Email Image and File Spec Guide

The right image sizes and formats keep emails sharp on high-resolution screens and quick to load on mobile data. Use these specs when designing, exporting, and building.

Quick specs

Item	Recommended spec	Why it matters
Email width	600–640px	Fits preview panes and scales cleanly on mobile
Full-width image	Displayed at 600px, exported at 1200px wide	2× export stays sharp on retina screens
Two-column image	Displayed at about 280–300px, exported at 2×	Stays crisp when columns stack on mobile
Logo	Displayed at 120–200px wide, exported at 2×	Readable without dominating the header
Social and small icons	Displayed at 24–32px, exported at 2×	Clear and tappable
Single image file size	Under about 200KB	Faster loading, especially on mobile data
Animated GIF	Under about 1MB, with a strong first frame	Some Outlook versions show only the first frame
Total email weight	Under about 1MB including images	Loads quickly for every reader
HTML file size	Under about 100KB	Gmail clips messages over roughly 102KB
Color profile	sRGB	Keeps colors consistent across screens
Resolution (DPI)	72 is fine	Pixel dimensions are what count; set width attributes in the HTML so Outlook doesn't rescale images

Which file format to use

Format	Best for	Watch out for
JPG	Photos and images with gradients	No transparency; heavy compression causes blurry edges around text
PNG	Logos, icons, and graphics with text or transparency	Large file sizes for photos
GIF	Simple animations	Limited to 256 colors; large files add up quickly
SVG	Not recommended for email	Unsupported in Gmail, Outlook, and Yahoo
WebP	Not recommended yet	Unsupported in classic Outlook for Windows and some other clients

Export and hosting tips

- **Export at 2×, display at 1×.** Export a 600px-wide image at 1200px, then set `width="600"` in the HTML.
- **Compress every image.** Tools like TinyPNG, Squoosh, or ImageOptim cut file sizes substantially with little visible loss.
- **Keep text out of images.** Live text stays readable with images off, works with screen readers, and adapts to dark mode.
- **Avoid image-only emails.** A single large image risks spam filtering and shows nothing when images are blocked.
- **Name files clearly.** Names like `fall-sale-hero.jpg` make builds and updates faster than `Untitled-3.jpg`.
- **Host images on a reliable server or your ESP.** Never link to local files, staging sites, or shared-drive previews.
- **Plan for transparency in dark mode.** Transparent PNG logos can disappear on dark backgrounds, so add a subtle outline or provide a light version.

Want this handled for you?

Inbox Standard builds fast-loading, retina-sharp HTML emails, tested across major clients. We work directly with brands and white-label for agencies. Get in touch for a quote.