

A Simple Method for Shrinking Picture File Size for E-mail or Web Use.

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Wes Hayward, W7ZOI

Today (June 8, 2008) I received a note from an Internet friend, Peter Gant, HA5RXZ, from Budapest, Hungary, with a similar procedure that functions with his Ubuntu based computer. For those of you unfamiliar with Ubuntu, it is a variation of Linux that is available for PCs. I've tried it here, and it seems to work as advertised. Many thanks to Peter for this version, which is attached at the end of this note.

PCs operating with Windows:

I often receive emails from colleagues that contain photographs or schematic diagrams. Most folks are careful to confine the file size to a comfortable level. Others are not so careful, producing extreme download times for a single photograph. The photo is sent out in exactly the form that it exited the digital camera. High resolution is preferred when making prints, but it is of no value when the photo is to be sent as an email or viewed in a web page where the resolution of the computer monitor is constrained.

More often than not, the large files result because the colleague doesn't know how to shrink his or her photos. It's not all that difficult and I thought it might be useful for me to present one of many methods that will do the job. I'm running Windows XP and the method uses nothing other than the raw JPG files from a digital camera and programs available in Windows XP (a Microsoft copyright, as if we didn't all know that!)

1. Let's assume that the pictures to be shrunk are in the folder "**My Pictures.**" Any other folder would, of course, work. Look at the list of pictures in this folder by calling the program **Windows Explorer.** Just double click on the **Windows Explorer** icon on the desktop. Then find **My Pictures** as one of the folders under "**My Documents.**" Double click any folder to see the other folders containing individual pictures.
2. Once you see a list of pictures, or perhaps even small "*thumbnail*" versions of the pictures, find the one you want to process and double click on it. This should bring up a nearly full screen version of the picture, usually in Microsoft Picture and FAX Viewer if you are using XP.
3. While viewing the large picture, *RIGHT CLICK.* This should bring up a screen of options. Move the mouse to *OPEN WITH* to see more choices. Now move the mouse to **PAINT** and click.
4. You will now see just part of the picture. In the new toolbar that appeared at the top of the program **PAINT**, click on **IMAGE**, and then go down and click on **stretch/skew.**

5. This brings up some boxes that show 100% for both the horizontal and vertical. Put a smaller number in the box, such as 35%, and click **OK**. Be sure to use the same value in both horizontal and vertical or you get some really distorted results.
6. Now to save the picture. Click on **FILE** in the upper left corner and then on **SAVE AS**. Enter a new name, something different than the original. Take care, for if you use the same name, or if you just click on SAVE, you will lose the original. So remember **SAVE AS**.
7. As an example, I started with a picture that was 1600 x 1200 pixels and had a stored file size of 768 KB. I shrunk it to 35% and ended up with a picture size of 560 x 420 pixels in a file size of 34 KB.

A Ubuntu Method (Thanks to Peter Gant!)

- 1) Save a copy of the original file, doing this on the desktop will be fine.
- 2) Right-click on the file, select 'Open With' and then 'Open With GIMP Image Editor.'
- 3) The image editor software will then load and you will have two windows. The first window has many options and can be ignored, the second window should have your picture in it surrounded by a dotted line.
- 4) Select 'Image' and then 'Scale Image' from the options along the top of the window which has your picture in it.
- 5) In the window that opens you should see two figures for width and height and these are linked together by a chain link symbol on the right hand side. Whichever is the larger of the two (width or height) change it to 800 pixels then click on the 'Scale' button. This will ensure that your image fits on an 800 x 600 VGA screen and is a reasonable size for emailing.
- 6) Click on 'File' then 'Save As'. Save your file on the desktop but make sure that you include the .jpg extension in the file name.
- 7) Click 'File' then 'Quit' to close down the software.