

## Best Practices

### Use brief, but descriptive filenames and alt text

Like many of the other parts of the page targeted for optimization, filenames and alt text (for [ASCII languages](#)) are best when they're short, but descriptive.

**Avoid:**

- using generic filenames like "image1.jpg", "pic.gif", "1.jpg" when possible—some sites with thousands of images might consider automating the naming of images
- writing extremely lengthy filenames
- stuffing keywords into alt text or copying and pasting entire sentences

### Supply alt text when using images as links

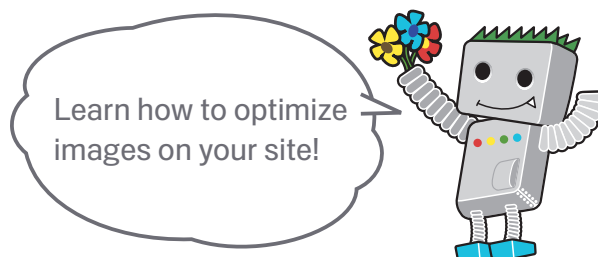
If you do decide to use an image as a link, filling out its alt text helps Google understand more about the page you're linking to. Imagine that you're writing anchor text for a text link.

**Avoid:**

- writing excessively long alt text that would be considered spammy
- using only image links for your site's navigation

### Supply an Image Sitemap file

An [Image Sitemap](#) file can provide Googlebot with more information about the images found on your site. Its structure is similar to the XML Sitemap file for your web pages.



#### Links

• **Google Image Search**  
<http://images.google.com/>

• **JPEG**  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JPEG>

• **GIF**  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GIF>

• **PNG**  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portable\\_Network\\_Graphics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portable_Network_Graphics)

• **BMP**  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BMP\\_file\\_format](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BMP_file_format)

• **Image Sitemap**  
<http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=178636>