

# The Etsy IMAGE GUIDE

## Q & As



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# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Print this out so you can have it handy!

After I sent the Guide to my wonderful beta readers, they asked such great questions and made such great comments that went beyond what I'd already written that I wanted to make sure you saw them.

Unfortunately, the book was already all constructed, so I couldn't fit them in without changing every last bit of the book.

Some were written by complete Etsy newbies, others by people not familiar with using apps to modify images, some were asked by artists not even on Etsy - regular people, not experts. They asked great questions that I figured would help you, too. So here they are.

**"I DO TOO MUCH WORK!"**

**Q:** "I produce a painting a day when I'm in full swing ... how should that kind of person go about filing his images ... because to resize all of them is I think too much work ...

**A:** I do a lot of paintings, too - there are days that I make 4 or 5 of them. So I usually wait until the next day to shoot my photos of them so my eye is fresh.

Later on that day, after I've painted or done whatever, I sit down and import my pix to my computer, and go through them one at a time, making all the sizes. I've gotten it down so I can make a copy and do all the different sizes in about ten minutes. You'll get that fast, too.

Because I'm so prolific, if I get behind, I really, really regret it! I have made it part of my routine to do the image work, because if I don't, I get too busy, and then feel overwhelmed because I've gotten behind.

The shoot-download-and-modify-images thing is just part of my day, like brushing my teeth. You need to make it that way, or you won't be ready for opportunities that come up. Remember Anne?

## SHARING WORK

**Q:** "Presently I take a photo of my work with my smartphone, then post to Instagram, and from there I post it to every other social media site.

I'm probably not the only one - would you recommend against this? Because it is so easy to do and there is a feeling that you're sharing your work and getting it out there...."

**A:** I think it's great that you share your work. It's important to get your work out there. AND - now that you have read the Guide, you know that you need to protect your images.

1. The first thing I'd do before sharing the image would be to download it to my computer, unsullied or edited.
2. Then, back on my phone, I'd use one of the logo or © apps to mark my image. Only then would I share.

I know, one more step! But I don't want you to regret not doing those things the way I did when I found someone had stolen my images. Believe me, it really sucks.

There's one more consideration to think about. I make coffee table books of art - both my own and others'.

As such, I need images that are 300 dpi, and at least 2700 px wide. If you mark your pic and share it, you can't download it without that mark. What will you do if you want me to make a book from your images? I won't be able to. You lose.

It's well worth the few minutes it takes to really care for your images. Don't be in such a rush - think long-term. After all, they are not only your income, but also your legacy.

## WATERMARK

**Q:** "I feel that if I use a watermark or copyright line like you talk about, it will massively reduce the chance of selling my work, especially if I put it in one of the best parts of the painting. Is this a false fear? Doesn't it spoil the work?"

It would be great if I could put some sort of mark on my painting that would stop it from being copied and reused by somebody else, but at the same time wouldn't be too obvious.

Maybe I could put my name on the image in such a way that it made it no good for copying, but would also have people looking for it because it was sort of hidden because I had the text going up vertically next to a building or something..."

**A.** If you have your name in a plain area on your image, it's super easy to remove it in Photoshop. I know - I've done it with my own. If you have it overlying a complex area, it's harder to remove smoothly.

Your mark, placed well, will not detract from sales. After all, we've all seen it - when a person loves a piece of art or a product they feel they must have, just about nothing can keep them from it! I've had people pay their last dollar for my sculptures, or their carefully stashed rent money!

So no, I don't believe it will hurt your sales. Especially if you remind people somewhere that the mark is not on the original.

Yes, you could semi-hide it. Sometimes I like to add my marks and fade the line out 60 or 70%. That way it's even harder to remove, and it doesn't look as glaringly out of synch with the art.

**Check out how tastefully** my friend Anita Nowinska adds her marks on the next page.



**This whole subject** reminds me of a famous artist named Al Hirschfeld. He was known for hiding his daughter Nina's name, written in capital letters ("NINA"), in most of the drawings he produced after her birth. The name would appear in a sleeve, in a hairdo, or somewhere in the background.

You might want to do something like that, that would serve to make your drawings/art/images unique!

## PINTEREST

**Q:** “You said that 735 px was the best for Pinterest ... I make my website images 750 px wide. Would 750 be okay to use for Pinterest as well as my website?”

**A:** Go ahead! Break the mold! Use 750 px wide on Pinterest and see what happens - it's not that much bigger than 735. If you try it and it doesn't work - guess what you need to do!

## PDFs & POD

**Q:** “I'm personally finding the pdf thing confusing. I now understand why you use them rather than jpgs, security wise. But do you use pdfs for your POD (print on demand) files too? My work is generally not in the print industry so I feel like I'm missing something.

**A:** The only time I use pdfs is when I want to be able to give someone a file without them being about to change it.

It's OK to upload a jpg or png to print on demand sites, because that file isn't being accessed by your customer. There is no worry that they will rip it off.

If you have a downloadable digital card, art print, calligraphic artwork, or something people will download and print off, that's when you'd use a pdf.

## ETSY RUINS MY PHOTOS!

**Q:** “I’m not selling downloadable files or prints - I sell POD items. One of the biggest issues I deal with in listings is the way Etsy reads my images.

My color-changing mugs have multiple layers, which Etsy reads as black or gray. The files must be flattened out, and for me, PowerPoint is the quickest way to achieve it.

I found that I have to change my png files to jpgs in order to have them turn out properly. This adds several extra steps to the creating listings.

For instance, I open my png in PowerPoint, stretch the image as much as I can to fill the slide, then save as a jpg, then upload to Etsy. It is 100% an Etsy issue, but I still have to work around it to make the listing viable.

**A:** I’d never heard of that problem! Nor have I heard of anyone using PowerPoint like that! It’s pretty clever. Actually, the way you are doing it is the same way I insert a photo into Open Office, but I export the image as a pdf.

So - if it works for you, do it! For me, I’d just open the image in Photoshop, go to Image > Image Size to resize it, flatten the file, and save as jpg.

You’ve found a clever way to get around the problem. If it takes you less time than using Photoshop, why change?



## CATEGORIZING YOUR WORK

**Q:** “Angela, I’ve used the icon way forever, but I want to start using the lists and categorizing system, and I want to include where I live like you do. How do you do it?”

**A:** First, I make a folder with the name of the town where I’m living at the time, and the year - like:

**KAILUA 2009**

**KAILUA 2010**

**KAILUA 2011**

and so on.

Within each folder, I name the category folders the same way, named by my types of work - painting - watercolors, oil and acrylic, sculpture - stone, bronze - like that.

So here’s an example of how the progression of files can look:

**KAILUA 2018 > WATERCOLORS > TREES > RedPath.jpg, or**

**KAILUA 2018 > SCULPTURE > TheSecret.jpg**

Here’s a shot of some files within my **WATERCOLORS** folder:



## HANDY NAMES

**Q:** “I love your idea about using a list rather than icons, but how do you not make the title too long? For instance I often do a series - and then I can’t remember the image name.

Can I name them something like rickshaw1, rickshaw2 ... just wondering ... others might have the same problem of keeping a short but memorable title ... ”

**A:** Yes! Use that same way of naming, that’s fine.

Sometimes I have long titles, like *Sunset Along the Seine*, so I shorten it and use **SEINE-1.jpg**. I make a note of what the long title is in my list of originals (yes, another list!), along with its shortened name.

I never use numbers to name my pieces - who the heck knows what piece **4089** is, even a week later?

I don’t use dates to name either, for the same reason. Who knows that I did on May 28th, 2014? So **052814-1.jpg** sure wouldn’t work for me!

I put real names on them, and then stash them in **place-year > category > file.jpg**.

For instance, I’d name a series like this: **title-1, title-2** and so on, like **Red-Path-1, Red-Path-2** etc.

That would look like this:

**KAILUA-2018 > WATERCOLORS > TREES > Red-Path-1.jpg**

**KAILUA-2018 > WATERCOLORS > TREES > Red-Path-2.jpg**

**KAILUA-2018 > WATERCOLORS > TREES > Red-Path-3.jpg**

## MORE ABOUT FILE TYPES

For those who question what file type names mean, and what those types are and do, here are some short explanations of file types. These will help you understand what kinds of files to use online - or not.

### PNG vs JPG?

“PNG” Some say it like ‘Pee eN Gee’, but “it is properly pronounced ‘ping’ as in ping-pong.

PNG stands for Portable Network Graphics. It is a file format for lossless image compression, whereas a JPG file is a lossy file, as I explained in the Guide.

PNG files are commonly used to make graphics for web images. PNG was created as an improved, non-patented replacement for Graphics Interchange Format (GIF), and is the most widely used lossless image compression format on the Internet.

PNG is a good choice for storing line drawings, text, and iconic graphics at a small file size. JPG format is a lossy compressed file format. This makes it useful for storing photographs at a smaller size.”

Please see this article for more info:

[LabNol.org/software/tutorials/jpeg-vs-png-image-quality-or-bandwidth/5385](http://LabNol.org/software/tutorials/jpeg-vs-png-image-quality-or-bandwidth/5385)

“The main difference between JPG files and PNG files is the compression algorithms that they use: JPG uses a lossy compression algorithm that discards some of the image information in order to reduce the size of the file.

With PNG, the quality of the image will not change, but the size of the file will usually be larger than a JPG.”

Please see this article for more info:

[DifferenceBetween.net/technology/protocols-formats/difference-between-jpg-and-png](http://DifferenceBetween.net/technology/protocols-formats/difference-between-jpg-and-png)

I always change PNG files to JPG files. The size of a file (in MB or KB, not inches or pixels) is significantly smaller once converted. This saves upload time, and loading speed for the viewer.

For instance, I saved the file of Anita’s painting as a JPG - it is 1.3 MB. I then saved a copy as a PNG - it is 2.9 MB. That’s a huge difference!

## WHAT ARE TIFF FILES?

TIFF stands for Tagged Image File Format, abbreviated TIFF or TIF.

**A TIFF is a computer file format for** storing raster graphics images, popular among graphic artists, the publishing industry, and photographers. The format was created by Aldus Corporation for use in desktop publishing.

TIFF files use lossless compression to maintain image integrity and clarity and are often used for professional photography.

## WHATE IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A JPEG and A TIFF?

**TIFF files are significantly larger** than JPEGs, and can be either uncompressed or compressed using lossless compression.

## WHY NOT USE TIFFS ONLINE?

**“A TIF is a large file** that doesn’t lose quality; it is usually used when saving photographs for print. Don’t use this file on the web; it will take forever to load!”

Please see this article for more info:

[Blog.Hubspot.com/insiders/different-types-of-image-files](http://Blog.Hubspot.com/insiders/different-types-of-image-files)

## WHAT IS A PSD FILE?

**“PSDs (Photo Shop Document)** are files that are created and saved in Adobe Photoshop ... This type of file contains “layers” that make modifying the image much easier to handle.”

Don't use a PSD file online.

Please see [this article](#) for more info:

[Blog.Hubspot.com/insiders/different-types-of-image-files](http://Blog.Hubspot.com/insiders/different-types-of-image-files)

## WORK ON MY PHONE?

I'm a stickler for quality. So I don't bother to try and work on files on my phone, because the image size is too small to really see well. I suggest that all the work you do for your images be done on your computer, too!

## MY STORAGE CAPACITY IS FULL!

Here's something I learned the very, very, heart-breakingly, horribly hard way: never keep anything on your computer's hard drive.

One miserably unhappy day about ten years ago, my computer died. That was it, done, crapped out, dead.

You can imagine how totally freaked out I was! You know the kind - you sit there in complete disbelief for a few seconds, until you finally can breathe again. Then you try every last thing you know to turn it back on. Reboot. Access files. But nada. Nothing.

Then you scream. And again, louder. And cry...

It was ugly. I thought I had lost every last thing I'd done for the last few decades.

But I was so lucky to have a computer guy who finally was able to retrieve all my files.

He said, "Angela, get thee to the mac store and get thyself an external hard drive. Never let me see this happen to you again!"

I did, and he didn't.

**So. I say to you:** "Get thee to thy computer store and get thyself a good external hard drive with tons of space. Don't cheap out - it won't be worth it."

Connect that external hard drive to your computer - all it takes is a USB cord.

Take every last file you have and transfer it all to the external.

If you have a lot of files, do it bit by bit. Mine took three days. It was so worth it when my next computer died a few years later. All I had to do was disconnect the USB and plug it into my new one. No more weeping, wailing, gnashing of teeth or screaming tears.

And for goodness sake, do back it up at least once a week to another hard drive! You can put that on automatic so you don't have to pay attention to it.

**Do it now.**