Language Arts
Photo Submission Guidelines
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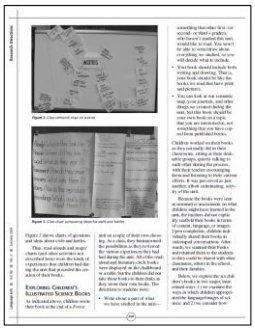
What do I send?
Is my picture big enough? What does that mean?
How do I check size on an Apple computer?
How do I check size on a Windows computer?
Can I find a bigger version of my picture?
Can I create a bigger version of my picture?
Understanding digital images….
I want to learn more!



Can I send a picture?
Of course! Images of and by writers add interest and detail to manuscripts. Photo essays must include black and white photographs printed on glossy paper.
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What do I send?
We can accept any common digital photo file format, including .jpg, .png, .tif, .psd.
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***Is my picture big enough? And what does that* mean?**
Pictures must be of a quality high enough for printing at full size. The largest picture we might print would be for the cover; Others would be smaller. What we *need* is 300 pixels per inch ('ppi' or 'dpi') at 8" x 8." (20 cm x 20 cm). Rule of thumb: note the resolution, divide by 300 (dpi) and you'll get the approximate maximum image size in inches. To be published 8" x 8" an image should start out at 2400 x 2400 dpi.
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How do I check size on an Apple computer?
Locate the picture file. Press and hold the Ctrl button. From the menu select GET INFO. A box should appear. In the 'General' section it will give 'Size.' This refers to the size of the image file on disk. In the section marked 'More Info' it will read "Dimensions: X x Y." The dimensions are in pixels.
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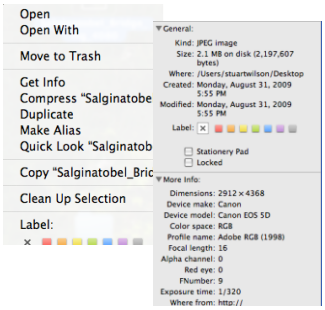
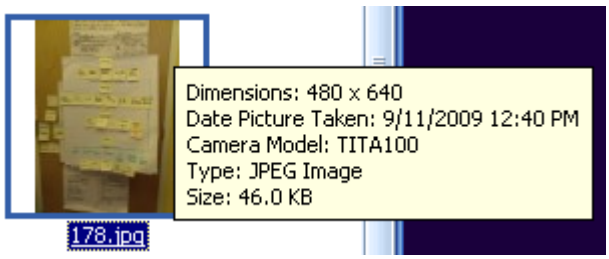


How do I check size on a Windows computer?

Method 1: Locate the picture file. Hover the cursor over the file name. A box should appear that says "Dimensions: X x Y." The dimensions are in pixels. 'Size:' refers to the size of the image file on disk.



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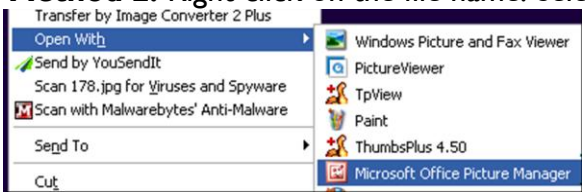
Method 2: Right-click on the file name. Select OPEN WITH then locate and click on Microsoft Office Picture Manager. (You MAY have to CHOOSE PROGRAM first and then find and click Picture Manager. Also in older Windows versions this may simply be called Picture Manger.) When the picture file opens, open the FILE menu item, then PROPERTIES. Again, "Dimensions: X x Y." defines pixels of width and height. 'Size:' refers to the size of the image file on disk.



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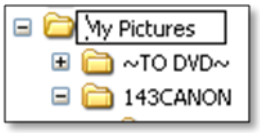
Can I find a bigger version of my picture?

The camera-original picture is the highest quality possible. Each camera and related software stores them differently. Find out where your camera-original file is stored. THAT is the file we need a copy from, but PROTECT THAT FILE!!! Make a copy of it before doing *anything* else. Always work on a COPY of the camera original file!



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Understanding digital images….

First, know that these concepts have confused even the best photographers so if you're working hard to understand them, you're in good company!

There are many words used to describe the 'size' of an image when it's associated with a computer. Conceptually, these have to do with:

1. *How much information is included in a picture file?*
2. *How do we squash the computer file to store it efficiently?*
3. *How much information is needed/shown by the viewing medium (computer screen, TV, printed page, etc)?*

1. *How much information is included in a file?* This is 'resolution' and is measured in pixels (picture elements). An image 2048 x 1536 pixels is considered a 3.1 megapixel image.

   The moment you click the shutter, the maximum resolution is set. Once you take a picture, it can NEVER get any better in quality. You can resample the image later to make it 'larger,' but what the camera 'saw' will never get any more detailed. And once you 'squash' the size of an image file for storage, you can NEVER make that file larger without degrading if.

   The size of the sensor in a camera is the primary factor in file resolution. A cel phone camera may have a sensor of 1 or 2 'megapixels' (thousand picture elements) in size. A better camera might shoot anywhere from 3MP and on up. Professional cameras use 8MP and larger sensors. The more pixels a camera contains, the larger the fine-detailed pictures it *can* eventually produce.

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When you set up your camera (even on a cel phone) you may have choices about what size files to save. If you compare files of the same type, smaller ones make poorer quality pictures.

You may not need great quality for snapshots of giving the dog a bath, but when taking 'important' pictures, set up your camera to save the highest quality images possible. This will also make the biggest files.

2. *How small can we squash the computer file size?*
This is 'file compression' and that's why there are so many different file formats! .jpg, .png, .tif, .psd, (and dozens more) all compact and store picture information differently. Each scheme is a compromise between file size, quality retained, and how the image can be altered later.

You may have noticed a blocky, pixilated appearance in some pictures. This is usually related to too much compression.

How you set up your camera before taking pictures affects compression. With each step down in file size you also lose quality.

You may also be adding compression or changing size (each deteriorates quality) when you view, alter, save pictures. Be sure to always save *at the original resolution* if you want to keep the picture quality as high as it began.

WARNING: Some software will automatically downsize pictures before emailing them. While that's a good when emailing that dog-wash picture to Aunt Evelyn, if someone intends on printing the image they need higher resolution.

We need plenty of detail to publish. Do not send a file smaller than the original!

3. *How much information is needed in the viewing medium (computer screen, TV, printed page)?*

Computer monitors generally show (and need) fairly few pixels per inch or pixel density[i]. Most work in arrange of 72 to 96 ppi. If someone will only ever see images on the average computer, they don't need to be very 'large.'

(You may have noticed screen resolution settings like these. On a notebook computer display of 15.4," 1280 pixels x 800 pixels = 98ppi[ii].)

On the other hand, high quality printing can use images with much finer detail. To print them, the computer image file must be a much higher resolution than is needed for a computer screen.

A picture that appears perfectly fine on the internet might be as small as 300 x 200 pixels, but that's too small for Language Arts to print that picture.

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If you'd like to know *even more*, see the last page for links.
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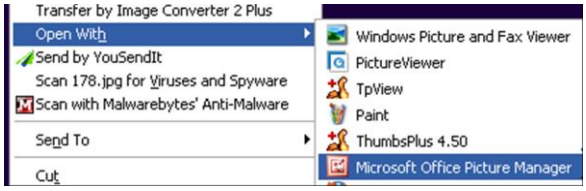
Can I create a bigger version of my picture? Maybe.

RESAMPLING[iii] changes the number of pixels when you enlarge or reduce a picture. Software creates new pixels by interpolating between the originals. If the change you make isn't *too* drastic, the results *may* be acceptable.

ALWAYS make a copy of your original image before trying any changes. (I usually add a suffix -1, -2 after the original file name for clarity).

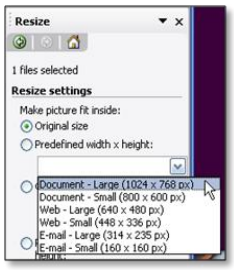
If you'd like to try, and have a PC running Microsoft Office, there is a tool called Picture Manager that does a decent job, simply.

Right-click on the image file. Select OPEN WITH then locate and click on Microsoft Office Picture Manager. (You MAY have to CHOOSE PROGRAM first and then find and click Picture Manager. Also in older software versions this may simply be called Picture Manger.)



When the picture file opens, open the PICTURE menu item, then RESIZE.

In Resize Settings menu, choose DOCUMENT-LARGE (1024x768). Use FILE, SAVE AS and ***be sure you're saving a copy of the original image.***



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I want to learn more!

There are many internet resources on this. Here are a few.

Image resolution, size and compression
A clear, concise explanation
http://www.microscope-microscope.org/imaging/image-resolution.htm

Understanding image resolution
ALL the details
http://designer-info.com/Writing/image_resolution.htm

How to Scan and Enlarge a Photo
Step 1, step 2, step 3
http://www.ehow.com/how_4424403_scan-enlarge-photo.html

Changing image resolution in Photoshop Elements
Software-specific
http://akvis.com/en/photoshop-tips/resolution-elements.php
http://www.photokaboom.com/photography/learn/Photoshop_Elements/change_size/1_change_size_introduction.htm

[i] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pixels_per_inch
[ii] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_displays_by_pixel_density
[iii] http://graphicssoft.about.com/od/resolution/a/realproblem.htm

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