



PICTURES AND STORIES

YOUR LIFE. IN A BOOK.™

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THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF ARCHIVES.

Sometimes papyrus
is all you need.

BUT OTHER TIMES, YOU
NEED GOLD PLATES.

Make sure you know the
difference when it comes
to your digital photos.

Five “Musts” to Digitize Your Photos the *Right* Way

WHO

Alison Taylor is the Creative Director of Pictures and Stories, Inc., which since 1995 has been helping people write and produce personal and family histories. She is co-author of the book “How to Save Your Life, One Chapter at aTime.”

WHAT

Confused by pixels, resolution, file formats, compression? You’re not alone. Learn in simple terms what these things mean and why they are important. Learn how scan, store, and send digital photos to get the best results for printing and web use. Photos are your history—don’t let them get away!

*“I’m confident that my digital files will live forever!”
—said no one ever.*

THE FIVE FUNDAMENTALS

1. SCAN ONCE, SCAN HIGH

Make a quality digital “negative” by scanning at high resolution (at least 300 pixels per inch).

2. GET YOUR PHOTOS IN A TIFF

Learn which file format is appropriate for which purpose—and why .tif is the best for creating a digital negative

3. DON’T SMASH YOUR PIXELS

Why jpegs are good for screens—and lousy for everything else. Learn how to use jpegs safely and when to avoid them.

4. NO MORE LOST SOULS

What a beautiful photo—wish I knew who it was! Create tags and captions that will travel with your digital files.

5. SAVE IT, SHARE IT, OR LOSE IT

Apathy is the dust and mold of the digital generation. Learn how to save, store, and share your files so they will live forever.

DITIGAL PHOTO GLOSSARY

RESOLUTION: the *quantity* of pixels in a digital photo.

COMPRESSION: the *quality* of pixels in a digital photo.

FILE FORMAT: what comes after the dot determines how that file behaves and what it can be used for.

METADATA: Secret words that live inside your digital photo. You can add words too—captions, copyright info, even stories—that will travel along with your digital file.

BACKUP: what foolish people don’t do. Redundancy will ensure your files live a long and healthy life. The more you share, the better chance your digital photo has of survival into the future.



the FUNNEL

METHOD FOR SCANNING PHOTOS

START BIG

1. Scan TIF format
2. Minimum 300 ppi (higher if you will enlarge or crop)
3. At least 3600 ppi for scanning slides/negs
4. Make edits/corrections to large file



USE LARGER
FILES FOR
BOOKS
OR PRINTS

MAKE JPEG COPIES



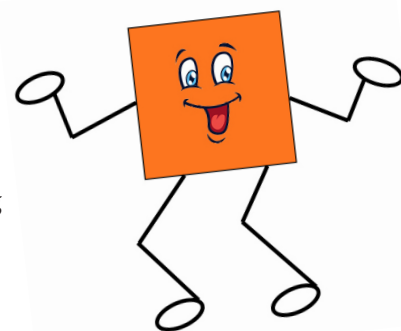
COPY AS JPEG
72-96 PPI
USE SMALLER FILES
FOR WEB



UPLOAD

DON'T FORGET...

- Scan at print resolution (300-600 pixels per inch)
- Scan as .TIF if possible
- If you must scan as a JPEG, scan at highest quality (least compression)
- Don't edit and re-save JPEGs. Doing so will compress and degrade the photo further each time it is saved.
- Wipe dust from scanner and photo before each scan
- Slides and negatives need to be scanned at a higher resolution. 35mm slides should be scanned at 3600 ppi.
- Keep original TIF scans as your "gold-plate-standard" digital negatives and make JPEG "papyrus" copies for distribution on the web. (See "Funnel Method" infographic at left.)
- Look at the resolution and compression settings on your digital camera as well. It's not worth ending up with low-quality compressed photos just to squeeze a few more vacay photos onto that flash card.
- Backup, backup, backup! Mix it up—cloud storage, disc media, card media, social media, flash drives, and even (especially) hard paper copies. Redundancy is the key to long life.
- Once pixels are gone, you can't get them back.
- Using Photoshop to make a low-res file into a high-res file is possible, but, like putting lipstick on a pig, it won't really help it look better!



Keep your pixels happy!

WANT TO LEARN MORE?



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We publish several how-to articles a month and no spam!

Or call us at 801-906-0609 Tom and Alison Taylor

