 pixels for optimum size for a website.

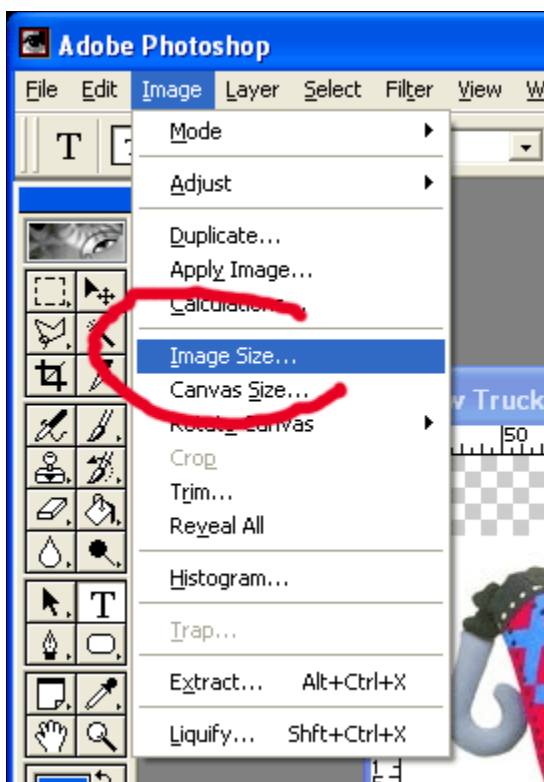


image 6

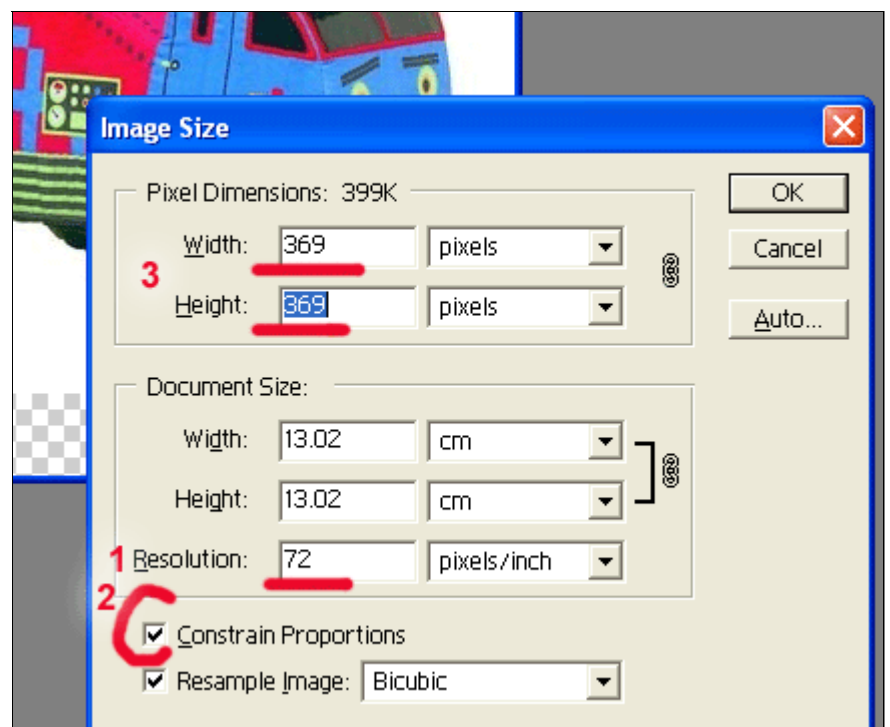


image 7

Saving your image for the web

Photoshop comes with a useful feature called 'save for web'. You access this menu via the 'Save for Web' in the file menu (*image 8*). This feature allows you to adjust the image quality and preview what effect this has on the way it looks and the file size of the image (*see image 9 for an illustration of the relevant parts of the screen*).

By selecting from the tabs along the top of the save for web screen you can view the original image, the optimised image (as we are in the example), or 2 or 4 versions of the image (where you can adjust different settings to compare).

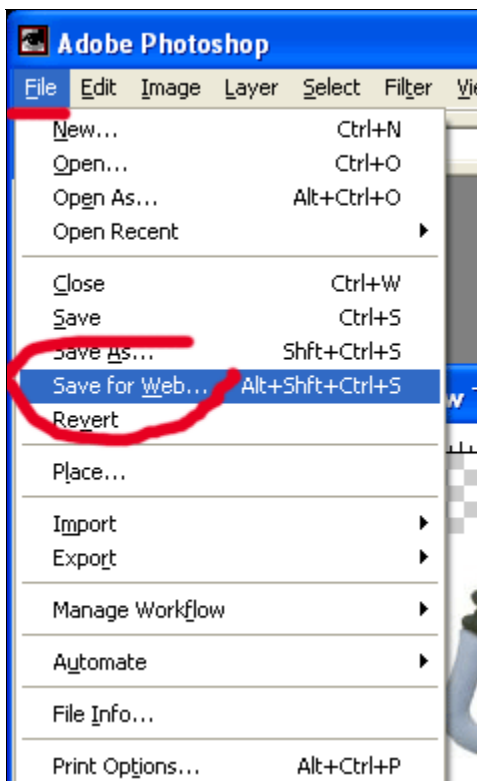


image 8

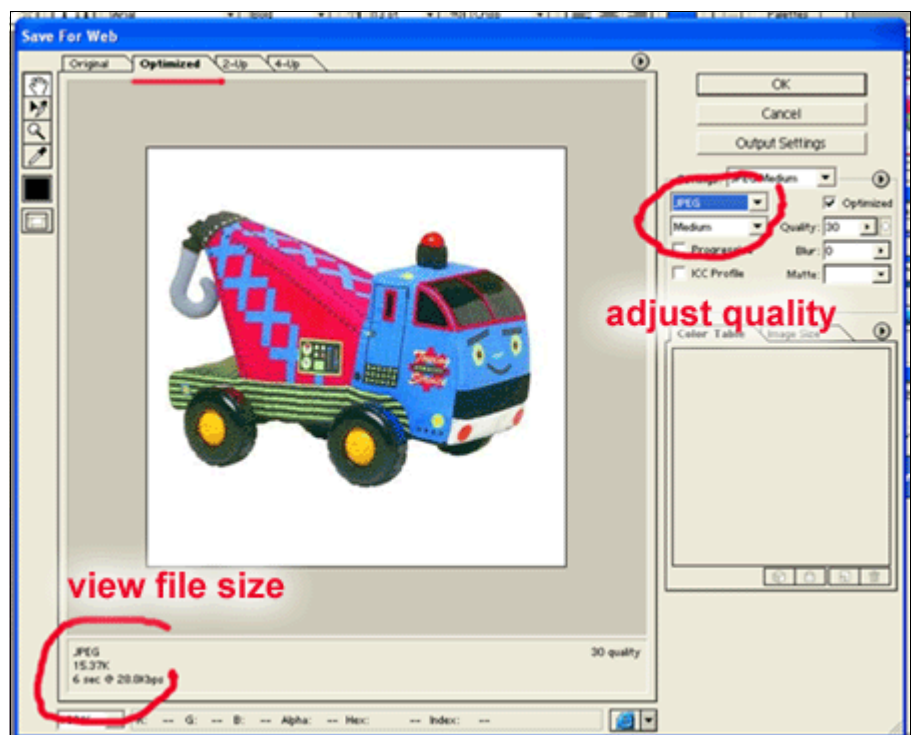


image 9

Adjusting the file size and quality is achieved by using the options displayed in *image 10*.

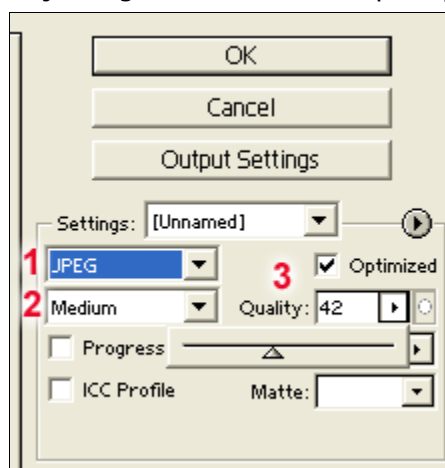


image 10

1. Select the appropriate file type – jpeg for photographs and gif for graphics or text
2. You can select a preset quality value from this dropdown list – we recommend you try 'Medium' quality
3. If your image does not look good enough using the Medium quality setting then you can use the slider bar to increase the quality (medium is set at 30). For most web images a value between 30 and 45 is sufficient. Keep an eye on the file size (bottom left – see image 9) when making alterations.

The images taken from our example are shown below, as you can see there is very little difference in the physical appearance of the images – but a huge difference in file size. Optimisation has reduced it to a third of the original file size.



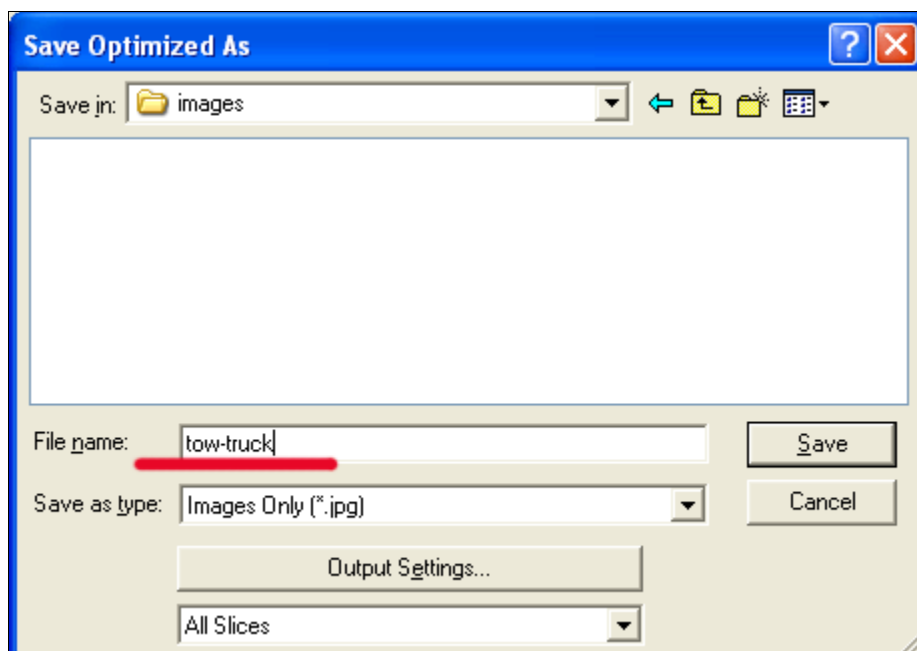
Original Image – File Size 62KB



Optimised Image – File Size 18KB

Once you are happy with the way your image looks and its file size then select 'OK' to save.

With website images do not use capital letters or spaces – this can cause problems with some operating systems and browsers. If you need to separate the words then use a dash (like in our example) or an underscore.



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