

Digitizing Your Archive

SCANNING

GOOD FOR DIGITIZING FLAT WORKS SUCH AS PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS, PRINTS, PHOTOGRAPHS, OTHER WORKS ON PAPER, DOCUMENTS AND SLIDES

EQUIPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

1



EPSON PERFECTION V600 PHOTO SCANNER:
Scan 8.5 x 11 documents, photos, film, and slides at 6400 pixel length and 9600 dpi. Compact, easy to use, affordable (about \$200). Saves files as TIFF, JPEG, BMP or PDF.

2



EPSON EXPRESSION 11000XL PHOTO SCANNER:
Scans at a very large format, 12.2 x 17.x inches. Expensive (about \$3200), but also one of the most popular scanners found in libraries. Saves files as TIFF, JPEG, BMP or PDF.

3



ONLINE MAIL-ORDER SCANNING SERVICES:
Recommended if you have a lot of slides. Bonus: can also possibly convert your video, audio and photographic materials. Highest recommended service: ScanCafe at www.scancafe.com.

SCANNERS ARE ONLY AS GOOD AS YOUR PREPARATION OF MATERIALS:

Use a microfiber cloth to clean the scanner glass as well as your slides or photos. Remove clips, staples and tape from documents.

SCANNER SETTINGS

Common Terms

Document Type: Reflective (photographs, documents works on paper) vs. Transparency (film or slides, positive or negative)

Image Type: 24-bit color (RGB) vs. Grayscale (B&W)

Resolution: Dots per inch (DPI) or Pixels per inch (PPI)

Size: Height and width of your scan, sometimes measured in inches but most often measured in pixels

Best Practices

Image Type: 24-bit color, even for B&W originals, because it captures a greater range of data from the source.

Resolution: Scan documents at 300 dpi, photos and artworks at 600 dpi, and slides or film at 4800 dpi. These resolutions are adequate both for archiving and for printing.

Target Size: 6000 pixels on the long side. You might need to shift the dpi to get to 6000 pixels, but this enables a 1" x 1.5" slide to be viewed or printed at 8" x 10" or greater.

File Type: Save photos, artworks, film and slides as TIFF and documents as PDF. No compression.

SCANNING STEPS

STEP 1:

Set up the scanner for either reflective (with the white mat in the lid) or transparency (without the white mat, and utilizing a film holder for 35 mm slides, filmstrips, 4 x 5 inch or medium format film).

STEP 2:

Place your original face-down on the glass (for slides and film, shiny side face-down).

STEP 3:

Choose the appropriate scanner settings.



STEP 4:

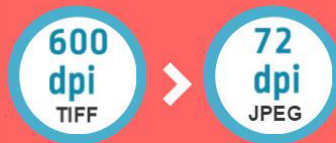
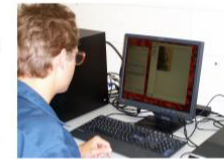
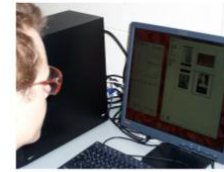
Preview your scan.

STEP 5:

Use the selection box on the preview window to crop to the edges of your scannable item. If necessary, rotate the preview image until it is right-side up.

STEP 6:

Scan and save. Most scanners require a text prefix and a number for a file name (example, photo001.tiff). Be consistent—you can rename files later.



The scan you have made is now your master file. You can use photo-editing software such as Photoshop (licensed) or GIMP (free) to create derivatives for other uses, such as lower-resolution jpegs for web access or cropped details for publications. **NOTE:** Do not save the derivative over your master file—give the derivative a new filename and/or file type.

STORE AND ACCESS YOUR SCANS

NAMING AND ORGANIZING:

Give your scans descriptive file names that will help you identify them, such as "19910315-drawing-2.tiff." Use what works for you, but be consistent.

Create a folder-within-folder structure on your computer to organize your files.

Example:

```
\Scan Archive
  \Drawings
    \1991
      19910315-drawing-1.tiff
      19950315-drawing-2.tiff
```

BACKUP, BACKUP, BACKUP:

Create at least two copies of your collection. Save one on your computer and other copies on CDs, portable hard drives, thumb drives or online storage (such as Dropbox).

Set up your computer to automatically create backups of your collection, using built-in utilities like Time Machine (Macs) or Windows Backup (PCs).

Store copies in different locations, as far apart as practical. If disaster strikes one location, the other copies should be safe. Transfer your scans to a new storage medium every five to seven years to prevent file decay and loss.

Library of Congress Personal Archiving:
<http://digitalpreservation.gov/personalarchiving/>

National Archive Digitizing Family Papers and Photographs:
<http://www.archives.gov/preservation/family-archives/digitizing.html>

MORE RESOURCES:

These websites have more information about scanning, archiving and preserving your collection.

INFOGRAPHIC CREATED BY:
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**NC Artist Archives
 Outreach Day**