

Animated GIFs

The simple way

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With your Photoshop skills, sooner or later someone will ask you to create an animated gif. The idea might seem daunting but it's actually quite easy.

What is a GIF?

An animated GIF is a GIF file that includes multiple images or "frames." These frames are played back in sequence when the file is opened or displayed in a web browser. The result is an animated clip or a short movie.

Animated GIFs are a popular way to display motion. Animated GIFs have recently seen a resurgence on the web since they are supported by all platforms. For example, Apple's iOS can display animated GIFs.

Several image editing programs, such as Adobe Photoshop and GIMP, can be used to create animated GIFs. Other graphics programs can merge multiple image files into a single GIF. Some video utilities can even convert short videos to animated GIFs. While this can be useful for sharing small videos on the web, the GIF format is not as efficient as the MPEG format for storing videos longer than a few seconds.

Making an Animated GIF

Here is a simple way to make one.

The Basic Version

The most basic is a "tween effect". In other words, the in between frames necessary to show the steps from one position to another are created.

Simply place and object or draw a shape, a circle for instance. Now go to **Window>Timeline**. This will show you the animation panel. Click on the **Create Frame Animation** button.



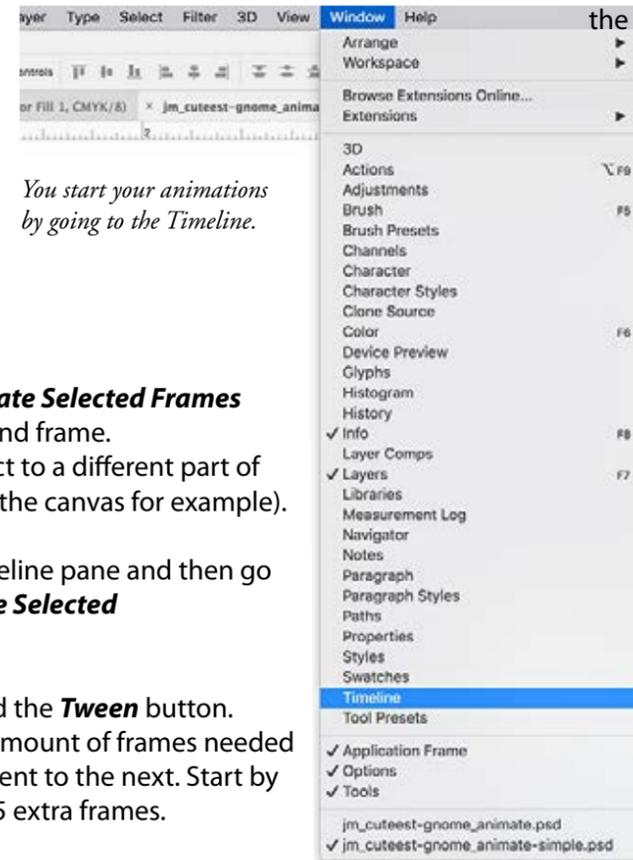
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By clicking on **Create Frame Animation** button you will see a thumbnail of your frame appear on the bottom left of the Timeline panel. This is the first frame.

Now you need to make a duplicate frame. Go to the bottom right of the Timeline panel and click on the **Duplicate Selected Frames** button. This will create a second frame. Now move the shape or object to a different part of the canvas (to the far right of the canvas for example).

Select both frames in the Timeline pane and then go to the icon next the **Duplicate Selected Frames** button.

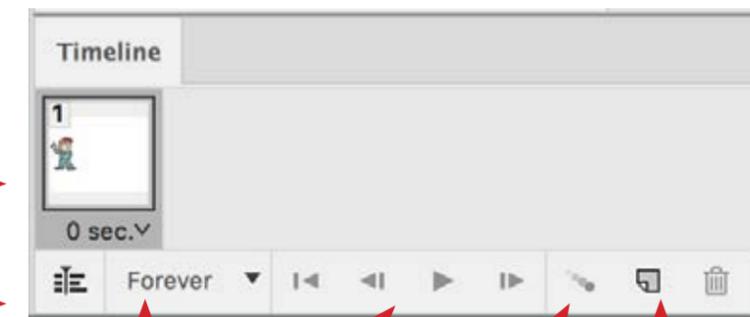
This particular button is called the **Tween** button. By clicking on it, you set the amount of frames needed in order to blend one movement to the next. Start by setting the Frames to Add at 5 extra frames. Click **OK**.



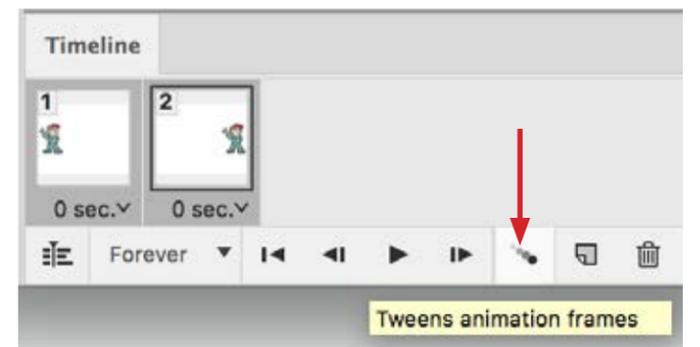
The Timeline panel

The animation frame

The timing settings



Your first frame is ready for a duplicate frame in order to begin your animation.



Now that you have your duplicate, move your object to another position and then click on the Tween button.

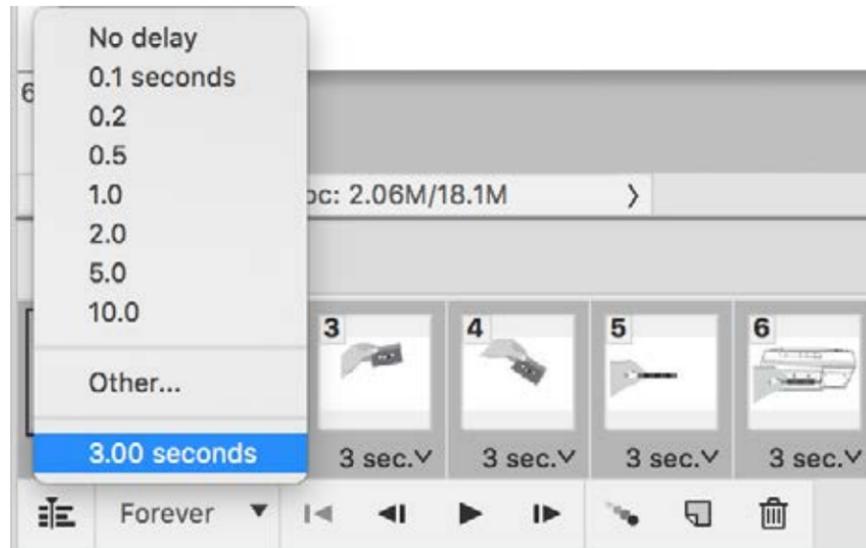
Animated

You now have your in between (Tween) frames created. Press the **Play** button to test it. Your image is now animated!



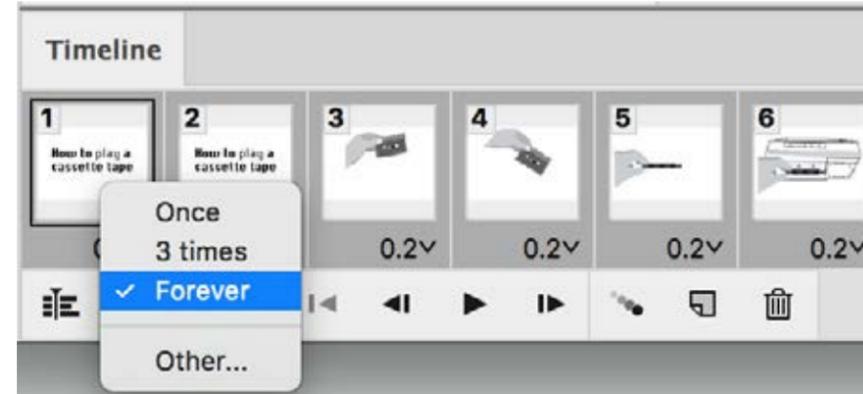
Timing

The timing of the animation might be too fast so you can set the desired amount of delay for each frame by clicking under the frame thumbnail. You will see a collapseable button with 0 sec. on it. Click on it and you will see all the choices for timing. You can even set up your own custom delay by clicking on the Other... section.



Looping

The animation will run once after pressing the play button. For animated GIFs it is best to run it Forever. Click on the button on the bottom left side of the Timeline panel, next to the Play controls. It will say Once. By clicking on it, you can set your animation to play forever or your desired amount of looping.

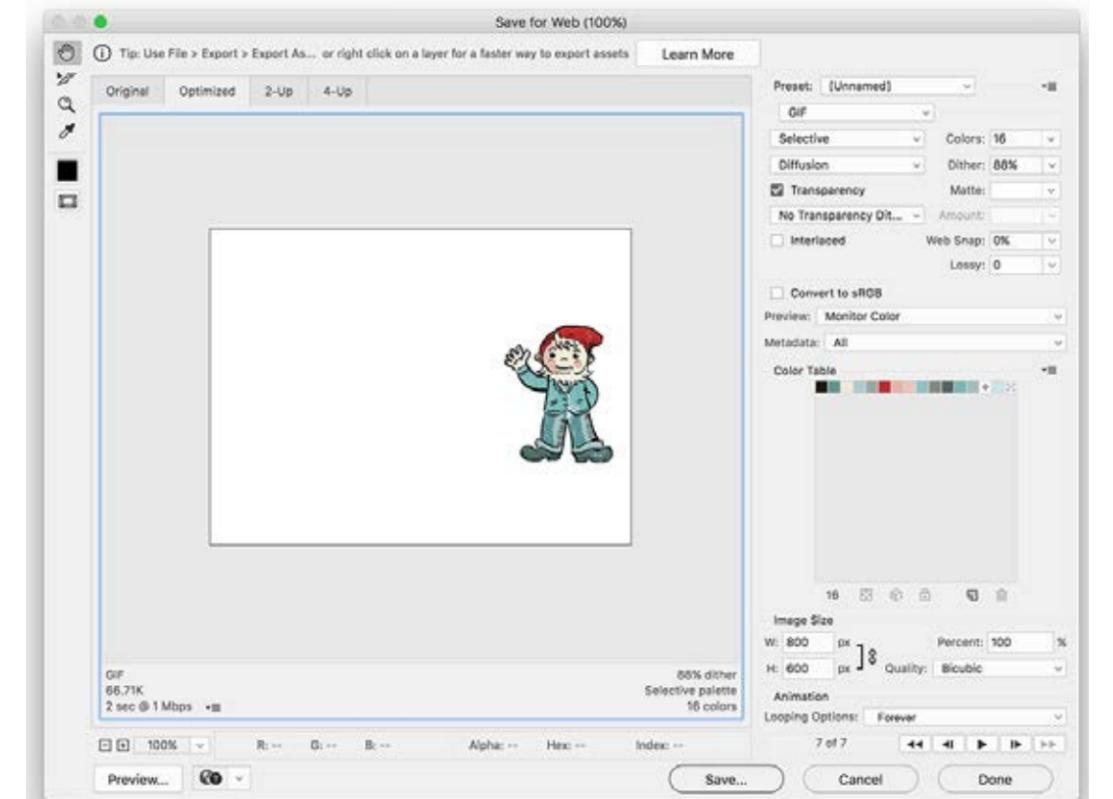
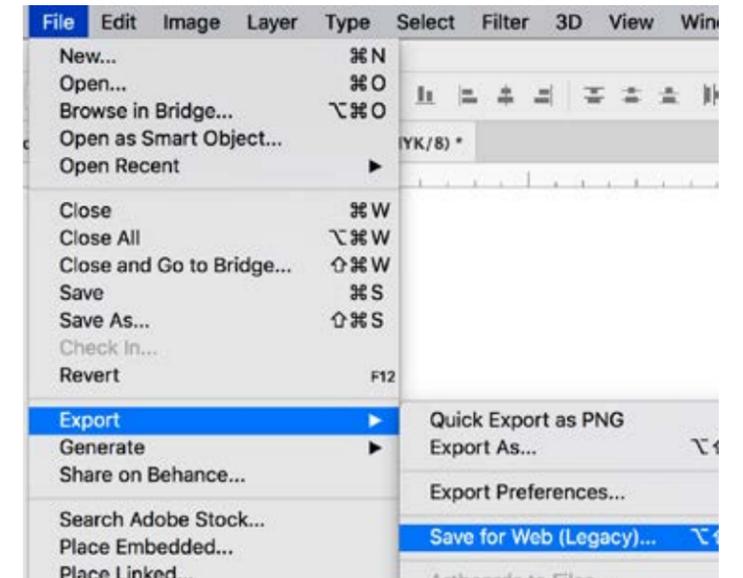


Export

Your animation is now ready to be exported as an animated GIF. Go to **File > Export > Save for Web (Legacy)**.

From here you can select GIF as your export. If your image does not have too many complex colours, drop the Colors field (top right of Save for Web panel) to 16 so your file size is smaller.

Now that your GIF is made, test it by dropping it on a web browser. This is the most basic way to make an animated GIF.



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