

PHOTOSHOP 3: Slicing

Working with your homepage design, you'll experiment with different layouts and create rollover states for each part of your image. You'll then slice the image into smaller images and export them for use in Dreamweaver.

Step 1: Download your PSD file to the desktop.

Experimenting with layout

Rather than have the four squares of image lined up horizontally across the page, you might want to arrange them in a square, line them up vertically, or even rotate them ([Edit > Transform](#)). To line up the squares and text evenly as you change the layout, make the rulers viewable ([View > Rulers](#)) and use the guides (by clicking on the Move tool and dragging off of the ruler).

Keep in mind that you need to use the Layers palette to select which layer you're moving as you make these adjustments. Also keep in mind that you should move the "up" and "over" states at the same time, so be sure to link these layers in the Layers palette.

Step 2: Link the "up" and "over" states for each of your four images. Then, experiment with layout by moving the images and text around on the screen.

Adjusting the size of your image to accommodate screen resolution

Once you've got a design that you like, you need to see how it will look at different screen resolutions. The standard page size that Web designers build for is 800x600 pixels; this is the screen resolution used by about half of the people who browse the Web. The other increasingly common screen resolution is 1024x768 pixels; this is the screen resolution of many "high end" users—that is, people with newer, larger monitors.

While you can certainly target one group of users and make an educated guess about the likely screen resolution of their computers, it's important to test your design by looking at it on both of the common resolution settings. In both settings, you want all of the images on your homepage to be viewable within the width of the browser window (that is, without the user having to scroll). You also want the images to look good in your target screen resolution, and to not look awful in the other standard resolution.

Step 3: Test your image on different screen resolutions.

My personal preference is to design small; designs that are too large can look amateurish. Also a smaller design leaves more blank space, which can result in a calmer looking page that draws more attention to the design features on the page.

Slicing

The next step is to slice this large image into smaller images. Smaller images load more quickly on the Web and thus reduce download time for your site. Also, it's impossible to do rollover images without slicing the up and over state images out of the larger file. In Dreamweaver, you'll put all of the slices back together.

(an excursion into software)

Adobe makes a program called ImageReady which is supposed to facilitate the transition from Photoshop to the Web. You can create rollover effects in ImageReady as well as animations and other fancy stuff. You can also open ImageReady directly from Photoshop (File > Jump To > ImageReady); your Photoshop file will open in ImageReady.

You might want to look around in it and see if you like ImageReady. However, we won't be using it here for two reasons: I think it's easier and also better practice to code rollovers in Dreamweaver; and I haven't figured out how to get ImageReady not to throw a lot of junk into the process when it slices and exports Web graphics.

Macromedia, the company that makes Dreamweaver, also makes a software program called Fireworks which, although seriously inferior to Photoshop, can help you with some image editing. Moreover, Fireworks has a much better slicing and exporting features.

You're going to do your slicing and exporting in Photoshop for this exercise, but you should know that these other tools are out there.

Back to Slicing

The ***Slice tool*** is located in the Toolbox directly below the Magic Wand. Click and hold on the Slice tool to see the ***Slice Select tool*** that is under it.

You can use the slice tool to manually draw a slice anywhere on the canvas. It may be easier in this case, however, to use guides to identify where slices should occur.

Step 4: Using the Move tool, drag guides from the rulers. Position the vertical and horizontal guides so that they correspond to the top left corners of each of the four squares. Position additional guides so that they slice your name and each of the text items on in your image.

Click on the Slice tool and select the "Slice From Guides" button on the Option toolbar. This will insert slices in the sections created by the guides.

The canvas should now be sliced, and each slice should have a number. Use the Slice Select tool (under the Slice tool in the Toolbox) to delete or name a slice.

- To delete a slice, select it and hit the Delete key.
- To name a slice, double click on it with the Slice Select tool and type a new name in the resulting dialog box.

Step 5: Turn on the visibility for the up state of each of your four squares. One at a time, double-click on these slices with the Slice Select tool, and give each slide a name. Keep in mind that it's good practice to avoid any spaces or odd characters in the names you give.

For example, name the square that corresponds to the resume link "resume_up".

Select and name the slices that have text on them, as well.

Saving/Exporting the Slices

The next step is to save each of your slices as separate images. Since the only slices you need are the ones with text or image on them, you can use two strategies:

- Select and save each slice one at a time
- Save all of the slices and delete the ones you don't want

We'll use a combination of these two strategies.

Step 6: Go to **File > Save for the Web**. In the resulting dialog box, use the Slice Select tool (in the toolbox on the right side of the window) to select a slice. Hold down the Shift key to select multiple slices. You should select all of the slices that have images that you want to put on your homepage, and leave unselected all of the blank slices.

Use the Settings options (on the left side of the window) to select JPEG as your format. Adjust the quality of the image, and notice how the file size and download time change (in the bottom left corner of the window).

When you've selected appropriate settings, click on Save. Select the following options in the resulting dialog box:

<u>Format:</u>	Images Only
<u>Where:</u>	Desktop
<u>Slices:</u>	Selected Slices

What you've done in the step above is to create a folder called "Images" into which you've exported all of the slices from your file. However, you've only exported those images that are visible—in other words, if the visibility was turned off on "resume over" then you haven't exported that image.

Step 7: In Photoshop, turn on the visibility of the over state (or the up state) so that you can see that version of the images that wasn't visible in the previous step.

Go to **File > Save for Web**. Use the Slice Select tool to select one of the images. Double-click on that image and give it a name (for instance, "resume_over"). Click on Save, and in the Slices option in the resulting dialog box, choose the "Selected Slices" option. This will cause only the one selected slice to be exported.

Follow the same procedure for the other three images.

Now the Images folder on your Desktop should have all of the text from your Photoshop document plus two versions for each image. Check the folder to be sure that your images are all there, and delete any unnamed and unwanted images.