

# Fundamental Photoshop

Little things make a big difference when working in Photoshop

■ BY BEN WILLMORE

What the heck was Adobe thinking of when they decided to give us five ways to save our images? Let's see, there's plain old Save, Save As, Save A Copy, Export, and in *Photoshop 5.5*, they added Save for Web. Let's assume there wouldn't be five choices if there wasn't five good reasons for all these options. So, with an open mind, let's take a look at our choices, one at a time.

## Save

Save is used to just save the changes you have made since last opening your file. It uses the same file name, same location on your hard drive, and the same file format as the original. Save will be grayed-out whenever you have just opened a file and haven't made any changes, because the saved version is the same as what you are working on.

## Save As

Used when you would like to change the file name, location, or file format. This dialog box is also used when you add a layer to a file that was saved in any file format other than Photoshop's native .psd format. This happens because Photoshop is the only file format that can recognize and/or save layers, and it is attempting to warn you that the format will change.

## Save A Copy

Save a Copy can do a lot more than the first two choices. Save A Copy will automatically flatten all the layers in your document if you choose a file format that does not support them (anything other than Photoshop's native .psd format). It will also discard Alpha

channels (saved selections) if you pick a format that doesn't support them. It also offers a checkbox called "Exclude Non-Image Data" that strips all unnecessary info from a file that will be used for the web (resolution setting, preview thumbnails, etc.). Also, Save A Copy works with a duplicate of the image, leaving the original untouched on-screen.

## Save for Web

A new choice, that is only available in Photoshop 5.5, allows you to do the following: pick from GIF, JPEG and PNG formats; change the image dimensions; reduce the number of colors in the image (Indexed Color); and preview JPEG images before saving them. It also indicates the final file size and how long it would take to download with different speed modems.

## Export

This used to be a popular choice for saving images for the Web, because it offered a special version of the GIF format known as GIF 89a. Photoshop 5.5's new Save for Web feature replaces this choice for the Web with a much more robust way of saving GIF files. Export is still used for unusual purposes, like saving a path that was made with the Pen tool in the Illustrator format. I'd say that the majority of Photoshop users can stay away from this choice, and you won't miss a thing.

Now that we've looked at our options, let me tell you how I deal with all this stuff. If I'm not quite done working on an image, and I'm not ready to load it into my page layout program or HTML generator, then I'll try plain old Save and

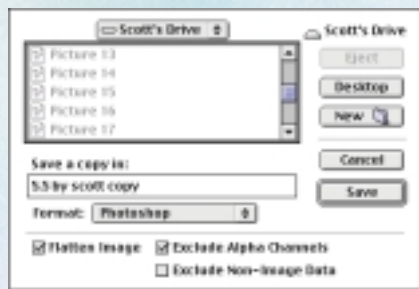
use Photoshop file format (.psd—the only one that supports layers and all the other great features in Photoshop).

Once I have my image close to a final stage, and I want to try it out in my page layout program, I'll choose Save A Copy and use the TIFF or EPS file formats. I prefer to use TIFF files because they are smaller and look better when printing to a non- postscript printer.

I use EPS when I need a feature that is not available in the TIFF format, including saving a Duotone or an image that contains Spot Channels (DCS 2.0 is really part of the EPS format); not wanting someone to be able to change the brightness/contrast in a page layout program because they will mess it up; needing to separate my CMYK file into a 5 file DCS file (some people need to—if you don't know what this means, then you obviously don't need it); or when I need a clipping path, and I know that the person doing the page layout is not using the most current version of the layout program.

If I'm using the image for the Web, then I'll choose Save for Web and use either a GIF or JPEG file. GIFs are best for images that have solid areas of color, like logos and graphics. JPEGs are best for photographic images that contain lots of detail. ■

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The Save a Copy dialog gives you more options



zip



zero



zilch



nil



nothin'



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