

Photoshop: Slicing

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Having created a graphic visual for a web page there may be some elements in the design that need to be optimised as images. There are several methods that can be employed to achieve this. The method used is dependent on what is suitable or convenient for the task in hand.

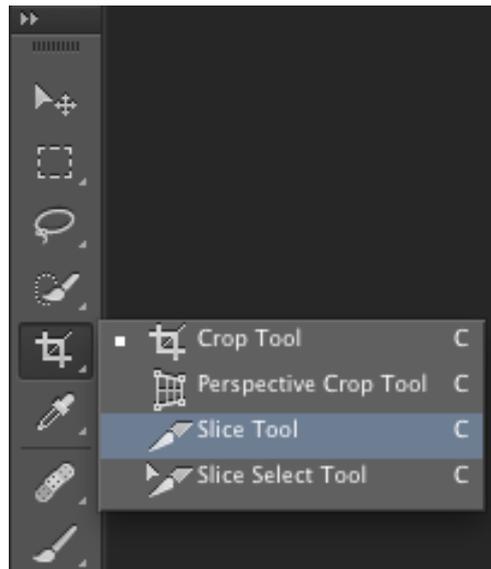
Methods

- *Slicing*: Makes it possible to define several graphic elements within a PS document and optimise them in one process. Convenient when there are several images to be extracted.
- *Copy Merged*: Using the Rectangular Marquee to define an area of the layout that is to be optimised as an image. Suitable if only one or maybe two images are required. More labourious than slicing.
- *Separate PS document*: It may be more appropriate to create a separate PS document when a range of images needs to be developed for a particular purpose. For instance, a banner image that will have a different version on each page or a group of icons sharing similar characteristics.

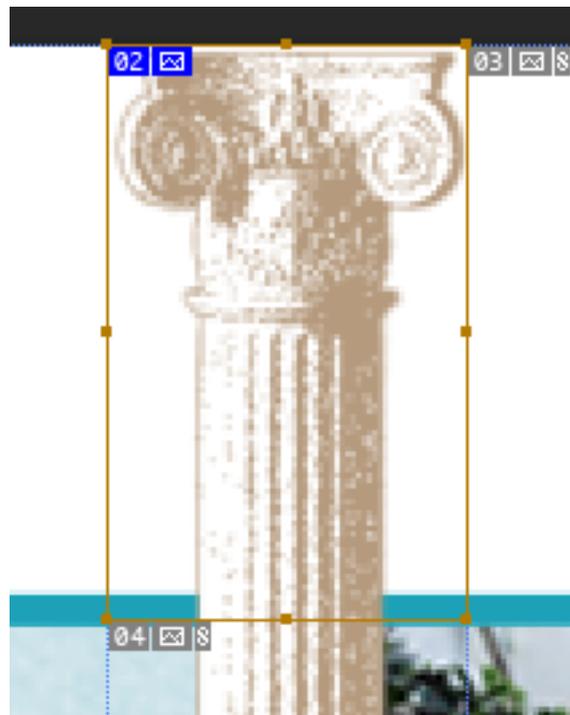
Slicing

PS has a Slice tool that can be used for drawing a box to define a visual element for optimising as an image. The box that is drawn is called a slice. Each slice can be given a name. The name given is used as the file name for the image.

Several slices can be defined at a time. Slices are optimised by going *File > Save for Web...* Defined slices can be optimised all together. Individual slices can have different optimisation settings applied.



Slices are created by drawing a box with the Slice tool.



Double-click with the Slice tool inside the slice to give it a name. This will become the file name for the image.

The image shows a 'Slice Options' dialog box with the following fields and values:

- Slice Type: Image
- Name: column-top
- URL: (empty)
- Target: (empty)
- Message Text: (empty)
- Alt Tag: (empty)
- Dimensions:
 - X: 91
 - W: 67
 - Y: 0
 - H: 108
- Slice Background Type: None
- Background Color:

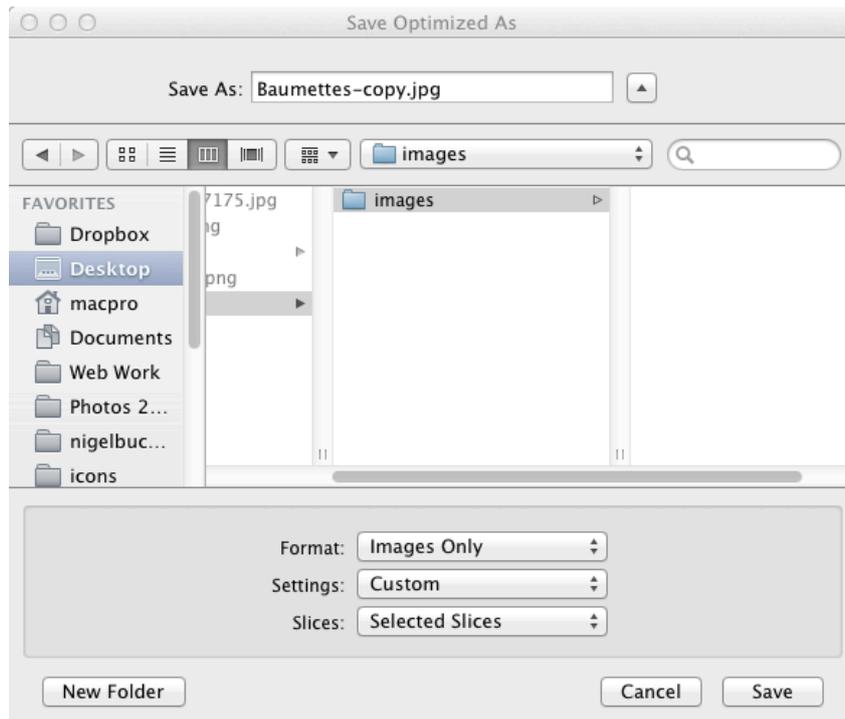
Draw as many slices as required.

When a slice is drawn, PS populates the image with default slices. These can be ignored. The default slices are created for the purpose of using PS to auto create a web page. User created/defined slices are indicated with a blue label at the top left of the slice.

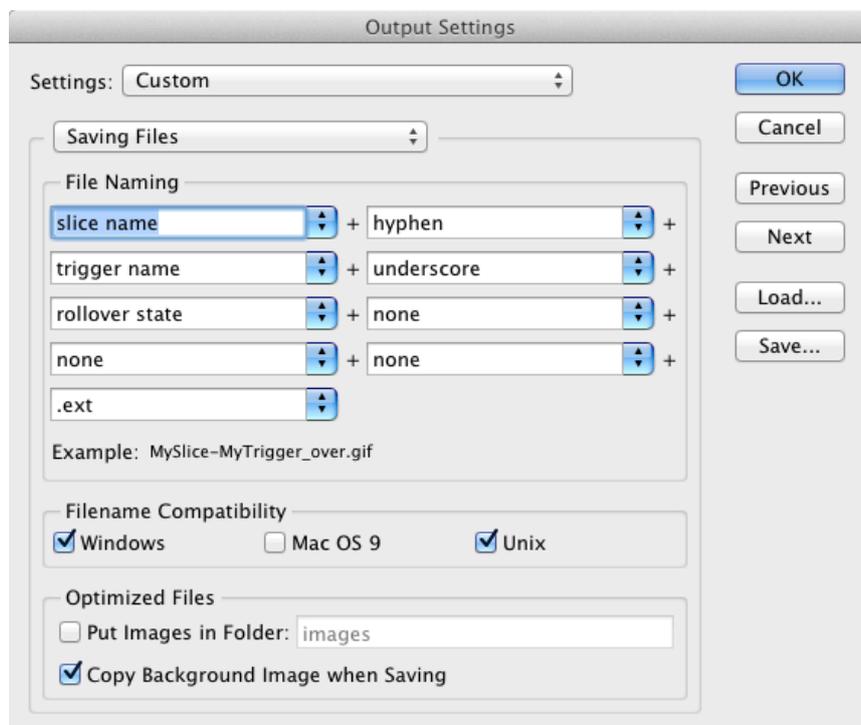
Immediately after drawing the slice it can be resized, re-positioned and named with the Slice tool. If any of these operations are required to edit a slice that was not the last drawn one, then they can only be done with the *Slice Select* tool. A selected slice can be deleted with the *Delete* key.

Once the slices are set, optimise them by going *File > Save for Web...* In the Save for Web dialogue, select a slice by clicking on it and then set the required optimisation settings. The same optimisation settings can be applied to a group of slices. To select a group of slices, hold the Shift key and click on them.

To save the slices as images make sure the required slices are selected and click on *Save...*



In the Save Optimized As window, ignore the *Save As:* field. Locate your images folder in the root folder. For *Format:* choose Images Only and for *Slices:* choose Selected Slices. Finally, for *Settings:* select Other... to open the Output Settings dialogue.



Under Saving Files, make sure Put Images in Folder: is un-checked. This will prevent PS from creating its own default images folder. Click OK and then Save in the Save Optimized As window. The images are now ready for use.