HOWARD UNIVERSITY
1867

Web & Digital Style Guide

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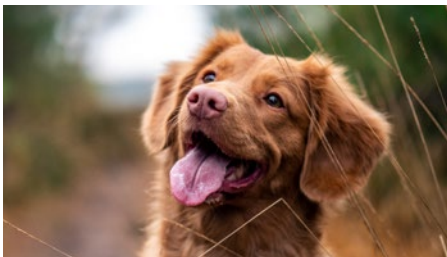
Photography Recommendations

Image Terminology

How It Looks

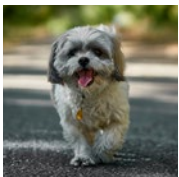Matters most to help ensure images aren't cropped in unexpected ways.

Aspect Ratio

The **relationship between the width and height.** Elements can require certain aspect ratios for the best fit.

16:9 (Exact Aspect Ratio)
This is a commonly used ratio for horizontal images, especially for large backgrounds.

Square (Exact)
Some images need to be exact squares, such as images that become circular.

Horizontal (General)
Sometimes, just a general width-to-height ratio is enough to choose the right image.

Focal Point
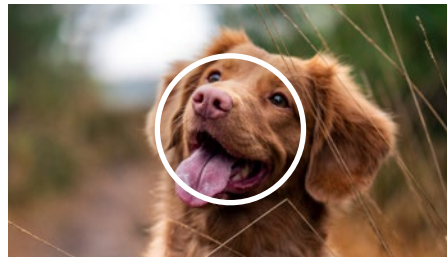
The **main point of interest** in an image.

Image with a centered focal point.

Images placed in an element needing a centered focal point.

How It's Sized

Matters most to optimize page load speeds and help ensure images aren't blurry or pixelated.

Dimensions

The **width and height in pixels** (e.g. 600px × 400px). Proper dimensions can help improve your image quality.

Images should be **at least** the recommended dimensions, and no smaller. Smaller dimensions can result in pixelated/blurry images.
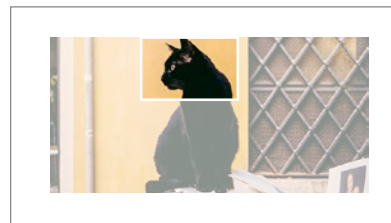
Example of a small image used in a large element

The image is stretched out, and looks blurry.

File Size

The size of the image in **KB** (e.g. 300 KB). Large images can slow down web pages, and might need optimization. **Limit files to 1 MB when possible.** Max files size is 1.5 MB.
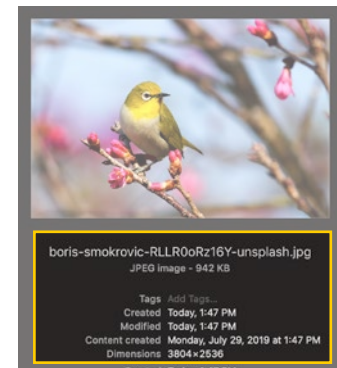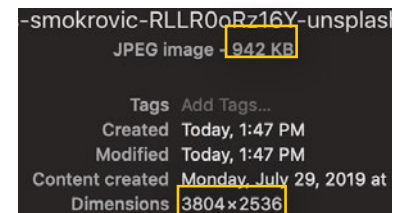

Image info in Finder on a Mac computer.

The file size is **almost 1 MB**—this should be optimized if possible.

Optimizing Images for the Web

It's worth repeating: Images that are too large can slow down sites. While it is important to have a good quality image, it needs to be a reasonable file size. Here are some tips and tools to help optimize images:

1. Use JPGs unless you need a PNG

You can adjust the image quality with a JPG in Photoshop (if you have this at your disposal)—but not a PNG. Unless an image needs a transparent background, save your images as JPGs.

2. Resize large images

Pay attention to image recommendations and file size. If an image should be 1920px wide, don't save it as 2500px.

### 3. Save to recommended size—then adjust the quality to 50%

If an image size on-screen is 400px, it should be saved at 800px with a quality of 50%. **This is so it shows up nice and high-res on retina devices.**

See top-left image of the export options in Photoshop for an example. The online tool **Pixlr.com** can also adjust the quality.

Tools to Help

For compressing image file size:
- **TinyPNG.com** (online, free)

To re-size and adjust quality:
- **Pixlr.com** (online, free)
- Photoshop
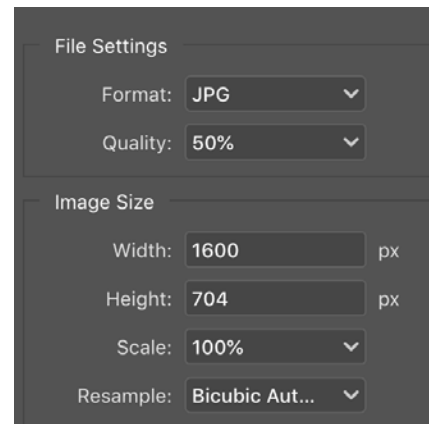
Photoshop "Export" options for image size and quality. Note the "50%" quality level.
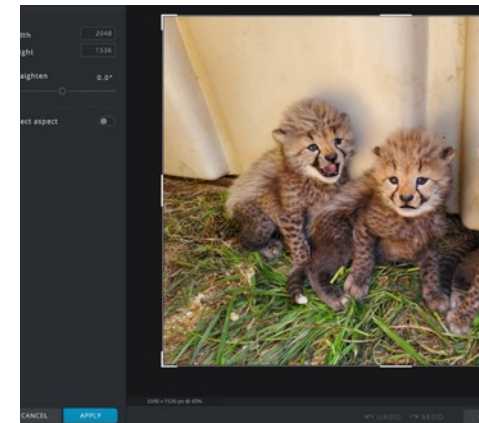
Pixlr—an online tool to create, re-size, and optimize images

TinyPNG—an online tool to compress images

Image Specifications Quick Reference

Important Notes

Adjust quality of all images to 50%. Image sizes are **intentionally larger** than what you see on-screen. This accounts for retina devices that need larger images.

Watch the file size. The file size limit on the website is **1.5 MB**. Avoid files over 1 MB when possible.

Element/Widget	Aspect Ratio	Focal Point	Dimensions (px)	Notes
HOMEPAGE				
Hero Image & Video	6:4	Centered	1500 x 1000	Videos can be supplied at 16:9 ratio, but will crop on the sides
Announcement Card	4:5	Centered	800 x 1000	
Priority Category Images	7:5	Center-Right	1960 x 1400	These will only display on desktop view-ports and will be hidden on mobile screen sizes (tablet/phone). Keep subject center-right.
Testimonial Quote	2:3	Centered	800 x 1200	
Stories of Support Cards	4:5	Centered	800 x 1000	
Your Impact	1:1	Centered	1000 x 1000	
More Ways to Support	5:7	Centered	1400 x 1960	

Image Specifications Quick Reference

Element/Widget	Aspect Ratio	Focal Point	Dimensions (px)	Notes
GIVING OPPORTUNITIES				
Featured Cards	4:5	Centered	800 x 1000	
Opportunity Cards	1:1	Centered	400 x 400	Note that these images will be hidden on mobile and will only display on desktop
YOUR GIFT AT WORK				
Stat Scroll	1:1	Centered	600 x 600	
INDIVIDUAL GIVING OPPORTUNITY				
Hero Image	5:7	Centered	1400 x 1960	

Photography Recommendations

Photo choice helps define your site. Users will notice images usually before they read anything on the site. Choosing the right photography can be difficult, even when you have a great library of images to choose from.

Tips for Choosing and Using Photos

Quality is key

When saving photos for your projects, check the image size and aspect ratio. Images that are sized incorrectly may appear blurry and unprofessional.

Choose relevant images

Take care to choose images that add context to the information being provided.

Choose stock wisely

When choosing stock, be sure to select images that feel authentic to your audience and message. Avoid anything that feels posed, and do a reverse image search to see where others may already be using the image. Go to Google, select images in the upper right-hand corner, and add a thumbnail of the desired image to search.

Check usage rights

Make sure you have the right permissions to use an image—don't just download from a Google image search or off someone's site.

Optimize photo colors

For brand consistency, use **Pixlr.com** to make minor adjustments to images, like brightening washed-out colors or adjusting colors that seem off.

Empty space ≠ filler image

Images should support surrounding content and help provide additional context or meaning.

Website Theme Guidelines

Kitchen Sink Overview

Widget Heading Styles

Kitchen Sink Overview

1 **Kitchen Sink Header** (Site Builder Guide)

- Use primary links to link to L1 pages and drop-downs to show L1 and child pages.
- Use the utility nav to link to important secondary pages and login portals.

2 **Breadcrumbs**

This acts as a secondary navigation that shows a user's location on the website and displays links to all of the levels that come before the current page.

3 **Sub-navigation (optional)**

This allows access to the parent page, sibling pages, and, if applicable, child pages.

- Do use for level two pages.
- Don't use for top level or pages without sibling or child pages.

4 **Hero Image (optional)** (Site Builder Guide)

The featured image that introduces a page.

5 **Lead-In Text (optional)** (Site Builder Guide)

This is the intro text (first H2 headline) for a basic page—with a recommended max of 100 characters.

6 **Sidebar** (Site Builder Guide)

The sidebars hold supplemental content, like contact information.

- Do use one sidebar per page, with a recommended 50 characters for the title and 200 for the description text.
- Do keep content within one to two paragraphs. Avoid "information overload."
- If your sidebar is longer than your page content, put that sidebar content in the body.

7 **Rich Text/WYSIWYG** (Site Builder Guide)

This contains header styles (H2-H5), body copy, and bullet styles (standard and numbered).

- Do use headers in proper order based on hierarchy (H2, H3, H4, etc.), bullets to help support points within a block of copy.
- Don't use headers in an improper order (H2 directly under an H4), overuse bullets or use them in place of large amounts of copy.

Kitchen Sink Overview

8 **Button Set** (Site Builder Guide)

Buttons draw the user's attention to trigger actions and links.

- Do use one to three buttons at a time. This will avoid overwhelming a user with buttons and will help to narrow down choices.
- Try to keep button labels to one to three words—overly long buttons can look awkward. If a button has long text, try pairing the button with a heading to break it up.
- Use meaningful language that tells users what to expect and know where they will go when they click a button. Avoid generic language such as "More," "Click Here," or "Submit."
- Don't overuse buttons. Prioritize the actions you want your users to take. Avoid using a row of over three buttons, as well as "sprinkling" too many buttons throughout a page.
- Keep button labels to a max character count of 30 characters.

9 **Link Set** (Site Builder Guide)

Link sets are used to draw the user's attention to trigger actions and links but with less emphasis as with a button set. Similar guidance should be used with link sets as with button sets.

- Keep link text to a max character count of 30 characters.

10 **Table** (Site Builder Guide)

- Headings are required—keep these as short as possible. With more columns, these headers get difficult to read on smaller devices. Use a recommended character count of 50 characters.
- Consider breaking data into multiple tables rather than segmenting across many columns.
- Avoid using a table with too many rows.

11 **Accordions** (Site Builder Guide)

Accordions organize and simplify a large amount of related content. When selected, the content is viewed without having to navigate away from the page. Only text can be used in accordions.

- Do use at least two accordions, but at least three is ideal.
- Do choose headings that are all related to a similar topic.
- Keep content length reasonable. Since accordions hide information, users may skip over info if it is buried in one that is overly long. Recommend no more than 500 characters where possible.
- Don't use very long headings. Instead, try to move text down into the body.

Kitchen Sink Overview

11 **Inline Images (Left and Right Aligned)** ([Site Builder Guide](#))

- Do use to support talking points in a large block of copy.

- Don't use for short paragraphs.

- Image captions have a recommended max character limit of 300 characters (ideally, shoot for less).

12 **Carousel** ([Site Builder Guide](#))

- Showcases multiple images within one area of the page (e.g., as an image gallery).

- Each image includes an optional title, body copy, and image caption.

13 **Image Gallery** ([Site Builder Guide](#))

This allows access to the parent page, sibling pages, and, if applicable, child pages.

- Do use for level two pages.

- Don't use for top level or pages without sibling or child pages.

Kitchen Sink Overview
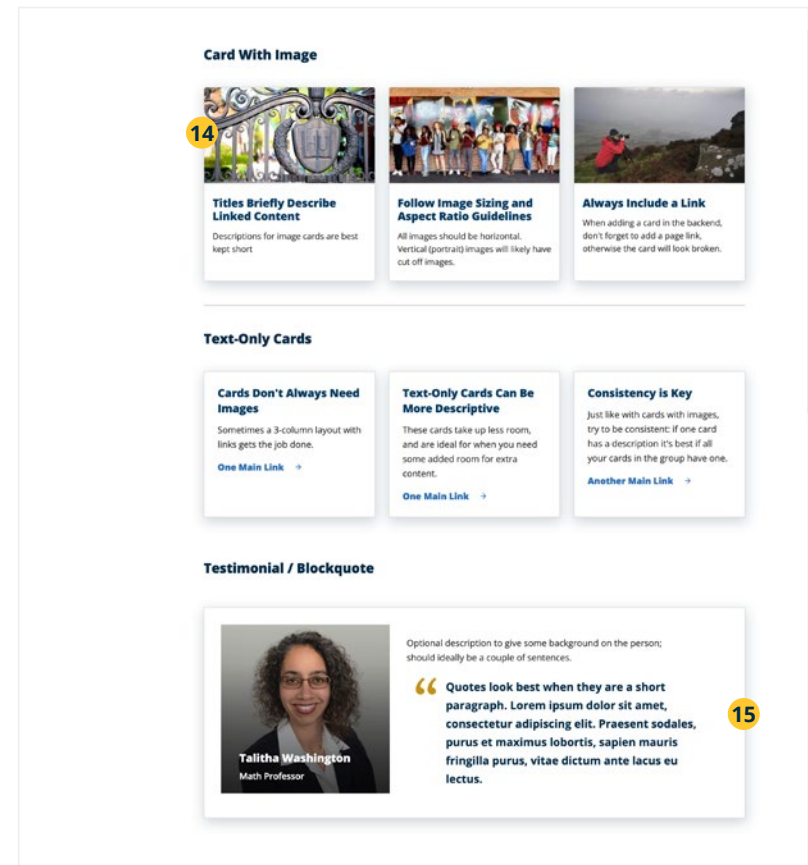
14 **Card Sets** (Site Builder Guide)

Cards briefly describe and link to a piece of content. Supporting copy, image, and link text are optional.

- Do use three to six cards at a time. Keep to the character limit specified for headings and text.

- Don't use fewer than two or more than six cards at a time.

- Use a recommended max character count of 60 for card titles, 200 for card description text, and 20 for link text.

15 **Testimonials (Blockquote)** (Site Builder Guide)

A blockquote is a specially styled section of text, offset or called out on its own, to support the other content on the page. This supports an optional image and optional fields for author and role.

- Do include blockquotes midway through a long article. This adds visual interest and helps break long copy into smaller sections.

- Don't use an overly long quote. Blockquotes often use font sizes/weights that can be overwhelming if used for copy that is very long.

- Don't place a blockquote as the last element on page.

- Don't include quotation marks within the text of the featured quote, as these are present as a design element.

- Use a recommended max of 300 characters for the quote portion of the testimonial (or shorter, if possible).

Card With Image

14

Titles Briefly Describe Linked Content

Descriptions for image cards are best kept short

Follow Image Sizing and Aspect Ratio Guidelines

All images should be horizontal. Vertical (portrait) images will likely have cut off images.

Always Include a Link

When adding a card in the backend, don't forget to add a page link, otherwise the card will look broken.

Text-Only Cards

Cards Don't Always Need Images

Sometimes a 3-column layout with links gets the job done.

One Main Link →

Text-Only Cards Can Be More Descriptive

These cards take up less room, and are ideal for when you need some added room for extra content.

One Main Link →

Consistency is Key

Just like with cards with images, try to be consistent: if one card has a description it's best if all your cards in the group have one.

Another Main Link →

Testimonial / Blockquote

Optional description to give some background on the person; should ideally be a couple of sentences.

15

❝ Quotes look best when they are a short paragraph. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Praesent sodales, purus et maximus lobortis, sapien mauris fringilla purus, vitae dictum ante lacus eu lectus.

Talitha Washington
Math Professor

Widget Heading Styles: Quick Reference

H1 Headings:

Hero

DAR Homepage

Landing Page Hero – Full-Width

Landing Page Hero – Introduction

Landing Page Hero – No Hero

Call to Action: Homepage

Rich Text/WYSIWYG

H2 Headings:

Accordion

- Uses an H2 but is styled like an H3

Call to Action : Full-Width

Card Sets

- Uses an H2 but is styled like an H3

External / Local Articles

- Uses an H2 but is styled like an H3

Feature with Large Image

Feature with Large Image and Intro

Promotional Area

Announcements

Rich Text/WYSIWYG

Statistic

H3 Headings:

Carousel

External News Story

- H3 heading is styled like an H4

Rich Text/WYSIWYG

Statistic

If you need assistance or have questions about web styles or any of these guidelines, contact the web team.

Review Howard Drupal Site Builder