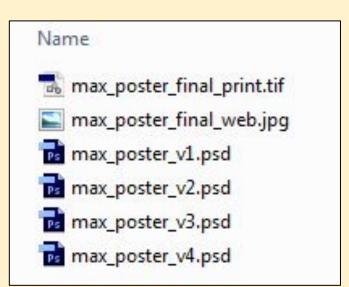# Image File Formats

File formats are the type of file you save work as.

Using the right format is important.

Using the right format for the right job is important

There are exam questions on this and it also gets you marks in every portfolio unit.
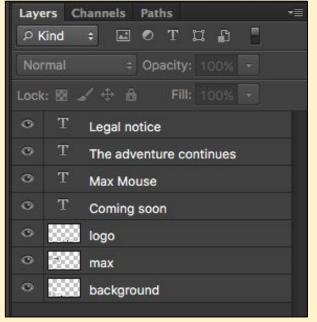
Image File Formats

You need to know about:

1. image file formats (these slides)

2. video and animation file formats

3. audio file formats

There is work on file formats in each of the portfolio units but you need to know this all for the exam.

Image File Formats

Photoshop (PSD):

Editing in Photoshop using layers. These allow you to build up an image in parts each of which can then be editing.

For example, you can change the text on a text layer or alter an image on an image layer.

This makes them good for editing.

But they can't be used without owning Photoshop, which makes them useless for use on websites.

Photoshop images are high quality and use layers to allow each part to be edited separately.

In theory you could send a final high quality image to a commercial printer using Photoshop format, but there's usually a better choice (TIFF or PDF)

Image File Formats

JPG:

JPG (or JPEG) are used for images such as photographs.

Each pixel can show one of 16.7 million colours.

The file is compressed which makes it smaller. This makes it a good choice for using on websites (load quickly) but means that the quality if lower (no good for commercial printing).

Only have one layer, so is harder to go back and make a change than Photoshop.

The individual pixels that make up a JPG image can use 16.7 million colours - which is enough to fool the human eye into believing it is seeing a real view. This is the tip of the gull's beak.

JPG images can't use transparency. For that you need to use PNG.
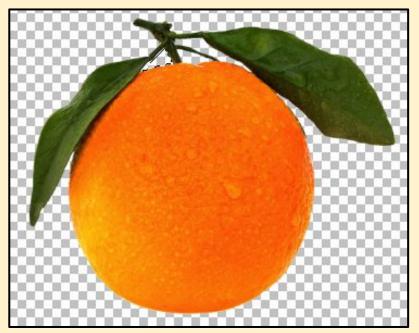
Image File Formats

PNG:

PNG images can use transparency. This makes then good for images such as logos.

Files are compressed and usually quite small. They can be used easily on websites.

The way PNG uses coloured pixels means that it's less good for photographs than JPG. The file size often ends up being bigger as well.

Only have one layer, so is harder to go back and make a change.

PNG can use transparency, which makes it ideal for using to build up a complex image in Photoshop.

Using a combination of JPG and PNG images in a Photoshop file is a good way to end up with a high quality final product.

Image File Formats

GIF:

GIF images use a much smaller set of colours.

They are the only simple image format that can be animated.

Files are compressed and usually quite small. They can be used easily on websites.

The way GIF uses colour means that the quality of the image is much lower.

Only have one layer, so is harder to go back and make a change.

GIFs are fine for simple images with limited colours such as logos. They can be made to animate and can use transparency.

GIF are great for small logos, especially for animated logos to use on websites. For anything else they're pretty much useless.

Image File Formats

TIFF:

TIFF images are very high quality.

This means they are good for sending as final versions to a commercial printer.

The file size is much larger because of the higher quality.

They are easier to view in a wide range of programs than Photoshop files which makes them useful for final versions.

Name	Type	Size
max_poster_final_print.tif	TIF File	6,681 KB
max_poster_final_web.jpg	JPEG image	393 KB
max_poster_v1.psd	Adobe Photoshop...	1,191 KB

TIFF files are high quality but much larger. This makes them ideal for commercial printing.
The JPG version of the same file would load much more quickly on a website.

Making in Photoshop and saving the final high quality version as a TIFF is a good way to end up with a really useful final product.
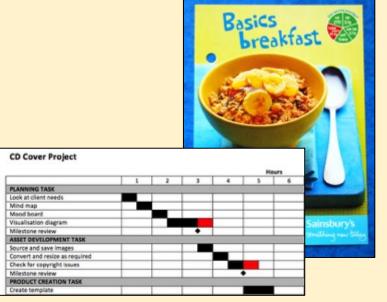
Image File Formats

PDF:

Photoshop files can be saved in PDF format.

These produce high quality images which can easily be sent to a commercial printer.

The format has the advantage that it is not necessary to have any software or any of the fonts used in the Photoshop version installed. This makes it very portable between computers.

Any office document can also be saved in PDF to use on a website.

PDF files are great for using on the web or for sending to other users. They can be used for images and many other types of file as well

This is a PDF file. It can be viewed easily in a web browser and you don't need to have any special fonts on your computer.

Image File Formats

Summary:

Use the right format for the right job

- JPG, GIF or PNG for the web

- GIF for animations

- TIFF or PDF for printers

- Photoshop (PSD) for editing layers

You might also know about BMP (bitmap) and Vector image formats (e.g. SVG). That's useful for a portfolio unit, but not essential for the exam.

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