

HOW TO OPTIMIZE GIF IMAGES

GIF (Graphic Interchange Format) is a graphic file format best used for images with large areas of solid flat color, such as simple illustrations, logos, and text. With Macromedia Fireworks MX, you can compare different versions of the same graphic to create the best quality with the smallest file size. Before optimizing, complete the graphic (size, effects, color, and design).

Optimize a GIF Image

1. Open a completed graphic in Macromedia Fireworks MX.
2. On the Optimize panel, choose **GIF** from the Export file format drop-down menu. Then choose the type of GIF you want from the Indexed Palette drop-down menu. WebSnap Adaptive (Windows) or Adaptive (Macintosh) is best for most small Web images.
3. Select the **4-Up** tab to compare different versions of the image. Make sure the image is visible. (If necessary, use the **Hand** tool to drag the image into the middle of the display area.)



4. Use the **Pointer** tool to select each of the three alternate versions of the original image in turn, and try different settings on the Optimize panel to find the smallest file size with the most acceptable quality:
 - To adjust the image for many color gradations, increase the Dither setting.
 - To make the file smaller, increase Loss (usually between 5 and 15).
 - To remove the background color or halos around the image, select **Index Transparency**.
 - To remove specific colors from the image, use the **Add color to transparency** button. This capability is a key advantage of exporting images as GIFs.

As you try different settings, note the file size and download time for each quality level.

5. To export the image version you prefer, click it and choose **File > Export**. Name the file with a .gif extension.
6. To also save the richest version of the file, choose **File > Save** to save the image as a Macromedia Fireworks PNG file (with a .png extension).