

Adjust Image Sizes with Confidence

CJ Worlein, CPSA • Creative Image Director

Your artwork is done and you have a digital image of it. You're ready to enter a CPSA exhibition, but how do you get the required image and file "sizes" for it?

Three simple rules about image sizing:

- 1) **Only pixels matter.** Repeat after me. **Only pixels matter!**
- 2) **Don't worry about "resolution" unless your image will be professionally printed on paper. Only pixels matter.**
- 3) **Don't worry about file size until you do your save.**

When we're talking file size, we're talking MB, which is the abbreviation for "megabytes." In Photoshop, you might see 2.0M (like in Figure 3), which is the same as 2 MB. This is how much space the file takes up digitally. CaFÉ limits images to 5 MB, but when an image is 1920 pixels on its longer side, trust me, it will be smaller than 5 MB in file size when saved.

As for **resolution**, the only time to be concerned about it is if a magazine or book publisher asks you to send your image and gives you both pixel dimensions AND the resolution they want. They'll want 300 pixels/inch if they're printing it on paper. Just know that changing the resolution does nothing to the number of pixels in the image as long as you're **ONLY** changing the resolution.

So let's see if my examples help:

Figure 1: The image size of this example (circled at the top under "Pixel Dimensions") is 3024 pixels wide by 4032 pixels high. Since the longer side (the height) is greater than the 1920 pixels I want (per the prospectus), I need to **resample** my image to reduce the number of pixels. (The "Resample Image" box must be checked for this, as well as "Constrain Proportions.") **Note:** Don't have your photo software *increase* the number of pixels unless you know what you're doing!

Figure 2: Here I've reduced the height (the longer side) from 4032 to 1920. With "Constrain Proportions" checked, Photoshop also automatically adjusts the width down to 1440 pixels. I can see that "Pixel Dimensions" will change from 34.9M to 7.91M, but note that this has nothing to do with the final file size when I save the resampled image. Once I click "OK," the number of pixels in my image will be reduced to the new dimensions.

Figure 3: Saving My Image. When I save my resampled image as shown in **Figure 3**, it shows me (just below "Preview") that the image file will be 2 MB in size ("2.0M"), well below the 5 MB maximum allowed by CaFÉ, even when set to "12 Maximum" quality and "large file" size. (P.S. It's important to choose Baseline "Standard" under Format Options when saving ... but that's another whole other topic!)

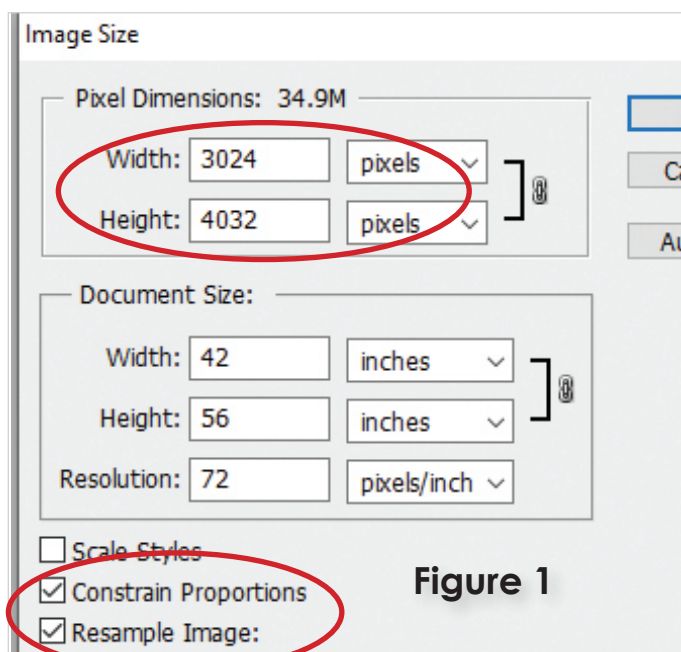


Figure 1

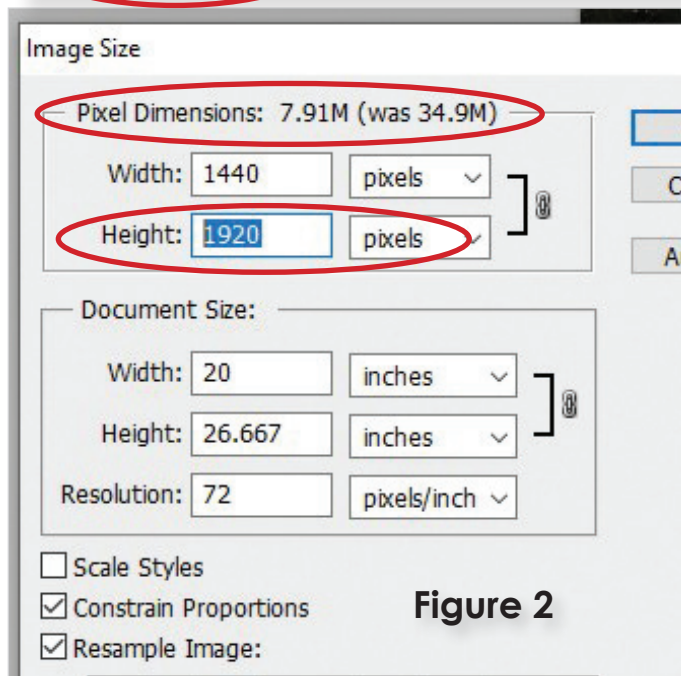


Figure 2

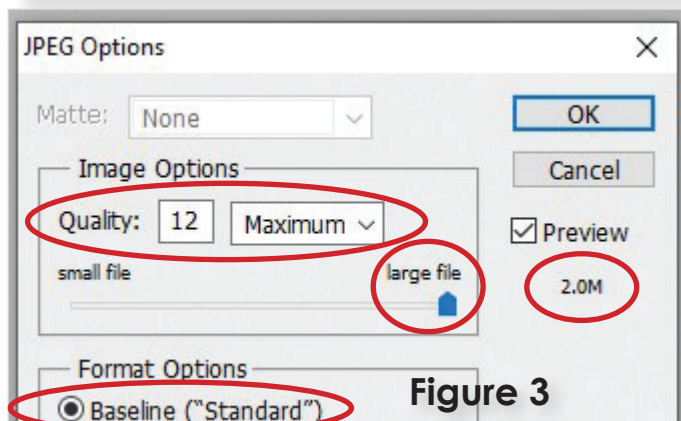


Figure 3