

Understanding image resolution

Image resolution is measured in “dpi” (dots per inch).¹ The higher the dpi, the better the resolution (clarity, crispness) of the image.

Resolution changes according to the size at which the image is being reproduced. The resolution you need will vary, depending on how the image (photo or illustration) is to be used:

72 dpi Photos used for computer-based applications, such as Web sites and PowerPoint presentations. Not suitable for professional printing.

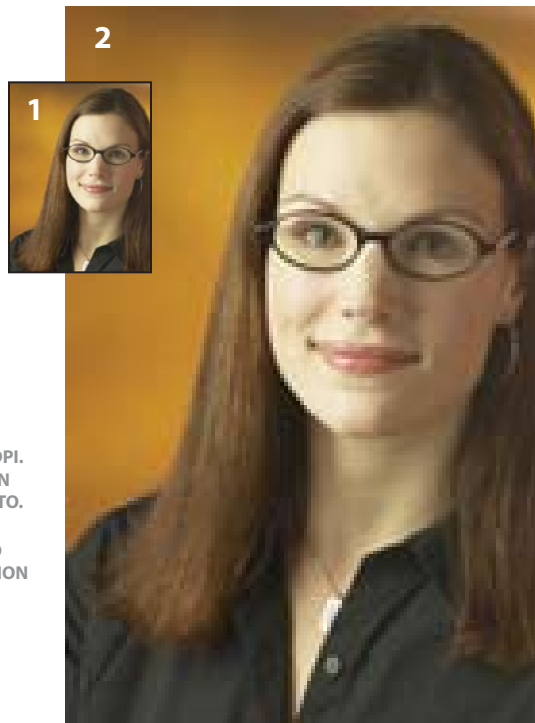
150 dpi Acceptable for use for some digital printing applications, such as inkjet/laser printers (e.g., for documents created with MS Word).

266 dpi Minimum acceptable resolution for professional printing (i.e., offset printing).

You can verify the resolution of an image with software such as Adobe PhotoShop and Microsoft Photo Editor.

When the physical size (dimensions) of a photo is increased, its resolution drops. The photo at left (above) is acceptable for professional printing when it is used at a smaller size. When the size is increased, the image becomes blurry/pixelated.

TIPS



Note: It is not possible to take a low-resolution, physically small image and transform it into a high-resolution, large image.

1 IMAGE IS 0.75" X 1"; 266 DPI. ACCEPTABLE RESOLUTION FOR PRINTING A SMALL PHOTO.

2 SAME IMAGE INCREASED TO 2.5" X 3.75"; RESOLUTION CHANGES TO 72 DPI (LOW RESOLUTION, SUITABLE FOR WEB OR PPT ONLY).

¹ Print resolution is measured in dpi. Screen resolution is measured in ppi (pixels per inch).

How to use Microsoft Photo Editor to check image resolution

Microsoft Photo Editor is a tool application that comes bundled with Microsoft Office XP. You can use this application to find out the resolution and dimensions of an image/photo.

If you are using Microsoft Office software, double-clicking on a photo file (such as a .jpg file) will usually open the image in Photo Editor. If it doesn't, you will need to locate Photo Editor, and open the photo from within the application.



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TIPS

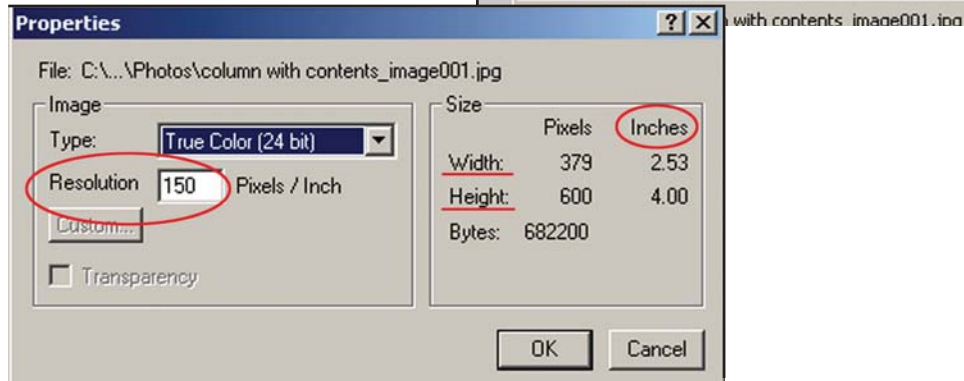
- 1 FIRST, IN PHOTO EDITOR, MAKE SURE YOUR MEASUREMENT UNITS ARE SET TO INCHES, AS SHOWN BELOW.



- 2 NEXT, OPEN THE IMAGE IN PHOTO EDITOR. THEN SELECT: FILE >> PROPERTIES



- 3 THE PROPERTIES BOX SHOWS YOU THE PHOTO'S CURRENT RESOLUTION AND ITS DIMENSIONS.



- 4 WHEN YOU ENTER A DIFFERENT RESOLUTION, THE SIZE OF THE IMAGE ALSO CHANGES. IN THIS EXAMPLE, INCREASING THE RESOLUTION TO 266 DROPS THE SIZE OF THE IMAGE TO 1.4" X 2.3"

