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Mac OS 8: Limitations of Desktop Pictures Control Panel

TOPIC

This article contains the following frequently asked questions (FAQ) about the Desktop Pictures control panel that is part of Mac OS 8, and answers to those questions.

- 1) Which file formats (such as GIF, JPEG, PICT, EPS) does Desktop Pictures support?
- 2) What are the the size limitations of pictures imported for use as a desktop picture? Are the size and number of pictures limited by available memory or is there a hard-coded limitation?

DISCUSSION

1) Question: Which file formats (such as GIF, JPEG, PICT, EPS) does Desktop Pictures support?

Answer: Desktop Pictures supports the following image formats:

- files supported by QuickTime 2.5 graphics import components including JPEG, GIF and PhotoShop
- QuickTime Compressed 'PICT'
- 'PICT'
- picture clippings

2) Question: What are the the size limitations of pictures imported for use as a desktop picture?
Are the size and number of pictures limited by available memory or is there a hard-coded limitation?

Answer: The use of the term "imported" is not quite proper. The pictures are not

absorbed by any preference file or the Desktop Pictures control panel itself. The pictures remain as separate individual files, with a reference to them in the Desktop Pictures Prefs file.

There are no known limits on dimensions or bit depth for the pictures displayed with Desktop Pictures.

The "number of pictures" has two interpretations. The number of pictures available to display and the number of pictures actually displayed in a multi-monitor configuration.

The number of pictures available to display is subject to theoretical file system limitations of files in a folder and practical limitations of number of files that can be displayed in the open file dialog by the List Manager.

The number of pictures actually displayed in a multi-monitor configuration would be constrained by available RAM. Desktop Pictures stores the picture in temporary memory. Thus, if you have sufficient free RAM, the picture stays in RAM and redraw happens quickly. If you launch an application that needs that temporary memory, the picture is read from disk and redraw happens much more slowly.

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