

The Adobe Photoshop 3.0 GIF89a Export Module

Welcome to the CompuServe® GIF89a Export module for Adobe Photoshop® 3.0.4—software that converts RGB and indexed color images to GIF (graphic interchange format) images. CompuServe GIF is the indexed color file format commonly used to display graphics and images in hyper-text markup language (HTML) documents over the World Wide Web.

With RGB images, the GIF Export module also lets you reduce the total number of colors in the image to create the smallest file and fastest display in your HTML document.

See the following topics for information on the GIF89a Export module:

[Installing the GIF89a Export Module](#)

[Exporting RGB Images to GIF](#)

[Exporting Indexed Color Images to GIF](#)

[Masking the Background of an Indexed Color Image](#)

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Installing the GIF89a Export Module

The GIF89a Export module is now available on the Adobe BBS, Adobe's World Wide Web Home Page, and Adobe forums on America OnlineSM and CompuServe in Adobe Applications/Photoshop. (The Adobe Home Page also lets you download documents on Adobe® products, customer service, training, technical subjects, and other topics.)

To install the GIF89a Export module:

1 Choose one of three options:

- Open the GIF89a folder on your Adobe Photoshop 3.0.5 CD-ROM disc.
- Connect to the World Wide Web using Netscape NavigatorTM or another Web browser, and use the URL **<http://www.adobe.com>** to open the Adobe Home Page.
- Locate the Adobe Home Page through Adobe forums on America Online and CompuServe, or via Adobe's ftp site on the Internet at **<ftp.adobe.com>**.

2 Copy the GIF89a plug-in to the Adobe Photoshop 3.0 Plug-ins folder.

Note: *The GIF89a plug-in module was designed to work with Adobe Photoshop version 3.0.4 or higher. To upgrade to the latest version, contact Adobe at 1-800-521-1976 or at 1-206-628-2749.*

3 Restart Photoshop.

Exporting RGB Images to GIF

When you export an RGB image to GIF, you can use layers in Adobe Photoshop to define what parts of the image you want to appear transparent. The GIF export module then lets you convert the image to indexed color, choose a transparency color for the Web browser, and save the image as a GIF file.

To export an RGB image to GIF:

- 1 Start Adobe Photoshop and open the RGB image you will export.
- 2 If you want to include only part of the image in your HTML document, select that part of the image and feather it if desired. Place the selection on a new, transparent layer, and hide the original layer.

Be sure to hide any layers you do not want to include in the GIF file. For example, if your image is on a white background, and you want the background to appear transparent, turn off the background layer.



Original



Feathered selection on transparent layer



3 Choose File > Export > GIF89a Export.

4 To select a transparency color, choose one of two options:

- To make transparent areas the same color as the Netscape browser window background, leave the Transparency Index Color box at the default color. The default color is Netscape gray, which is 192 R, 192 G, and 192 B.
- To change the transparency color, click the Transparency Index Color box, and choose a new color from the color picker. Click OK.

5 To choose an indexed color palette, select one of the following options:

- Choose Exact from the Palette menu if this option is not dimmed. This option is available only if the image contains 256 or fewer colors.
- Choose Adaptive from the Palette menu for the best results if the Exact option is unavailable. The Adaptive option creates a palette by sampling colors in the image. When multiple images are displayed simultaneously, the Netscape 1.1 or higher browser dynamically creates a color table using the adaptive palettes.
- Choose System from the Palette menu to create a color table using the computer's built-in color palette. Note that the System option may produce unexpected results when the image is displayed on an 8-bit monitor using a different built-in palette.





Original, 135K



Adaptive palette



System palette

- To select a custom palette that you have created in Adobe Photoshop, click the Load button, and locate and select a custom palette.

6 If you have chosen the Adaptive palette option, use the Colors text box or pop-up menu to select the smallest number of colors that retains the necessary detail in your image.



Note that the effect of reducing the number of colors on the file size will vary significantly with images of different dimensions and color content. In small-sized images, such as this example, the effect on file size is insignificant.



Adaptive palette, 256 colors, 36K



Adaptive palette, 128 colors, 27K



Adaptive palette, 64 colors, 23K



Adaptive palette, 32 colors, 18K



Note: You can reduce the number of colors in an image only when exporting an RGB image to GIF. To reduce the number of colors in an indexed color image, convert the image to RGB mode, and then export the image using the GIF module.

7 If you have not already done so, click Preview to see how the image will appear in the Web browser.



Previewed image

- To move the image within the preview window, select the hand tool and drag over the image. To fit all of the image in the window, double-click the hand tool.
- To increase the magnification, select the zoom-in tool and click or drag over the part of the image that you want to magnify. For a 1:1 preview, double-click the zoom tool.
- To reduce the magnification, hold down the Option key (Macintosh®) or the Alt key (Windows®) and click or drag.



Shortcuts: To select a zoom tool or to switch between the zoom tools as you work on the preview image, press Command (Macintosh) or Ctrl (Windows) to get the zoom-in tool; press Option (Macintosh) or Alt (Windows) to get the zoom-out tool. Press the spacebar to get the hand tool.

8 Click OK to close the preview window.

9 If dissatisfied with the results, hold down the Option key (Macintosh) or the Alt key (Windows), and click Reset to restore the colors in the image. Repeat steps 4 through 8 as needed.

10 To determine how the image displays as it is downloaded in the Web browser, choose one of two options:

- Keep the Interlaced option selected if you want the image to be displayed gradually as it is downloaded. This option displays increasingly higher resolution detail as an image is downloaded.
- Deselect the Interlaced option if you plan to use your image as a background or texture.

11 If the file contains a caption that you want to include as a comment in the GIF header, select the Export Caption option. For more information, see [Adding Caption Information](#).

12 Click OK to export the file. The suffix .gif is added automatically to the filename. Click Save.

Exporting Indexed Color Images to GIF

When you export an indexed color image to GIF, you use the GIF89a Export dialog box to choose transparency options for the GIF image. You can select more than one color to be transparent.

For the most control, however, you may want to convert your image to RGB, create transparency in Photoshop using layers, and then convert the RGB image to GIF. Creating transparency in RGB mode lets you feather transparent areas. Converting to RGB also lets you reduce the number of colors in an indexed color image. See [Exporting RGB Images to GIF](#) for more information.

To export an indexed color image to GIF:

1 Start Adobe Photoshop and open the indexed color image that you want to export.



2 Choose File > Export > GIF89a Export.



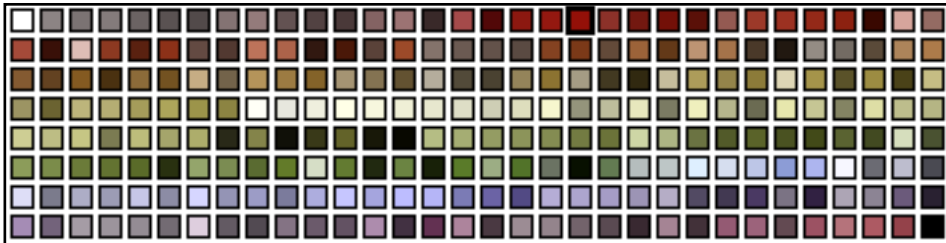
3 To select a transparency color, choose one of two options:

- To make transparent areas the same color as the browser window background, leave the Transparency Index Color box at its default. (The default is Netscape gray—192 R, 192 G, and 192 B.)
- To change the transparency color, click the preview image with the eyedropper-plus tool, and then click the Transparency Index Color box. Choose a new color from the Color Picker. Click OK.

Note: *If your background color is the same color as another element in the image and you want only the background to be transparent, you must create an alpha channel to mask the background. See [Masking the Background of an Indexed Color Image](#) for instructions.*



4 To select one or more colors to become transparent, click the eyedropper-plus, and then click the colors in the preview image. The selected colors appear highlighted in the swatches. Click to add additional colors.



5 To adjust the image preview:

- To move the image within the preview window, select the hand tool and drag over the image. To fit all of the image in the window, double-click the hand tool.
- To increase the magnification, select the zoom-in tool and click or drag over the part of the image that you want to magnify. For a 1:1 preview, double-click the zoom tool.



- To reduce the magnification, hold down the Option key (Macintosh) or the Alt key (Windows) and click or drag to reduce the image.

Shortcuts: *To select a zoom tool or to switch between the zoom tools as you work on the preview image, press Command+spacebar (Macintosh) or Ctrl+spacebar (Windows) to get the zoom-in tool; press Option+spacebar (Macintosh) or Alt+spacebar (Windows) to get the zoom-out tool. Press the spacebar to get the hand tool.*

6 If dissatisfied with the results, choose one of two options:

- To restore a single color in the image, hold down the Option key (Macintosh) or the Alt key (Windows) and click the eyedropper-plus tool to switch to the eyedropper-minus tool. Click a swatch to restore the color.

Shortcut: *To switch between the eyedropper-plus and -minus tools as you work in the preview image, press Command/Shift (Macintosh) or Ctrl/Shift (Windows).*

- To restore all colors in the image, hold down the Option key (Macintosh) or the Alt key (Windows), and click Reset. Repeat steps 3 and 4 as needed.

7 To determine how the image displays as it is downloaded in the Web browser, choose one of two options:

- Keep the Interlaced option selected if you want the image to be displayed gradually as it is downloaded. This option displays increasingly higher resolution detail as an image is downloaded.
- Deselect the Interlaced option if you plan to use your image as a background or texture.

8 If the file contains a caption that you want to include as a comment in the GIF header, select the Export Caption option. For more information, see [Adding Caption Information](#).

9 Click OK to export the file. The suffix .gif is added automatically to the filename. Click Save.

Masking the Background of an Indexed Color Image

If your background color is the same color as another element in the image and you want only the background to be transparent, you can use an alpha channel to mask the background. For example, if you have an image with a red background that you want to appear transparent, but with red details that you want to remain visible, you can use a channel mask.

Alternatively, you can convert the image to RGB mode, place the foreground selection on a new transparent layer, and turn off the background. Converting the image to RGB lets you [feather your selection](#) and to [reduce the number of colors in an adaptive palette image](#) when you convert the image to GIF. See [Exporting RGB Images to GIF](#) for more information.

To mask the background of an indexed color image:

- 1 Start Adobe Photoshop, and open the indexed color file you will export.
- 2 Select the foreground or image area that you want to remain visible. (In this example, we selected the background, and then inverted the selection.)
- 3 Using the Channels palette, click the selection icon at the bottom of the palette to save the selection in a channel.



Original



Selection saved in a channel



4 Choose File > Export > GIF89a Export.

5 Using the Transparency From pop-up menu, select the channel that you want to use.

Transparency From: ☒ Selected Colors
#2



Image masked by channel

Shortcut: To invert what will be transparent in the image, hold down the Option key (Macintosh) or the Alt key (Windows) as you select the channel.

6 Choose additional export options as described in [steps 4 through 9](#) of the procedure to export an indexed color image to GIF.

7 Click OK to export the file. The suffix .gif is added automatically to the file-name. Click Save.

Adding Caption Information

You can add caption information to your GIF file in Adobe Photoshop that an information catalog or a database application such as Adobe Fetch® can use to index and search for the GIF file. The caption is indexed as a comment in the GIF file header. See your application's documentation for more information on indexing GIF files.

To add caption information to your Adobe Photoshop image:

- 1** In Adobe Photoshop, open your RGB or indexed color file.
- 2** Choose File > File Info.
- 3** Enter a caption in the Caption text box. Useful information includes descriptive keywords for the photo elements, and copyright information. Information outside of the Caption text box (such as keywords or credits) isn't kept by the GIF plug-in when you export the file.
- 4** Click OK.
- 5** Save your file. This adds the caption information to the file header.
- 6** Export the file as described in [Exporting RGB Images to GIF](#) and [Exporting Indexed Color Images to GIF](#).

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