

## PhotoShop Techniques: Cropping and Layout



Dear Customer,

Thank you for visiting iPrintfromHome.com.

We have prepared this document to help you prepare your digital files in PhotoShop to get the best possible Photographic and Fine Art Prints. Over the next few pages, we provide information about file preparation and explain how to manipulate your files to ensure the best possible results.

In this document we provide detailed instructions for cropping, designing the layout of, and adding borders to your digital images.

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If you have any questions about the process of ordering Photographic Prints, Fine Art Prints and/or 35mm Slides from digital files, please contact us at [www.iPrintfromHome.com/contact.asp](http://www.iPrintfromHome.com/contact.asp).

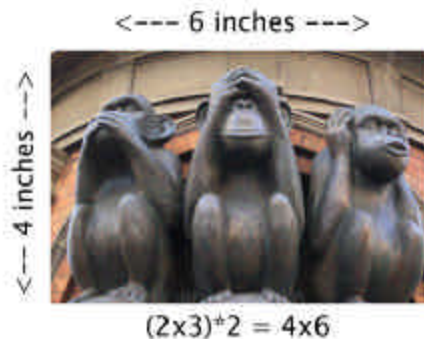
Take Care,  
the iPrintfromHome.com team

## Understanding Aspect Ratios

The aspect ratio is the ratio of the height of the image to the width of the image. For example, an image that measures 2 inches high by 3 inches wide is said to have an aspect ratio of 2:3 (two-to-three).



When you order prints from digital files, the digital image will generally be enlarged or reduced in size to fit onto whatever size print you select. For example, you could order a 4x6 Photographic Print from your digital file that is sized 2x3. If you did, we would take your 2x3 image and enlarge it to 4x6.



As you can see from the illustration, when we enlarged the 2x3 file to print a 4x6 the image was not cropped or distorted. That is because 2x3 is proportional to 4x6, which is the same thing as saying they have the same aspect ratio.

The aspect ratio of a digital file will determine what size prints can be made from that file without cropping the image. For instance, if you have a digital image that has a 2:3 aspect ratio, you can print at the following sizes: 4x6, 8x12, 12x18, 16x24, and 20x30.

$$\begin{aligned}(2 \times 3) * 2 &= 4 \times 6 \\(2 \times 3) * 4 &= 8 \times 12 \\(2 \times 3) * 6 &= 12 \times 18 \\(2 \times 3) * 8 &= 16 \times 24 \\(2 \times 3) * 10 &= 20 \times 30\end{aligned}$$

However, you may find yourself in a situation where you would like to order a print that does not have the same aspect ratio as your digital image. For instance, you may want to order an 8x10 print from your 2x3 digital file. In that case, because the sizes are not proportional to one another, you have a couple different choices:

1. *You can crop your image.*



As you can see in the above illustration, in order to print the 2x3 image at 8x10 we had to crop the image on the left and right.

2. *You can "Smart Fit" your image.*



The "Smart Fit" method prints the entire image within the selected paper size, leaving any unfilled space white. This method is especially popular when making photographs of works of art, as the entire digital image is printed with no cropping whatsoever.

## Cropping Your Images

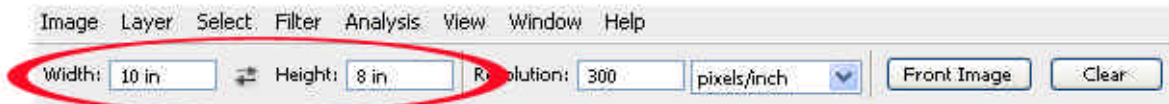
We recommend that you prepare your files at the same output size (or aspect ratio) as the product that you will order with a resolution between 150 and 300 dpi. For example, if you are ordering an 8x10 print, please prepare your image as an 8x10 digital file with a resolution between 150 and 300 dpi. If you do so, we will be able to print directly from your digital file without making any subjective decisions about cropping, which ultimately gives you more control over the resulting print.

1. Open your image in Photoshop. Save a new copy of your image by clicking on “File” in the menu bar and scrolling down to “Save As”. *\*\*Make sure you are working with the COPY of the original image. This way you can work on editing your image without making changes to your original file.\*\**

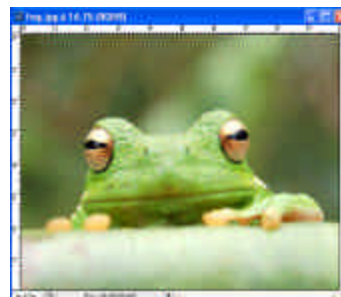
2. Choose the “cropping tool” from the tool bar.



3. Set the height and width to your desired output size. For example, if you are ordering a horizontally oriented 8x10 print, set your width to 10 and your height to 8.



4. Click inside the photo and drag your mouse to outline the part of your image that you want to use. Because you have set the “cropping tool” to 8x10, it will only allow you to outline an area that is proportional to 8x10.



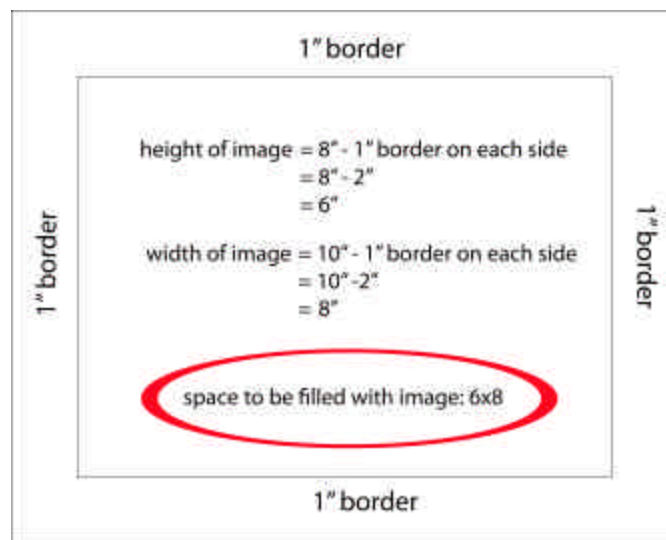
After you have your initial outline on the image, you can resize or reposition the outlined area with your mouse.

5. When you have the outlined area positioned to your satisfaction, press “Enter” or “Return” on the keyboard to apply the crop. If you are satisfied with the crop, save your file.

## Adding Borders to Your Images

Manipulating your canvas gives you the ability to add borders of various widths and colors to your images. For example, say you have an image that you want to place in an 8x10 matte, but you want to leave an inch of white space all the way around your image. You can prepare your file so that your print is produced according to your exact specifications. Even though it sounds a little complicated, it's really very easy. To do so, please follow these simple instructions:

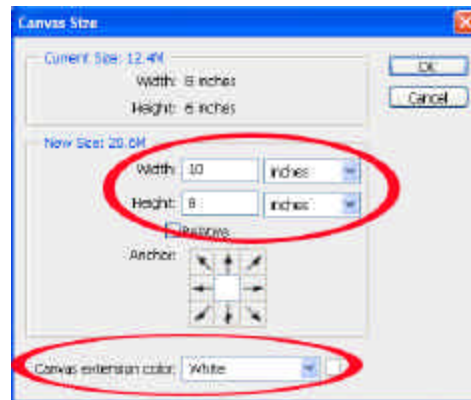
1. Figure out what size your image needs to be so that your image and your borders fill up the entire paper size:



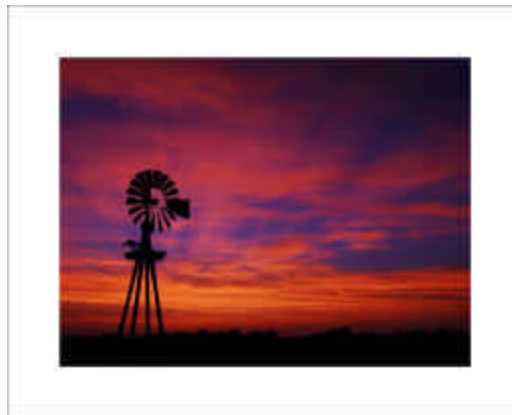
2. Prepare your image at your desired output size, such as 6x8 (see "Cropping Your Images"). We chose 6x8 because if you center your 6x8 image inside of an 8x10 matte you will have 1 inch of extra space in between your image and the matte.



3. Click on "Image" in the menu bar and scroll down to "Canvas Size."



4. Change the canvas size to 8x10 and change the “Canvas extension color” to whatever color you would like the border to be.



5. If you are satisfied with your borders, save your file.

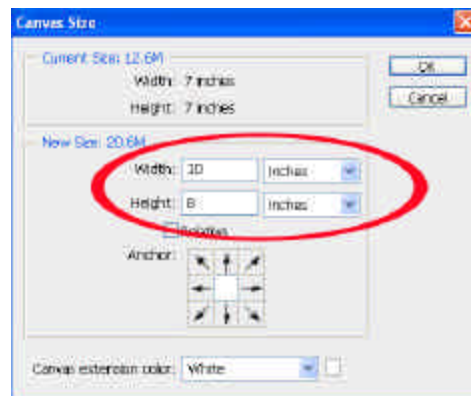
## Ordering Non-Standard Sized Prints

Many of our customers need prints at sizes that we don't explicitly offer. For example, say you have a 7x7 image that you want printed at 7x7. Although we don't explicitly offer 7x7 prints, if you follow these simple instructions, you can get any size print that you want.

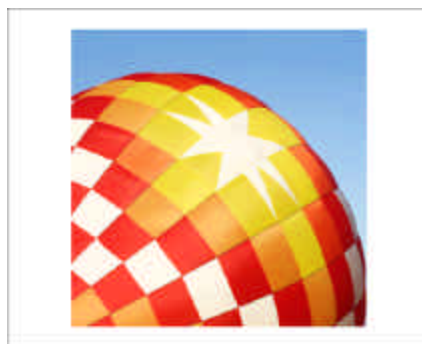
1. Prepare your image at your desired output size, such as 7x7 (see "Cropping Your Images").



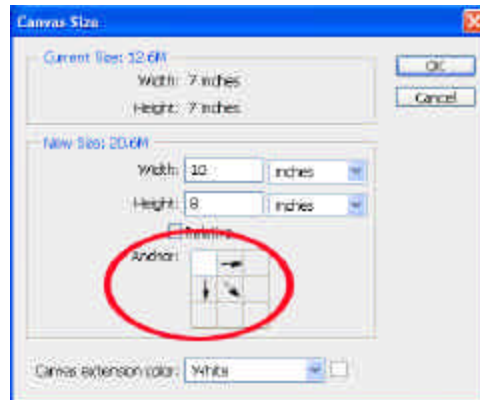
2. Click on "Image" in the menu bar and scroll down to "Canvas Size."



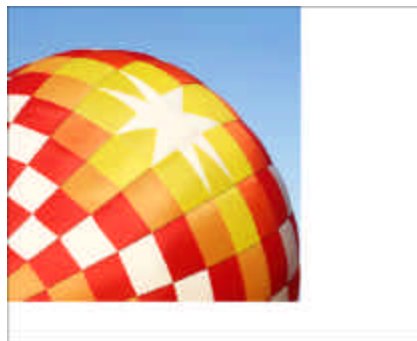
3. Change the canvas size to the offered output size that best fits your image. For example, to order a 7x7 print from iPrintfromHome.com, you would want to place your 7x7 image on an 8x10 canvas, which is the offered output size that best fits a 7x7 image.



- By “anchoring” your image you can control where your image is oriented on the new canvas. In the last example, because we left the “anchor box” in the center position, our image was centered on the new canvas. However, you may not always want your image centered on your canvas. For instance, if you intend to trim off the excess paper, it makes sense to anchor the image in such a way to minimize the number of cuts you will have to make.



If you anchor your image to a corner, your image will be oriented on the canvas so that you will only have to make one or two cuts to trim your image to size:



- Save your file and then place an order for an 8x10 print which will have your properly sized (7x7) image within it. When you receive your 8x10 print, you can then trim it down.



## “Smart Fitting” Your Images

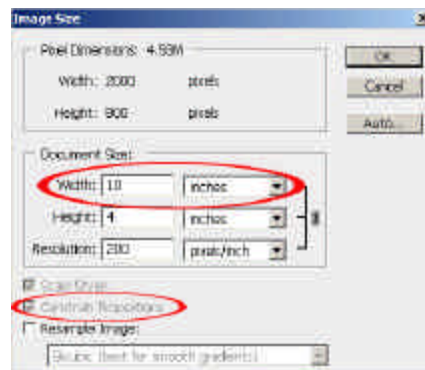
The "Smart Fit" method prints the entire image within the selected paper size, leaving any unfilled space white. This method is especially popular when making panoramic prints or photographs of works of art, as the entire digital image is printed with no cropping whatsoever.

1. Figure out how to orient your image so that it can be printed as large as possible within the selected paper size:

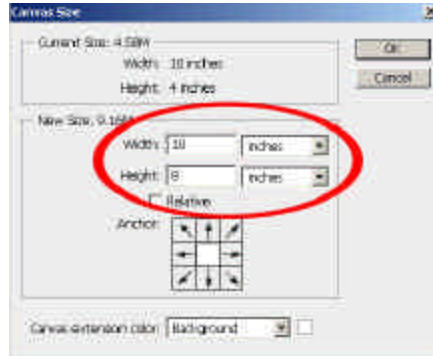


For example, if you are working with a panoramic image, it makes sense to orient your image horizontally on an 8x10 sheet of paper so that your image is printed bigger on the print.

2. Open your image in PhotoShop. Save a new copy of your image by clicking on “File” in the menu bar and scrolling down to “Save As”. **\*\*Make sure you are working with the COPY of the original image. This way you can work on editing your image without making changes to your original file.\*\***
3. Click on “Image” in the menu bar and scroll down to “Image Size.” Because we are Smart Fitting your image horizontally on a piece of photographic paper that is 8 inches high by 10 inches wide, we want to change the width of the image to match the width of the paper. Accordingly, change the width of your image to 10 inches. **\*\*Make sure that “Constrain Proportions” is checked. This will ensure that your aspect ratio is respected.\*\***



- Click on “Image” in the menu bar and scroll down to “Canvas Size.”



- Change the canvas size to the size of the print you will be ordering (8x10).

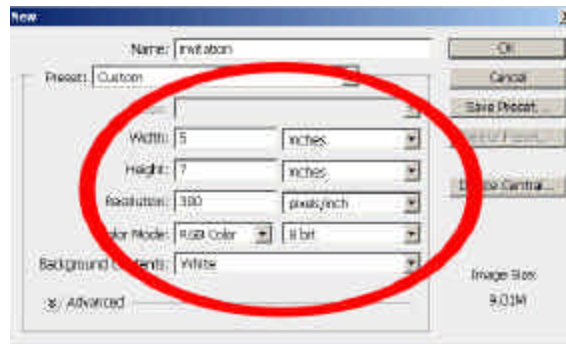


- You have now successfully “Smart Fitted” your image. If you are satisfied with your work, save your file.

## Placing Your Image on a Canvas

Placing your image on a canvas allows you to position your image however you want to within a given space. This is different than the canvas manipulation that we did in “Adding Borders to Your Images” and “Ordering Non-Standard Sized Prints” because when you place your image on a canvas you are not limited to centering your image or anchoring your image to a specific point on the canvas. This is particularly useful when pairing your image with text. In this example, we will prepare an invitation on a 5x7 piece of photographic paper.

1. The first step is to create the canvas on which you will be designing your invitation. Open PhotoShop. Click on “File” and scroll down to “New.”



Change the width and height to the size of the print you will be ordering. In this case, change the width to 5 inches and the height to 7 inches for our vertically oriented invitation. Also, change the resolution to 300. Now you have created a blank 5x7 canvas.

2. Prepare the image that you want to include on your invitation at your desired output size, such as 4x3 (see “Cropping Your Images”).



Now you should have both your blank canvas and your image open in PhotoShop.

3. Choose the “move tool” from the tool bar.



4. Click on your image and drag it onto your canvas. You can move the image around the canvas using the “move tool”.



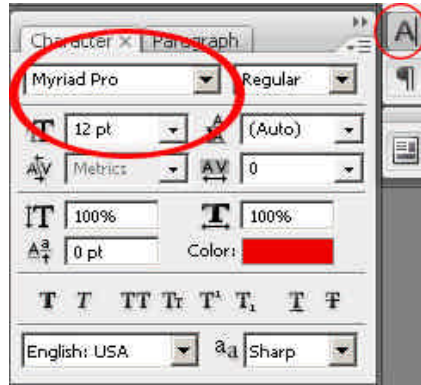
5. To add text to your image, choose the “type tool” from the tool bar.



6. Click inside your canvas and drag your mouse to designate the space that you want to fill with text. Insert text by typing on your keyboard.



7. Click on the “A” on the navigation pane to make changes to font, text size, text color, etc.



8. Once you have finished typing your message, you can position the text on your canvas using the move tool.



7. When you are satisfied with the positioning of your image and your text, save your file.