

COVERS
PHOTOSHOP

3.0

034

Photoshop

Techniques

How to create

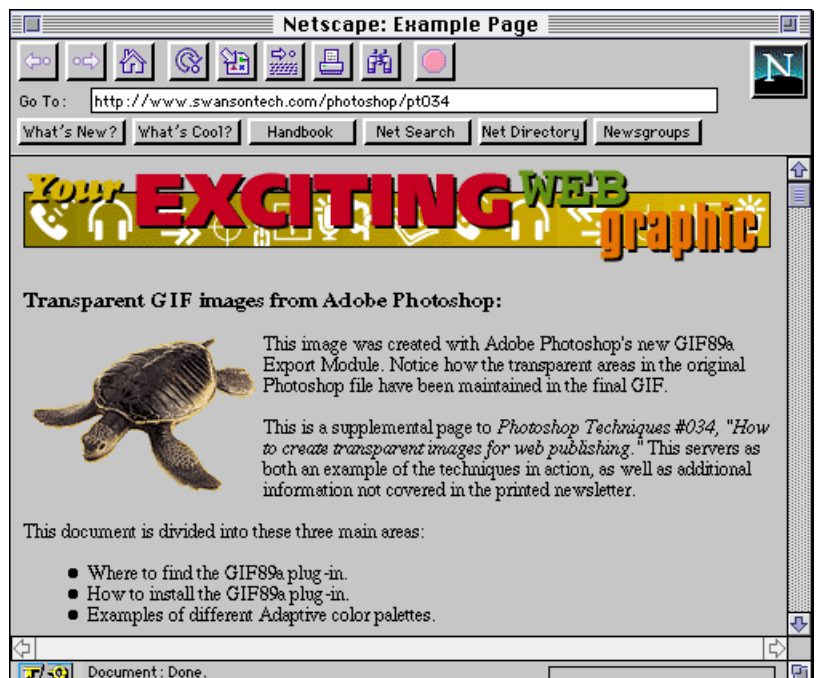
TRANSPARENT IMAGES FOR WORLD WIDE WEB PAGES.

If you are already publishing information on the World Wide Web, you are probably familiar with the hassle of creating good-looking images. Until now, you always needed extra software in addition to Photoshop to create the appropriately prepared files.

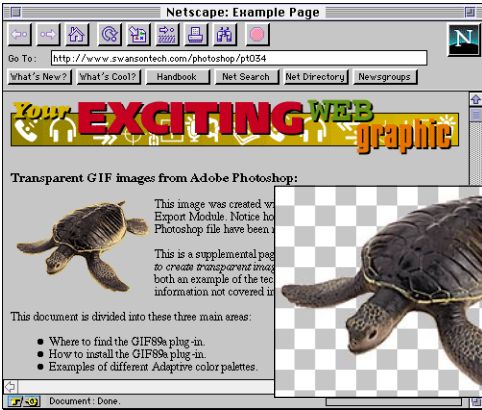
But now, a new plug-in is available for Photoshop that allows you to create transparent, interlaced GIFs directly from Photoshop. You can create excellent Web-ready images without relying on any additional software.

Note: This technique requires some experience creating graphics for use on Web pages. If you do not have a World Wide Web home page, you will not be able to apply this technique.

(GIF is a type of image file format used in Web publishing.)



Photoshop's new GIF Export Module

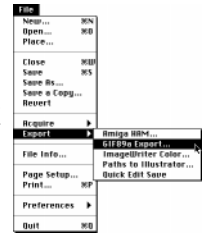


Look in the File menu under Export. If you do not see an item titled GIF89a, you will need to install this new plug-in before you can use this technique.

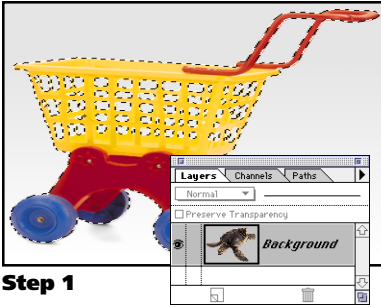
Note: You can find installation instructions at our supplemental Web page: (www.swansontech.com/photoshop/pt034/extra.html)

Where to find the GIF89a plug-in:

- On your Adobe Photoshop 3.0.5 CD-ROM disc.
- On America Online (keyword: Adobe)
- On Adobe's Web site (www.adobe.com)



Creating and exporting a transparent GIF



Step 1

Open or scan a good-looking image.

A: Open or scan an object for your Web page.

Note: Start with an RGB image. Change the Mode if necessary.

B: Choose Image Size from the Image menu.

Reduce the resolution to the final size.

Width & Height: Enter final size (in inches*)

Resolution: 72 pixels per inch.

**Note to experienced users:* If you prefer to work in pixel measurements when creating Web graphics, that is fine.

Step 2

Remove the object's background.

A: Name the Background Layer.

Double-click on "Background" in the Layers palette.* A Layer Options dialog box will appear. Name the layer anything you wish and click OK.

**Note:* If your image's layer already has a name, skip this step.

B: Remove the object's background.

The GIF export tool maintains transparent parts of the photo when you export your final Web graphic. Try one of the following:

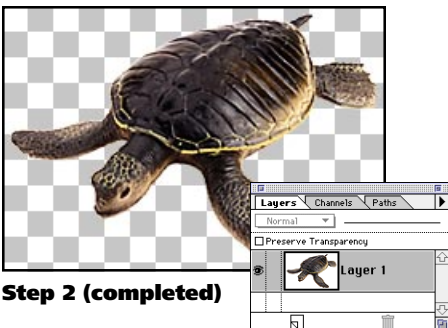
- Carefully erase the background using the eraser tool.
- Select your object with the lasso tool; choose inverse from the Select menu and hit the delete key.

When you are done, your image should look something like the example at left.

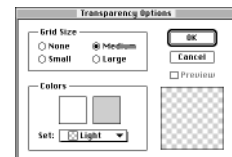
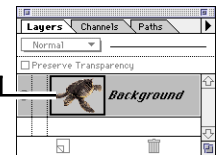
Note: Photoshop uses a grid pattern to indicate transparent areas. To control the look of this grid, choose Preferences > Transparency from the File menu.

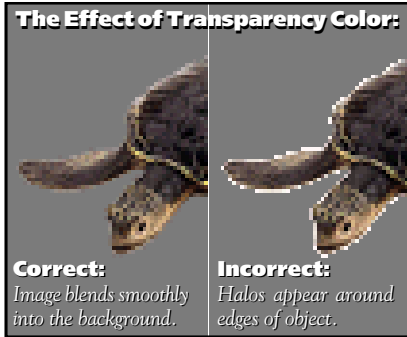


Step 2



Step 2 (completed)





Step 3

Start the GIF export process.

A: Choose **Export 1 GIF89a** from the **File** menu.

This will bring up the GIF export dialog box.

Note: If **GIF89a** does not show up in the **Export** sub-menu, you will need to install the plug-in filter (see comments at top of Page 2).

B: Click on the **Transparency Index** color box. (optional)

Note: If your Web pages are built with a standard gray background, you can leave this option untouched.

When you click on the color box, Photoshop brings up a standard color picker. In the color picker, set the background color you are using in your final Web page.

Photoshop uses this color to blend your image neatly into the background (see examples at left).

Tip: For pages with a textured background, pick a color that will blend into the most prominent background color.

Step 4

Use the fewest colors possible.

When building Web graphics, one of the top concerns is file size. Keep your files as small as possible to help the pages load quickly.

A: Set the **Palette** menu to **Adaptive**.

With an adaptive palette, Photoshop will dither your image to create a GIF file with fewer colors. You set the number of colors to use in Step B.

Note: If the image you are exporting uses less than 256 unique colors, this menu will default to **Exact**.

B: Set the number of colors to use.

How few colors you can use depends on the type of image you are working with. Try starting at 32 colors and evaluating the results.

Note: Compare the effects of different setting on our supplemental Web page: (www.swansontech.com/photoshop/pt034/extra.html).

C: Click the **Preview** button.

This brings up a window showing how your image will look at these settings. After previewing your image click **OK**.

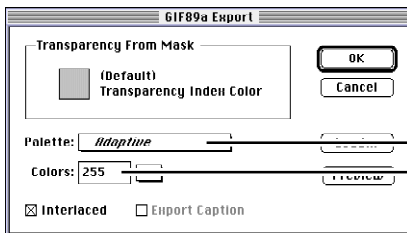
D: Repeat steps **B** & **C** to get the fewest acceptable colors.

Use the fewest colors possible while keeping acceptable image quality. Repeat a few times to decide what you are happy with.

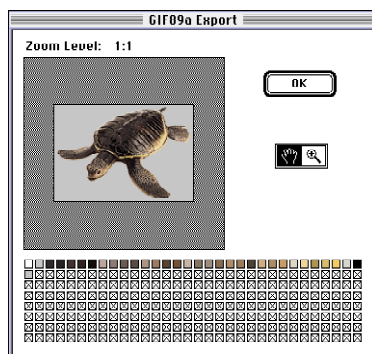
E: Click **OK**.

Photoshop will ask you to name your new GIF file.

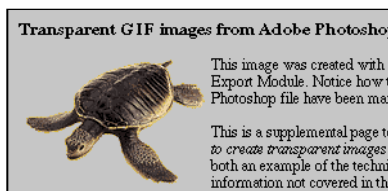
Macintosh users: Keep your file name under 8 characters with “.gif” at the end (example: turtle.gif).



Steps 4A,B (setting the color options)



Step 4C (previewing final graphic)



Step 5 (placed into web final page)

Step 5

Add your image to the final Web page.

Add your image as you would any other GIF graphic.

Using graphics from a drawing program.

You can also use Photoshop to convert graphics created in an illustration program like FreeHand or Illustrator.

Option Steps

Create a graphic in an illustration program.



Option Step A (drawn in Adobe Illustrator)



Option Steps B&C (opened in Photoshop)



Option Step D (placed into web final page)

A: Create artwork in your drawing program.

This example graphic was created in Adobe Illustrator.

Tip: The width of a typical Web banner graphic is 6.5 inches.

B: Export the objects in an Adobe Illustrator format.

In *Illustrator*, just save the document.

In *FreeHand*, choose *Export* from the *File* menu and pick “*Illustrator 3*” from the pop-up menu.

C: In Photoshop, choose **Open** from the **File** menu.

Find the file you exported in the previous step and open it.

Photoshop will bring up the EPS rasterizer dialog box. Use the settings below and click OK.

Width & Height: Defaults to your document size.

Resolution: 72 pixels per inch

Mode: RGB.

Antialiased: Checked.

D: Use Steps 3-4 to export the graphic as a GIF.

The graphic will come into your Web page with the same transparent areas you left in the original drawing program.



www.swansontech.com