

# Fundamental Photoshop

Little things make a big difference when working in Photoshop

■ BY BEN WILLMORE

**A**t my seminars, I'm constantly being asked the same questions. Which file format is better for print publishing—TIFF or EPS? There are arguments for both sides, but, I personally prefer TIFF files. On this page I'll further explain the reasons why.

## REASON ONE:

They are always smaller than EPS files (EPS contains not only the info needed to print but also a preview of what the image looks like).

## REASON TWO:

TIFF files look better on-screen in my page layout program because they are not limited to a 256-color preview.

## REASON THREE:

TIFF files print better to non-PostScript printers (EPS files only print a low-resolution preview which can look terrible).

## REASON FOUR:

TIFF files are adjustable in page layout programs (change brightness, contrast, assign color to a B&W image, etc.)

## REASON FIVE:

TIFF files can contain saved selections (also known as Alpha channels) and EPS files cannot.

## REASON SIX:

TIFF files *can* contain clipping paths as long as you are using PageMaker 6.5 or Quark 4.0 (this used to be a big advantage with the EPS file format, but now TIFF can handle them as well).

## REASON SEVEN:

The TIFF format offers LZW compression, which does not degrade the quality of your image (loss-less compression). LZW is mainly useful on images that contain solid areas of color, like text and screen shots.

## REASON EIGHT:

TIFF files give you more predictable

results when using color management with ICC profiles.

## REASON NINE:

If you crop a TIFF file in your page layout program it often prints faster than a cropped EPS file.

So when do I use EPS files? Well, I use them when I need a feature that is not available in the TIFF format including the following:

## REASON ONE:

I'm saving a Duotone.

## REASON TWO:

I'm saving an image that contains Spot channels (DCS 2.0 file format is really a special version of the EPS format).

## REASON THREE:

I want to "lock in" the LPI or screen angle settings. But beware, some output devices seem to override this setting.

## REASON FOUR:

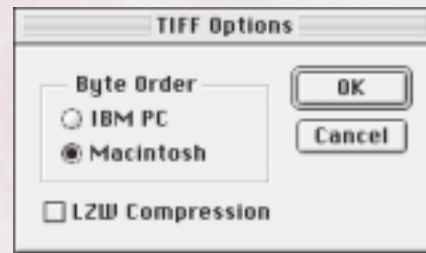
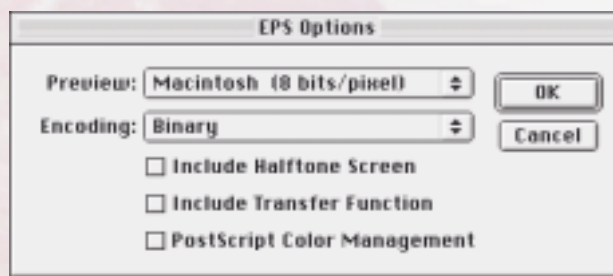
I don't want anyone to be able to change the brightness/contrast in a page layout program, because I might not like the changes.

## REASON FIVE:

I need to separate my CMYK file into a 5 file DCS file (to split a poster-sized image into multiple files, so they can fit on zip cartridges).

## REASON SIX:

I need a clipping path and the person doing the layout is not using the most



current version of their page layout program.

I hope this gives you a better understanding of why I prefer TIFF for the majority of my jobs. But you should know that there is absolutely nothing wrong with using an EPS file. The image should look identical to a TIFF file when printed as color separations. So, if EPS files are what you are used to, I'd only switch to TIFF if the advantages listed in this article were compelling to you. And, if you are planning on changing your workflow, please let your service bureau or printing company know, so they can inform you of any problems they might encounter with your files. ■

*Ben Willmore is the founder of Digital Mastery, a training company that presents the national seminar tour of "Master Photoshop in 3 Days." Ben provides hundreds of free Photoshop tips on his Web site [www.digitalmastery.com](http://www.digitalmastery.com).*



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