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## Step 1. Capture the image electronically

This step involves the process of "capturing" your item to create an electronic file of an image. To complete this step, you can:

- [Create an electronic image yourself](#)
- [Pay someone to develop an electronic image for you](#)
- [Pay someone to process your film and deliver your image to the Web](#)

### Create an electronic image yourself

There are three primary methods to capturing electronic images.

Equipment	Optimal for:	Save image as:
<a href="#">Digital Camera</a>	3D images	jpg
<a href="#">Video Capture</a>	3D images	jpg
<a href="#">Scanner</a>	Flat items, photos of items	jpg

#### Digital Camera (Cost: \$200 - 600)

Using a digital camera is an ideal way to capture an electronic image of a three-dimensional item. A digital camera is just like a regular camera, except the image is stored in the digital camera's memory instead of on film. You simply transfer the file directly from the camera to your computer using a cable. Or, some cameras allow you to save images onto removable media which can be read by your computer.

Ideally, get a camera that stores images in the JPG format, since this format produces Web photos are sharp and easily read by most imaging software. Also, if you sell small items, make sure the camera you purchase has a lens that will handle extreme close ups (known as *macro* capability). Most cameras with a zoom feature will take excellent macro images but others will not. Be sure to find out all of the capabilities of the camera before you make a purchase.

#### Video Capture (Cost: \$100 - \$200)

If you have video images from your video camera or your VCR tapes, you can transfer this video into a digital image using a Video Capture device and software. Assuming you have the video equipment, this option costs less than buying a digital camera or a scanner because all you need to buy is the device. One good example of this software is [Snappy](#).

#### Scanners (Cost: \$100 - \$300)

A scanner is connected to a computer and is controlled by a software application running on the computer. Once you scan an image using a software application that controls the scanner, you can use that software to save the image onto your computer's hard drive or floppy disk. You probably will want to scan the image at 72 dpi (dots per inch) since it will be displayed at this resolution.

Scanners are ideal for items which are flat, such as a poster or trading card. If you have a three-dimensional object that cannot be scanned easily, you can still use a scanner to get that image into your computer. Keep in mind that you have a photograph of that item and then scan the photograph.

#### Where and what kind of equipment to get

You can visit almost any computer, electronic, or photo store to purchase each of these items. If you don't want to buy these items, you can ask your friends or relatives if you can borrow the equipment.

Some manufacturers with informative sites include: [HP](#), [Kodak](#), [Visioneer](#) [Sony](#), [Epson](#), [Logitech](#), [Canon](#), [Agfa](#), and [Nikon](#).

You can learn more about equipment choices at:

- ZD Net - [Scanners](#) - [Cameras](#)
- CNet - [Scanners](#) - [Cameras](#)

### **Paying someone to develop an electronic image for you**

You can bring your items to a copy or desktop publishing store (such as [Kinkos](#) or [Mail Boxes Etc.](#)) and pay for them to be either scanned or photographed, and converted into a digital format. Again, eBay recommends that you make sure digital image is saved in a JPEG (.jpg).

### **Paying someone to process your film and put your image on the Web**

The following three companies have services that will process your photos and give you the option to have your photos in a digital format suitable for the Web. If you choose to have someone else put your photos on the Web, you can avoid Steps 2 and 3. Again, if you use this solution, make sure the digital image is saved in a JPG (.jpg) format. Check out a few of these programs at:

- [PhotoNet](#)
- [Fujifilm.net](#)
- [Seattle Filmworks](#)

[Photo Home](#) [Step 1](#) [Step 2](#) [Step 3](#) [Step 4](#)



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## Step 2. Edit the image

Once you capture an image electronically, you can view and edit it with image editing software. Editing an image allows you to get rid of unnecessary details and modify the image's dimension and graphic size so the image is small enough to download quickly when someone views your item, yet large enough to display sufficient detail.

### **More info:**

[Software to help you edit your image](#)

[Tips for editing your image](#)

[Put your image into the right format](#)

### **Software to help you edit your image**

Check to see if your digital camera, scanner, or video capture software has some basic features which allow you to crop and edit the image.

If you need more software to enhance your image, there are several excellent software packages less than \$100 which allow you to resize, convert, and adjust all aspects of an image file. Some of these include [Picture It!](#), [PhotoDeluxe](#), [Paint Shop Pro](#), and [LivePix](#).

If you are looking for free image editors, try searching from the TUCOWS site <http://www.tucows.com>, or the shareware site <http://www.shareware.com> for popular image editors such as Graphics Workshop or older versions of Paint Shop Pro. You can also use Microsoft's Picture Editor, which is shipped with the Microsoft Office Suite.

### **Tips for editing your image**

*Recommended Maximum Image Size:* 50 KB (compressed); less than 200KB (uncompressed)

*Recommended Maximum Dimensions:* 300 x 300 pixels

If your image file is very large, it will take a long time to download over the Web. To help users more easily view your item, reduce your image's size if it is larger than 50 KB. Large image files may discourage some users from downloading your photo and may use up a lot of limited space on your Web server (more on this in Step 3). Image file sizes of 10 to 25KB (compressed) are even better.

The software that came with your digital camera, scanner, or video capture method will help you reduce your image files to a workable size while maintaining satisfactory image quality. You may have to experiment a bit until you're satisfied with the results.

If you use a scanner to capture your electronic image, try scanning at a resolution of 150 dpi (dots per inch) or less at first. If you think your image looks good and is relatively small (again, less than 50KB), then your image are fine. If you think your image does not look clear enough, you can either scan only the most important part of the image, or increase the dpi setting and accept that your image will require a longer download time.

### **Put your image into the right format**

Once you have the file containing the image on your computer, you need to make sure you save it so that it can be used on the Web. While you can usually choose to save your image in one of several different types of image files or formats, there are only two that are appropriate for the Web: JPG (.jpg) and GIF (.gif). eBay recommends using the JPG (.jpg) format for listing items on eBay since photos and images of items appear best in this format.

In addition to choosing a format, you must also give the image file a name. The end of the name will end in a dot (.) followed by the type of file you saved it as: jpg or gif. You should not put any spaces or special characters (such as &, \$, or /) in the name of your file. An example of a file name is:

*myphoto.jpg*

Once you've saved your image, you might want to make sure it is small enough to download easily. This information is covered in the Step 3.

[Photo Home](#) [Step 1](#) [Step 2](#) [Step 3](#) [Step 4](#)



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## Step 3. Put your image on the Web

Once you have an electronic file containing your item, you need to upload the image to the Web. There are several ways to put your electronic file onto the Web.

[If you have "dedicated" space \(for your files or images\) on the Web](#)

[If you are an AOL user](#)

[If you do not have space on the Web \(or don't think you do\)](#)

### If you have "dedicated" space (for your files or images) on the Web

Most Internet Service Providers (ISPs) provide some space on their computers where their customers can post their own stuff.

Find out from your ISP how you can transfer your file to this space. Most likely, you will need to use an FTP (File Transfer Protocol) application to transfer your file from your computer to theirs.

One of the easiest ways to use an FTP application is to use a free (shareware) program to help you. These programs allow you to upload and download information from your desktop to servers on the internet. Popular FTP utilities include:

- [WS FTP](#)
- [CuteFTP](#)
- [FTP Voyager](#)
- [Fetch \(FTP for Macs\)](#)

### WS FTP - Example of how an FTP program works

Download and install WS\_FTP. When you start the application, you will be prompted to fill in what is called the Session Window. Click "New" and fill in the various fields. Your ISP will provide the necessary instructions and information for setting up your FTP application so that you can connect to your space at their Web server. Once the session has been configured and saved, you can connect directly to your web server space on the remote server by clicking "connect".

You will then see a screen with two windows. The window on the left displays a directory tree for your hard drive; the window on the right displays a directory tree for your allotted space on a Web server. Once you know where to put your files on the Web (your ISP will tell you which directory to use in the right hand window), using WS\_FTP is just a matter of selecting your image files from the window on the left and sending them to the window on the right using the arrow direction buttons.

### If you are an AOL user

AOL users can go to the keyword MyPlace and access their own webspace where they can follow instructions to upload their own images. [Click here](#) for info.

### If you do not have space on the Web (or don't think you do)

There are several places on the Web which will help you transfer your image from your desktop to the Web, without having to get server space or using FTP. These sites will get your photo through by email or their own proprietary systems which allow you to upload an image to their site. There is a charge for these uploading and "hosting" services, which can range from about 50 cents to 2 dollars (U.S.) (depending on the image size and time they will host the photo) for each picture.

Some long-time community members who provide this service and helpful information include:

- [Pongo](#)

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