



Q. How do I put pictures in my listings?

A. Adding photos to your auction item pages is not as complicated as it might seem, although it does involve several separate steps:

1. CAPTURING THE IMAGE

You must "capture" the image or photo by using either a digital camera or a scanner. A digital camera takes the image and creates a digital file that you can then "upload" into your computer by following the instructions that came with your particular make of camera. A scanner "scans" actual photographs or graphics and converts the data into digital information that is stored on your computer. Both methods have their advantages and disadvantages.

2. FORMATTING AND NAMING THE IMAGE

The visual information of a photo or scan is saved as digital data in a computer file. There are several different possible types of image files or "formats" but the two we are most interested in are GIFs and JPGs. The image formatting software that comes with your digital camera or scanner will best explain how to convert your image files to either format. GIF format is best for non-photographic images. Photos are most often best converted to JPG format. Using either format, you must also give the image file an identifying name like:

myebayphoto.jpg

or

beanie04.gif

3. SIZING THE IMAGE

Image files need to be a workable size in kilobytes. Large image files may take too much time loading for most bidders and could use up the limited amount of space on your web server (step 4). Any image larger than 40KB is probably too big for eBay purposes. 10 to 25KB is a good range. If you use a scanner, never scan at any resolution over 150 dpi (dots per inch).

The software that came with your digital camera or scanner will help you reduce your image files to a workable size while maintaining satisfactory image quality.

There are several free and shareware graphics applications available for resizing, converting and adjusting all aspects of an image file. Graphics Workshop and Paint Shop Pro are two very good shareware graphics apps. Try searching from the TUCOWS site at www.tucows.com

(While you are there, look for WS_FTP LE under the FTP section and download it as well.)

Don't panic, just a few more steps.

4. USING FTP TO SEND THE IMAGE TO YOUR WEB SERVER

Next, you will need to put the image files of your photos in a place where the Internet public can access them. Keeping them on your hard drive won't do it. So the next step is to use a special type of application called FTP (File Transfer Protocol) to "send your images to a publicly available web server. Most Internet Service Providers (ISP) provide web server space for to their subscribers just for this purpose. Download and install an application like WS_FTP LE (a terrific FTP application). WS_FTP has two windows; the left window is a directory tree for your hard drive and the right window is a directory tree for your allotted space on a remote web server. 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. Then it's just a matter of sending your image files from the left window to the right window using the arrow direction buttons.

5. PROVIDING THE URL FOR YOUR IMAGE

Once you have uploaded copies of the image files, you need to note the address or URL (Universal Resource Locator) for each one. A URL is that long bunch of text that starts with:

`http://www.something.com/~my_user_id/my_photo.jpg`

This hypothetical URL is like a postal address in reverse. The "city" would be the "www.something.com". The street would be the "/~my_user_id" and the "name" would be "/my_photo.jpg". Together all the elements of a URL point to a specific filename at a specific and unique location.

When you list an item, you type the URL for the image into the box provided marked "photo URL." If you have followed the above steps carefully and correctly, the image will display on your auction listing.

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