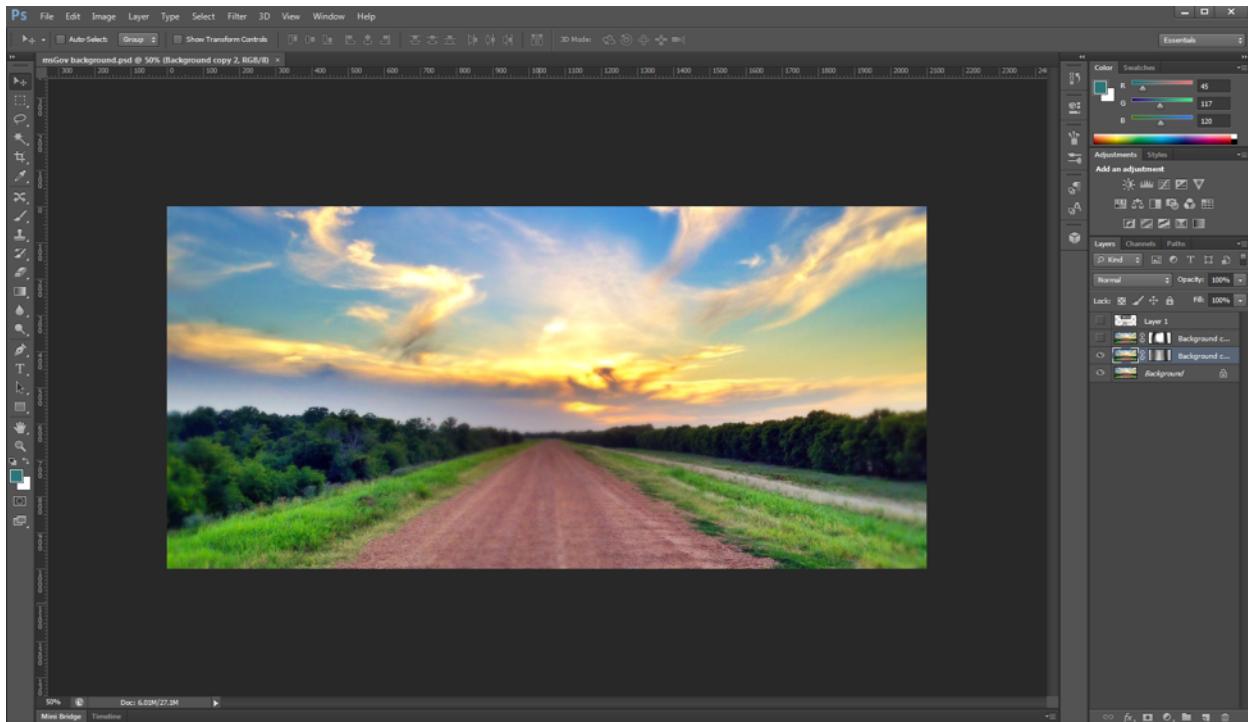


# Preparing and Exporting Files for Web

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## Photos

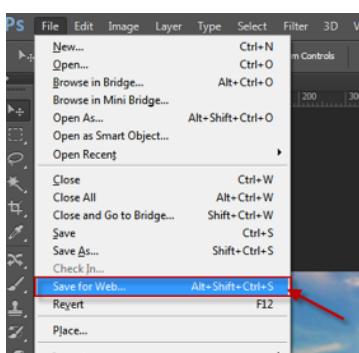
Open your photo in Photoshop. Make any necessary adjustments and then selectively blur out unnecessary details. One trick I use is I make a copy of my photo layer, run a Gaussian blur on it, and then apply a layer mask to selectively bring back sharpness where it is needed.



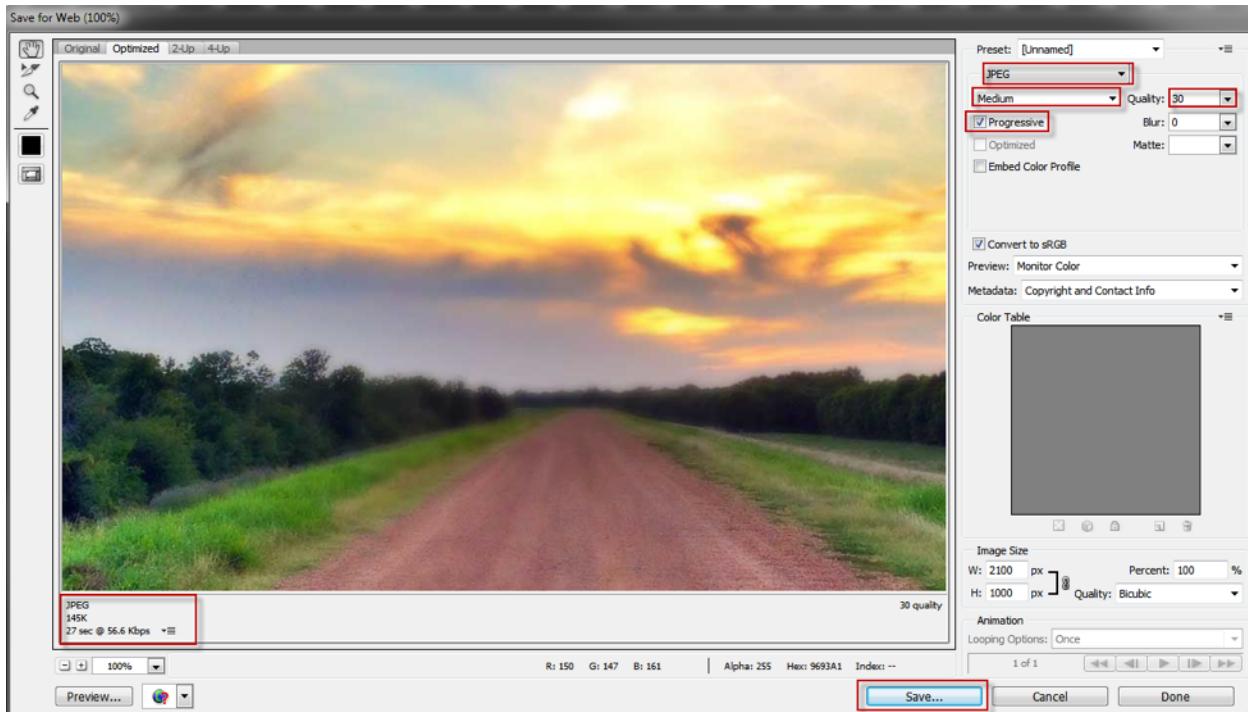
Save the file and then flatten the layers.

## Export Option One: Use Photoshop Export Options

Go to **File > Save for Web:**



Choose JPEG, Medium, 60, and check Progressive.

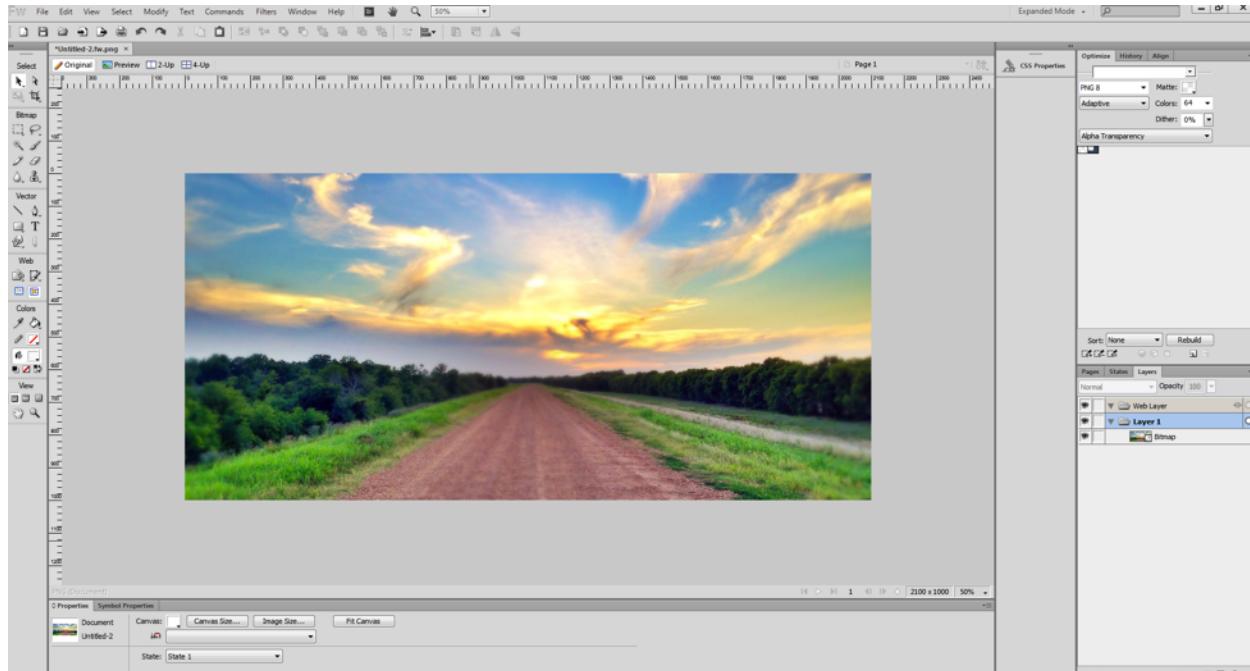


### What's a Progressive JPEG?

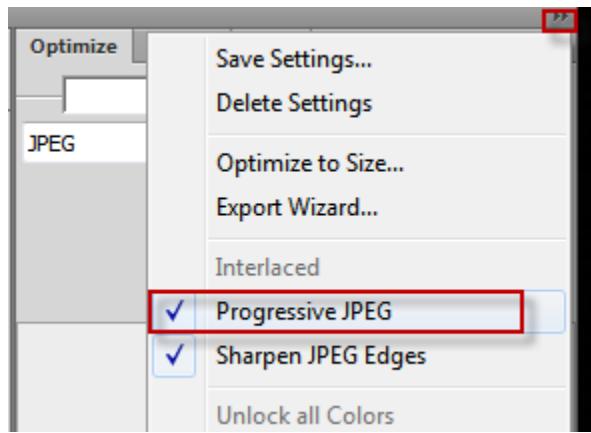
Regular JPEGS are created as one “scan” of the image. When you use a standard JPEG on a site you must wait for the whole file to load before the entirety of the image displays. The file will load starting at the top and continue to load top down until it is completed. A Progressive JPEG stores the file as a series of scans and loads the file one scan on top of the other. A low quality version of the file displays first in its entirety, and the subsequent scans are layered on top until the file has completed loading. The advantage, even though the file sizes are similar, is that the user sees the whole image much faster, creating the illusion of a faster load.

## Export Option Two: Use Fireworks Export Options

Make a selection around the photo in Photoshop and copy into Fireworks.

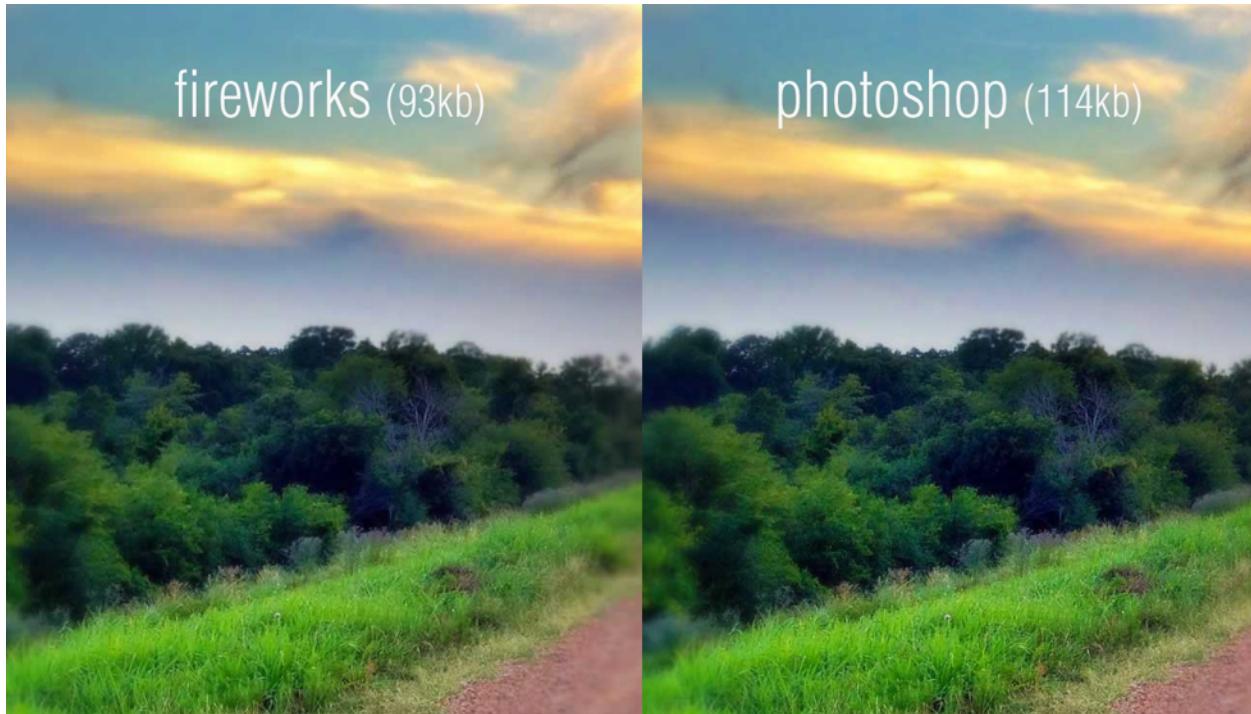


Click Preview and then select JPEG from the Optimize panel. Choose a Quality number, and then click on the drop arrow at the top right of the panel and select Progressive JPEG.



You may need to play with these settings to get the optimum balance of sharpness and file size. In general, deselecting Sharpen JPEG Edges will reduce the file size and remove artifacting. Selecting Progressive JPEG will reduce the file size and make the file load faster for the user.

Comparison of same photo exported from Fireworks and Photoshop:

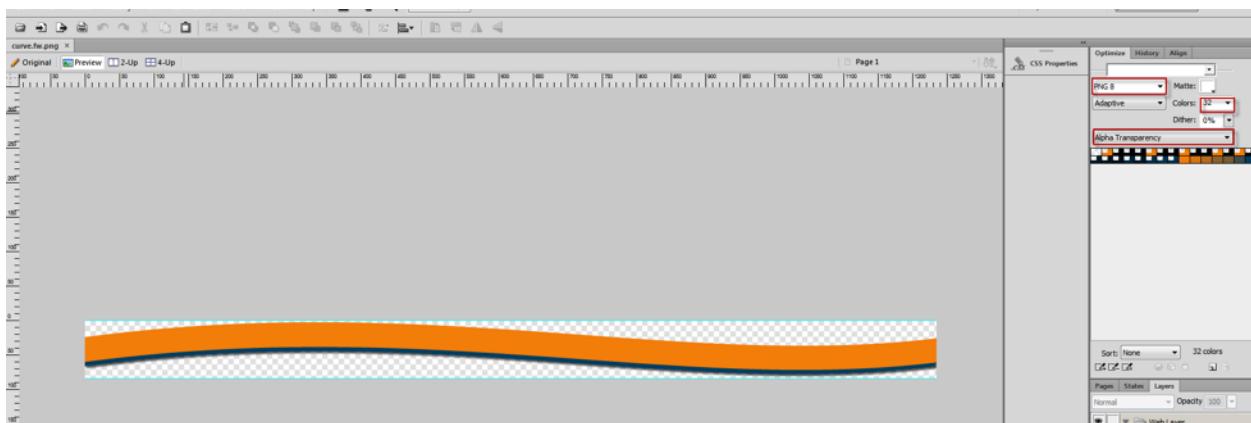


## Vector Graphics

Vector graphics can be created in Illustrator or Fireworks, or a number of vector editing tools.

### Exporting a File Created in Fireworks

Open a file created in Fireworks. Make sure that the background is set to transparent.



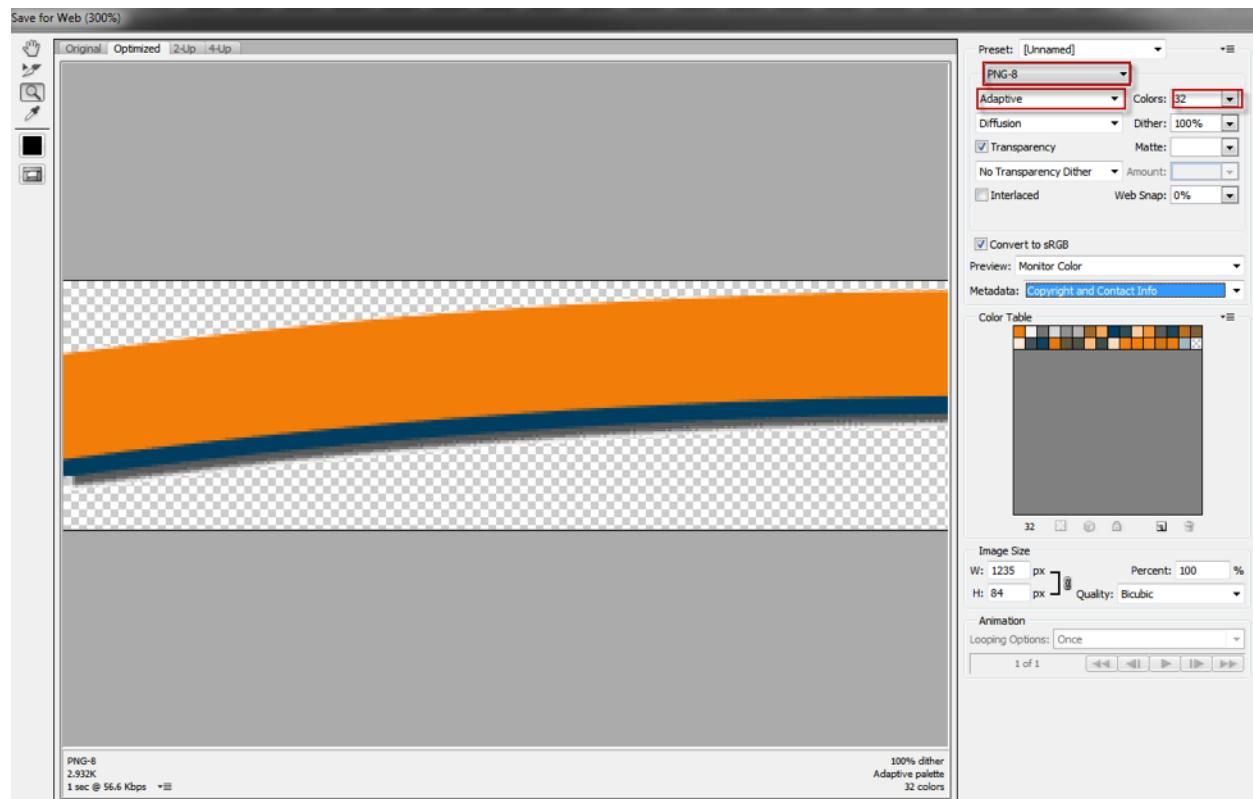
Choose PNG, Adaptive, and reduce the number of colors until the file is small but still looks good. Select Alpha Transparency. **File > Export**.

## Why PNG and not GIF?



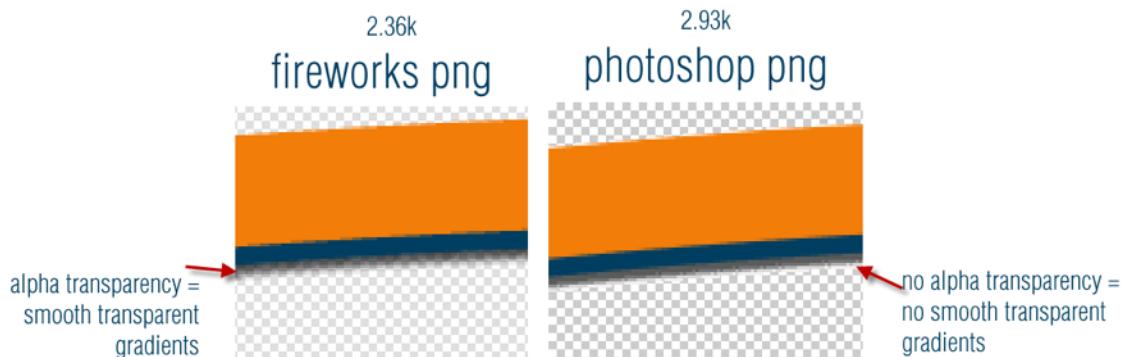
## Exporting Graphics from Photoshop

Open a vector or graphic file in Photoshop. Make sure the background is transparent. Go to **File > Export for Web**. Use the same settings as Fireworks.



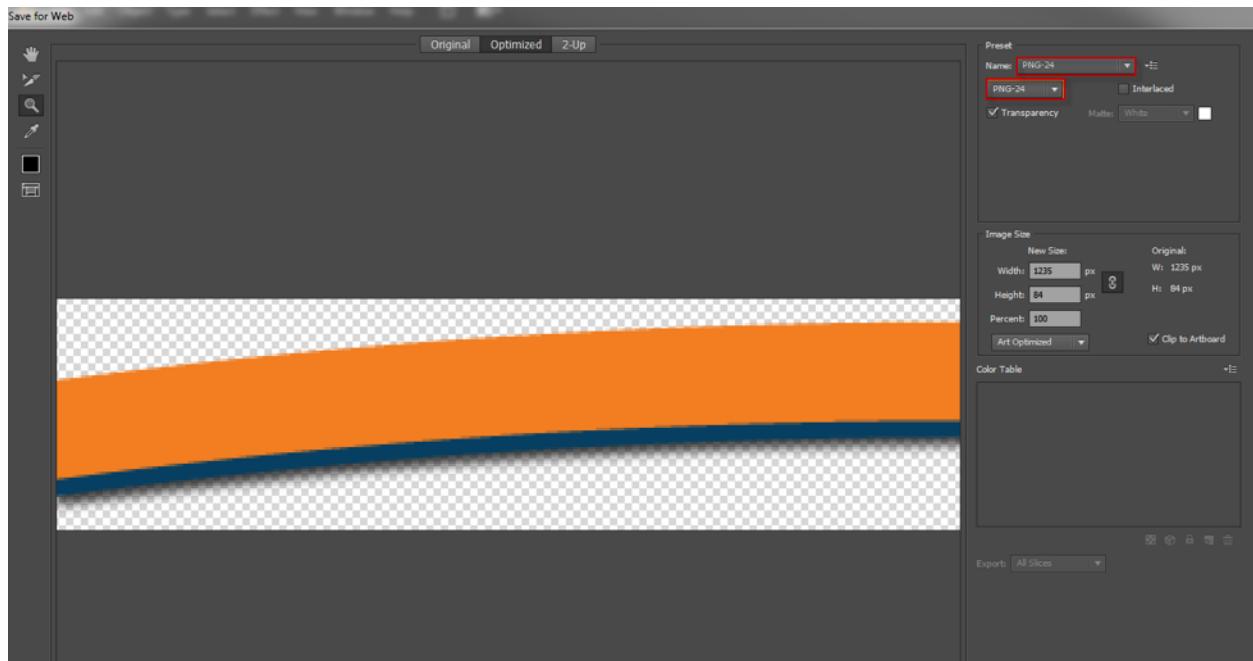
## What's missing?

No alpha transparency option. Why does that matter?



## Exporting Files from Illustrator

Open a file in Illustrator. Go to **File > Save for Web**. Illustrator does not have an alpha transparency option. It does offer PNG-24 which saves the file true to life. The file looks great, but it is significantly larger in size than the standard PNG file produced in Fireworks.



2.36k

fireworks png-8



6.95k

illustrator png-24



they both look great, except the fireworks png is 2.36k and the  
illustrator png is over twice that size at 6.86k

## Mixed Images

So what about photos with type or other art layered on top? What's the best way to export these files?

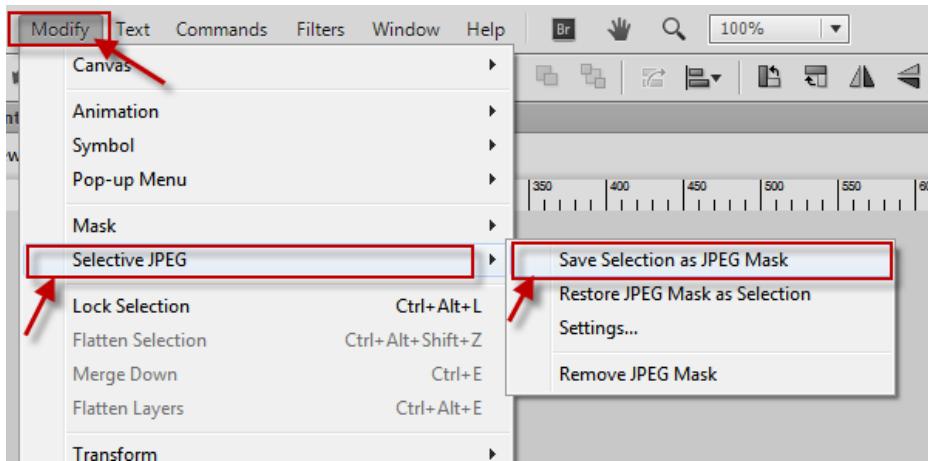
Open a mixed image in Fireworks. If you optimize the image for JPEG you will notice artifacting around the type and flat color areas of the image:



Luckily, Fireworks has a nifty tool called Selective JPEG. Using the marquee tool, make selections around the type and graphic areas of the image:



With the selections still active, go to **Modify > Selective JPEG > Save Selection as JPEG Mask**:



The selected areas will now have a red box over them. These exist only on the web layer and will not affect your image.



When you go into preview you will notice that the masked areas look noticeably sharper with little to no artifacting. You will have to play around with the Quality and Selective Quality settings to get the best balance of image quality versus file size. The Selective quality field determines the amount of compression applied only to the masked areas. Images that use Selective JPEG masking tend to have larger file sizes.



51.5k

regular JPEG



Quality:60

62.4k

selective JPEG



Quality:60  
Selective Quality:84

47.4k

selective JPEG



Quality:55  
Selective Quality:75

## **Summary:**

- Photos export best as Progressive JPEGS with non-essential details blurred. Photoshop and Fireworks can both export JPEGS, though the extra options in Fireworks may allow you to save a smaller file.
- You can create vectors in Fireworks or Illustrator and can save them for web from both programs. You can also open vector files from within Photoshop and export from there as well. The advantage goes to Fireworks as it has an Alpha Transparency option that produces smooth transparent gradients that compress well.
- Mixed images, those with photos, type and/or flat art benefit from the Selective JPEG tool in Fireworks.