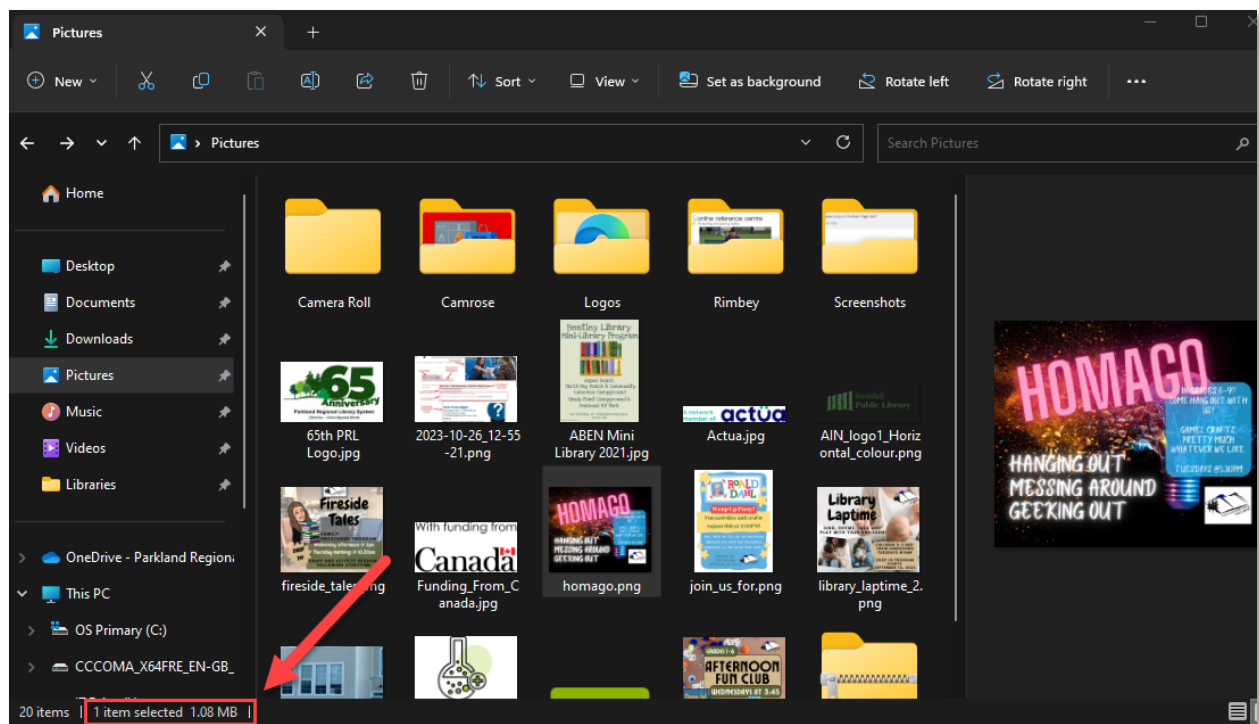# Images Best Practice Guide

Contents

Following image best practices is important and helps to ensure our websites stay operating in tip top shape. If you have any questions about anything in this guide, please contact us at the PRL Helpdesk.

There are two main factors when ensuring your images are in ideal form. Image File Size and Image Ratio (click to jump to that section).

Image File Size

The size of an image can greatly impact how fast a website loads. To ensure best performance, all images we upload to Sitecore should be 800 kB or less at *minimum*. Ideal size is 500 kB or less. For reference, 1 MB (megabyte) is 1000 kB (kilobyte).

There are a few ways to check the size of your image. The easiest is too select the file in File Explorer. In the screenshot below, I've selected an event poster:

As you can see at the bottom of the window, this poster is 1.08 MB, which is 1080 kB. Definitely too big. We'll have to shrink this one down.

Reduce Image Size

In order to make an image smaller, we need to put it through a compressor. Here are a few websites we recommend using.

TinyPNG – This is the best option, but it only supports up to 5 MB images. It can compress WebP, PNG, and JPEG files (the most common image file types).

Optimizilla – Another option, supports larger images, but also hosts many ads that can be bothersome. Only use this when your image is larger than 5 MB.
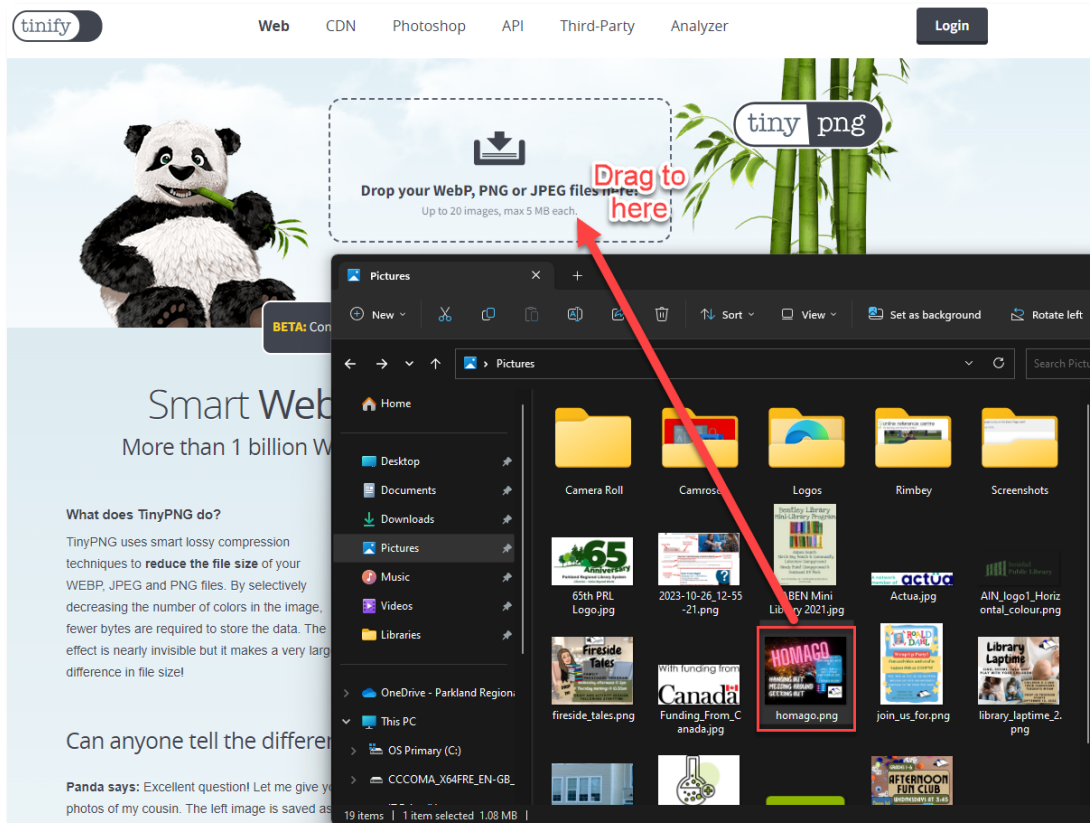
Vecta – This website supports SVG image files, whereas the other two do not.

All of these sites work pretty much the same. We'll use TinyPNG in this example, but the process to use the other two are almost identical.
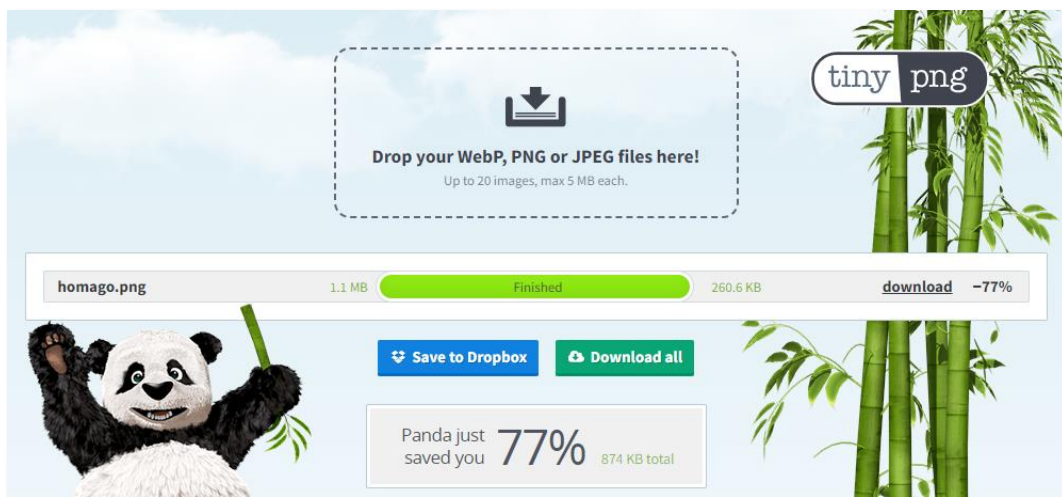
Once you're ready, use the links above to open a browser. Once the website (TinyPNG in this case) has loaded, this is your main working area:

To start, drag and drop the file onto the website. Here I've uploaded the event poster we noted earlier that was over 1 MB:
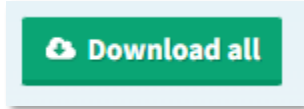

The website will start to compress the image and look like this when it's done:
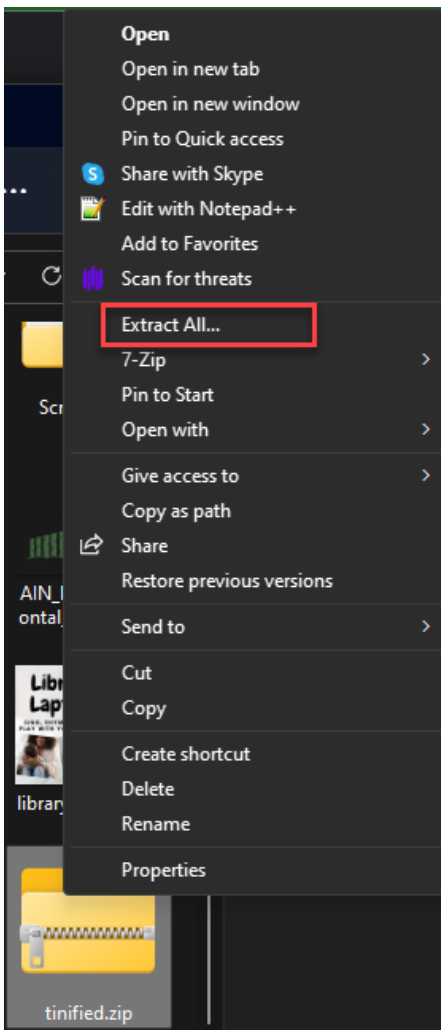

NOTE: You can also select multiple images (up to 20) and drag them all together onto the website. It will accept and work through all of them.

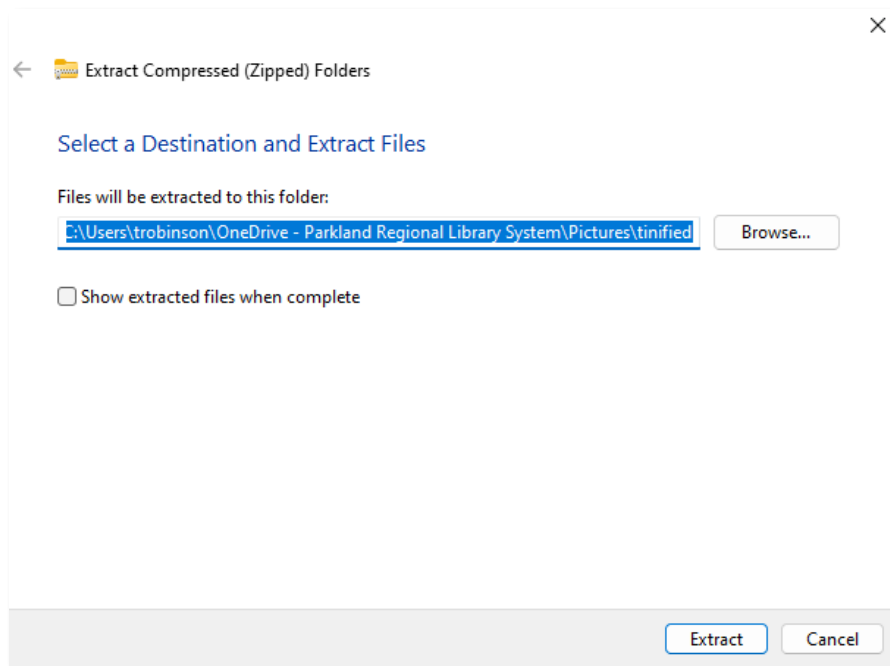Once your image(s) finish compressing, you can click Download all.

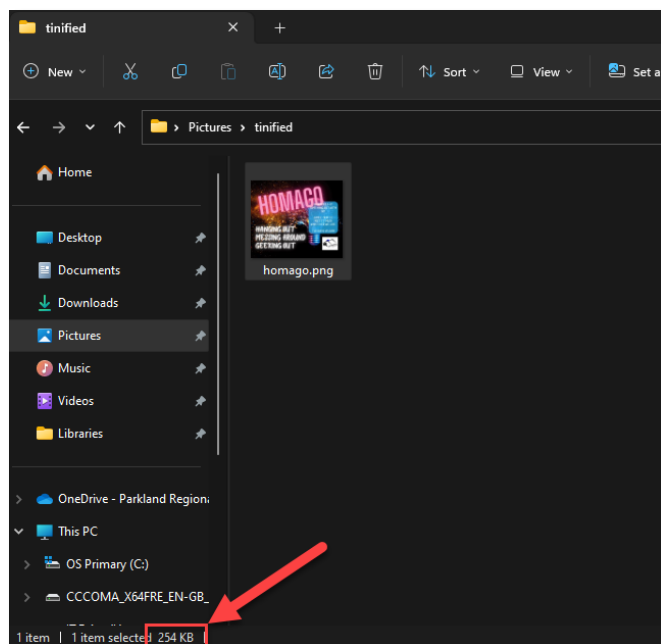A File Explorer window will pop up. Navigate to where you want to save the image(s) and click Save.

Find the file you just downloaded. It will be a zip file, so we'll need to decompress that. Find the zip file, right click, and select Extract All...

This window will appear:

You can tick the "Show extracted files…" box if you want it to open the folder it creates immediately. Either way, click Extract and it will create a new folder with the same name as the zip file. Open this folder and you should have the new version of your image(s). Note that their file size should be much smaller now (see 254 kB below vs. 1080 kB before).
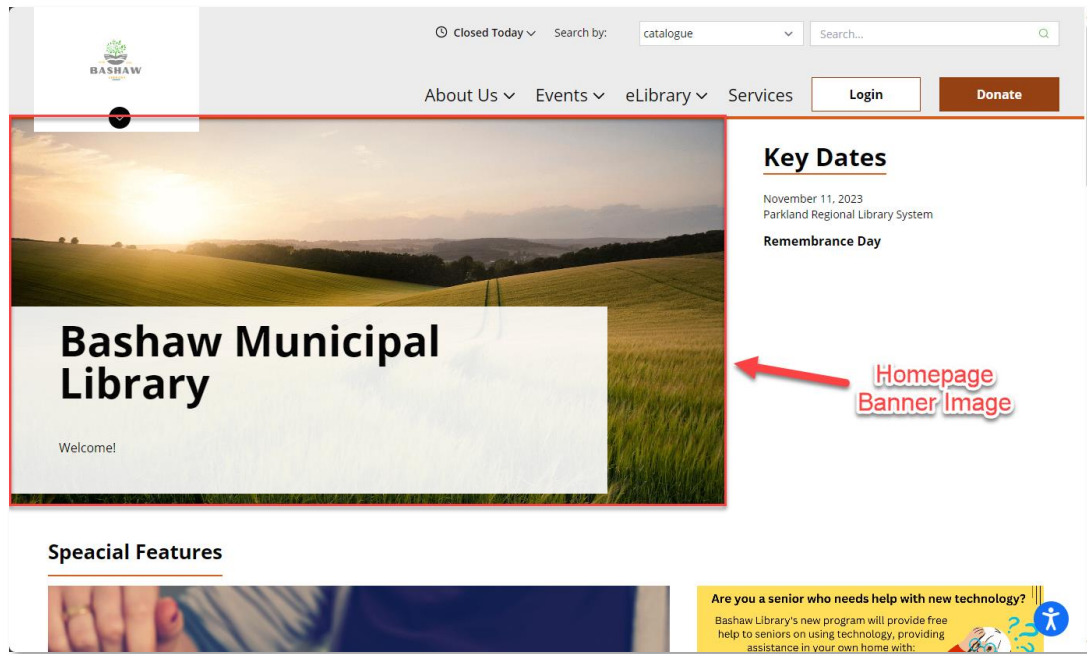

If your file size is still too large, you might want to consider Resizing the Image first.
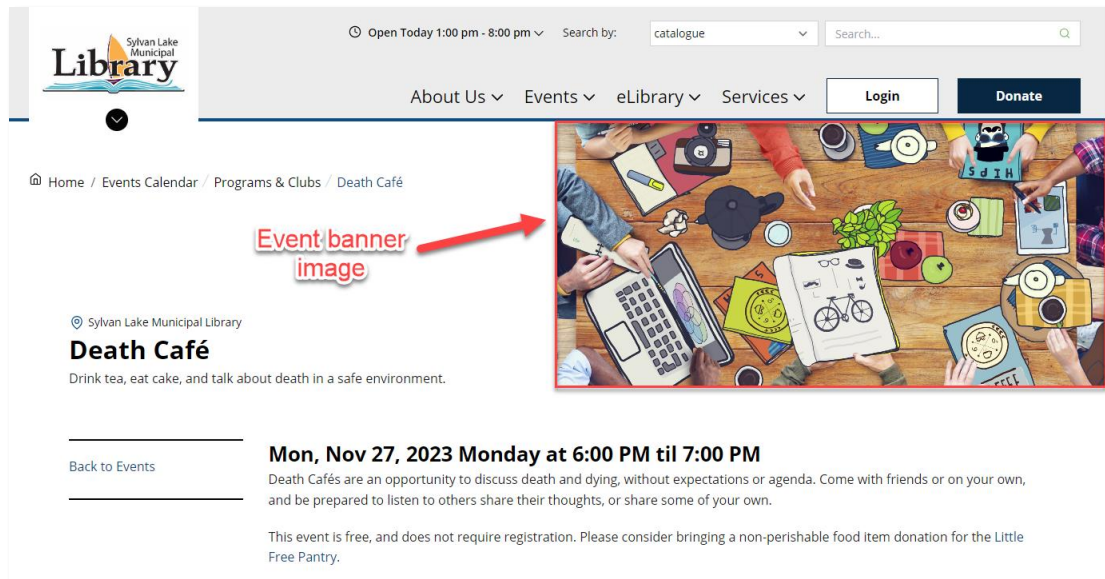
Image Ratio

The majority of images on the website work best in a **2:1** image ratio. For example, this means an image could be 800px (wide) by 400px (tall).

Examples of images that use this ratio:

Home Page Banner

Event Banner

NOTE: Images can also go into the body of an event (as noted in the Event Guide). There is no recommended ratio for placement here, but just remember that if it the image is too wide, it will shrink down when viewed on mobile and may become unreadable.

Crop an Image

If you try to use an image that doesn't fit the **2:1** ratio, the website will automatically cut off portions of it to make it fit in the spot you've added it. This can lead to parts missing that you'd like to be included. To prevent this, we can resize the image ourselves, which may still lead to missing portions, but at least it'll be the portions we've chosen.

I have a poster for a Roald Dahl event that's intended to into the body description, but I'd like to cut off the top portion to use as the banner. Here's the original image:

We will outline two methods for cropping, one for Windows 11 (with a NOTE about Windows 10) and an online method.
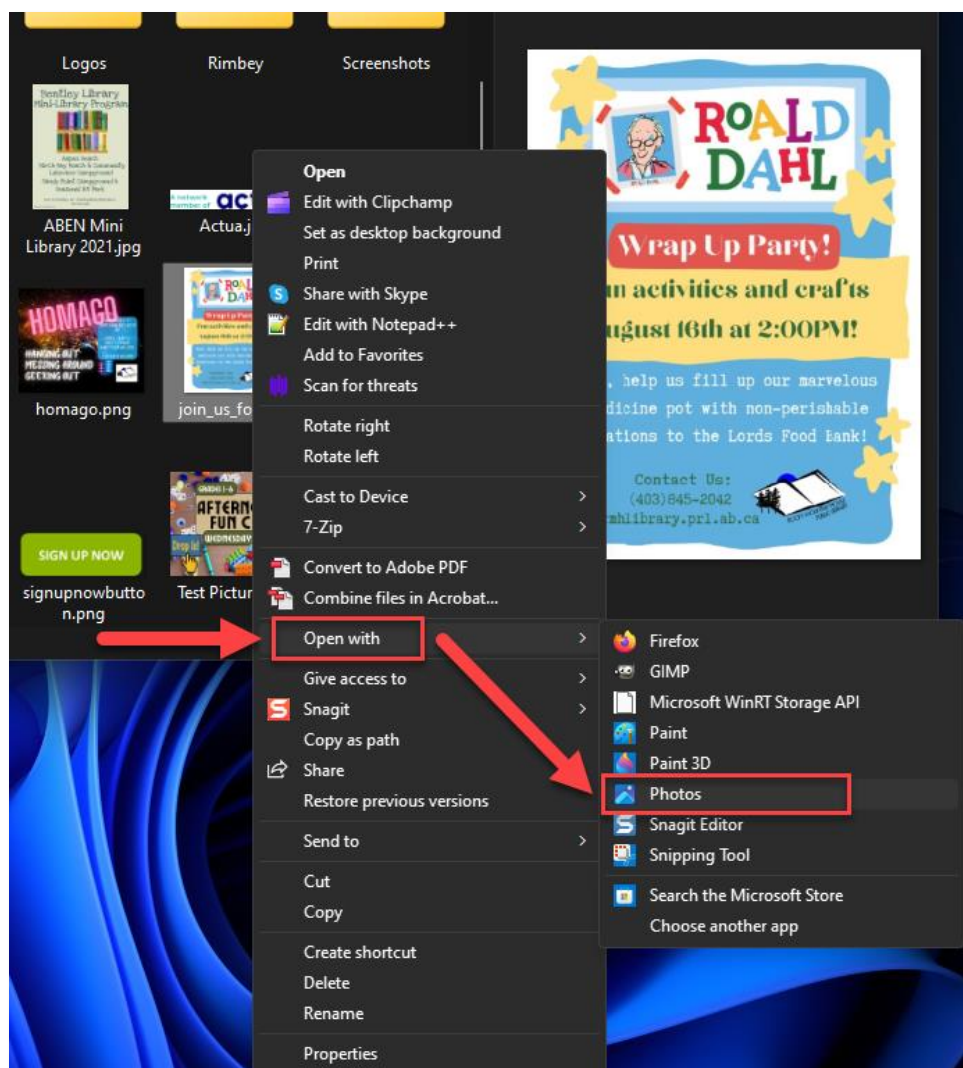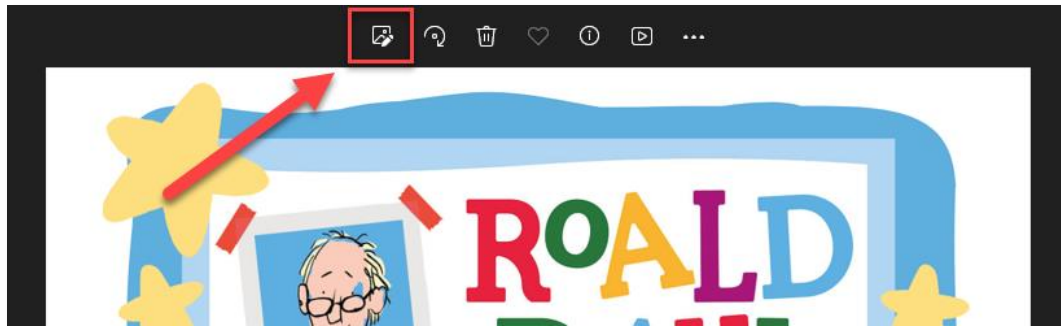
November 9, 2023

Windows 11 Method

NOTE: Windows 10 will be quite similar to this method, with a few differences. The main being that there is no built in 2:1 ratio for cropping. You can use a Custom crop and make a best guess, which should work okay. If you're concerned and wanted something more exact, try the Online Method instead.

The easiest way to crop is to use the built-in program called Photos in Windows 11. You might be able to double click your image and it will open, but just in case it's not your default image viewer, here's another way.
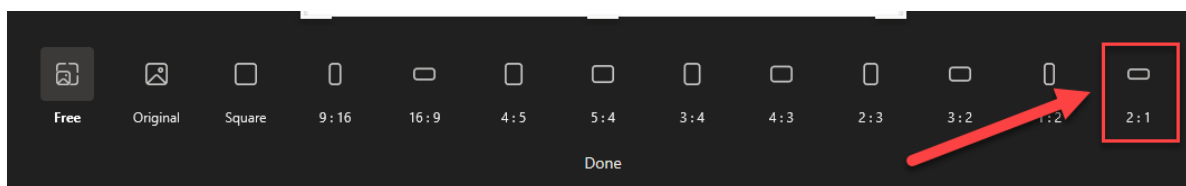
Right click the image, go to Open With, and select Photos from the menu.

Once the image is opened, click the Edit Image button at the very top:

The Crop tool should be automatically selected. If you look at the very bottom, the crop is set to "Free." We want a 2:1 ratio, so let's change that.

Once you've clicked the 2:1 ratio, the middle section will change into that shape. You can now use the mouse to drag the image around to where you need. You can click each corner and sides to make the crop area bigger or smaller (while maintaining the 2:1 ratio).

Here I've got the top part of the poster highlighted:

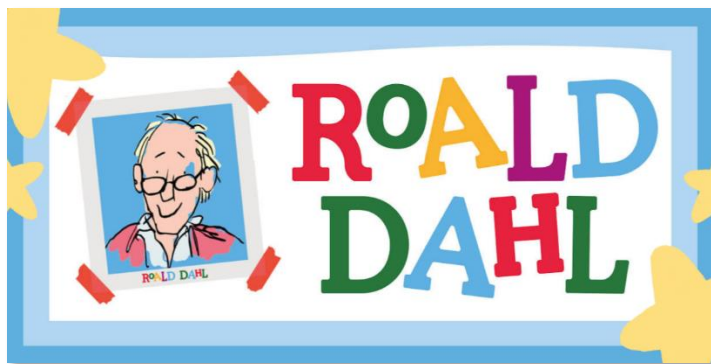Once you're satisfied with what you have highlighted, click on the blue Save options button at the top right.

Save as copy – will create a *new* file from the cropped area and leave the original alone.

Save – will overwrite the original image with the cropped area.

I'm going to choose save as copy. A file explorer window will pop up and you can choose where you want to put your new image. Once you've found the folder, give it a file name, hit save, and it will create the new image.

If you chose "Save" after cropping instead, this window won't appear as it will just replace the file you originally opened.
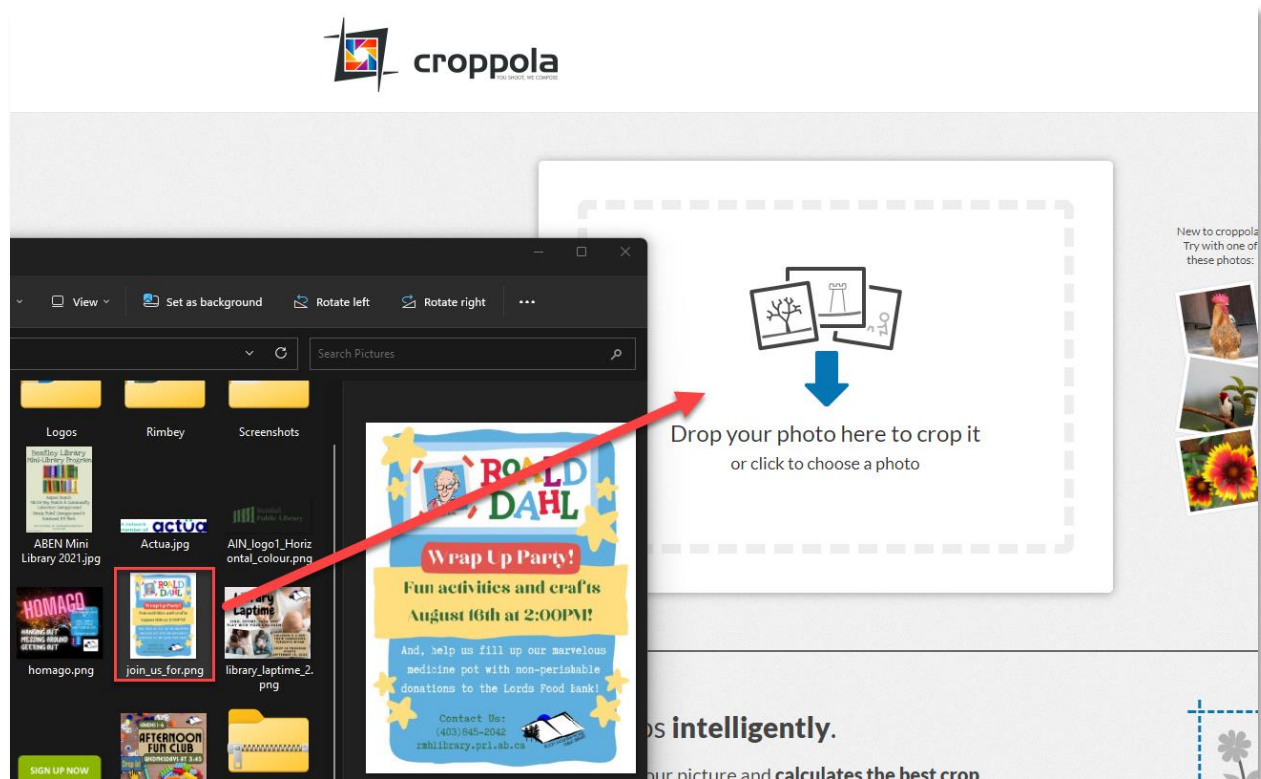
Here's my final image, perfect for a banner:

Online Method

If you are running Windows 10, you can use the Photos app. It's very similar to what's outlined above (Windows 11 Method), but it can be hard to get exact since there is no 2:1 option offered in that version of Photos.

For this method, we will use the Croppola website.

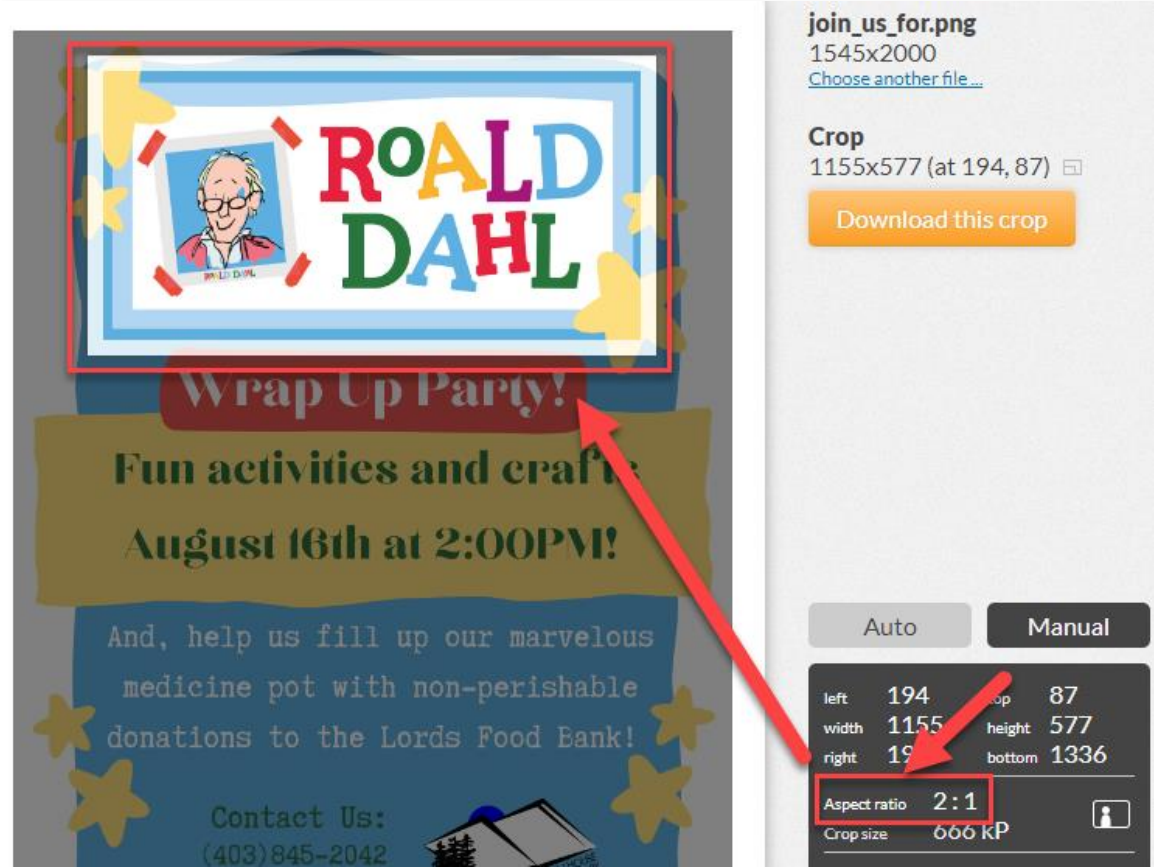Drag and drop the image as directed by the website:

Once the file has uploaded, your image will appear on the website. Select "Manual," then change your aspect ratio to 2:1.
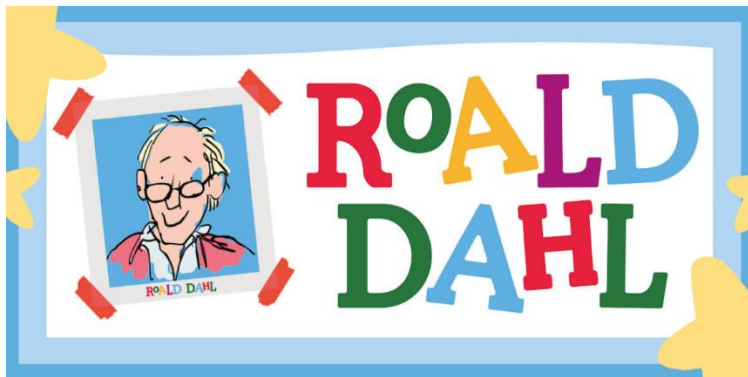
Once you've set the ratio to 2:1, the white box in the middle will adjust. You can now freely move it around the image and use the white outline to adjust the size of the box.

I've highlighted the area I want for my banner:

Then just click the orange button, "Download this crop," navigate to where you want to save your file to, and click the Save button.
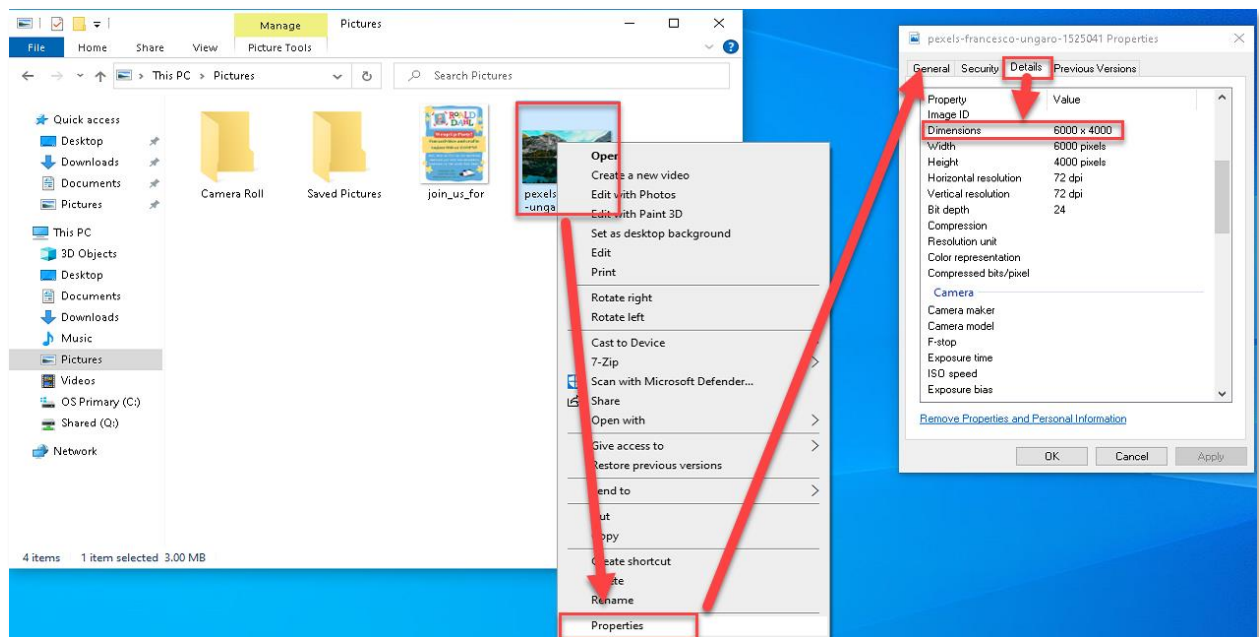
Here's the final image:

Resize an Image

If your image is gigantic, several thousand pixels wide and tall, it might be a good idea to resize it to a smaller image. This can help reduce the file size and make the Reduce Image Size steps more effective.

I found a nice mountain image online that I want to use, but it's 3 MB. Way too big. And when I reduce it using TinyPNG, it's still 2.4 MB. Let's find out why.
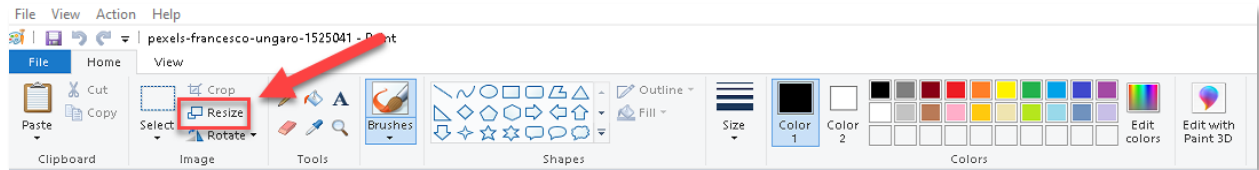
We can open the Properties of image to find out how big this file is. Right click the image, click on Properties at the bottom, click the Details tab, then look at Dimensions.
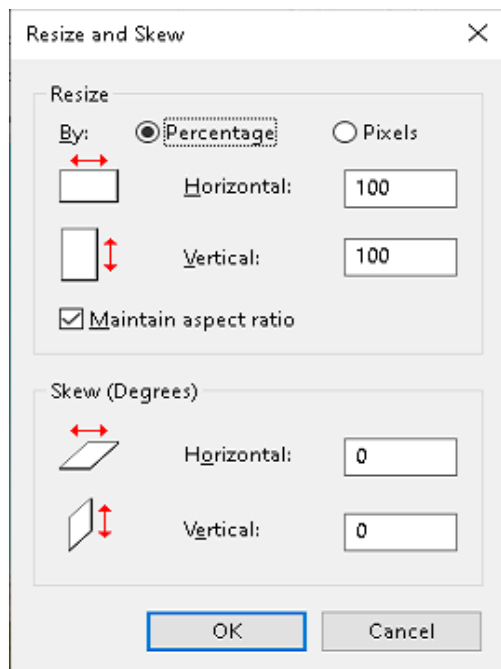

This file is 6000 x 4000 pixels. This would be great for a high-definition wallpaper, but takes a long time to load on an internet connection. For comparison, a standard monitor is 1920 x 1080 pixels, so we can go a lot smaller.

To start reducing the file, right click it again, hover on "Open with," then click on Paint. Once your image is open in Paint, find the Resize button and click it.

(NOTE: This method was outlined using Windows 10 Paint. Windows 11 has the same functions, just some of the icons look a little different. You can still follow these steps, but if you have any trouble, contact us at PRL Helpdesk and we can give you a hand.)
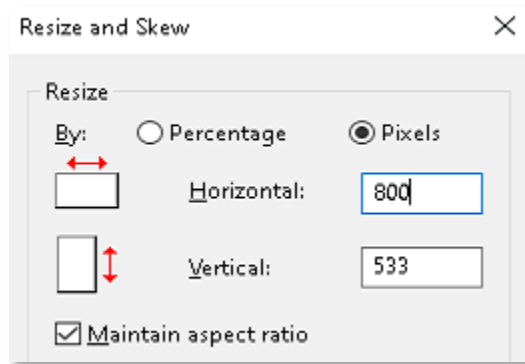

This window will open:

You can adjust by Percentage or Pixels. I prefer to know exactly how many pixels my image is going to be, so I'm going to use that in this example.
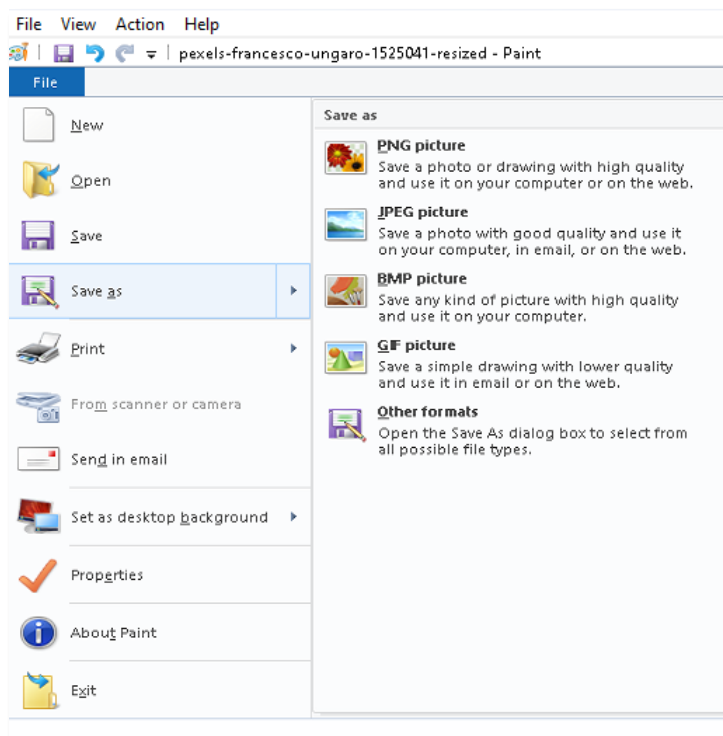
I only want to use this image as a small banner, so I'm going to go quite small. I put 800 into the Horizontal field. As long as the "Maintain aspect ratio" box is ticked, the Vertical field will automatically scale.
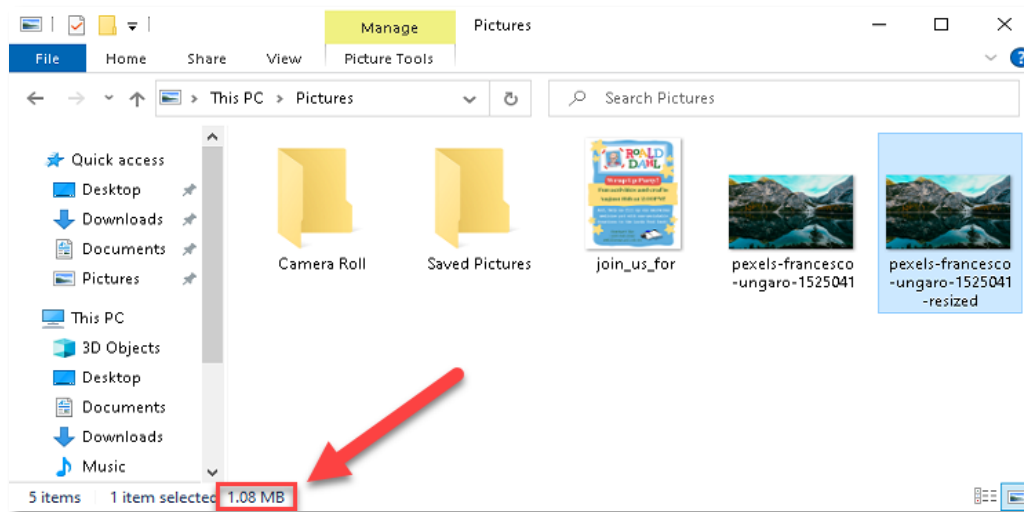
Click OK. The image will shrink.

Now you need to save. Click File, hover on Save as, then choose the file type you want to save as. Generally, PNG is best for websites.

When the File Explorer window pops up, give the image a name (I usually like to append it with "-resized" to differentiate).

The new file is now quite a bit smaller:

At 1.08 MB, it is a third of the file size it was before. When I run it through TinyPNG, it becomes 257 kB, perfect to putting onto Sitecore.