

Tips to Resize Your Photos for N4C Digital Slide Contests

SCOPE:

This paper is not a set of rules. It is a quick attempt to help entrants deal with some of the technical details of submitting entries to their best advantage. To some this will be very basic. I invite input from others and help adding instructions for other software packages. I would like to continue to add and develop this document to help all of us present our photography as favorably as possible. *Ken Johnson* web@n4c.us.

OBJECTIVE:

The N4C rules specify the longest side to no more than 1024 pixels and to keep file size below 500KB.

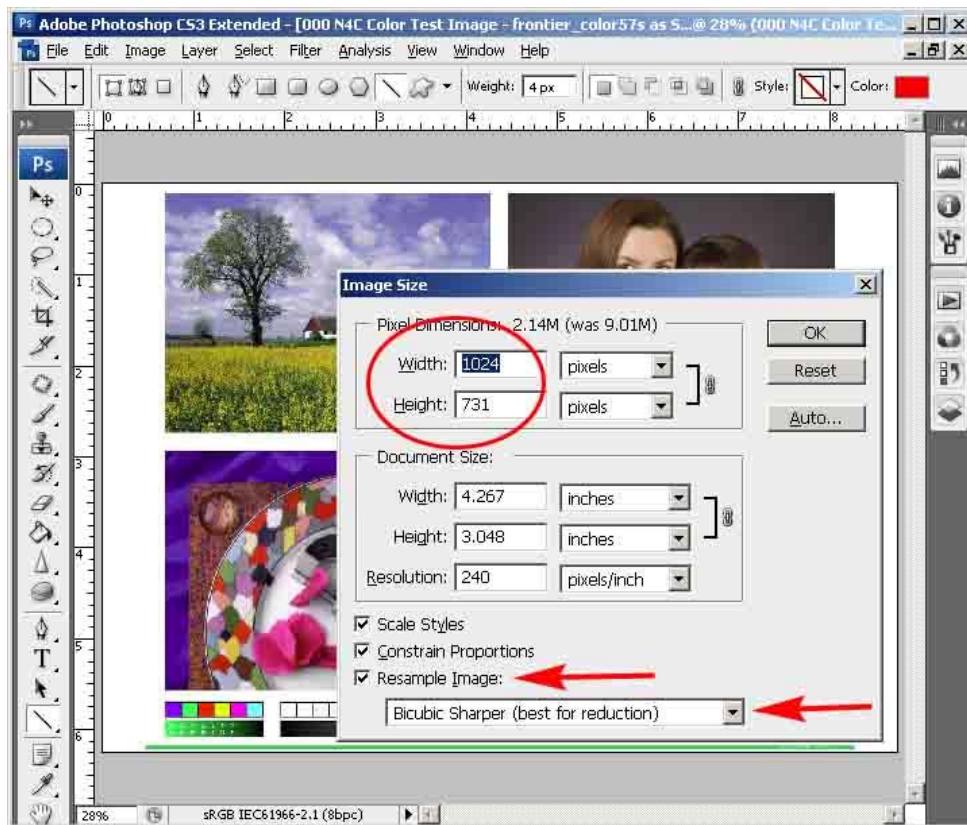
In general terms, the “window” for projecting images for judging is 1024 pixels wide and 768 pixels high. The objective is to have horizontal images fill the width and vertical images fill the height. If your image is smaller than these dimensions, it will appear proportionally smaller for the judges on the screen. When the image size is larger than this “window”, the image is automatically reduced to fit and will not be cropped. Below are instructions for using a few common software packages to resize images. When you resize and save your photo for a contest, use “Save as...” and give it a new filename – always keep your original image file.

When resaving a digital photo, the "quality setting" (level of compression) to use is an important consideration. The JPEG file format allows a trade-off between file size and image quality. JPEG (and nearly all lossy file formats) are not suitable for intermediate editing. Repeated saves will generally reduce the working file's quality. Besides the cumulative addition of visual artifacts (errors), repeated recompression also introduces destructive color changes. "Lossless" file formats (such as TIFF, PSD, BMP, etc.) are better choices for intermediate processing. JPEG should only be used for storing the final image or for a specific use, such as a contest or printing, and possibly the initial capture. Quality levels and settings are not standardized values amongst photo editing software. Sometimes it is best to test saving – always from the same original file – at various quality or compression levels and look at the resulting file size. Also examine the results on your monitor at 100% size. **Experience with the N4C Digital contests reveals a noticeably lower image quality when file sizes were less than 100KB. Images in the range of 150KB to 300KB seemed much better** – sharper and smoother gradation of colors. Within Photoshop, “Save for Web...” is not a good choice for resizing and saving for a contest. The image metadata will be lost (time / camera / lens / date / aperture / shutter speed / etc).

Photoshop 7.0, CS to CS3 or Elements:

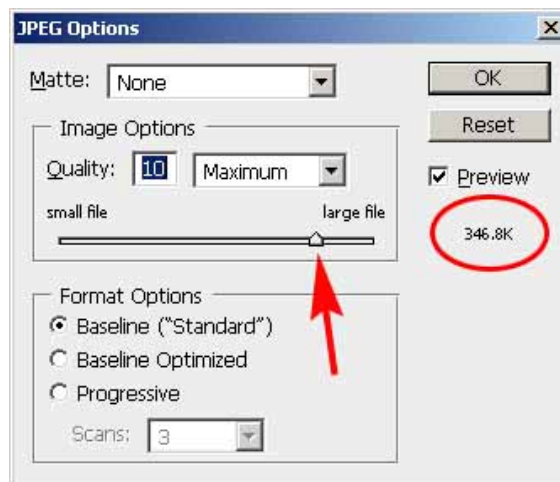
1. With CS2 & CS3 CHOOSE COLOR SPACE:
 - a. Edit > Convert to Profile
 - b. Set “Destination” space to “sRGB IEC61966 2.1”
2. Or with 7.0 & CS CHOOSE COLOR SPACE:
 - a. Image > Mode > Convert to Profile
 - b. Set “Destination” space to “sRGB IEC61966 2.1”
3. RESIZE:
 - a. With 7.0, CS, CS2 or CS3 Image > Image Size (see illustration on page 2)
OR - With Photoshop Elements: Image > Resize > Image Size
Pixel Dimensions: (set longest side - width or height - to 1024 pixels)
Width: _____ Pixels
Height: _____ Pixels
Document Size: (for viewing on a monitor or for contest entry there is no need to change this)
Width: _____
Height: _____
Resolution: _____ pixels/inch

If you change the Resolution, do so BEFORE setting the Pixel Dimensions above.
Check: Scale Styles, Constrain Proportions, and Resample Bicubic Sharper.



4. SAVE IMAGE FILE

- a. File > Save As
- b. Choose JPEG (*.JPG, *.JPEG, *.JPE)
- c. Enter a file name (see N4C rules – Example: 01,CE034,DP,Red Rose.jpg)
Use YOUR member number NOT “CE034”
- d. Adjust the Quality Slider until the estimated file size (circled below) is less than 500K
- e. Check the color profile box if there is one.



5. If JPEG is not a choice in step #4, check:

- a. Image > Mode and check “8 bits/channel and then save as in step #4.

Paint Shop Pro 7.0

1. RESIZE with PSP 7.0
 - b. Image > Resize
 - c. Click “Pixel Size” and set longest side – either width or height – to 1024 pixels

Picasa2

1. CHECK THE SIZE with Picasa
 - a. Click on a thumbnail to choose an image
 - b. Check the size in the information bar below the thumbnails or below the image. Or Right-click on the thumbnail and select “Properties”.
2. RESIZE
 - a. File > Export
 - b. Choose the location of the exported folder
 - c. Click “Pixel Size” and set slider to 1024 pixels, Image Quality 85% or less