

**DRIVE**

CREATIVE  
AGENCY

BEST PRACTICES GUIDE

# WEBSITE IMAGES



## Image Selection

### Focal Point / Focus / Crop / Aspect Ratio

Choosing the right images is one of the most important parts of the process. Try to select images where the focal point / main area of interest is in the center.

**Pro Tip:** Selecting images that have safe space around the point of interest will help insure that important visual elements are seen when objects resize in a responsive environment.

**Note:** Some of the image containers on a website are fluid and flex their aspect ratio depending on the screen size and the changing/resizing/flowing of elements around them. This is referred to as “cover”. When an image is set to cover it will resize to fill the entire frame of a container making sure the width and height are filled at a minimum of 100%.

Additionally, depending on the specific setup of a website these images are commonly set to be centered in the elements areas space (see examples to the right).



Filling the space available making sure that there is 100% coverage.

## Image Sizing

### Pixel Dimensions / Resolution

Image optimization is paramount in the digital age and the sizing of images plays a larger part in that. Search engines rank websites/pages based on numerous factors. One of the most heavily regarded is an actual page's size in bytes - how much physical content has to be downloaded in order to render the page. This includes all the HTML itself, style sheets, JavaScript, fonts, videos, images and other media.

All images should have a resolution of 72 dpi (standard screen resolution). For greater pixel depth especially on retina screens, a resolution of 150 dpi may also be used.

**Pro Tip:** Horizontal (landscape) photography works best for most website applications. Vertical (portrait) images stretch pages vertically especially on mobile making users scroll more. There are also issues in auto-fit / cropped situations and often have important details out of the viewable area.

**Note:** consistency in sizing is important especially when using groups of images in website layouts, slideshows, feeds etc.

### RECOMMENDED IMAGE SIZES

#### “Hero” / Header / Splash / Background

These types of images are often rendered at full browser width or larger depending on the setup/use case. It is important to remember that since these images often scale upwards, they shouldn't be sized too small.

**1400px (wide) x Minimum Height of 800px (tall)**

#### General Use / Featured Image(posts) / Slideshow

These types of images are the most common for a website. When seen on a tablet they are often needed to be “full-width” (depending on specific use cases). Image ratio in most case should be around 16:10 or 16:9, while 4:3 is also acceptable. Depending on the design for the “featured image” a larger image may be required

**1024px (wide) x Minimum Height of 550px (tall)**

#### Head-shots / 1:1 Ratio Images

These types of images are often in the 1:1 ratio (square), but also may have more of a vertical format/crop like a 3:4 ratio.

**600px (wide) x Minimum Height of 600px (tall)**

## Optimization

### Formats / File Size / Quality

Image optimization is a balancing act pitting 2 components against each other - file size vs image quality (visual clarity). The smallest file size will inherently affect visual clarity making the image appear “pixelated”. This can also be referred to as “image quality” or “compression”. The file type/kind an image is saved in can help or hinder in this process.

**Pro Tip:** Setting a target for the byte size of an image is an important factor when it comes to page size on the web and it has a large effect on load times. As a rule of thumb, we generally look for images to be around 100kb (depending on the export size/dimensions), but under 100kb is generally preferred.

**Note:** Image sizing greatly affects the exported file size as well. The best images for websites balance the size and quality of an image with its file type to get the best results.

#### TRADITIONAL FILE EXPORT TYPES

- .png** This file type typically has the best visual appearance, but comes at the cost of much higher file sizes. However, it does work real well with vector assets generated in Adobe Illustrator etc., and often exports at file sizes that are quite small. There are also 3rd party vendors that specialize in compression of this file type. Visit <https://tinypng.com> to learn more about how they can reduce .png file sizes for you.
- .jpg** This file type has been around for a very long time and offers great compression and small file sizes but depending on “quality/compression” settings on export, the images can often look grainy, pixelated, or even out of focus.
- .gif** This file type has been around for a very long time and offers decent compression and small sizes, but mainly at enormous image degradation. At this point, the is file type is really only used for simple repeating image animations.

#### NEXT GENERATION FILE TYPES

- .webp** These newer file types have been around only for a short time and offer the best compression whilst retaining better image quality compared to the aforementioned file types above. They now have wide spread acceptance across browsers and devices. We recommend starting with a quality of 80% and see what your exported file sizes end up at and go from there.

