Image Formats: What is a PNG file?

PNG (**Portable Network Graphics**) is a [bitmap](#) [image format](#) that employs [lossless data compression](#). PNG was created to both improve upon and replace the [GIF](#) format with an image file format that does not require a [patent](#) license to use. PNG is officially pronounced as "ping" (/p in/[IPA](#)), but it is often just spelled out.

PNG compression produces files that are generally of a larger size than comparable JPG images, but PNG files are compressed in a way that completely preserves image quality. PNG is pretty much the best quality you can get, but files compressed via PNG are not as small as JPG files. Generally, if you're just going for average quality, a JPG at medium quality will be "good enough" with a very high compression ratio.

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