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# Axialis IconWorkshop 6.1

## Corporate Edition / Tryout Version

How-To Procedures





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# 1

## Introducing IconWorkshop™

### What is Axialis IconWorkshop™?

Axialis IconWorkshop™ is a powerful tool designed to work with Windows® and Macintosh® icons. It has a fully integrated workspace which permits you to work efficiently and create professional icons in minutes.

### What can I do with IconWorkshop™?

- Create, read and save Windows Vista™ icons up to 256x256 with alpha channel and PNG compression.
- Create, read and save Windows® XP icons up to 256x256 with alpha channel.
- Create, read and save Macintosh® icons up to OSX 10.4 and 10.5 (including the latest 256x256 Tiger format and 512x512 Leopard Format).
- Modify, add, remove icons in EXE and DLL files. This is very useful to compress 256x256 icons for Windows Vista™ in programs (MS VS 2005 does not support compilation of compressed icons in resources).
- Creating attractive icons in seconds using ready-to-use Image Object Packs.
- Composing icons in seconds using mouse drag & drop and a powerful built-in image editor.
- Create icons with several built-in formats from images (BMP, PNG, JPEG 2000, PSD...) in one operation.
- Convert icons from Windows® to Macintosh® and vice versa.
- Apply automated operations to several icons at once (batch procedures) : Conversion Win <-> Macintosh; Icon creation from images; Image creation from icons; Icon format normalizing...
- Work easily with Adobe Photoshop® using a transfer plugin. With ready-to-use Photoshop templates, create icons in one step with several formats.
- Work easily with Adobe Illustrator® using a transfer plugin.
- Manage your icons using a built-in Librarian.
- Browse your computer for icons and images using a built-in explorer with preview.
- Customize your Windows® icons.
- Compile icon libraries and distribute them.

## What formats are compatible with Axialis IconWorkshop™?

Axialis IconWorkshop™ is the only icon tool to support creation, reading and writing of **Windows® XP, Windows Vista™**, (ICO, ICL) and **Macintosh®** (ICNS, RSC, BIN) icons. Axialis IconWorkshop™ supports Windows® XP Icons with alpha channel images (smooth transparency) and Macintosh® icons up to Macintosh® OSX v10.4 (Tiger) and 10.5 (Leopard).

This new version supports creation of Windows Vista™ icons with PNG compression and image sizes up to 256x256.

## Why choose Axialis IconWorkshop™?

Because Axialis IconWorkshop™ is the most complete icon tool available on the market. It has powerful features and is easy to use.

### Create quality Windows® XP and Macintosh® icons

Windows® XP and Macintosh® OSX come with a new generation of icons using variable transparency. This feature permits to create beautiful icons with smooth borders and shadows. You need a professional tool to create such icons. Axialis IconWorkshop™ has been designed with one goal in mind: "Icon Quality". Enjoy the powerful editor which permits to create the various image formats of an icon from an original drawing without quality loss. Axialis IconWorkshop™ is the only icon editor to create icons for both Windows® and Macintosh® systems.

### Create icons for Windows Vista™

Windows Vista™, the next version of Windows® to arrive, includes a new PNG compressed icon format. It permits to create icons up to 256x256 with alpha channel with smaller file size. Axialis IconWorkshop™ now fully supports this new format in all features: edition, automatic format creation, batch creation, batch conversion, format normalization... Don't wait and create today your icons for Windows Vista™. To get more information about Windows Vista™ icons, read this topic: "Introducing Windows Vista™ Icons".

### Make program files containing Windows Vista™ compressed icons

Microsoft Visual Studio versions 6 to .NET 2005 do not support creation of executables with PNG-Compressed 256x256 icons for Windows Vista™. Axialis IconWorkshop permits to compress icons directly in EXE/DLL files.

### Create icons the professional way using ready-to-use Photoshop templates

Create icons the professional way using ready-to-use Photoshop templates – 10 ready-to-use Photoshop® templates are provided with Axialis IconWorkshop™. Load templates in Photoshop® directly from IconWorkshop™, draw your icons in several formats and transfer the whole work in IconWorkshop: Your icon is created in one step. You can even create your own template using an easy to use XML descriptive format.

### Create attractive icons from Image Objects in seconds

The first Axialis Object pack for icons has been included in Axialis IconWorkshop™. It is a library of 150 graphical objects which will permit you to create an unlimited number of icons with various glossy effects and shapes simply using drag & drop. The images come in 256x256 high-quality PNG format. It permits to create icons containing various sizes up to 256x256 for Windows® XP, Windows Vista™ and MacOS®. To read more about this exclusive feature, read this topic: "Creating Icons from Image Objects".

### Convert icons between Macintosh® and Windows® formats

Macintosh® designers are prolific, especially when it comes to icon creation. Use Axialis IconWorkshop™ to read Macintosh® icons and convert them to Windows®. It reads all kind of Macintosh® icons up to OS-X. You can also convert your Windows® icons for the Macintosh®. If you're a software developer, you'll enjoy the ability to create applications for both Windows® and Macintosh® platforms by converting your icons. If you're simply a Windows® user you'll be able to use your icons on both systems.

### Automatically create icons from images

Axialis IconWorkshop™ features a powerful editor. But sometimes it's easier to create an icon from an existing image. Basically, you can import all kind of existing images: PSD, PNG, BMP, JPEG, GIF, JPEG 2000...

An exclusive feature permits to create an icon, with its several image formats, in just one operation! All is done automatically: Alpha channel is preserved, palettes are calculated for 256 color formats and even 16 color formats with transparency are generated.

### Export icons to images to illustrate your applications

If you create applications, you know that images are required to create an attractive user interface. Axialis IconWorkshop™ permits to export any image included in an icon (Windows®/Macintosh®) to an external bitmap file. You'll be able to easily use these images in your program to create beautiful toolbars for example.

### Redistribute your icons

A compilation feature permits you to create professional installation packages to redistribute your Icon Libraries. It produces a compressed install program (the result is up to 70% smaller) convenient for Web distribution. Also, an advanced system, based on activation codes, permits you to protect your Icon Libraries. The user will be prompted for a personal code to proceed with the installation. An activation code generator is also provided.

### Customize Windows® icons

A built-in feature permits you to customize many Windows® icons. It works with all Windows® version up to Windows® XP. This new version permits you to customize each folder icon individually.

## What's New in Version 6.10?

This version includes several major improvements:

- **Compatible with Windows Vista™** – Many Windows Vista™ compatibility issues have been fixed in this version.
- **New Interface for Windows Vista™** – The application automatically detects Windows Vista™ and propose a new user interface compatible with the new Aero™ visuals.
- **Make program files containing Windows Vista™ compressed icon** – Microsoft Visual Studio versions 6 to .NET 2005 do not support creation of executables with PNG-Compressed 256x256 icons for Windows Vista™. Axialis IconWorkshop permits to compress icons directly in EXE/DLL files and use Windows Vista™ icons in your software projects.

- **Create icons the professional way using ready-to-use Photoshop templates** – 10 ready-to-use Adobe Photoshop® Templates are provided with Axialis IconWorkshop™. Load templates in Photoshop® directly from IconWorkshop™, draw your icons in several formats and transfer the whole work in IconWorkshop. Your icon is created in one step. You can even create your own template using an easy to use XML description file.
- **Support for 512x512 Macintosh icons for OSX 10.5 Leopard** – Create extra large 512x512 icons for the new MacOS 10.5. Axialis IconWorkshop now fully support this size.
- **New Object Pack #2 for Icons (Realistic Buttons)** – This pack is composed of 500 hi-res image objects which have been designed to create icons in the style of Windows Vista™. Using this pack you can easily create beautiful sets of buttons to be used in your projects (websites, application GUI, toolbars, dialog boxes...). With 156 symbols included and many shape effects (circle, rounded square, octagon, triangle) you can create a large variety of icons. The full set of objects is available for download on our web site to registered customers only.
- **New Object Pack #3 for Icons (Quick Toolbars)** – A collection of 256 image objects which permits to quickly create program toolbars. Using drag & drop, you can create in seconds icons and buttons for your toolbars by associating basic objects and overlays symbols. The objects do not contain details and have thick borders to allow the creation of small icons suitable for toolbars (32x32, 24x24, 16x16). The objects, which are provided in 256x256 format with alpha channel, permit to easily create icons containing various sizes for Windows XP®, Windows Vista™ & MacOS®. The full set of objects is available for download on our web site to registered customers only.
- **New Object Pack #4 for Icons (Web 2.0 Icons)** – This pack is composed of 601 image objects which permits to quickly create icons in the style of Web 2.0. Using drag & drop, you can create in seconds icons and buttons for your websites and applications by associating background shapes, glossy effects, shadows and various ready-to-use texts and symbols. The icons can also be saved as optimized GIF, JPEG or PNG images for inclusion in your websites. To permit you to work faster, more than 500 ready-to-use derived symbols and texts have been added to the pack, including effects like outer light glow, soft shadow, emboss and 15° rotation. The full set of objects is available for download on our web site to registered customers only.
- Other enhancements and bug fixes.

## Features included since version 6.0

This version includes several major improvements:

- **Full Windows Vista™ icon support with PNG compression** – Axialis IconWorkshop™ now loads, creates, edits, saves Windows Vista™ icons. Windows Vista™ the next version of Windows® to arrive, includes a new PNG compressed icon format. It permits to create icons up to 256x256 with alpha channel with smaller file size. Axialis IconWorkshop™ now fully supports this new format in all features: edition, automatic format creation, batch creation, batch conversion, format normalization... Don't wait and create today your icons for Windows Vista™.
- **Object Pack for Icons (Glossy Buttons)** – The first Axialis Object Pack for icons has been included in Axialis IconWorkshop™. It is a library of 150 image objects which will permit you to create an unlimited number of icons with various glossy effects and shapes simply using drag & drop. The images come in 256x256 high-quality PNG format. It permits to create icons containing various sizes up to 256x256 for Windows® XP, Windows Vista™ and Macintosh® OS.

- **Illustrator® to Axialis IconWorkshop™ transfer plug-in** – Now you can import vector images with transparency directly from Illustrator into Axialis IconWorkshop™ through memory. You don't need to create a temporary file anymore. [Read More...](#)
- **Full tutorial on how to use Image Objects** – Creating icons from image objects is easy and produce hi-quality results. This [tutorial](#) will learn you how to create attractive icons in minutes using **Image Objects**.
- **Background floating selection** – Using this command you can easily **place a floating object in background** of your icon. This is useful to add a shadow or a colored halo around an icon.
- **Copy/Paste Alpha Channels as Masks** – Now you can use a grayscale mask image to **apply it as Alpha Channel** to an icon. Also, you can **extract an alpha channel** from an icon to create a grayscale mask image.
- **256x256 and floating Preview Window** – The preview window is now **adjustable** (256x256 or 128x128). It can also be set as a floating window (easier to move in 256x256 mode).
- Other enhancements and bug fixes.

## Object Packs – Terms Of Use

This is a legal agreement between you (the "User") and Axialis Software Corporation ("Axialis"). This agreement refers to the image objects (the "Objects") included in the product or packs downloaded from our website: <http://www.axialis.com/objects>. By using the objects, the user agrees to the following terms.

IMPORTANT: This agreement does not refer to the sample icons provided in the product. To get more information on the sample icons terms of use, read this page: ["Sample Icons – Terms of Use"](#).

### License Grant

Axialis grants the User a non-exclusive, non-transferable, royalty-free license to use these objects as indicated herein. The objects, which cannot be used "as is". The Objects must be assembled together to create icons (the "Icons").

**You MAY: (a)** assemble the Objects to create Icons using an Axialis product only; (b) use the Icons in personal or commercial projects; (c) use the Icons in softwares, documentations or websites; (d) redistribute, loan, rent, sell the Icons created using the Objects as long as they have been created with an Axialis product.

### Restrictions

**You MAY NOT:** (a) use the Object "as is" without assembling them using an Axialis product; (b) redistribute, loan, rent, sell the Objects "as is"; (c) use the Icons to create pornographic, immoral, illegal or defamatory material

## Copyright/Ownership

The Objects are proprietary products of AXIALIS and are protected by copyright and other intellectual property laws. The Objects are licensed and not sold. You acquire only the right to use the Objects and do not acquire any rights, express or implied, in the Software other than those specified in this License.

## Disclaimer of Warranties

The Objects is supplied "as is". AXIALIS disclaims all warranties, expressed or implied, including, without limitation, the warranties of merchantability and of fitness for any purpose. The user must assume the entire risk of using the Objects.

## Disclaimer of Damages

AXIALIS assumes no liability for damages, direct or consequential, which may result from the use of the Objects, even if AXIALIS has been advised of the possibility of such damages. Any liability of the seller will be limited to refund the purchase price if any.

## Sample Icons – Terms Of Use

In version 6.10 and more, the sample icons have been created by the Axialis Team. As a result, you can freely use and/or redistribute them in any projects as long as you've purchased Axialis IconWorkshop (see User License Agreement).

If you use these images on a website, please add the following HTML tag:

---

```
<a href="http://www.axialis.com/icons/">Icons</a> by <a  
href="http://www.axialis.com">Axialis Software</a>
```

---

## IconBuffet copyrighted icons

Icons in folder "Librarian/Icons/Tutorials/Redmond - ©2006 IconBuffet" are copyrighted and cannot be used. Please contact the authors at <http://www.iconbuffet.com>.

# Acknowledgments

## Icons and Images used in the program

Thanks to these great icon artists for giving us permission to include some of their icons and images in the program (toolbar buttons, icons, dialog illustration):

- . **Foood** – Some images in dialog boxes, (Iconaholic.com 🌐).
- . **IconBuffet** – Toolbar icons courtesy of IconBuffet, part of Mahattan and Redmond icon set (IconBuffer.com 🌐)
- . **Jairo Boudewyn** – Special thanks to Jairo who made the IconWorkshop™ icon (JairoBoudewyn.com 🌐)
- . **Marvilla** – Some images in dialog boxes (Iconica 🌐)

## Translations

Thanks to Jörg Schmalenberger for the **German** translation (Website 🌐).

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Thanks to Ivan Stambolic for the **Serbian** translation (Website 🌐).

## VisiBone Color Swatches

Thanks to **Bob Stein** for his great "Web Safe by VisiBone" color swatch (located in application data > Color Swatches > Web Safe by VisiBone.axco).

## Compression Support

Thanks to **Jean-loup Gailly** and **Mark Adler** for writing the fantastic and free ZLIB compression/decompression library which is used in Axialis products. Visit the official ZLIB Web page at: <http://www.gzip.org/zlib/> 🌐

## PNG Support

Thanks to the creators of the PNG graphic file format and its related source code. Visit the official PNG Web page at: <http://www.libpng.org/pub/png/> 🌐

## JPEG Support

Thanks to **Thomas G. Lane** and the **Independent JPEG Group** for the JPEG graphic file format and its source code. Visit the official JPEG Web page at: <http://www.iijg.org> 🌐

## JPEG 2000 Support

Thanks to the **Joint Photographic Experts Group** for defining the JPEG 2000 graphic standard. Visit the official JPEG 2000 Web page at: <http://www.jpeg.org/jpeg2000/index.html> 

Thanks to **Michael D. Adams**, creator of JASPER. This JPEG 2000 C library is used in Axialis products. Official JASPER website: <http://www.ece.uvic.ca/~mdadams/jasper/> 

## System Requirements

Axialis IconWorkshop™ has been designed to work with Windows® 95, Windows® 98, Windows® ME, Windows® NT4, Windows® 2000, Windows® XP, Windows Vista™.

### Minimum

- Pentium® class CPU - 500 Mhz
- 65536 color video card - 1024x768
- 128 Mb RAM
- Microsoft Windows® 95 (with ComCtl32 v4.72+) or Windows® NT 4.0 SP4

### Recommended

- Pentium® 3/4 or AMD Athlon - 1.2 Ghz or more
- True Color Video Card (24 or 32 bits - 16,8 M colors) - 1280x1024
- 512 Mb RAM
- Microsoft Windows® ME, Windows® 2000, Windows® XP, Windows Vista™



# 2

## Before you start...

Before you start following these IconWorkshop tutorials we strongly recommend you to read the following topics. You will learn important general information about icons and image objects. This knowledge is required to understand all the terms and notions used in this tutorial.

### What is an Icon?

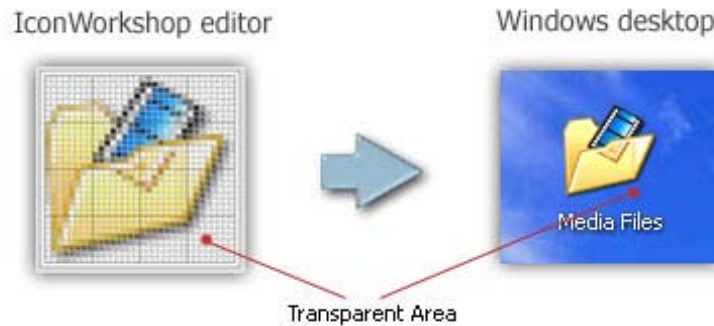
An icon is a graphic image, a small picture or object that represents a file, program, web page, or command. Icons help you execute commands, open programs or documents quickly. To execute a command by using an icon, click or double-click on the icon. It is also useful to recognize quickly an object in a browser list. For example, all documents using the same extension have the same icon.

That's almost all you need to know if you only use icons. But to create icons, which is the purpose of Axialis IconWorkshop™, you need to more about them. What's the difference between a standard image and an icon image? What's the structure of an icon? How to create an icon which will display correctly on all screen configurations (size, colors...)? Can we save an icon to a file? Can we assemble several icons into one file? What about the new Windows® XP icon format?

### What are the differences between an image and an icon?

A computer image is a bitmap (composed of pixels) or vector (composed of drawing paths) picture, which can be saved using various formats (BMP, PSD, GIF, JPEG, WMF...). All these formats have several different properties (bitmaps, vectors, compressed, layered, animated...) and can be used to store pictures at any sizes and resolution.

Icons are different from standard images. They are have standard sizes (usually small): 16x16, 32x32, 48x48... One icon is composed of several images. Each of them with a different size and number of colors (mono, 16 colors, 256 colors, 16.8M...). And the most important property of an icon is the ability to include transparent areas. This allows seeing the screen background behind the icon within its square image (see illustration below).

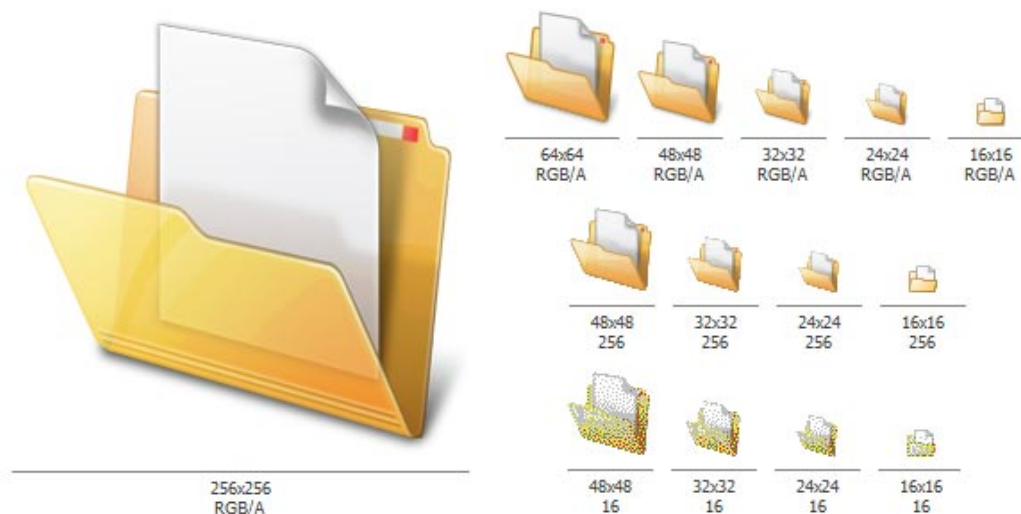


## What is the structure of an icon?

An icon is a group of images of various formats (size and colors). Furthermore, each image can include transparent area. That's why you'll find a transparent color in the drawing palette for 16 or 256 color images and a variable opacity parameter using an alpha channel for the new RGB/A image format (opacity = 0 means transparent).

You need to include several images in an icon to permit Windows® or Macintosh® OS to choose the appropriate format when displaying it on screen. It may change based on screen number of colors and display location. For example, in the Windows® task bar icons are displayed using 16x16 image format and on the desktop, they are displayed at larger sizes (48x48, 96x96, 256x256). In Windows Vista™, some intermediate sizes are used (24x24, 32x32, 48x48 and 64x64). If a size does not exist in the icon, Windows Vista™ displays it automatically by resizing "on the fly" the largest size 256x256.

The Macintosh® OSX uses the large formats 128x128, 256x256 and even 512x512 in OSX 10.5. All those formats include an alpha channel to create smooth transparency and permits nice resize effects .



**An icon contains several images formats (size and colors)**

This is very important to create several image formats in an icon (especially if you wish to redistribute it) in order to be compatible with all screen configurations. Axialis IconWorkshop™

includes a powerful feature which permits to create new formats based on existing images in a few clicks.

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The image format 128x128 is used under Macintosh® OS 10.0 or more only. OSX 10.4 (codename "Tiger") supports icons up to 256x256. OSX 10.4 (codename Leopard) supports icons up to 512x512. Axialis IconWorkshop™ fully supports creation and edition of OSX icons up to 256x256 and 512x512.

Windows® XP does not display 128x128 icon formats in normal mode. By default, icon display in Windows® versions prior to Microsoft Vista™ is limited to 48x48 icons. Microsoft Windows Vista™ supports icon formats up to 256x256 with compression. Axialis IconWorkshop™ fully supports creation and edition of Windows Vista™ icons. To know more read this topic: "[Introducing Windows Vista™ Icons](#)".

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## Which image formats should I include in my icons?

To be compatible with all display cases and screen configurations, you must consider creating icons containing various image formats. See below the minimum and recommended formats for different OS versions:

### Windows® 95, Windows® 98, Windows® ME, Windows® 2000

- **Recommended:** 48x48 (256 colors, 16 colors), 32x32 (256 colors, 16 colors), 16x16 (256 colors, 16 colors).
- **Minimum:** 32x32 (256 colors, 16 colors), 16x16 (256 colors, 16 colors).

### Windows® XP

- **Recommended:** 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors), 24x24 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors).
- **Minimum:** 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors).
- **Optional:** 128x128 (RGB/A).

### Windows Vista™

- **Recommended:** 256x256 (RGB/A), 64x64 (RGB/A), 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors), 24x24 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors).
  - **Minimum:** 256x256 (RGB/A), 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors).
  - **Optional:** 256x256 (256 colors, 16 colors), 64x64 (256 colors, 16 colors), other formats are possible to deal with HIDPI screens (see below).
- 

If you create an icon for recent versions of Windows®, the compatibility is ensured with previous versions. For example, if you create an icon containing a 256x256 image for Windows Vista™, it will display fine under Windows® XP. Based on our tests, the only exception we've found is: If you add **24x24 image formats** in your icon, it won't be

**compatible with Windows®98 and Windows®2000. The icon displays correctly in IconWorkshop™ but will be considered invalid by Windows®.**

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### Windows Vista™ for HI-DPI screens

On hi-dpi screens (high DPI resolution LDC screens), Windows Vista™ code will downscale the images for sizes between 64x64 and 256x256. If you want your icon to be compatible with future screens, we recommend you to add the following sizes:

- **Recommended:** 256x256 (RGB/A), 64x64 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 40x40 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 24x24 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 22x22 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors).

Examples of scaling ratios applied to some common icon sizes:

DPI	Scale Factor	16x16 Icon Size	32x32 Icon Size	48x48 Icon Size
96	100%	16x16	32x32	48x48
120	137%	22x22	40x40	66x66 (scaled by code)
144	150%	24x24	48x48	72x72 (scaled by code)
192	200%	32x32	64x64	96x96 (scaled by code)

### Macintosh® OSX

- **Recommended:** 128x128 (RGB/A), 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors, mono), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors).
- **Minimum:** 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors).

### Macintosh® OSX 10.4 Tiger

- **Recommended:** 256x256 (RGB/A), 128x128 (RGB/A), 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors, mono), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors).
- **Minimum:** 128x128 (RGB/A), 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors).

### Macintosh® OSX 10.5 Leopard

- **Recommended:** 256x256 (RGB/A), 128x128 (RGB/A), 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors, mono), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors).
- **Minimum:** 128x128 (RGB/A), 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors).
- **Optional:** 512x512 (RGB/A).

Below is a summary of the standard image formats that should be included in icons. If an image format is missing, Windows® displays the nearest existing image. The resulting image is generally blurred and distorted.

	512x512	256x256	128x128	64x64	48x48	32x32	24x24	16x16
RGB/A	○	● *	○	●	●	●	●	●
256 Colors	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●
16 Colors	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●
Mono	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Windows® standard icon image formats

(\*) PNG compressed Windows Vista™

	512x512	256x256	128x128	64x64	48x48	32x32	24x24	16x16
RGB/A	● ***	● **	●	○	●	●	○	●
256 Colors	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	●
16 Colors	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	●
Mono	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○

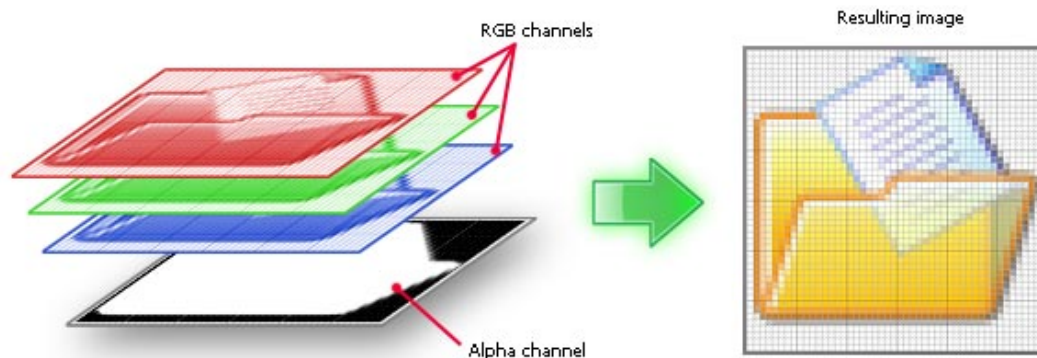
Macintosh® OS standard icon image formats

(\*\*) Jpeg2000 compressed OSX 10.4  
(\*\*\*) Jpeg2000 compressed OSX 10.5

● Recommended    ○ Optional    ○ Not Available

## What is the RGB icon format with Alpha Channel?

Also called RGB/A, this image format contains 16.8M colors coded in RGB plus an additional opacity channel. This channel is called the "Alpha Channel". Each channel is coded using 8 bits per pixel. As a result each pixel is coded in 32 bits (32 BPP – Bits Per Pixel). See the illustration below to understand how channels are organized in an RGB/A image.



Structure of an image with Alpha Channel (RGB/A)

This is a new image format that you can find in new generation of icons. This image format is called Windows® XP RGB/A by Axialis IconWorkshop™.

The main advantage of this image format is that it permits to display a smooth transparency in icons. The resulting image is displayed with smooth contours on all backgrounds. It permits also to create dropped shadows behind icons. This interesting effect, which is recommended by Microsoft, is usually used in Windows® XP icons.

The following illustration shows the difference between a standard image format transparency (in 256 color formats for example) and the new Windows® XP smooth transparency:



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**Windows® and Macintosh® icons support RGB/A images. These icons can be displayed in Windows®XP, Windows Vista™ and in Macintosh®OS 10 or more. Older systems does not support RGB/A icons. That's the reason why you need to include other standard formats in your icons.**

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## Can we save an icon to a file?

Yes, the extension for a Windows® icon file is "ICO". The extensions for Macintosh® icons are "ICNS", "RSC", "RSRC" and "BIN". Only one icon can be saved in an icon file. If you want to group several icons in a file you must create a library (see below).

Axialis IconWorkshop™ fully support Windows® and Macintosh® icon files. You can create, read and save icons using those file formats. The MacBinary format "BIN" is used to transfer icons between Windows® and Macintosh® preserving Macintosh®resource forks (see "Macintosh® vs Windows® icons" topic to read more).

## Can we save several icons into one file?

Yes, you can assemble several icons in one file called an Icon Library. The extension for a standard Icon Library is ICL.

Axialis IconWorkshop™ fully supports ICL files. It can create, read and save ICL library files. Furthermore, ICL is fully supported by all versions of Windows®. For example, you can customize a Windows® shortcut by selecting a new icon in an ICL file. If you manage a large number of icons, we recommend you to store them in ICL files. ICL file size is limited to 64MB.

Creation of Macintosh® icon libraries is not yet supported by Axialis IconWorkshop™. However you can read RSRC files with several icons embedded as well as Icontainer libraries. Additionally you can save Macintosh® icons in ICL files. A small overlay image permits to distinguish them in Axialis IconWorkshop™. However you won't be able to open those ICL files under Macintosh®OS. Future versions of Axialis IconWorkshop™ will support Macintosh® icon library creation.

## What's New with Windows Vista™ Icons?

Microsoft Windows Vista™ comes with a new format of icons supporting PNG compression and sizes up to 256x256. The standard Windows Vista™ icons now includes the following image formats (grayed formats are optional):

256x256 - RGB/A	64x64 - RGB/A	48x48 - RGB/A	32x32 - RGB/A	24x24 - RGB/A	16x16 - RGB/A
256x256 - 256c	64x64 - 256c	48x48 - 256c	32x32 - 256c	24x24 - 256c	16x16 - 256c
256x256 - 16c	64x64 - 16c	48x48 - 16c	32x32 - 16c	24x24 - 16c	16x16 - 16c

The problem is: if you simply make the icon and save it in standard Windows® XP ICO format, the resulting file will be 400Kb on disk. The solution is to compress the images. Only the 256x256 images are compressed. The compression scheme used is PNG (Portable Network Graphic) because it has a good lossless ratio and supports alpha channel. The compressed icon sizes are 100Kb to 150Kb.

Axialis IconWorkshop™ permits to create Windows Vista™ icons. To read more about Windows Vista™ icons and how to create them using Axialis IconWorkshop™, read this article: "Introducing Windows Vista™ Icons".

## How to create an icon?

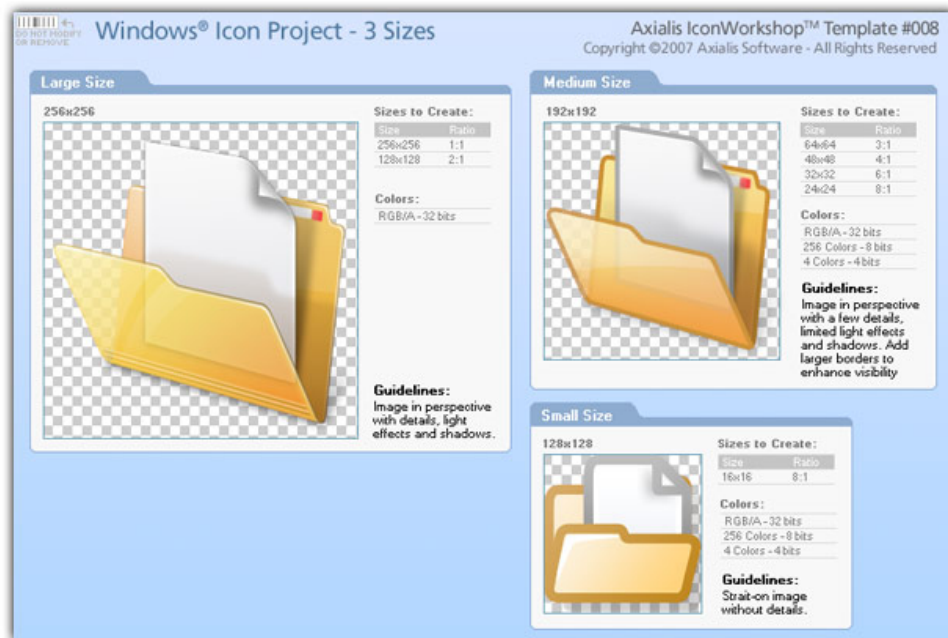
Graphics are among the primary ways of advertising the sale of goods or services. This is true for computing when designing software or website interfaces. The primary solution is to draw icons using either an image or vector editor. Then, when the image is done, use Axialis IconWorkshop™ to convert this image to an icon. If you don't use an external image editor, Axialis IconWorkshop™ contains some drawing tools that permit you to draw your own icons.

Axialis IconWorkshop™ offers alternate solutions for Adobe Photoshop® users and programmers who don't have drawing skills.

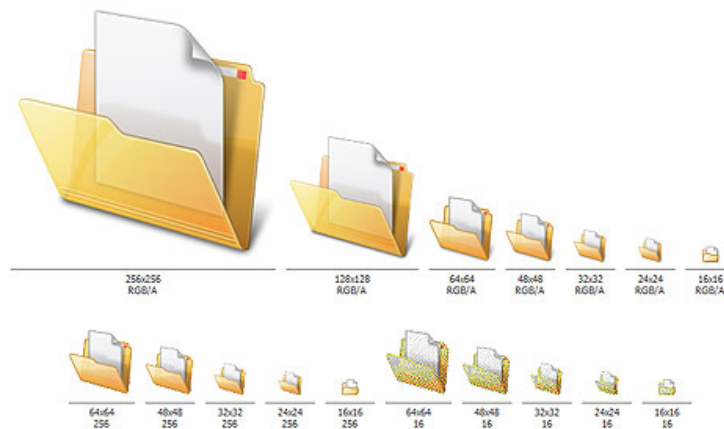
### Using Project Templates for Photoshop®

If you work with Adobe Photoshop®, a new feature has been added which permits you to draw your icon at different sizes and automatically export it into IconWorkshop™. The resulting icon is automatically created with all its formats. Several ready-to-use templates have been added for Windows® and Macintosh® icon creation. See below how the templates work:





1. Draw the 3 versions of your icon (in the empty squares with transparency chessboard texture).
2. Export this Template to IconWorkshop™
3. The icon is automatically created with all its Image formats embedded.

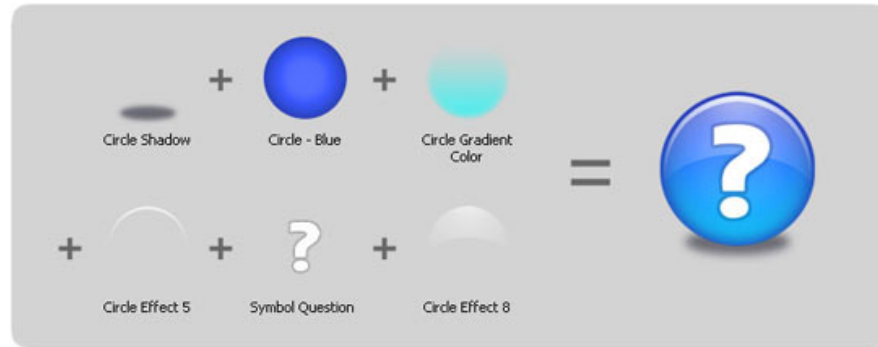


## Using Image Objects

Most of us are not graphic designers and we have a problem when it comes to create attractive icons or web graphics. The question is: **"How to create attractive custom icons without drawing skills?"** Image Objects are the answer.

The solution is to use a set of image objects already done by a skilled computer graphic artist, and assembling them together to create a final artwork that will match your needs. Using a set of existing image objects the possibilities are almost infinite. You can create many different icons or graphics simply by adjusting various parameters of each object like Hue (tint), Saturation, Brightness, Contrast, Size, Opacity and more:





This association can be easily done with Axialis IconWorkshop™ using a few mouse clicks and drag-and-drops. Creating different versions of an icon is very easy with an object pack. See below some examples of the help icon made in a few minutes simply using the mouse and without drawing one pixel (non-exhaustive list of course!):



## Macintosh® vs Windows® icons

### What are the differences between Windows® and Macintosh® icons?

Microsoft Windows® and Apple Macintosh® icons are very similar. They both have several image formats embedded in the same icon. But the file format is totally different. You cannot use Macintosh® icons as is under Windows®. The file format is not compatible. You must convert them to Windows® ICO file format (with Axialis IconWorkshop™ of course!). This is the same under Macintosh® OS which cannot read Windows® icon files.

Axialis IconWorkshop™ supports the following Macintosh® icon files: ICNS, RSC and BIN. You can easily open them into the Icon Editor and save them as Windows® ICO format. During this operation, we recommend you to remove special Macintosh® formats which are useless under Windows®. You can also read a Windows® icon and save it as Macintosh® format.

Recommended image formats embedded in icons are slightly different in Windows® and Macintosh®. See the comparison tables below:

	512x512	256x256	128x128	64x64	48x48	32x32	24x24	16x16
RGB/A	○	● *	○	●	●	●	●	●
256 Colors	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●
16 Colors	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●
Mono	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Windows® standard icon image formats

(\*) PNG compressed Windows Vista™

	512x512	256x256	128x128	64x64	48x48	32x32	24x24	16x16
RGB/A	● ***	● **	●	○	●	●	○	●
256 Colors	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	●
16 Colors	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	●
Mono	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○

Macintosh® OS standard icon image formats

(\*\*) Jpeg2000 compressed OSX 10.4  
(\*\*\*) Jpeg2000 compressed OSX 10.5

● Recommended    ○ Optional    ○ Not Available

Some image formats are unavailable in Macintosh® icon specifications. Therefore IconWorkshop™ won't event permit you to create them. If you try to save or convert a Windows® icon to Macintosh®, some format will be removed. Note that all image formats can be created in Windows® icons, even custom formats not listed above.

## Image formats included in Macintosh® icons

Only a limited list of image formats are available in Macintosh® icons (no other or intermediate formats can be defined):

### Macintosh® OSX

- **Recommended:** 128x128 (RGB/A), 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors, mono), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors).
- **Minimum:** 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors).

### Macintosh® OSX 10.4 Tiger

- **Recommended:** 256x256 (RGB/A), 128x128 (RGB/A), 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors, mono), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors).
- **Minimum:** 128x128 (RGB/A), 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors).

### Macintosh® OSX 10.5 Leopard

- **Recommended:** 256x256 (RGB/A), 128x128 (RGB/A), 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors, mono), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors, 16 colors).
- **Minimum:** 128x128 (RGB/A), 48x48 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 32x32 (RGB/A, 256 colors), 16x16 (RGB/A, 256 colors).

- **Optional:** 512x512 (RGB/A).

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**The 32x32 Monochrome format is recommended for Macintosh® icons to ensure display compatibility on old Macintosh® systems with B/W screens.**

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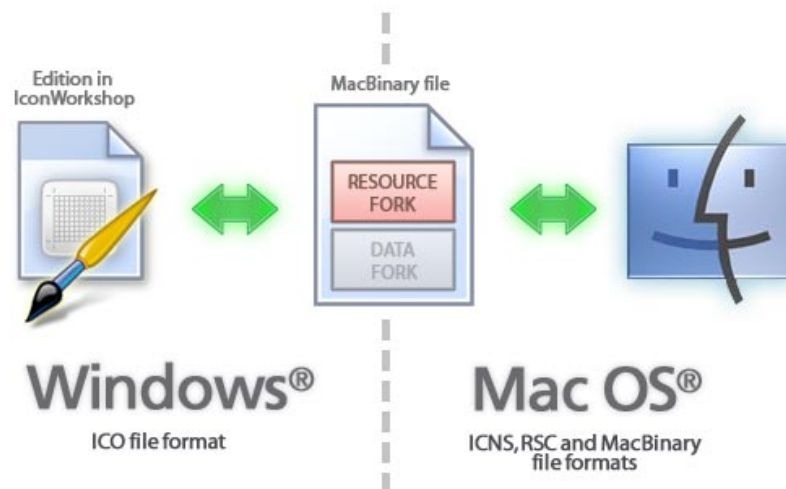
## Various Macintosh® file types

Macintosh® icons can be saved using two different file formats: "ICNS" and "RSC" (or "RSRC" is used). A third format MacBinary "BIN" is used for transfer purpose between Windows® and Macintosh®.

- **ICNS** - This is the standard Macintosh® icon file format. Only one icon (with several formats) can be saved in this format. This format is the most commonly used.
- **RSC or RSRC** - This is the Macintosh® resource file format. It is used mainly by developers. This format can contain several icons. Axialis IconWorkshop™ support reading of RSC files with several icons but can write only RSC files with one icon.
- **BIN** - MacBinary format. This format permits to easily transfer files between Macintosh® and Windows®. For more information on this format, visit this website:  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MacBinary>.

To transfer an icon between Windows® and Macintosh®, the easiest method is to use the MacBinary format. This format permits to generate an icon compatible with the Macintosh® OS forks.

The MacBinary format permits to merge the 2 forks in one file handy for transfer, mail attachment or Web publishing. When IconWorkshop™ saves an icon in MacBinary format, it writes the icon in the resource fork. The data fork is left empty. As a result, as soon as you receive or see the file in Macintosh®, the icon appears automatically. Then, you can handle it using the standard Finder/MacOS user interface.



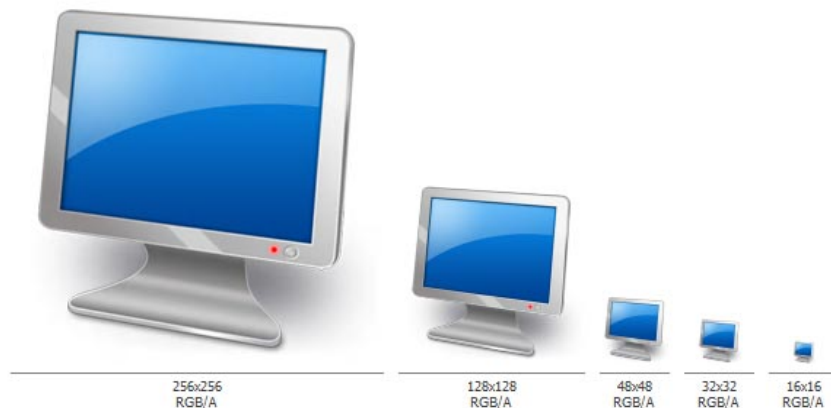
Use of MacBinary format to transfer an icon between  
Macintosh® OS and Windows® OS

## Information about the new 256x256 format for Tiger (OS-X 10.4)

The new Macintosh® OS version 10.4 (Tiger) introduces a new icon format which permits to create 256x256 icons. In the upcoming months a new generation of flat LCD displays will have much higher resolutions. The screens won't be larger but the number of pixels per inch (DPI) will increase. This will result in smaller items on screen including icons. To compensate this effect, Apple® has planned to create a new resolution-independent user interface and the ability to display icons with higher definition in Tiger.

This format is highly compressed and permits to create large 256x256 icons using less than 100 KB. The compression is based on JPEG 2000. This format is similar to JPEG but can include a transparency channel (Alpha Channel). However, JPEG 2000 has an additional option which permits to compress the image without quality loss (unlike JPEG which "destructs" the original image to increase the compression ratio). In OS-X 10.4 icons, the icons are compressed using this lossless method, keeping the original image quality. The resulting compression ratio is about 1:2 (similar to PNG).

Keep in mind that a 256x256 icon is 28 times the size of a 48x48 icon! It will change deeply the way you'll create icons in the future. But be sure we'll add many features to help you in future versions. To get an idea of things to come, see an icon snapshot comparing sizes from 256x256 to 16x16:



## Information about the future 512x512 icon format for Leopard (OS-X 10.5)

**This is preliminary subject to change** (August 2007)

The next Macintosh® OS version 10.5 (Leopard) introduces an extra large icon format which permits to display 512x512 icons on future HI-DPI screens. This format uses the same compression format as 256x256 format for Tiger (see above).

A 512x512 icon is 4 times the size of a 256x256 icon and 114 times the size of a 48x48 icon! Keep this in mind when you're designing the image. The 512x512 image can be complex with a high level of details. To get a better idea, see an icon snapshot comparing sizes between 512x512 and 256x256 image formats:



## Introducing Windows Vista™ Icons

Microsoft Windows Vista™ include many new features and enhancements. The most visible evolution will be the new Graphical User Interface (GUI). A first look at Aero (the codename for the Windows Vista™ user experience) reveals a slicker interface with sharper graphics.

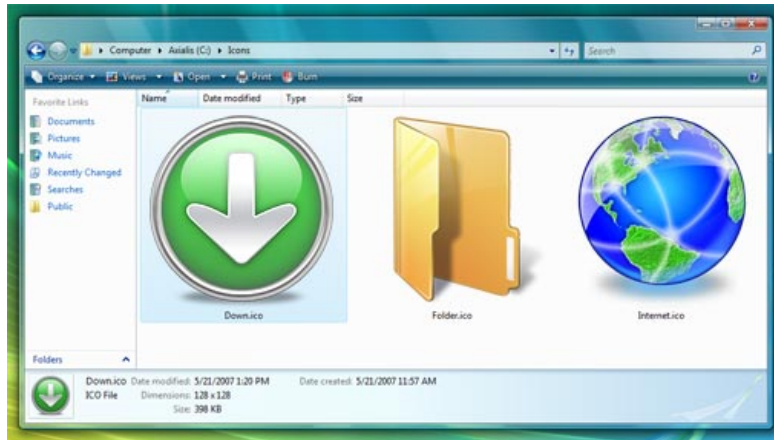
But the changes are not only visual. Aero has been designed to comply with computer technology that will be delivered over the next decade. Many new features have been implemented in Aero to support the hardware changes to come.

### Windows Vista™ – A Resolution-Independent User Interface

One of the most important enhancements of Aero is its ability to deal with the high-resolution displays of the future, and that feature a resolution-independent UI. At present, monitors generally have a resolution of 96-DPI (dots/pixels per inch). Simply put, 48x48 icons are displayed on screen in a half-inch square.

Future LCD screens however will support resolutions up to 192 DPI. Therefore, to be displayed at the same size without quality loss, icons must include much larger images. That's the reason why Windows Vista™ introduces a new standard for Windows® icon size: 256x256 pixels.

The screenshot below shows the Windows Vista™ File Explorer displaying icons using the maximum resolution available: 256x256. Of course the result seems a bit "large" on a 96-DPI screen, but keep in mind that this technology has been designed for future screens. The icon files have been created with Axialis IconWorkshop™.



Windows Vista™ displaying 256x256 icons

An additional option will permit you to display icons at smaller sizes more attune to medium-res screens (say 120-DPI) screens. In such cases Aero uses the 256x256 image and shrinks it the desired size without any quality-loss. The result looks really slick with real-time zoom!

## Windows Vista™ 256x256 PNG Compressed Icons

Microsoft Windows Vista™ comes with a new format of icons supporting PNG compression and sizes up to 256x256. The standard Windows Vista™ icons now includes the following image formats (grayed formats are optional):

256x256 - RGB/A	64x64 - RGB/A	48x48 - RGB/A	32x32 - RGB/A	24x24 - RGB/A	16x16 - RGB/A
256x256 - 256c	64x64 - 256c	48x48 - 256c	32x32 - 256c	24x24 - 256c	16x16 - 256c
256x256 - 16c	64x64 - 16c	48x48 - 16c	32x32 - 16c	24x24 - 16c	16x16 - 16c

The problem is: if you simply make the icon and save it in standard Windows® XP ICO format, the resulting file will be 400Kb on disk. The solution is to compress the images. Only the 256x256 images are compressed. The compression scheme used is PNG (Portable Network Graphic) because it has a good lossless ratio and supports alpha channel. The compressed icon sizes are 100Kb to 150Kb.

See below the different formats included in our sample icon **down.ico** (the 16-color formats are not displayed but are present in the icon):



Example of Windows Vista™ icon images

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The PNG compression is embedded in the ICO file for the 256x256 images only. PNG compressed Windows Vista™ icons cannot be read and edited with an Windows® XP-only compatible icon editor, nor can you open them with a PNG image editor. **You will require a Windows Vista™ compatible icon editor, like Axialis IconWorkshop™, to edit such icons.**

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## Compatibility with Windows® XP

Windows Vista™ compressed icons are compatible with Windows® XP. They can be used in Windows® XP but only using the standard formats (48x48, 32x32 and 16x16) which will be read and displayed. The 256x256 PNG formats will be ignored.

For example, if you save the **down.ico** (see link above) on your Windows® XP desktop, it will be displayed as 48x48. The most important fact is that Windows® XP won't reject Windows Vista™ icons.

### Can we add other formats, such as 128x128, in Windows Vista™ icons?

Yes, but this is not recommended. 128x128 format is used by Windows® XP Desktop or Dock-Bar applications. These applications will probably support 256x256 icon format when ported under Windows Vista™.

### Can we create 256x256 icons which display under Windows® XP?

Simply by creating uncompressed versions of the icons. They will work on all versions of Windows. However, if you want to display at large size under Windows® XP, you must install a Desktop Enhancer application. The drawback is the icon file size: 400Kb for an icon! Using Axialis IconWorkshop™ you can easily remove the PNG compression option.

## Create a Windows Vista™ Compressed Icon with Axialis IconWorkshop™

Here is a step-by-step tutorial on how to create a Windows Vista™ compressed icon using Axialis IconWorkshop™.

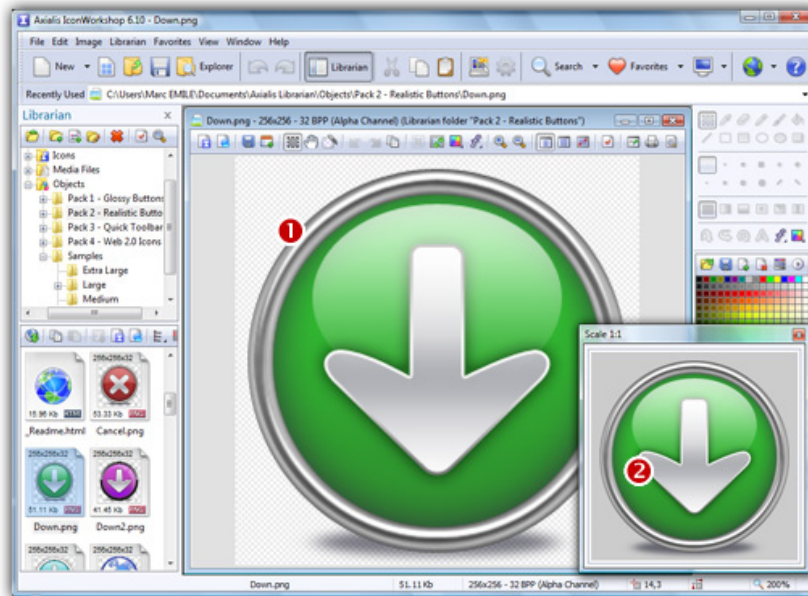
1. Create a 256x256 version of your icon image using any image/vector editor. Save your artwork with smooth transparency (32 BPP alpha channel) using a file format that is compatible with Axialis IconWorkshop™: BMP, PNG, JP2000, PSD.



You can also transfer your work from **Adobe Photoshop®** using the Axialis transfer plug-in (see this tutorial) or you can create an icon by assembling several **image objects** (see this tutorial).

In this procedure, we'll use this file: **down.png** (we recommend you to download it and save it on your disk – use right click and choose "Save Target As"). You can also find the file in the **Librarian**, folder "**Objects/Pack 2 – Realistic Buttons**". If this object pack is not present in the folder, you can download it from [here](#).

2. Launch Axialis IconWorkshop™ and open the image file. It is loaded in an image document window, not an icon editor window, as shown below (❶):

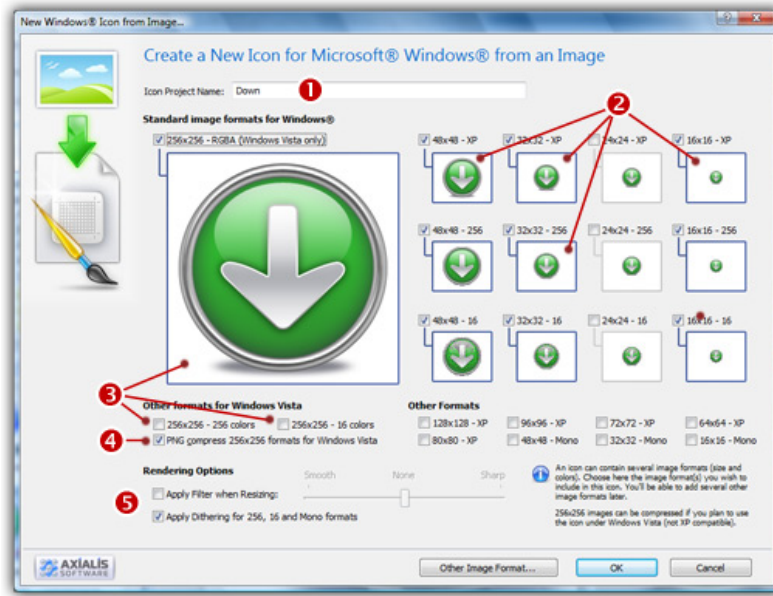


3. If the scale-1:1 preview window is not in 256x256 mode, the preview image will be cropped. It is recommended that you switch to 256x256 preview mode if you want to work with 256x256 Windows Vista™ icons. To switch to this mode, right-click in the preview window, a menu opens. Choose "**256x256 Display**". The preview window now looks as shown above in floating mode (❷).

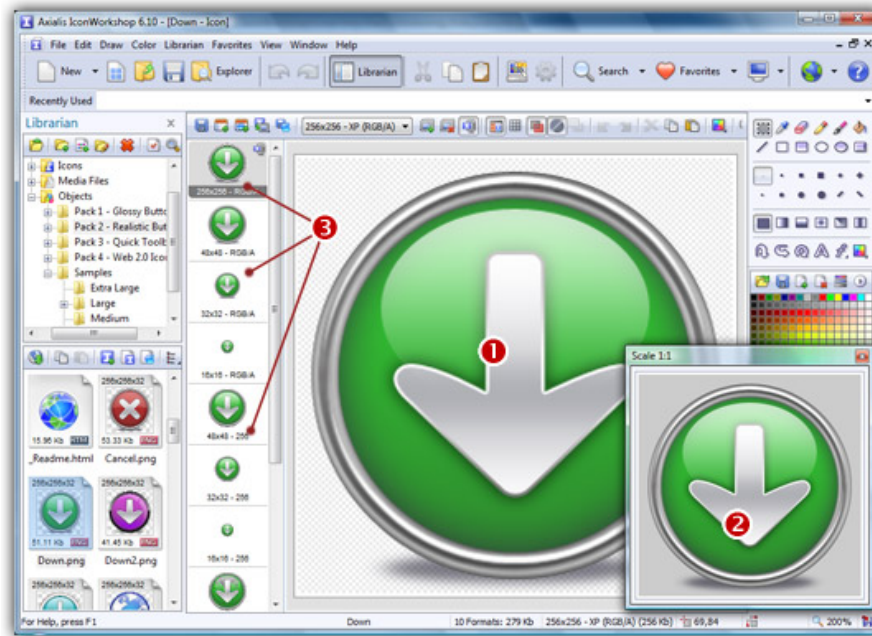
Use the same method to return to the previous state: choose "**128x128 Display**", remove the "Floating Window" option and use the mouse to dock the window.

4. Select the whole image. Choose **Edit/Select All** or press **Ctrl+A**. An animated selection rectangle is now drawn around the image.
5. Choose **File/Create Windows® Icon From Selection** or press "**I**". A large dialog box opens. This dialog box will permit you to create all the image formats you want to include in your icon in one simple step:





6. Type the **Name** of the new icon project (❶). The root of the image file is proposed by default.
7. Select the images formats to include in the icon (❷) by clicking on the images. To create a Windows Vista™ icon, it is recommended that you follow the Windows Vista™ specifications as specified above. Don't forget to add the 256x256 Windows Vista™ formats in RGB/A (Windows® XP), 256 and 16 color modes (❸).
8. To create a fully-compliant Windows Vista™ icon, you'll need to compress the 256x256 formats in PNG. Select the associated option (❹).
9. You can also choose to apply the dithering option to the 256/16 color images as well as add a filter effect to smooth/sharpen the resulting images in RGB/A mode (❺). View the results in the preview images.
10. When done, click **OK**. A new icon project is created in a document window:



11. The main window with the grid (❶) is the edition area where you can retouch the icon. The gray chessboard-like texture behind the icon is the transparent portion of the icon (the alpha channel info has been preserved). The scale 1:1 preview is displayed in the associated window (❷).
12. All the available formats are displayed in a list (❸). You can select them to edit (❶) or preview (❷) them. See the application built-in help (press **F1**) to learn how to add/remove formats or work with this icon project.
13. The compressed format (only the 256x256 formats can be compressed) are marked with this overlay PNG compression image: . You can add/remove this option by choosing **Draw/Compressed Image Format (Windows Vista™)** or by pressing "K". You can also use the local toolbar or a right-click menu.
14. When done, save the icon by choosing **Edit/Save** or pressing **Ctrl+S**.

## Use of Windows Vista™ Compressed Icons in Software Projects

Windows Vista™ PNG compressed 256x256 icons will be supported in **Microsoft Visual Studio® 2008** (codename "ORCAS"). We've tested PNG compressed icons on **Visual C++ 6.0** and **Visual .NET 2003/2005** and they all reject the icon during the resource compilation:

```
Error RC2176: old DIB in res\app.ico; pass it through SDKPAINT
```



This is unsurprising to us since this new ICO file format introduces a new header which points to raw PNG data. Of course the compiler returns a false error message. The DIB header is not old, it is PNG. Passing it through SDKPAINT does not help.

Windows Vista™ compressed icons have also been reported as not functioning in the **Delphi** programming environment. New components will no doubt be developed in the future that identify these shortfalls.

## Compiling a Program with a 256x256 PNG icon using Visual C++ 6.0 and .NET 2003/2005

Create a 256x256 icon with all formats embedded as recommended for Windows Vista™. Save your icon **without compressing** your 256x256 formats (approximately 400Kb icon file). Once the icon is created, work on your project as usual. The compiler will handle correctly the image since it won't be a PNG image.

When your project is finished and before releasing the program file, follow the procedure below:

1. Open the EXE file containing the uncompressed icon in IconWorkshop.
2. The file opens in a document window with all the embedded icons displayed. Be sure to display all the formats in raw: choose **"View/Display Icons/All Formats In Raw"**.
3. Double-click on the icon you want to compress. It opens in another document window.
4. In the list of available formats (vertical list on left), right-click on the first "256x256 RGB/A" format, a menu opens. Choose **"PNG Compressed Image Format (Windows Vista)"**. A small overlay icon indicating the compression is displayed ()
5. Repeat step 4 with the other 256x256 image formats (if any).
6. Save the icon **"File/Save"**. Close the icon window.
7. Back in the EXE document window, you see the compression overlay icon () displayed on all the 256x256 formats. Repeat steps 3 to 6 for all the other icons containing 256x256 images (if any).
8. Save your EXE document, close the window.
9. You're done! The EXE file size is smaller indicating that the compression is made.

## Conclusion

Windows Vista™ icons deliver a new framework of icon presentation for high definition monitors and operating systems while remaining compatible with Windows® XP and lower definition screens. The larger 256x256 icon format provides additional opportunities for icon designers to explore more subtle and detailed development in their aim to create visual symbols that aid the user in their use of the computer environment.

## What is an Image Object?

Image objects are simple, basic graphical elements which are assembled together to create more complex artworks like icons, buttons, sprites and more. Image objects permit you to be creative without drawing one pixel, just by using mouse drag & drop and applying effects. In the near future all Axialis products will support Image Objects.

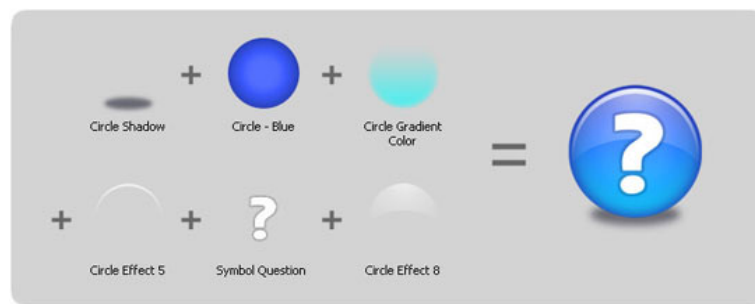
## Why Image Objects?

Graphics are among the primary ways of advertising the sale of goods or services. This is true for computing when designing software or website interfaces. The primary solution is to draw icons

using either an image or vector editor. Then, when the image is done, use Axialis IconWorkshop™ to convert this image to an icon. Also, if you don't want to use an external image editor, Axialis IconWorkshop™ contains some drawing tools that permit you to draw your own icons. But most of us are not graphic designers and we have a problem when it comes to create attractive icons or web graphics. The question is: **"How to create attractive custom icons without drawing skills?"** Image Objects are the answer.

The solution is to use a set of image objects already done by a skilled computer graphic artist, and assembling them together to create a final artwork that will match your needs. Using a set of existing image objects the possibilities are almost infinite. You can create many different icons or graphics simply by adjusting various parameters of each object like Hue (teint), Saturation, Brightness, Contrast, Size, Opacity and more.

For example, using 6 image objects from our Glossy Buttons object pack, you can easily create an attractive help icon:



This association can be easily done with Axialis IconWorkshop™ using a few mouse clicks and drag-and-drops. Creating different versions of an icon is very easy with this pack. See below some examples of the help icon made in a few minutes simply using the mouse and without drawing one pixel (non-exhaustive list of course!):



## Specifications of an Image Object

An image object is a simple raster or vector image which can be saved as standard or proprietary file format. However, to comply with Axialis requirements, image objects must match the following specifications:

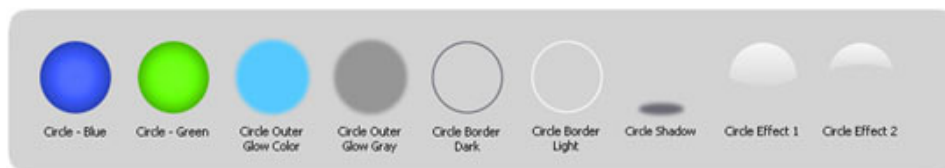
- Objects can be vector or raster images;
- Objects file format must be compatible with Axialis Software products: PNG, JPEG2000, BMP, PSD, ICO, ICNS (more formats to be supported in the future);
- Raster objects must contain RGB images and include alpha-channel transparency (RGB/A 32 bits-per-pixel format). Indexed images with color palette are not accepted.

- Raster objects size must be 256x256. Overlay objects object can be 128x128. Complex multi-resolution objects can include several versions on the same image at different sizes (useful for small icons).
- Objects can contain layers;

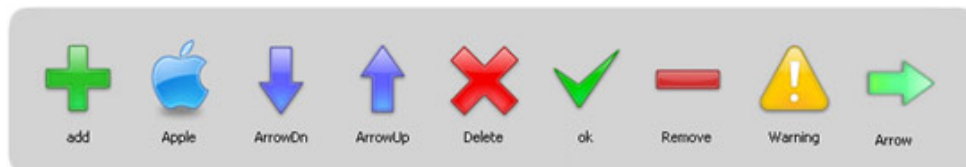
## Different Types of Image Objects

All objects are simply images. However we can separate them in three types:

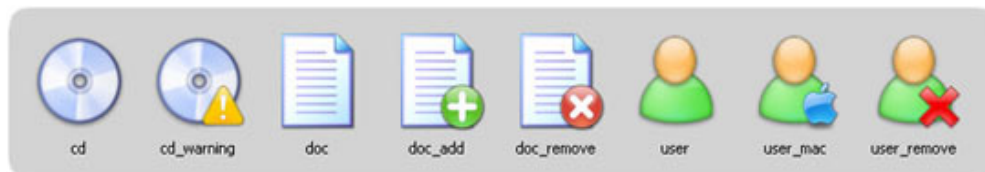
- **Basic Objects** – These objects are the most simple possible. For instance, the Glossy Buttons pack contains only basic objects. Basic objects cannot be used alone. They are designed to be added as layers to other basic or simple objects. Typical basic objects are: geometric shapes, reflect effects, lightning effects, shadows and more. See below examples of basic objects (from Glossy Buttons pack):



- **Overlay Objects** – These objects can be used alone but are generally added to already-done images. The aim of overlay objects is to add a supplementary information to the image, usually actions or types. Overlay objects can be created from basic objects and added to your existing object collection. See below examples of overlay objects (from Axialis IconWorkshop™ standard objects):



- **Complex Objects** – These objects are detailed ones which can be used alone. However, they're usually used with overlays images applied to them. See below examples of complex objects (few of them with overlays):



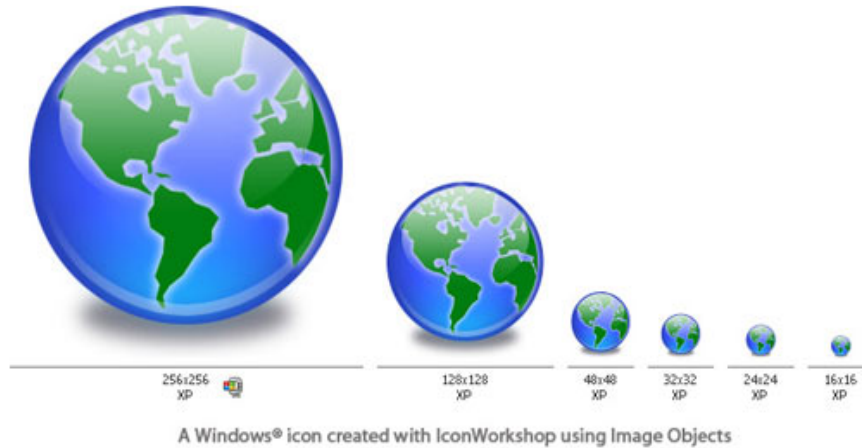
## Using Image Objects with Axialis Products

Actually **Axialis IconWorkshop™** is the only product to support image objects. In the near future, **Professional Screensaver Producer** and **CursorWorkshop** will support image objects. On a regular basis, new image object packs will be available for download on our website. Packs are free but some of them are reserved to registered customers. Additionally, third-party authors may propose their own object packs (additional fees may be required). Links to selected object packs will also be added to our [website object page](#).

Using image objects in Axialis products is a child's play. The installation is easy and fully automated. Objects are added in the Axialis Librarian folder and appear in the associated integrated window (present in all Axialis products). Once the pack is installed, dealing with objects is fun and intuitive. It can be done exclusively with the mouse using drag and drops.

To learn how to create icons from object we recommend to read this tutorial: [Creating Icons from Image Objects](#)

To follow this tutorial, you need to install Axialis IconWorkshop™ 6.0 (Tryout or Corporate version) or more. The Glossy Buttons pack is already included in Axialis IconWorkshop™. You'll learn how to create the following icon, containing several formats, in minutes:



# 3

## How-to Procedures

### How to Create an Icon from an Image File

#### 1. Open the image file in Axialis IconWorkshop™

1. Choose **"File/Open"**, browse your folders and select your file (Windows® standard dialog box).

or

Choose **"File/New/File Explorer"** or press **Ctrl+E**. A built-in Axialis file explorer window opens. Browse your disks, see the thumbnail preview and double-click the image file you wish to open.

or

In the **Recently Used** zone (in the main toolbar), type the **full pathname** of the image file you wish to open then hit **Enter**.

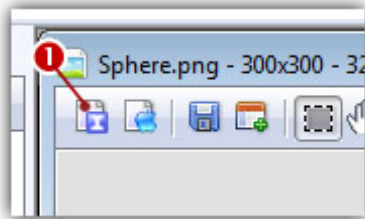
2. The image file opens in a document window.

Axialis IconWorkshop™ will convert images to 32 bpp with transparency when possible. This is much more convenient to create icons. The following image formats can include transparency: Photoshop® PSD, PNG, RGB, GIF, JPEG 2000 and WMF.

#### 2. Create an icon from this image

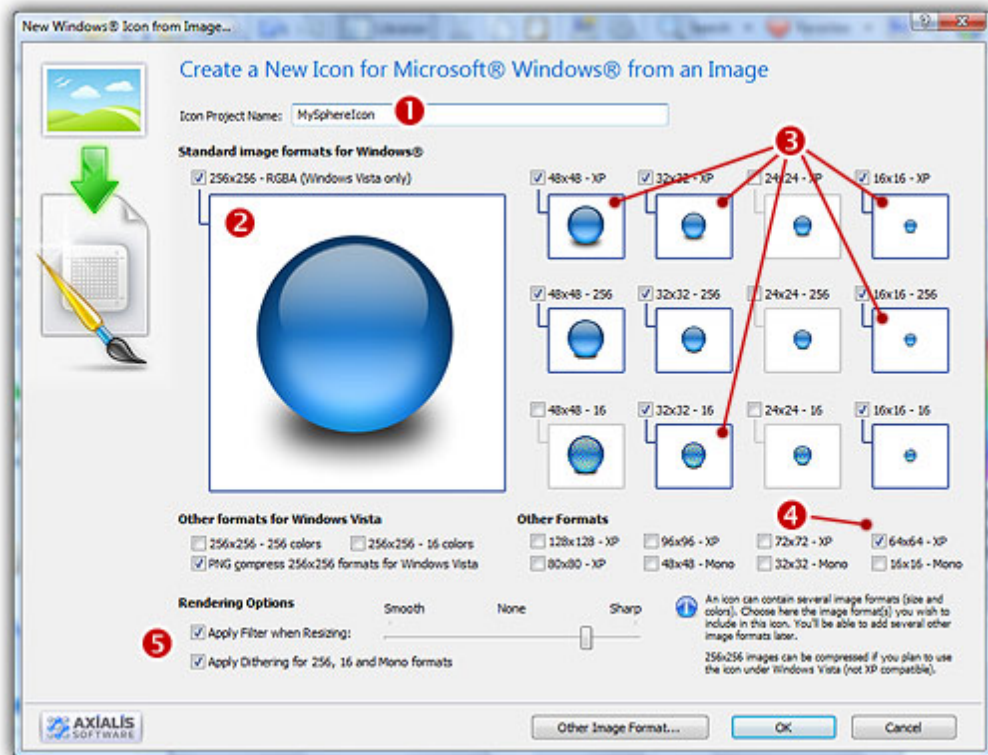
3. Before proceeding, we recommend you to **select the portion of image** you wish to use to create your icon. If you leave too many transparent areas around your image, the visible part of your icon will be too small.
4. Select the portion of image: Use the **selection tool** (upper-left button of the tool palette) and select the portion of image you wish to use (do not cut the shadow if there is one around the object). When done, an animated dashed rectangle has been created.
5. When the selection is done, choose **Image/Create New Icon from Selection** or press **"I"** or click the first command button in the local toolbar (🔴):





To create a Macintosh® icon, the procedure is similar, just click the Apple® button in right or press "M".

6. The dialog box **New Icon From Image** opens (see below). In the **Name** group (1), enter the icon project name. Do not specify any extension.



7. In the **Image Formats** group, **select** the image formats you wish to add in the icon (2) and **unselect** the unwanted images (3). Just click on the image preview to select/unselect. To know more about the desired Windows® standard image format, see [What is an Icon](#) topic.
8. If you wish to start creating your icon with an unlisted format, click the **Other Image Format** button.
9. When done, click **OK**. The icon is automatically created with the various image formats you've selected.



## How to Create an Icon from a Cursor File...

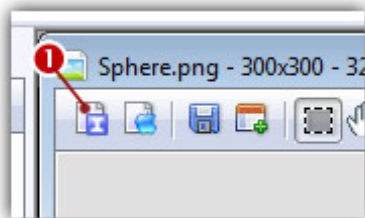
Axialis IconWorkshop™ permits you to create icons from Static (CUR) or Animated Cursors (ANI).


### 1. Open the cursor file in Axialis IconWorkshop™

1. Choose **"File/Open"**, browse your folders and select your file (Windows® standard dialog box).  
 or  
 Choose **"File/New/File Explorer"** or press **Ctrl+E**. A built-in Axialis file explorer window opens. Browse your disks, see the thumbnail preview and double-click the image file you wish to open.  
 or  
 In the **Recently Used** zone (in the main toolbar), type the **full pathname** of the cursor file you wish to open then hit **Enter**.
2. The cursor file opens in a document window.

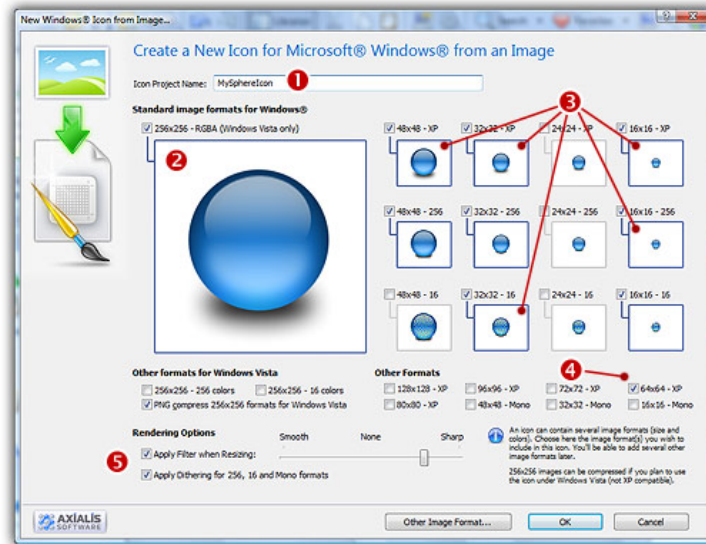
### 2. Create an icon from this cursor

3. If the file is a **Static Cursor (CUR)**, it may contain several image formats (see list). Click on the desired format. It appears in the editor window.  
 or  
 If the file is an **Animated Cursor (ANI)**, it contains several frames (see list). Click on the desired frame. It appears in the editor window.
4. Select the portion of image: Use the **selection tool** (upper-left button of the tool palette) and select the portion of image you wish to use. When done, an animated dashed rectangle has been created.
5. When the selection is done, choose **Image/Create New Icon from Selection** or press **"I"** or click the first command button in the local toolbar (1):



 To create a Macintosh® icon, the procedure is similar, just click the Apple® button in right or press "M".

- The dialog box **New Icon From Image** opens (see below). In the **Name** group (❶), enter the icon project name. Do not specify any extension.



- In the **Image Formats** group, **select** the image formats you wish to add in the icon (❷) and **unselect** the unwanted images (❸). Just click on the image preview to select/unselect. To know more about the desired Windows® standard image format, see [What is an Icon](#) topic.
- If you wish to start creating your icon with an unlisted format, click the **Other Image Format** button.
- When done, click **OK**. The icon is automatically created with the various image formats you've selected.

## How to Create an Icon from a Transparent GIF File

GIF is a famous and widely used image format. Additionally, some GIF files include transparent areas, which is convenient to create icons. Axialis IconWorkshop™ permits you to create icons from **Static** or **Animated** GIF files.

### 1. Open the GIF file in Axialis IconWorkshop™

- Choose **"File/Open"**, browse your folders and select your file (Windows® standard dialog box).  
or  
Choose **"File/New/File Explorer"** or press **Ctrl+E**. A built-in Axialis file explorer window opens. Browse your disks, see the thumbnail preview and double-click the image file you wish to open.  
or  
In the **Recently Used** zone (in the main toolbar), type the **full pathname** of the cursor file you wish to open then hit **Enter**.
- The GIF file opens in a document window.

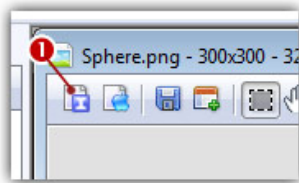
## 2. Create an icon from this GIF image

3. If the file is a **Static GIF**, it appears in the editor window.

or

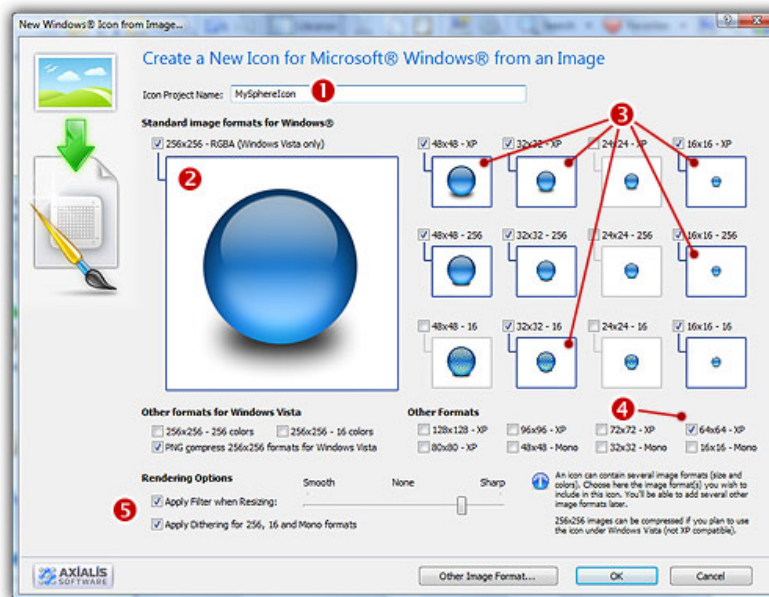
If the file is an **Animated GIF**, it contains several frames (see list). Click on the desired frame. It appears in the editor window.

4. If the GIF image contains transparent areas they are kept (you see the Chessboard texture). Select the portion of image: Use the **selection tool** (upper-left button of the tool palette) and select the portion of image you wish to use. When done, an animated dashed rectangle has been created.
5. When the selection is done, choose **Image/Create New Icon from Selection** or press "I" or click the first command button in the local toolbar (1):



To create a Macintosh® icon, the procedure is similar, just click the Apple® button in right or press "M".

6. The dialog box **New Icon From Image** opens (see below). In the **Name** group (1), enter the icon project name. Do not specify any extension.



7. In the **Image Formats** group, **select** the image formats you wish to add in the icon (2) and **unselect** the unwanted images (3). Just click on the image preview to select/unselect. To know more about the desired Windows® standard image format, see [What is an Icon](#) topic.
8. If you wish to start creating your icon with an unlisted format, click the **Other Image Format** button.
9. When done, click **OK**. The icon is automatically created with the various image formats you've selected.

## How to Create an Icon from a Web Image


The Web is a great place to find images. Here is how to proceed to create icons using these images.

### Get the Image from the Web

1. Launch your Internet browser and surf to the desired page.  
or  
In the **Recently Used** zone (in the main toolbar), type the **full Internet address** of the desired page, hit **Enter**.
2. The page opens in a document window.

### Create an icon from an image in the page using the Clipboard

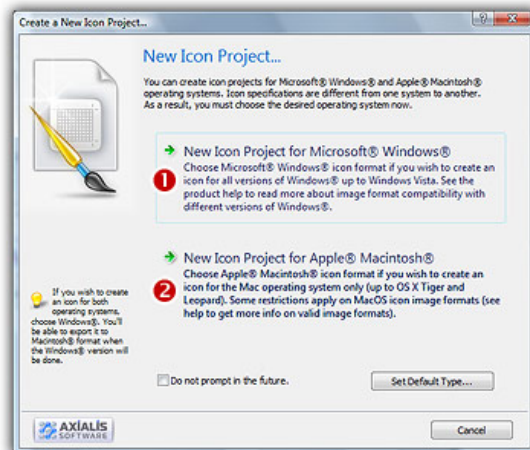
---

 **Using the clipboard, you lose the transparent areas if present.**

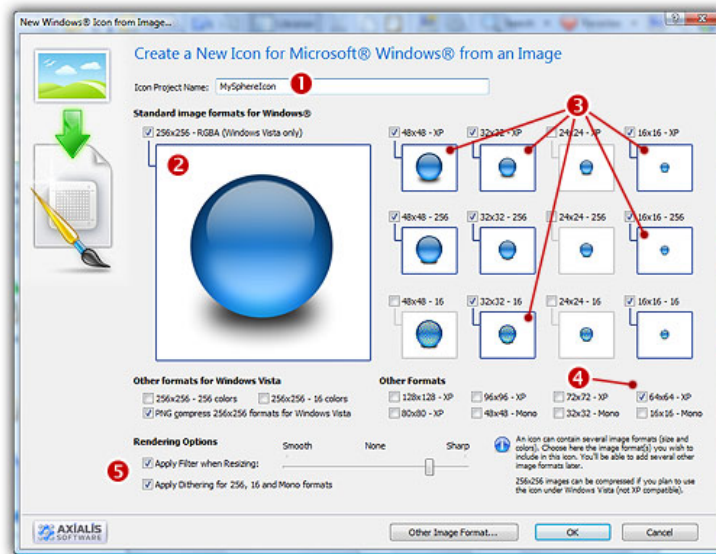
---

3. Right-click the desired image then choose **Copy**. The image is copied into the clipboard.
5. If you want to create an icon using the whole image:

Select **New/Icon Project From Clipboard** or press **Ctrl+Q**. The dialog box **New Icon Project** opens. Select the type of icon you wish to create: Windows® (❶) or Macintosh® (❷):



If you choose Windows® (the procedure is similar for a Macintosh® icon), a second dialog box opens.



In the **Name** group (❶), enter the icon project name. Do not specify any extension.

In the **Image Formats** group, **select** the image formats you wish to add in the icon (❷) and **unselect** the unwanted images (❸). To know more about the desired Windows® standard image format, see [What is an Icon](#) topic. If you wish to start creating your icon with an unlisted format, click the **Other Image Format** button.

When done, click **OK**. The icon is automatically created with the various image formats you've selected.

or


5. If you want to create an icon using a portion of the image:

Select **Edit/Paste as New Image** or press **Ctrl+I**. A new document is created containing the desired image.

Now follow Step 2 procedure as in topic: [Create an Icon from an Image File](#).

## Create an icon from an image in the page using a temporary file

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 **Using a temporary file, you keep the transparent areas if present.**

---

3. Right-click the desired image then choose **Save Picture As**. Store the image on your hard disk using a new filename.
4. Now, create your icon as in topic: [Create an Icon from an Image File](#) using the newly created file.

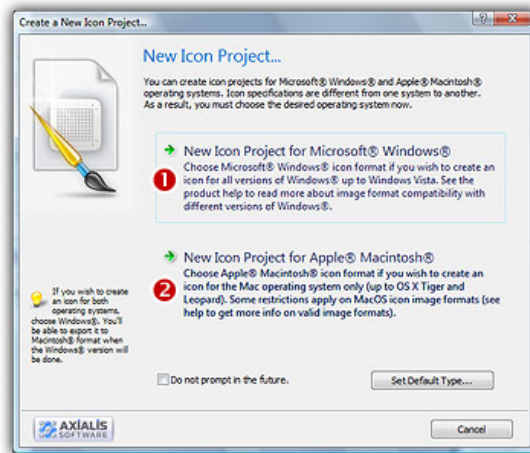
## How to Create an Icon from the Clipboard

Creating an Icon from the Clipboard Contents is the quickest way to proceed. It permits also to transfer images from external programs.

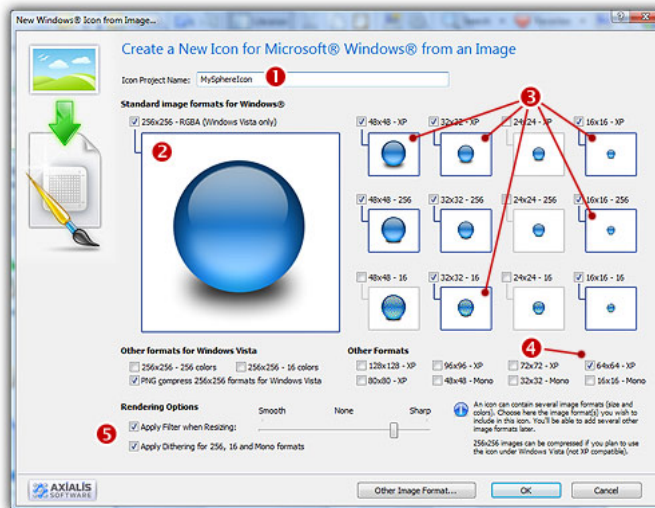
 If the external program (from where you copied the image) does not support 32Bpp images with transparent alpha channel, the transparency will be lost.

### Creating the Icon from the Clipboard Contents

1. Select **New/Icon Project From Clipboard** or press **Ctrl+Q**. The dialog box **New Icon Project** opens. Select the type of icon you wish to create: Windows® (1) or Macintosh® (2):



2. If you choose Windows® (the procedure is similar for a Macintosh® icon), a second dialog box opens.



3. In the **Name** group (1), enter the icon project name. Do not specify any extension.

4. In the **Image Formats** group, **select** the image formats you wish to add in the icon (2) and **unselect** the unwanted images (3). To know more about the desired Windows® standard image format, see [What is an Icon](#) topic. If you wish to start creating your icon with an unlisted format, click the **Other Image Format** button.
5. When done, click **OK**. The icon is automatically created with the various image formats you've selected.

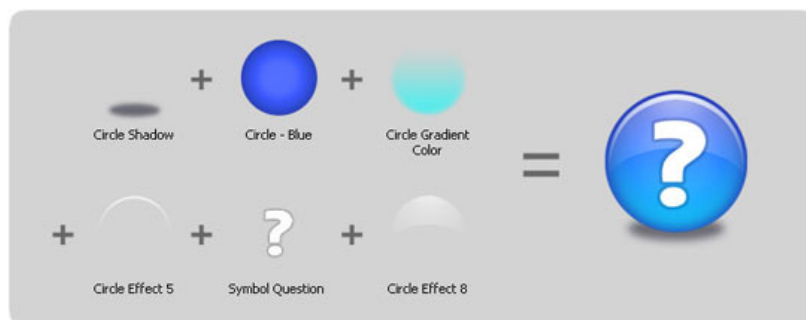
## How to create attractive icons using image objects

Graphics are among the primary ways of advertising the sale of goods or services. This is true for computing when designing software icons or website interfaces. The primary solution is to draw icons using either an image or vector editor. Then, when the image is done, use Axialis IconWorkshop™ to convert this image to an icon. Also, if you don't want to use an external image editor, Axialis IconWorkshop™ contains some drawing tools that permit you to draw your own icons. But most of us are not graphic designers and we have a problem when it comes to create attractive icons or web graphics.

The question is: "**How to create attractive custom icons without drawing skills?**" Image Objects are the answer.

The solution is to use a set of image objects already done by a skilled computer graphic artist, and assembling them together to create a final artwork that will match your needs. Using a set of existing image objects the possibilities are almost infinite. You can create many different icons or graphics simply by adjusting various parameters of each object like Hue (teint), Saturation, Brightness, Contrast, Size, Opacity and more.

For example, using 6 image objects from our Glossy Buttons object pack, you can easily create an attractive help icon:



This association can be easily done with Axialis IconWorkshop™ using a few mouse clicks and drag-and-drops. Creating different versions of an icon is very easy with this pack. See below some examples of the help icon made in a few minutes simply using the mouse and without drawing one pixel (non-exhaustive list of course!):





**Object Packs** are libraries containing a large number of image objects made by a professional designer. We regularly publish new objects packs that you can download on Internet. To create your icons, you just have to assemble basic objects together. See below examples of icons made using the **Glossy Objects** pack:



---

To follow this tutorial, you need to have the "Glossy Buttons" object pack installed in the librarian. Search the Librarian for the folder "**Objects\Pack 1 - Glossy Buttons**"). This pack is included in IconWorkshop™ 6.0 or more. If you can't find the folder, **download** the "Glossy Buttons" pack from **Internet**

---

## Defining, Creating the Icon Project

Before using the image objects, we need to create a new icon project. An icon contains several image formats (see "What's an Icon?") so we need to define all these formats before going on.

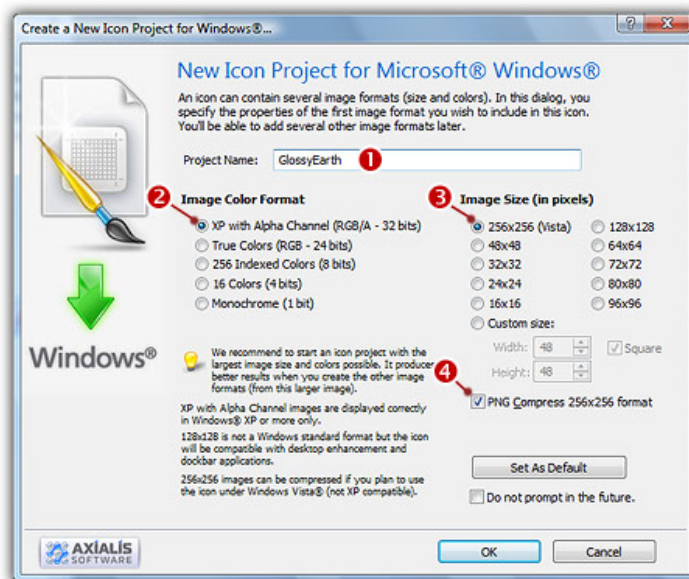
We'll create an icon compatible with Windows Vista™ (256x256 format), Windows® XP; (48x48, 32x32, 24x24 and 16x16 formats) and Dock Bar applications (128x128 format). To simplify the project, we won't add indexed color formats (256, 16 colors). Using the objects we'll make a "Glossy Earth" icon with bottom shadow. The resulting icon will look like this:



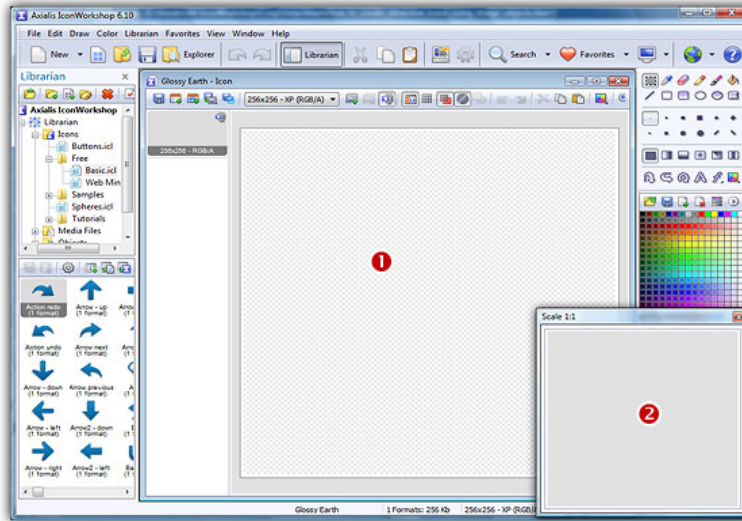


The largest image format is 256x256 XP (ie RGB with alpha channel). To get the best results, we'll start the project with this new format and work with it to assemble the objects. When finished, we'll create all the other formats using this 256x256 format as template. Let's create our new icon project:

1. Launch Axialis IconWorkshop™. Choose **File/New/Windows® Icon Project** or press **Ctrl+W**. A dialog box opens:



2. Type the name of the project (❶): **"Glossy Earth"**.
3. Now specify the format of the first image to add in the project: In **Colors**, choose **"Windows® XP with Alpha Channel (RGB/A 32 bits)"** (❷). In **Size in Pixels**, choose and **"256x256 (Windows Vista™)"** (❸).
4. As we want the 256x256 format to be used under Windows Vista™, we choose to compress it as PNG: Click the option **"Compress 256x256 Windows Vista™ format"** (❹). To learn more about Windows Vista™ icons, read this article: ["Introducing Windows Vista™ Icons"](#).
5. When done, click **OK**. A new icon project window is created (❶):



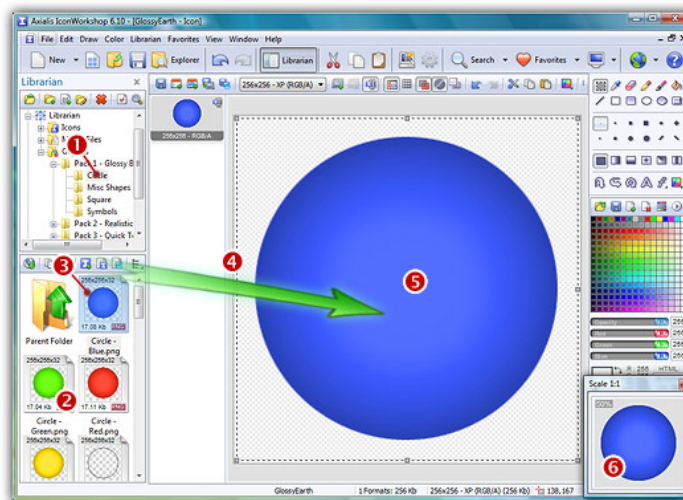
6. If the scale-1:1 preview window is not in 256x256 mode, the preview image will be cropped. It is recommended that you switch to 256x256 preview mode to work with 256x256 Windows Vista™ icons. To switch to this mode, right-click in the preview window, a menu opens. Choose **"256x256 Display"**. The preview window now looks as shown above in floating mode (2).

Use the same method to return to the previous state: choose **"128x128 Display"**, remove the "Floating Window" option and use the mouse to dock the window.

## Building the Icon Using Image Objects

This is the most important part of the project. The time has come to be creative! No problem it's easy and fun with IconWorkshop™. Before we start, don't forget that each step of the creation can be undone/redone (Ctrl+Z/Ctrl+Y) up to 16 steps back.

7. In the **Librarian** window (choose **View/Librarian** if it is not visible), select the **"Objects/Pack 1 - Glossy Buttons/Circle"** folder (1). A list of available object is displayed in the contents window below (2). Find the **"Circle - Blue.png"** file and select it (3).



8. When done, use a mouse **Drag-and-Drop** to add it into the project as shown above (4). The object is added to the project as a floating selection (5). Take a look at the quality of the artwork in the **Scale 1:1 window** (6).

**Congratulation!** you've just added your first image object to your project! As you can see it's very easy and intuitive. Now let's continue and add other objects to build the icon.

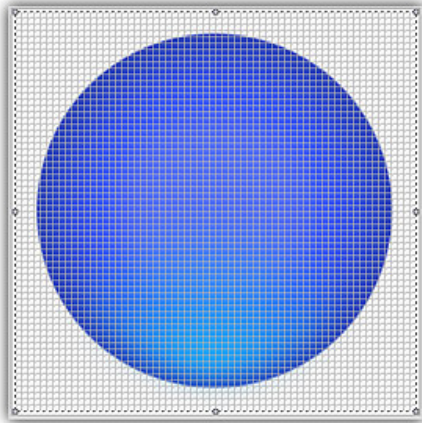
---

### IMPORTANT

To follow the next steps, the **"Preserve Transparency"** option must be set (press **"T"** or select **Draw/Preserve Transparency**). If this option is not set, the transparency will not be kept each time you add a new image object and the objects already added will be fully replaced

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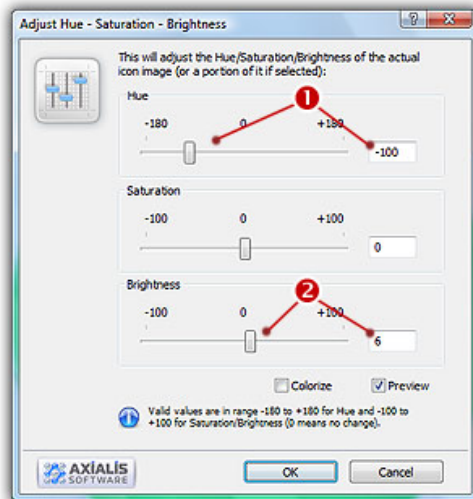
9. From the **Librarian**, select the file **"Circle Inner Light.png"** and add it to the project using the same method. The resulting image now includes a cyan light effect as shown below:



10. To create the Earth image, we now add the map object. From the librarian, select the file **"World Map.png"** and add it to the project using the same method. The resulting image looks like below:



11. The result is good but we want to make it even better. We can increase the realism by changing the color of the map to green. To do so, IconWorkshop™ has a feature to adjust the Hue/Saturation/Brightness of an image. Choose **Draw/Adjustments-Effects/Hue-Saturation** or press **"U"**. A dialog box opens:



12. Set the **Hue** to "-100" either using the slider or by typing the value (❶). It "shifts" the colors of the floating image in the spectrum. As a result, the map is now green. Also, we slightly increase the **Brightness** of the map by specifying "6" (❷). You can see the results in real-time in the Preview 1:1 window. When done click **OK**. Now the map is green:



13. Do you recall the name of the icon? Yes, "Glossy Earth"! So, let's add the glossy effects. First, using the same drag-and-drop method as above, we add the object "**Circle Effect 3.png**". Then to increase the effect, we add the object "**Circle Effect 6.png**". Now it looks like this:





14. Now the final touch: the shadow. We want to add a shadow at the bottom and under the earth. This will produce an interesting effect, just like if the globe was laid on a white horizontal plan.

First, we need to move the whole Earth 10 pixels up (just to leave more space for shadow at the bottom of the image). **Important:** To do so, we must **select the whole image**. Actually, only the last object we've added is selected. Choose **Edit/Select All** or press **Ctrl+A**. There is no visual change but now you're ready to move the whole image.

To move the image, you can use the mouse (with a drag-and-drop) or use the arrow keys of the keyboard. To move the image 10 pixels up, hit **UpArrow** 10 times or press **Shift+UpArrow**. The resulting selection rectangle is now 10 pixels outside the top of the editor area.

15. We can now add the shadow. Select the object "**Circle Shadow.png**" in the librarian and add it to the project. The resulting image looks like this:



16. Obviously, there is a problem: The shadow is in front of the Earth Globe! The solution is as easy as a keystroke: Press the **End** key or choose **Edit/Set Floating Selection to Background**.

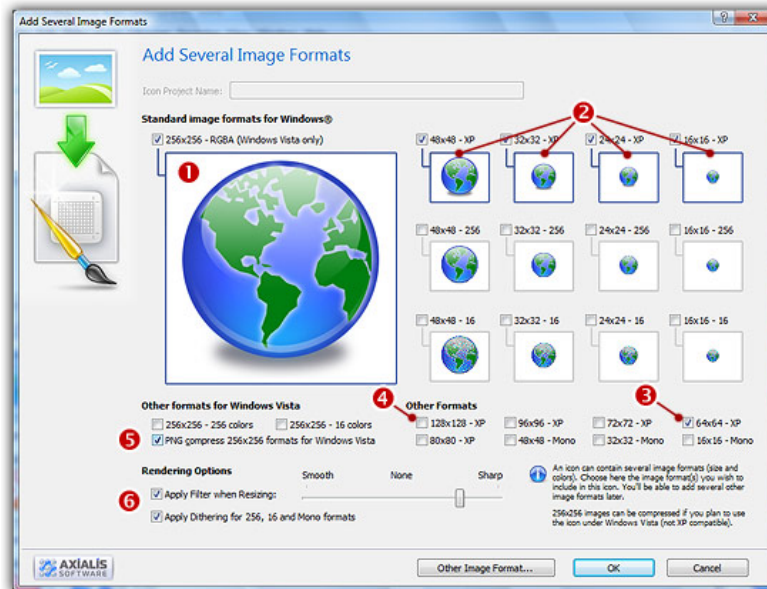
**You're done!** The resulting image should look like this:



## Finalizing the Icon by Creating All the Formats

Now that the largest image is done (256x256 RGB/A), we'll create all the other formats of the icons from this one. This is done in one step with Axialis IconWorkshop™ Corporate Edition. Using the Personal Edition, you need to create each format manually (see product help for more info).

17. Choose Draw/Add Several Image Formats from This Image or press "V". A dialog box opens:



18. Select the images formats to include in the icon (1/ 2) by clicking on the associated check boxes. Follow the specifications as we defined them above.
19. You can also choose to apply the dithering option to the 256/16 color images as well as add a filter effect to smooth/sharpen the resulting images in RGB/A mode (2). View the results in the preview images.
20. When done, click **OK**. The new formats are automatically created and added to the project (1):



21. Take a moment to admire your work :) Click on the various formats (❶) and see the resulting icon at scale 1:1 in the preview window (❷). You can change the **background lightness** of the **Scale 1:1** window simply by clicking in it using the left button of the mouse. It will permit you to see how the icon is displayed on different backgrounds with different lightness.
22. Save your icon: Choose **File/Save** or press **Ctrl+S**. It will be saved as Windows® ICO format.

**Congratulations!** You've created your first icon from Image Objects. There is no limit to your creativity using these objects. You can resize them, changing their color, their opacity and more. You can even create your own objects by combining existing ones.

## Creating a Macintosh® version of the icon

You can also save your Windows® icon as Macintosh® format. When the icon is finished (step 22 above), choose **File/Save as Macintosh®Icon** or press **Ctrl+Alt+S**.

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**By doing this, some icon formats which are not available for Macintosh® icons will be removed. In the example above, format 24x24 will be removed. An information message will be displayed**

---

## How to create Windows Vista™ compliant icons

In this topic, we'll see how to create a Windows Vista™ compliant icon. Windows Vista™ includes many new features and enhancements. The most visible evolution is the new Graphical User Interface (GUI). A first look at Aero (the codename for the Windows Vista™ user experience) reveals a slicker interface with sharper graphics.

Microsoft Windows Vista™ comes with a new format of icons supporting PNG compression and sizes up to 256x256. The standard Windows Vista™ icons now includes the following image formats (grayed formats are optional):

256x256 - RGB/A	64x64 - RGB/A	48x48 - RGB/A	32x32 - RGB/A	24x24 - RGB/A	16x16 - RGB/A
256x256 - 256c	64x64 - 256c	48x48 - 256c	32x32 - 256c	24x24 - 256c	16x16 - 256c
256x256 - 16c	64x64 - 16c	48x48 - 16c	32x32 - 16c	24x24 - 16c	16x16 - 16c

The problem is: if you simply make the icon and save it in standard Windows® XP ICO format, the resulting file will be 400Kb on disk. The solution is to compress the images. Only the 256x256 images are compressed. The compression scheme used is PNG (Portable Network Graphic) because it has a good lossless ratio and supports alpha channel. The compressed icon sizes are 100Kb to 150Kb.

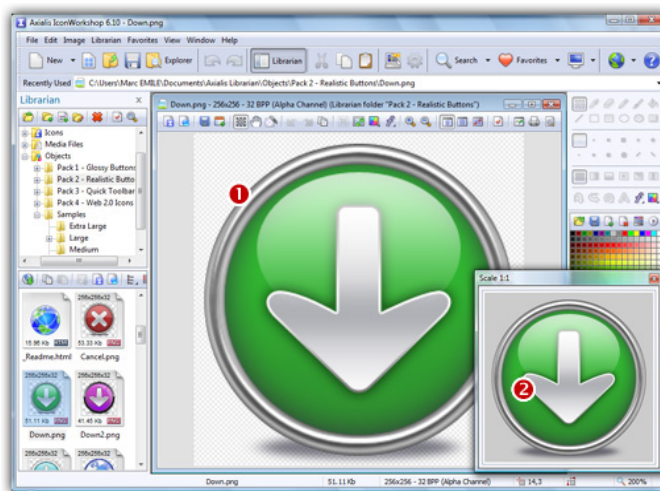
To get more information on Windows Vista™ Icons, we recommend you to read this topic:  
Introducing Windows Vista™ Icons

## Creating the Windows Vista™ Icon from an existing image

1. In this procedure, we'll use the following image file to create the Windows Vista™ icon:  
"Down.png" (located in Librarian: "Objects\Pack 2 - Realistic Buttons"). If you can't find the file, download the "Realistic Buttons" pack from Internet.

To get the best results possible, the source image must be 256x256 - RGB/A.

2. Open the Librarian window, go to the folder "Objects\Pack 2 - Realistic Buttons" and open the file "Down.png". It is loaded in an image document window, not an icon editor window, as shown below (1):

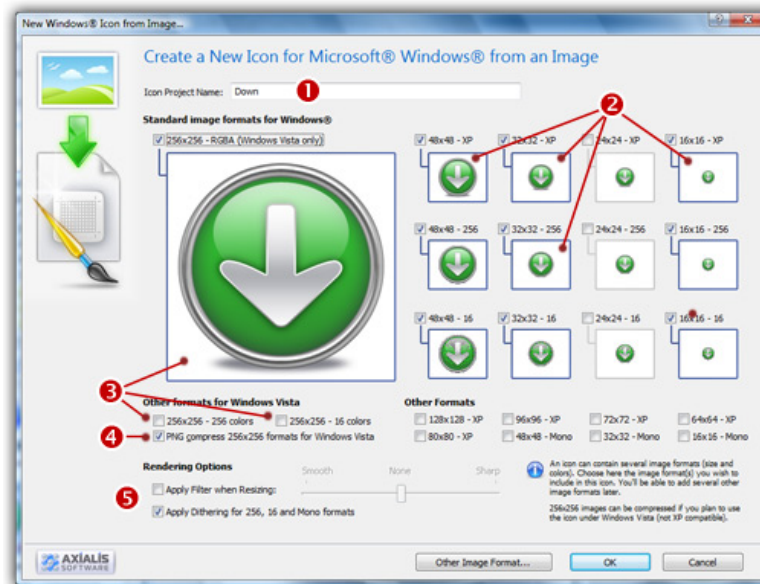




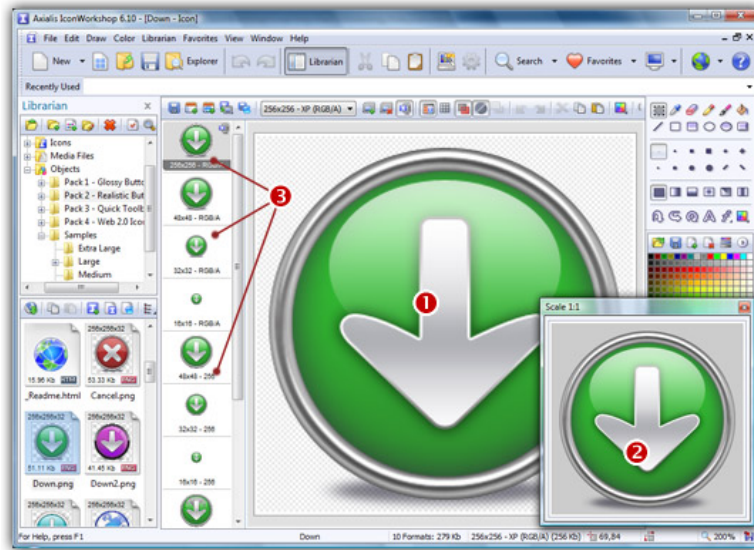
3. If the scale-1:1 preview window is not in 256x256 mode, the preview image will be cropped. It is recommended that you switch to 256x256 preview mode if you want to work with 256x256 Windows Vista™ icons. To switch to this mode, right-click in the preview window, a menu opens. Choose "**256x256 Display**". The preview window now looks as shown above in floating mode (2).

Use the same method to return to the previous state: choose "**128x128 Display**", remove the "Floating Window" option and use the mouse to dock the window.

4. Select the whole image. Choose **Edit/Select All** or press **Ctrl+A**. An animated selection rectangle is now drawn around the image.
5. Choose **File/Create Windows® Icon From Selection** or press "**I**". A large dialog box opens. This dialog box will permit you to create all the image formats you want to include in your icon in one simple step:



6. Type the **Name** of the new icon project (1). The root of the image file is proposed by default.
7. Select the images formats to include in the icon (2) by clicking on the images. To create a Windows Vista™ icon, it is recommended that you follow the Windows Vista™ specifications as specified above. Don't forget to add the 256x256 vista formats in RGB/A (Windows® XP), 256 and 16 color modes (3).
8. To create a fully-compliant Windows Vista™ icon, you'll need to compress the 256x256 formats in PNG. Select the associated option (4).
9. You can also choose to apply the dithering option to the 256/16 color images as well as add a filter effect to smooth/sharpen the resulting images in RGB/A mode (5). View the results in the preview images.
10. When done, click **OK**. A new icon project is created in a document window:



11. The main window with the grid (1) is the edition area where you can retouch the icon. The gray chessboard-like texture behind the icon is the transparent portion of the icon (the alpha channel info has been preserved). The scale 1:1 preview is displayed in the associated window (2).
12. All the available formats are displayed in a list (3). You can select them to edit (1) or preview (2) them. See the application built-in help (press **F1**) to learn how to add/remove formats or work with this icon project.
13. The compressed format (only the 256x256 formats can be compressed) are marked with this overlay PNG compression image: . You can add/remove this option by choosing **Draw/Compressed Image Format (Windows Vista™)** or by pressing "**K**". You can also use the local toolbar or a right-click menu.
14. When done, save the icon by choosing **Edit/Save** or pressing **Ctrl+S**. The resulting icon size is 150Kb.

## How to Create Windows® XP Compliant Icons...

In this topic, we'll see how to create icons which deal with the new Windows® XP Style. We'll also see which image formats must be included in such icons in order to be compatible with all screen configurations (see [What is an Icon](#) for more info).

This topic is based on a Microsoft® article named "Creating Windows® XP Icons". [Click here](#) to read the original document.

### Introduction

Windows® XP introduces a new style in icon design (see image below). We recommend you to follow the guidelines described in this topic to create compliant icons.

The best way to proceed is to start creating large scale versions of your images in an external vector or bitmap drawing program, such as Macromedia® Freehand®, Adobe® Photoshop® or Jasc® Paint Shop Pro®. The next step will be to import them into IconWorkshop™ to create your icons.



The new Windows® XP icon style

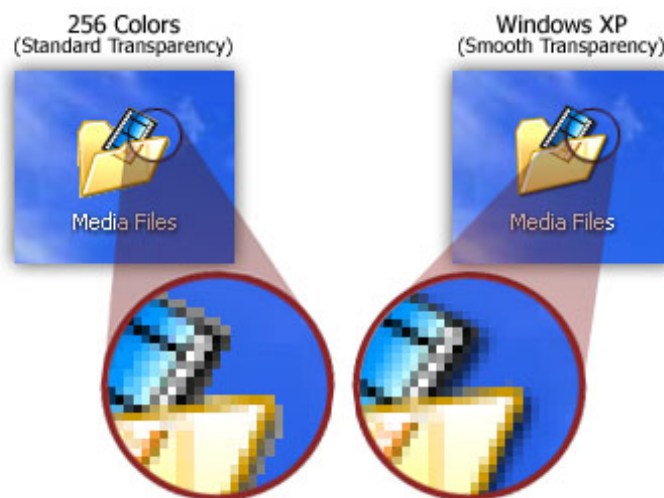
All these programs support the new Alpha Channel (a.k.a. 32 BPP Smooth Transparency) feature in images. This will help you to create beautiful icons with smooth edges.

## What about the new Windows® XP icon format?

This is not a new icon format at all. This is a new image format that you can find in new generation of icons. This new image format is called "Windows® XP format" in Axialis IconWorkshop™.

This image format contains a 24 bit image, providing 16,8 million colors to the image, plus an additional 8 bit image called the opacity image (a.k.a. Alpha Channel). As a result, the image color depth is 32 bits (i.e. you need 32 bits to define one pixel). The main advantage of this image format is that it permits to display a smooth transparency in icons. The resulting image is displayed with smooth contours on all backgrounds. It permits also to create dropped shadows behind icons. This interesting effect, which is recommended by Microsoft, is usually used in Windows® XP icons.

The following illustration shows the difference between a standard image format transparency (in 256 color formats for example) and the new Windows® XP smooth transparency:



Standard vs Windows XP Smooth transparency

## Windows® XP Icon Style Characteristics

To create a Windows® XP compliant icon, try to respect the following characteristics:

1. Color is rich and complementary to the Windows® XP look.
2. Angle and perspective provide a dynamic energy to the images.
3. Edges and corners of elements are soft and slightly rounded.
4. Light source is coming from the upper left-hand corner with additional ambient light illuminating other parts of the icon.
5. The use of gradients provides dimension and gives the icon a richer look.
6. A drop shadow provides contrast and dimension.
7. Outlines provide definition.
8. Everyday objects, such as computers and devices, have a more modern consumer look.

## Windows® XP Icon Color Depth and Size

To be compatible with all display cases and screen configurations, you must consider creating icons containing **various image formats** based on the following rules:

### IMAGE SIZES:

**16x16:** Displayed in taskbar, windows upper-left corner, detailed lists...

**24x24:** Displayed in Windows® 2000, Windows® XP menus (facultative)

**32x32:** Displayed in desktop, lists...

**48x48:** Displayed in Windows® XP explorer and system lists...

### IMAGE COLORS:

**Monochrome:** Displayed by Windows® if the screen is monochrome (rare, facultative)

**16 colors:** Displayed by Windows® if the screen is 16 or 256 colors (recommended)

**256 colors:** Displayed by Windows® if the screen is 16bits or True Colors (recommended)

**Windows® XP:** Displayed by Windows® XP if screen is True Color or more (recommended)

	● Recommended Formats	● Facultative Formats		
	16x16	24x24	32x32	48x48
Monochrome	●	●	●	●
16 Colors	●	●	●	●
256 Colors	●	●	●	●
Windows XP	●	●	●	●

Summary of standard icon image formats

If an image format is missing, Windows® displays the nearest existing image. It works but the result is generally distorted.

## Color Palette used in Windows® XP Icons

The following colors are generally used in Windows® XP icons:

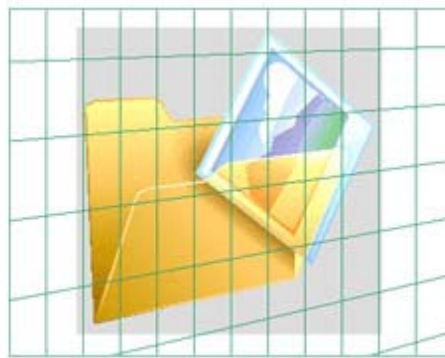
R153 G102 B0	R51 G51 B102	R153 G153 B255
R204 B153 B0	R0 G51 B153	R102 G102 B204
R255 G204 B0	R0 G102 B204	R153 G153 B204
R255 G255 B0	R0 G131 B215	R102 G102 B153
R255 G255 B153	R0 G153 B255	R0 G102 B0
R255 G219 B157	R62 G154 B222	R0 G153 B0
R255 G204 B102	R153 G204 B255	R102 G204 B51
R255 G153 B51	R180 G226 B255	R153 G255 B102
R255 G121 B75	R222 G255 B255	R204 G255 B204
R255 G51 B0	R255 G204 B255	
R153 G0 B0	R204 G204 B255	

Colors used in Windows® XP Icons

We have created a file containing these color swatches. The file "**Windows® XP.axco**" is located in "Color Swatches" subfolder of the installation directory. For your information, this file format is **compatible with ACO color files** used by Adobe® Photoshop®.

## Perspective and Grouping Objects in Icons

This is the perspective grid that Windows® XP style icons use:



Windows® XP Icon Perspective

Not all objects work well at 16 × 16 at an angle. The following objects are usually shown in a straight-on manner:

- Document icons
- Icons that are symbols (such as warning or information icons)
- Icons that are single objects (such as the magnifying glass)



Straight-on icon examples  
(.Jpg Document, Search, and  
Favorites icons)



Overlapping examples  
(Add or Remove Programs, Print Pictures,  
Recent Documents)

Create overlapping secondary objects at an angle unless it makes more sense, due to readability and integrity, that they are rendered straight on. Consider also how your icons may be viewed as a set to help determine how to group objects.

## Drop Shadow

Windows® XP icons use a drop shadow to provide definition and added dimension.



The Drop Shadow Effect

Adding a drop shadow effect is very simple using IconWorkshop™. Once the object is created, choose **Draw/Adjustments Effects/Drop Shadow**. Don't forget to leave 2 or 3 free pixels in the right and bottom side of the object before applying the shadow.

## Outlines

When illustrating Windows® XP-style icons, add an outline to the image to provide definition and ensure that the image works well on different background colors.

## Transferring the Image to IconWorkshop™ to Create an Icon

1. Axialis IconWorkshop™ supports the native **Photoshop® PSD** image format **with Layers** and **PNG with transparency**. If you use Photoshop®, save your image to a PSD file. If you use Paint Shop Pro®, Freehand® or Corel Draw®, save it to PNG with transparency.
2. In Axialis IconWorkshop™, choose **"File/Open"**, browse your folders and select your file (Windows® standard dialog box).  
  
or  
  
Choose **"File/New/File Explorer"** or press **Ctrl+E**. A built-in Axialis file explorer window opens. Browse your disks, see the thumbnail preview and double-click the image file you wish to open.  
  
or  
  
In the **Recently Used** zone (in the main toolbar), type the **full pathname** of the image file you wish to open then hit **Enter**.
3. The image file opens in a document window. If the image contains layers, you see them on the left side of the document window. You can **select one layer** by clicking on it. Its contents appears automatically in the main area. Now you can **create an icon** from this image (see Step 2 of topic **How to Create an Icon from an Image File**).



## How to Use IconWorkshop™ with Adobe Photoshop®

If you use Adobe® Photoshop® to create and retouching your images, here is how to proceed to work with Axialis IconWorkshop™:

### Transferring an Image from Photoshop® to Axialis IconWorkshop™ to Create an Icon

1. Axialis IconWorkshop™ supports the native **Photoshop® PSD** image format **with Layers**. In Photoshop save your image to a PSD file.
2. In IconWorkshop™, choose **"File/Open"**, browse your folders and select your file (Windows® standard dialog box).  
or  
Choose **"File/New/File Explorer"** or press **Ctrl+E**. A built-in Axialis file explorer window opens. Browse your disks, see the thumbnail preview and double-click the image file you wish to open.  
or  
In the **Recently Used** zone (in the main toolbar), type the **full pathname** of the image file you wish to open then hit **Enter**.
3. The image file opens in a document window. If the image contains layers, you see them on the left side of the document window. You can **select one layer** by clicking on it. Its contents appears automatically in the main area. Now you can **create an icon** from this image (see Step 2 of topic Create an Icon from an Image File).

### Creating Icons using Photoshop® Templates

Templates permit you to use the powerful tools of Adobe Photoshop® to draw your icon in different formats, then transfer the work to IconWorkshop. Axialis IconWorkshop™ creates the icon automatically in one step.

### Transferring an Icon Image from IconWorkshop™ to Photoshop®

1. Open an icon in IconWorkshop™. Select the desired image format by clicking on it. It appears in the editor window.
2. Choose **Draw/Save Image as Bitmap**. A dialog box opens. Choose to **Preserve Transparency Information** (this will permit you to keep transparent areas in your PSD image file). When done, click **OK**.
3. A standard **Save Image As** dialog box opens. In the **Save as Type** list, select "Adobe Photoshop (PSD)". Choose a **destination folder** and type a **new filename**. When done, click **OK**. The file has been created.
4. In Photoshop®, open the newly created file. It opens, containing one layer with transparency. Now you can retouch it or use it as necessary.

## Install the Photoshop-to-IconWorkshop™ transfer plug-in

Before using the plug-in as detailed in next topic, you need to install it on your computer. The plug-in can be easily installed from within Axialis IconWorkshop™ in one fast and simple operation.

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If you've already installed the Photoshop® plug-in with a version of IconWorkshop prior to 6.10, you must install it again by following the procedure below. A new export plug-in will be installed in addition to the filter plug-in. The export plug-in will be used with Photoshop® Templates

---

1. Before installing the plug-in we recommend you to close the Photoshop® application (if it is actually opened in background). Choose **File/Install Photoshop® Plug-in...**
2. The dialog box **Install the Photoshop to IconWorkshop™ Transfer Plug-in** opens (see below). In the **Location** edit zone (❶), specify the Photoshop plug-in folder. If you don't know the exact folder path, click the browse button (❷) to choose the folder in a list.



3. If you want to **create a subfolder "Axialis"** to install the plug-in module (recommended to organize your folder properly), activate the option **"Install in a subfolder Axialis"** (❸). Note that creating a subfolder may fail with some compatible applications.
4. Click **OK**. When done, a message informs you that the plug-in has been installed.
5. Now you can start your Photoshop® application. The plug-in is visible in **Filter/Axialis/Transfer To IconWorkshop™** and **File/Export/Export to Axialis IconWorkshop™** menus. Read this for more info on how to use the plug-in filter.

## Transferring an Image from Photoshop® to IconWorkshop™® using the plug-in

1. First of all, **launch Photoshop®** and open or create an image file. You don't need to launch Axialis IconWorkshop™ before using the plug-in. It will be automatically launched by the plug-in if necessary.
2. **Select the layer and the portion of the image** you want to transfer to Axialis IconWorkshop™ (❶). If you don't create a selection area, the whole layer image will be transferred. Only rectangular selections are supported for transfer.





### 3a. Export the image in the Current Layer only :

Use this command if you want to transfer the image in the current layer only. The images in the other layers will be ignored. If you want to export a flatten image, choose the command in step 3b.

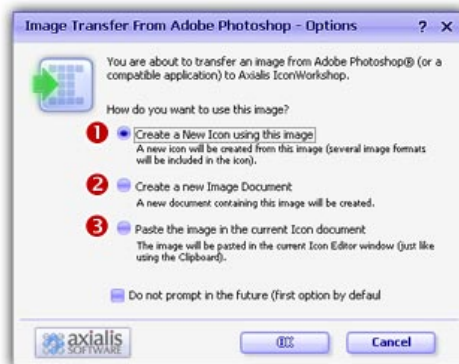
Choose the **Filter/Axialis/Transfer to Axialis IconWorkshop™...** command in the Photoshop menu.

### 3a. Export the flatten image (all layers merged):

Use this command if you want to transfer the image as displayed. The images in all layers will be merged during the export (the layers will be kept in Photoshop).

Choose the **File/Export/Export to Axialis IconWorkshop™...** command in the Photoshop menu.

4. Axialis IconWorkshop™ is automatically launched (or activated if running in background) and the dialog box **Install the Photoshop® to IconWorkshop™ Transfer Plug-in** opens (see below).

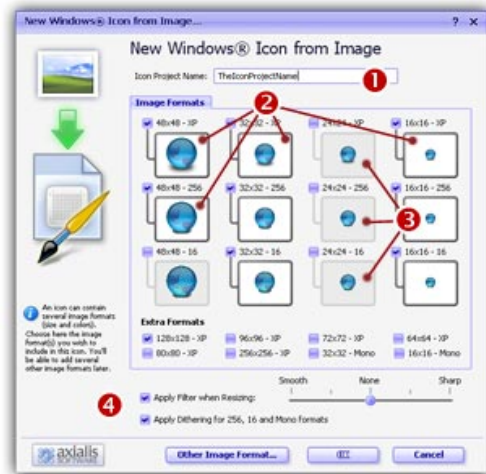


3. The image is about to be transferred in Axialis IconWorkshop™. You can choose one of the following operations: **Create a New Icon using this Image (1)**: You create a new icon with several formats based on the image (see step 4); **Create a New Image Document (2)**: IconWorkshop™ opens a new document containing the image. You'll be able to perform various operations on the image (resize, crop, save...) and even create a new icon from a portion of it; **Paste the Image in the Current Icon Document (3)**: This option is enabled only if an icon document is already opened in IconWorkshop™. It pastes the image in the current editor area (just like the Clipboard paste operation).
4. If you choose the first option (**Create a New Icon using this Image**), the following dialog box opens (see below). As Axialis IconWorkshop™ support creation of both Windows® and

Macintosh® icons, you're prompted to choose the format. Select option **1** for Windows® or option **2** for Macintosh®.



5. By choosing Windows®, the following dialog box opens (a similar dialog opens if you choose Macintosh®)



6. In the **Name** group (**1**), enter the icon project name. Do not specify any extension.
7. In the **Image Formats** group, **select** the image formats you wish to add in the icon (**2**) and **unselect** the unwanted images (**3**). Just click on the image preview to select/unselect. To know more about the desired Windows® standard image format, see [What is an Icon](#) topic.
8. You can also apply or not the dithering option to the 256/16 color images as well as add a filter effect to smooth/sharpen the resulting images in RGB/A mode (try **4** and see the results in the preview images).
9. If you wish to start creating your icon with an unlisted format, click the **Other Image Format** button.
10. When done, click **OK**. The icon is automatically created with the various image formats you've selected.

## How to Use IconWorkshop™ with Paint Shop Pro®

If you use Corel® Paint Shop Pro® to create and retouching your images, here is how to proceed to work with Axialis IconWorkshop™:

### Transferring an Image from Paint Shop Pro® to IconWorkshop™® to Create an Icon

1. Axialis IconWorkshop™ supports the PNG image format **with Transparency**. In Paint Shop Pro, save your image to a PNG file.
2. In IconWorkshop™, choose **"File/Open"**, browse your folders and select your file (Windows® standard dialog box).  
or  
Choose **"File/New/File Explorer"** or press **Ctrl+E**. A built-in Axialis file explorer window opens. Browse your disks, see the thumbnail preview and double-click the image file you wish to open.  
or  
In the **Recently Used** zone (in the main toolbar), type the **full pathname** of the image file you wish to open then hit **Enter**.
3. The image file opens in a document window. Its contents appears automatically in the main area. If the image contains transparency, it has been kept (see the chessboard texture). Now you can **create an icon** from this image (see Step 2 of topic **Create an Icon from an Image File**).

### Transferring an Icon Image from IconWorkshop™® to Paint Shop Pro®

1. Open an icon in IconWorkshop™. Select the desired image format by clicking on it. It appears in the editor window.
2. Choose **Draw/Save Image as Bitmap**. A dialog box opens. Choose to **Preserve Transparency Information** (this will permit you to keep transparent areas in your PSD image file). When done, click **OK**.
3. A standard **Save Image As** dialog box opens. In the **Save as Type** list, select "Portable Network Graphic (PNG)". Choose a **destination folder** and type a **new filename**. When done, click **OK**. The file has been created.
4. In Paint Shop Pro®, open the newly created file. It opens, containing the image with transparency. Now you can retouch it or use it as necessary.

## How to use IconWorkshop™ with Freehand®

If you use Macromedia® Freehand® to create your images, here is how to proceed to work with Axialis IconWorkshop™:

## Transferring an Image from Freehand® to IconWorkshop™® to Create an Icon

1. Axialis IconWorkshop™ supports the **PNG** (Portable Network Graphic) image format **with Transparency**. In Freehand®, save your image to a PNG file.
2. In IconWorkshop™, choose **"File/Open"**, browse your folders and select your file (Windows® standard dialog box).  
  
or  
  
Choose **"File/New/File Explorer"** or press **Ctrl+E**. A built-in Axialis file explorer window opens. Browse your disks, see the thumbnail preview and double-click the image file you wish to open.  
  
or  
  
In the **Recently Used** zone (in the main toolbar), type the **full pathname** of the image file you wish to open then hit **Enter**.
3. The image file opens in a document window. Its contents appears automatically in the main area. If the image contains transparency, it has been kept (see the checkboard texture). Now you can **create an icon** from this image (see Step 2 of topic **Create an Icon from an Image File**).

## How to use Stuffit Expander™ to read Macintosh® Icons

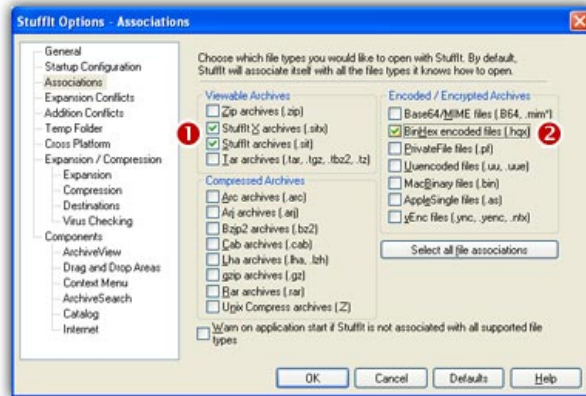
Most of the websites which propose Macintosh® icons to download, provide them in **archives using SIT/HQX** packed file format. This file format is widely used by Macintosh® users.


To uncompress these archive files under Windows, you need a specific tool: **Stuffit Expander™ for Windows®**. Click to visit Stuffit website and download the software. This how-to procedure has been designed for **version 9.0** of Stuffit Expander.

You can either purchase the full version which is required to compress files and create SIT archives or download the **"Stuffit Standard Free Trial"**. They both contain the **Stuffit Expander** portion which is free and permit to extract files from SIT archives.

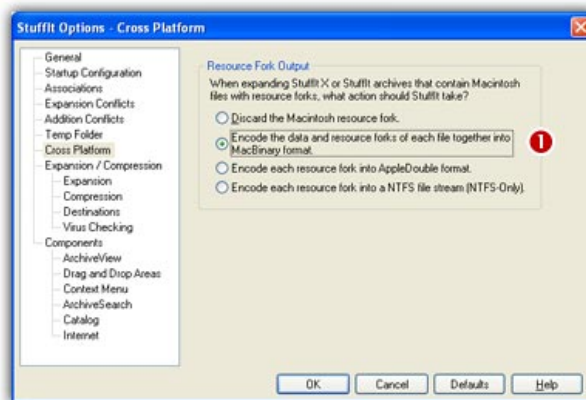
## Installing and Configuring Stuffit Expander™ for Windows®

1. Download the Stuffit Expander program from this page:  
<http://www.stuffit.com/win/expander/index.html>. Click the **"Download NOW"** button. Launch the installation program you've downloaded. Follow the procedure as usual.
2. Once installed, start the program: **Start/Programs/Stuffit/Stuffit Tools/Expander**. The Stuffit Expander main window opens.
3. In the main menu, choose **Edit/Application Options**. A dialog box opens, select the **Associations** tab. Select at least **"Stuffit Archives"** (🔴) and **"BinHex Encoded Files"** (🔴). If you don't want to associate the other archive types to Stuffit (ZIP, ARC, ARJ, RAR...), unselect them.



 We recommend you to remove the association with MacBinary (BIN) files because IconWorkshop™ supports this type directly.

4. When done, select the **Cross Platform** tab:



5. Select the option "Encode the data and resource forks of each file together into MacBinary format" (1). It means that the files will be extracted as MacBinary which is a format fully supported by IconWorkshop™. For more information on MacBinary format, see this topic.
6. When done, click **OK**. The program is now installed and properly configured.

## Uncompressing a SIT/HQX Archive File

1. Open **Windows® Explorer** and browse to the folder in which you saved the archive file.
2. **Double-click** on the archive file. The StuffIt program starts and **automatically uncompress** the archive contents into a **subfolder**.
3. Now you can browse the newly created subfolder to see the Macintosh® icons. We recommend you to use IconWorkshop™ built-in explorer (Ctrl+E) to browse it and see the Macintosh® icons in preview thumbnail.

## Uncompressing Macintosh® icons packed in a ZIP file

More and more website now propose to download Macintosh® icons in ZIP archives. You can simply extract them with any ZIP unpacker (Stuffit support this format too). The unpacked files will be read without problems by IconWorkshop™.

## How to Convert a Macintosh® Icon to Windows®

In this topic, we'll see how to create Windows® Icons from Apple® Macintosh® Icons.

### What's the difference between Windows® and Macintosh® icons?

Microsoft Windows® and Apple Macintosh® icons are very similar. They both have several image formats embedded in the same icon. But the file format is totally different. You cannot use Macintosh® icons under Windows® because the file format is not compatible. You must convert them to Windows® ICO file format (with Axialis IconWorkshop™ of course!).

All kinds of formats can be included in a Windows® ICO file (you can even create non-square icons). With Macintosh® icon files this is not possible. Only some strictly-defined image formats can be included.

Axialis IconWorkshop™ supports the following Macintosh® icon files: **ICNS**, **RSC** and **BIN**. Icons from system 7.5, 8.5, 9.x and 10.X are supported. You can easily open them into the Icon Editor and save them as Windows® ICO format. During this operation, we recommend you to remove special Macintosh® formats which are useless under Windows®.

To learn more about Windows® and Macintosh® icon file formats, read this topic: [Macintosh® vs Windows® icons](#)

### Which image formats are included in Macintosh® icons?

Here is the list of image formats you can find in Macintosh® Icons:

- **Tiger** (256x256) – 32 bits (alpha channel)
- **Thumbnail** (128x128) – 32 bits (alpha channel)
- **Huge** (48x48) – 32 bits (alpha channel), 256 colors, 16 colors, mono
- **Large** (32x32) – 32 bits (alpha channel), 256 colors, 16 colors, mono
- **Small** (16x16) – 32 bits (alpha channel), 256 colors, 16 colors, mono
- **Mini** (16x12) – 256 colors, 16 colors, mono

The new OS-X icons can contain very large image formats (128x128, 256x256 – 32 bits). Those formats are also supported. Although those image sizes are not actually used in Windows®, it's a good idea to start from hi-res sizes to create a new Windows® icon.

Here is a summary of image formats you can find in Macintosh® Icons:

	512x512	256x256	128x128	64x64	48x48	32x32	24x24	16x16
RGB/A	○	● *	○	●	●	●	●	●
256 Colors	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●
16 Colors	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●
Mono	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Windows® standard icon image formats

(\*) PNG compressed Windows Vista™

	512x512	256x256	128x128	64x64	48x48	32x32	24x24	16x16
RGB/A	● ***	● **	●	○	●	●	○	●
256 Colors	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	●
16 Colors	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	●
Mono	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○

Macintosh® OS standard icon image formats

(\*\*) Jpeg2000 compressed OSX 10.4  
(\*\*\*) Jpeg2000 compressed OSX 10.5

● Recommended    ○ Optional    ○ Not Available

## Convert the icon to Windows®, keeping all Macintosh® formats

This is the simplest way to proceed. However, some Macintosh® specific image formats may be useless.

1. Open the Macintosh® icon. Choose **File/Open...** The icon is opened in a document window.
  2. Choose **File/Save As**, select **Windows® (ICO)** as file type and specify a new name.
- or
2. Choose **File/Save As Windows® Icon...** (Ctrl+Alt+S) and specify a new name.
- or
2. Click the following button on the toolbar and choose a new name for this icon.

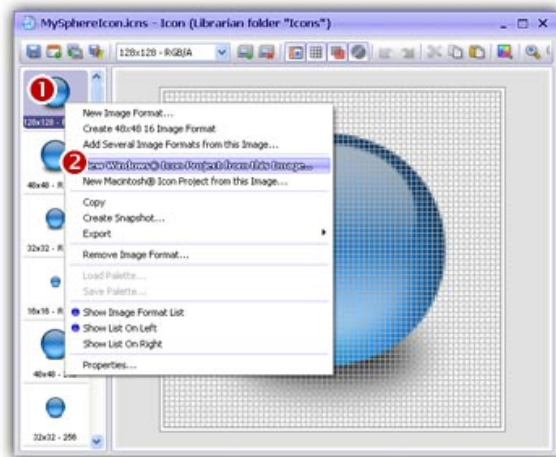


## Creating a Windows® icon from a Macintosh® icon

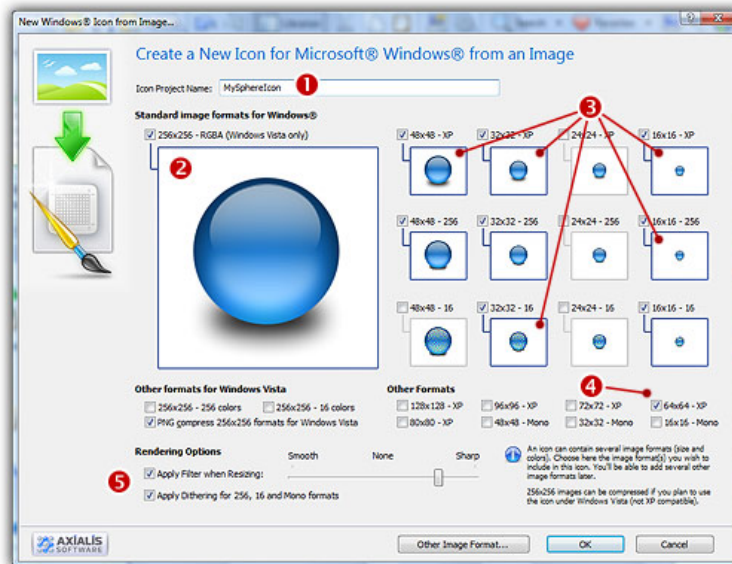
This operation is not a conversion, it's a creation of a new icon. It will not preserve all the existing formats. It will create a new icon based on the largest and most coloured image included in the original Macintosh® icon (usually 128x128 or 48x48 with alpha channel).

1. Open the Macintosh® icon. Choose **File/Open...**
2. When the icon is opened, select the largest and the "most coloured" image format in the list (best with 128x128 or 48x48 with alpha channel).
3. Right-click on the selected image format in the list (1), a menu opens. Select **"New Windows® Icon Project from this Image..."** (2).





4. A large dialog box opens. In the **Name** group (1), enter the icon project name. Do not specify any extension.



5. In the **Image Formats** group, **select** the image formats you wish to add in the icon (2 3 4).
6. You can also add extra formats (128x128 or 256x256 may be used in future versions of Windows®). When done, click **OK**. The new Icon Project document window is created with all formats embedded.
7. Save your icon to Windows® format. choose **File/Save** and choose a new name (.ICO) for this icon.

## Where to find Macintosh® icons?

Many websites offer various Macintosh® icons package for download. Try to search using Google or Yahoo for the following terms:

- "Mac icons"



· "Macintosh icons"

## How to unpack Macintosh® icon archives?

Most of these websites propose to download icons in **archives using SIT/HQX** packed file format. This file format is widely used by Macintosh® users. To unpack these archive files under Windows®, you need a specific tool: **StuffIt Expander™ for Windows®**. [Click here to visit StuffIt website.](#)

To know how to use StuffIt Expander™ to unpack Macintosh® icons under Windows®, see the following topic: [How to Use StuffIt Expander® to Read Macintosh® Icons](#)

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

Converting a Macintosh® icon to Windows® format does NOT change Copyright or Intellectual Property of an icon. The image/icon is property of its author and still property of this author after a conversion.

As a result, do NOT redistribute converted icons without permission of the author. Also, some Macintosh® authors do not wish that you convert/use their icons under Windows®. In such a case, please respect author wish and do not convert its icons, even for your personal use.

## How to convert a Windows® Icon to Macintosh®

In this topic, we'll see how to create Macintosh® Icons from Windows® Icons.

### What's the difference between Windows® and Macintosh® icons?

Microsoft Windows® and Apple Macintosh® icons are very similar. They both have several image formats embedded in the same icon. But the file format is totally different. You cannot use Windows® icons under Macintosh® because the file format is not compatible. You must convert them to Macintosh® ICO file format (with IconWorkshop™ of course!).

All kinds of formats can be included in a Windows® ICO file (you can even create non-square icons). With Macintosh® icon files this is not possible. Only some strictly-defined image formats can be included. As a result, some image formats cannot be converted to Macintosh® icon.

Axialis IconWorkshop™ supports the following Macintosh® icon files creation: **ICNS**, **RSC** and **BIN**. Icons from system 7.5, 8.5, 9.x and 10.X are supported. You can easily open Windows® icons into the Icon Editor and save them as Macintosh® format. During the conversion, formats which are not supported under Macintosh® will be removed.

To learn more about Windows® and Macintosh® icon file formats, read this topic: [Macintosh® vs Windows® icons](#)

## Which image formats are included in Macintosh® icons?

Here is the list of image formats you can find in Macintosh® Icons:

- **Tiger** (256x256) – 32 bits (alpha channel)
- **Thumbnail** (128x128) – 32 bits (alpha channel)
- **Huge** (48x48) – 32 bits (alpha channel), 256 colors, 16 colors, mono
- **Large** (32x32) – 32 bits (alpha channel), 256 colors, 16 colors, mono
- **Small** (16x16) – 32 bits (alpha channel), 256 colors, 16 colors, mono
- **Mini** (12x16) – 256 colors, 16 colors

The new OS-X icons can contain very large image formats (128x128, 256x256 – 32 bits). Those formats are also supported. Although those image sizes are not actually used in Windows, it's a good idea to start from hi-res sizes to create a new Windows® icon.

Here is a summary of image formats you can find in Macintosh® Icons:


	512x512	256x256	128x128	64x64	48x48	32x32	24x24	16x16
RGB/A	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> *	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
256 Colors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
16 Colors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Mono	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Windows® standard icon image formats** (\*) PNG compressed Windows Vista™

	512x512	256x256	128x128	64x64	48x48	32x32	24x24	16x16
RGB/A	<input checked="" type="radio"/> ***	<input checked="" type="radio"/> **	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
256 Colors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
16 Colors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Mono	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Macintosh® OS standard icon image formats** (\*\*) Jpeg2000 compressed OSX 10.4  
(\*\*\*) Jpeg2000 compressed OSX 10.5

☒ Recommended    ☐ Optional    ☐ Not Available

 Some image formats are unavailable in Macintosh® icon specifications. Therefore IconWorkshop™ won't event permit you to create them. If you try to save or convert a Windows® icon to Macintosh®, some format will be removed. Note that all image formats can be created in Windows® icons, even custom formats not listed above.

## Convert the icon to Macintosh®, keeping all Macintosh® compatible image formats

This is the simplest way to proceed. However, some Windows® specific image formats may not be converted.

1. Open the Windows® icon. Choose **File/Open...** The icon is opened in a document window.
2. Choose **File/Save As**, select **Macintosh® (ICNS, RSC or BIN)** as file type and specify a new name.

or

2. Choose File/Save As Macintosh® Icon... (Ctrl+Alt+S) and specify a new name.

or

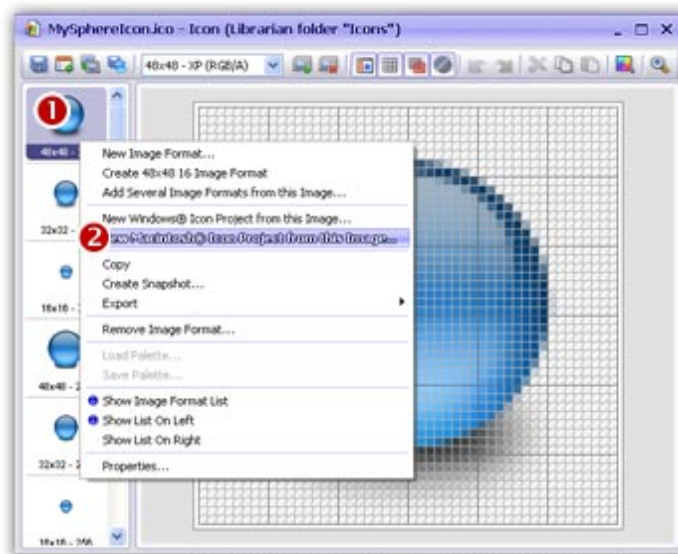
2. Click the following button on the toolbar and choose a new name for this icon.



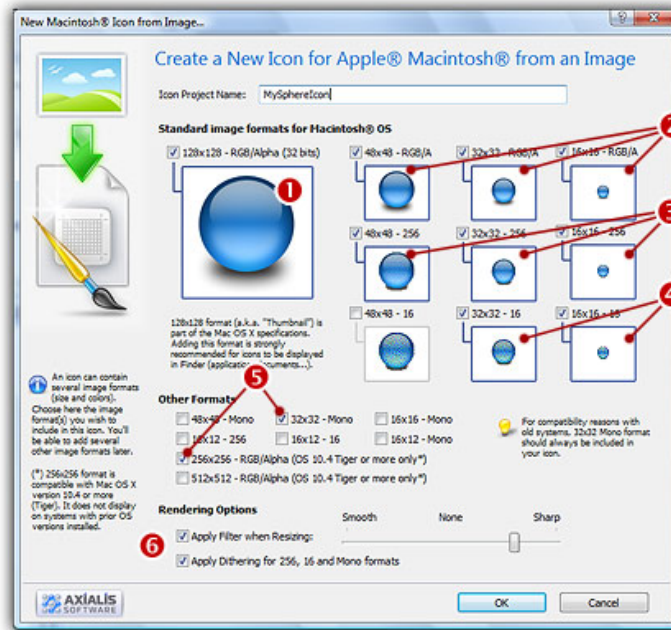
## Creating a Macintosh® icon from a Windows® icon

This operation is not a conversion, it's a creation of a new icon. It will not preserve all the existing formats. It will create a new icon based on the largest and most coloured image included in the original Windows® icon (usually 256x256 or 48x48 with alpha channel).

1. Open the Windows® icon. Choose **File/Open...**
2. When the icon is opened, select the largest and the "most coloured" image format in the list (best with 256x256 or 48x48 with alpha channel).
3. Right-click on the selected image format in the list (❶), a menu opens. Select **"New Macintosh® Icon Project from this Image..."** (❷).



4. A large dialog box opens. In the **Name** group, enter the icon project name. Do not specify any extension.



5. In the **Image Formats** group, **select** the image formats you wish to add in the icon (1 2 3 4).
6. You can also add other formats (256x256 to be used in Tiger). When done, click **OK**. The new Icon Project document window is created with all formats embedded.
7. Save your icon to Macintosh® format. choose **File/Save** and choose a new name for this icon.

## How to transfer an icon to a Macintosh® computer

With Axialis IconWorkshop™ you're able to create Macintosh® icons. To use them under Macintosh® OS, you need to transfer the files using a LAN (local area network)

### What file format should I use to transfer an icon?

Under Macintosh® files are stored in 2 parts called "Forks". A fork can be empty but at least one must contain data. The two forks cannot be empty.

- **The Data Fork** – This is the file itself, its contents. For example, in a text document, this the text.
- **The Resource Fork** – This is the part that is used by Macintosh® OS to display the file in the Finder or the Desktop. Usually the resource fork contains an icon.

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**?** When you simply transfer a file between Windows® and Macintosh®, the resource fork is lost. To transfer the 2 forks you need to use the MacBinary format.

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To transfer an icon to Macintosh® you can either convert it to ICNS, RSC or MacBinary:

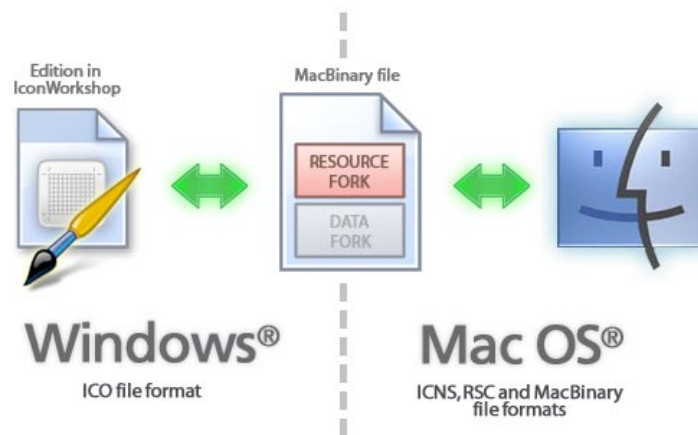
- **ICNS** – This is the standard Macintosh® icon file format. Only one icon (with several formats) can be saved in this format. This format is the most commonly used.
- **RSC or RSRC** – This is the Macintosh® resource file format. It is used mainly by developers. This format can contain several icons. IconWorkshop™ support reading of RSC files with several icons but can write only RSC files with one icon.
- **MacBinary** – This format permits to easily transfer files between Macintosh® and Windows®. For more information on this format, visit this website: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MacBinary>.

We strongly recommend to use this file format to transfer your icons to Macintosh® because it is compatible with Macintosh® file system which separate each file in two parts called "forks": The data fork and the resource fork. The data fork contains the data included in the file (a text file for example). The resource fork contains the image or icon which permits to display it on screen. See below for more information on transfer from Windows® to Macintosh®.

## Transfer an icon between Windows® OS and Macintosh® OS using MacBinary

To transfer an icon between Windows® and Macintosh®, the easiest method is to use the MacBinary format. This format permits to generate an icon compatible with the Macintosh® OS forks. Once transferred, the icon will be automatically displayed in the Macintosh® Finder and on the Desktop.

The MacBinary format permits to merge the 2 forks in one file handy for transfer, mail attachment or Web publishing. When IconWorkshop™ saves an icon in MacBinary format, it writes the icon in the resource fork. The data fork is left empty. As a result, as soon as you receive or see the file in Macintosh®, the icon appears automatically. Then, you can handle it using the standard Finder/MacOS user interface.




Use of MacBinary format to transfer an icon between Macintosh® OS and Windows® OS

In the following procedures, we'll use the MacBinary format to transfer an icon from Windows® to Macintosh®.

## Transfer an icon to Macintosh® OS using a LAN

Before proceeding, be sure the Macintosh® and the Windows® computer are properly connected to the same LAN. The procedure below was done on Macintosh® OS 10.4 (Tiger).

### On the Macintosh® computer

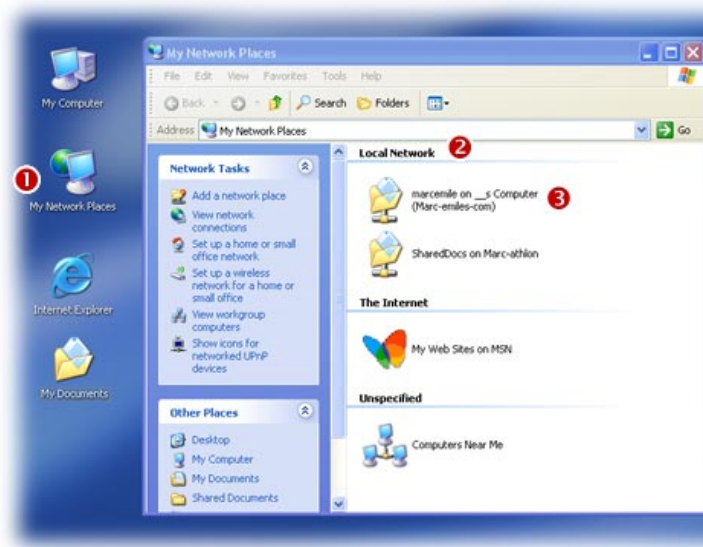
1. Click  and select **System Preferences**. A window opens. In **Internet & Network** group, select **Sharing**. The following window opens:



2. Select the **Service** tab (1), in the list select **Windows® Sharing** service (2).
3. If necessary, select the user accounts you want to activate (3).

### On the Windows® computer

4. Double-click in the icon **My Network Places** (1). A window opens. In **Local Network** group (2), open the folder which is related to your Macintosh® computer. Browse the folders and locate a target directory (3).



5. In IconWorkshop™, save your Macintosh® icon as MacBinary in the folder that you have located above.

#### On the Macintosh® computer

6. Launch the Finder and browse the folder where you have saved the BIN file.



7. Use mouse Drag & Drop to copy or move the file on the Desktop (❶). Double click on the BIN file (❷), StuffIt Expander® is launched and the icon file is automatically created as resource fork on the Desktop (❸). Now you can use freely as a standard Macintosh® icon.

## How to batch convert icons between Macintosh® and Windows®

Using IconWorkshop™ you can **Convert Several Icon from Macintosh® to Windows® and vice-versa** in one operation. This is what we call a batch procedure. We'll perform this task using the built-in IconWorkshop™ explorer.

To get more info about Macintosh® to Windows® icon conversion see [How to Convert a Macintosh® Icon to a Windows® Icon](#) topic. In this topic we'll focus on how to convert several icons in one operation.

### Select the icons you wish to convert

1. Open a new Axialis Explorer window. Choose **File/New/File Explorer...**



2. When the window is opened, select the folder which contains the Macintosh® icons using the tree in the left pane.
3. When done, the Macintosh® icons appears (with preview) in the right pane. Select the icons you wish to convert. You can use **Shift/Ctrl + Mouse** to select several icons. Use **Ctrl+A** to select all. Use **+/-** to select/unselect by specifying filters.

## Convert the icons From Macintosh® to Windows®

4. Choose Explorer/Batch Convert Macintosh® Icons To Windows®(ICO) or Ctrl+Shift+W
5. A dialog box opens. You can choose to convert **all the formats** or only a **selection** of them. When done, click **OK**.
6. The batch operation starts. The hourglass mouse pointer is displayed during the conversion. When done the Windows® icons are added to the folder contents.

The created icons have the same filenames as the original icon with ICO appended. A smart system has been added to index the files if necessary to avoid overwriting.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

Converting a Macintosh® icon to Windows® format does NOT change Copyright or Intellectual Property of an icon. The image/icon is property of its author and still property of this author after a conversion.

As a result, do NOT redistribute converted icons without permission of the author. Also, some Macintosh® authors do not wish that you convert/use their icons under Windows®. In such a case, please respect author wish and do not convert its icons, even for your personal use.

## Convert the icons From Windows® to Macintosh®

4. Choose Explorer/Batch Convert Windows® Icons To Macintosh® (ICNS, RSC, BIN) or Ctrl+Shift+M
5. A dialog box opens. First select the Macintosh® file format you wish to create. 3 formats are available for Macintosh® icons (see this topic to learn more about the file formats).
6. You can choose to convert **all the formats** or only a **selection** of them. When done, click **OK**.
7. The batch operation starts. The hourglass mouse pointer is displayed during the conversion. When done the Windows® icons are added to the folder contents.

The created icons have the same filenames as the original icon with ICNS, RSC or BIN appended. A smart system has been added to index the files if necessary to avoid overwriting.

## How to Batch Create Icons From Images, Cursors

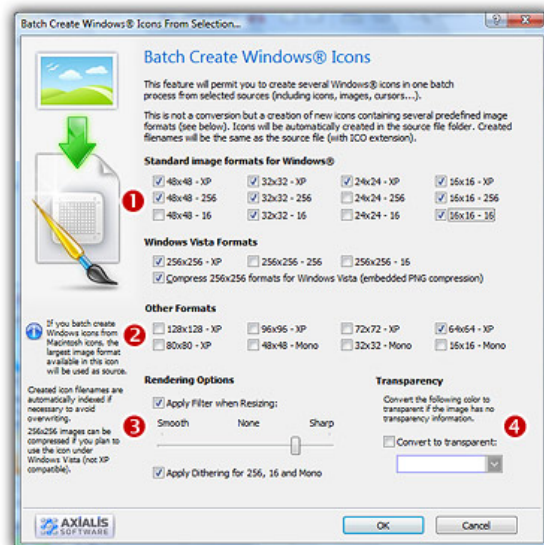
Using this feature you can **Create Several Icons (Macintosh® or Windows®)** from images, existing icons or cursors in one operation. This is what we call a batch procedure. We'll perform this task using the built-in IconWorkshop™ explorer.

### Select the source images, icons or cursors

1. Open a new Explorer window. Choose **File/New/File Explorer...**
2. When the window is opened, select the folder which contains the Source Files using the tree in the left pane.
3. When done, the Source Files appears (with preview) in the right pane. Select the icons you wish to convert. You can use **Shift/Ctrl + Mouse** to select several icons. Use **Ctrl+A** to select all. Use **+/-** to select/unselect by specifying filters.

### Batch create Windows® icons

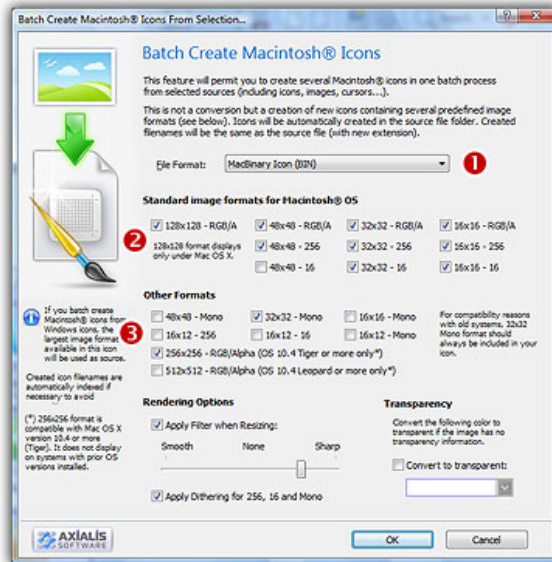
4. Choose Explorer/Batch Create Windows® Icons from Selection or Ctrl+Shift+C.
5. A dialog box opens. In **"Standard Image Formats"** (❶) and **"Extra Image Formats"** (❷) choose the image formats you wish to add in the icons.



6. In **Image Adjustment** group (❸), you can add a smooth or sharp filter to the image shrinking process. You can also use or not a dithering method to render image using 256 or 16 colors. In **Transparency** group (❹), an option permits to use opaque images (i.e. without transparency) and specify a color to make transparent.
7. When done, click **OK**. The batch operation starts immediately, the hourglass mouse pointer is displayed during the creation. When done the new Windows® icons are added to the folder contents.

## Batch create Macintosh® icons

4. Choose Explorer/Batch Create Macintosh® Icons from Selection or Ctrl+Shift+D.
5. A dialog box opens. First we need to choose the Macintosh® file format we wish to use (1 there are 3 formats supported by IconWorkshop™ – see this topic to learn more).
6. In groups "Standard Image Formats" (2) and "Extra Image Formats" (3) choose the image formats you wish to add in the icons.



6. In **Image Adjustment** group, you can add a smooth or sharp filter to the image shrinking process. You can also use or not a dithering method to render image using 256 or 16 colors. In **Transparency** group, an option permits to use opaque images (i.e. without transparency) and specify a color to make transparent.
7. When done click **OK**. All the Macintosh® icons are created and added to the same folder. Names are preserved, only the extension is changed.

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The created icons have the **same filename as the original document** with different extension (depending on the icon types). A system has been implemented to index the files if necessary to avoid overwriting. If you create icons from **Image Files**, the whole image is selected and resized keeping its aspect ratio. If it contains transparency, it is kept during the creation. If you create icons from an **Existing Icons or Cursors**, the largest image is used as source to create the icons. Transparency is kept.

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## How to Batch Create PNG images with Transparency from Icons...

Creating PNG images from icons can be very useful. For example, PNG with transparency is the standard icon format for Linux® KDE® Desktop Environment. Also some useful "Dock" applications

have been ported to Windows® (clones of Macintosh® OS-X Dock toolbar). Most of these applications also are using 128x128 PNG with transparency as icons. See [MobyDock](#) and [Y'z Dock](#) websites for more info).

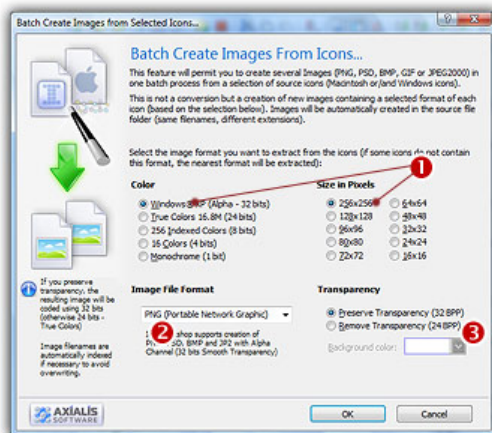
You can either create one PNG image from one icon (see topic [How to Create a PNG, BMP or PSD Image with Transparency](#)) or several images from icons in one operation. This is what we call a Batch procedure:

## Select the Source Icons

1. Open a new Explorer window. Choose **File/New/File Explorer...**
2. When the window is opened, select the folder which contains the Source Files using the tree in the left pane.
3. When done, the Source Files appears (with preview) in the right pane. Select the icons you wish to convert to images. You can use **Shift/Ctrl + Mouse** to select several icons. Use **Ctrl+A** to select all. Use **+/-** to select/unselect by specifying filters.

## Create the Images

4. Choose Explorer/Batch Create Images from Icons or Ctrl+Shift+V.
5. The dialog box **Batch Create Images From Icons** opens (see below). In the **Icon Format to Extract** group (❶), choose the image format you wish to extract from the icons. You can choose only one image format. If this exact format does not exist in an icon, the nearest format is chosen.



5. In the **Image File Format** group (❷), select the file format you wish to use for the images to create.
6. In the **Transparency** group (❸), choose if you wish to create transparent or opaque images. If you choose to preserve transparency, the images will be automatically converted to 32BPP with alpha channel (even if the chosen icon format is 256 or less colors). If you choose to remove transparency, the images will be generated using 24BPP (no alpha channel). In such a case, you must specify a background color (to fill the transparent areas with this color).

7. When done, click **OK**. The batch operation starts immediately, the hourglass mouse pointer is displayed during the creation. When done the new Images are added to the folder contents.

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The created images have the **same filename as the original document** with **.PNG, .PSD or .BMP** appended. A smart system has been added to index the files if necessary to avoid overwriting. If this exact chosen format does not exist in an icon, the nearest format is chosen for extraction.

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## How to Change the User Interface of IconWorkshop

All of our softwares have a specific "Axialis" interface. Since the release of Microsoft® Windows® XP we decided to implement a feature that permits you to choose between Axialis and Microsoft Standard interface. You can also change various settings to customize your interface.

### To switch to Standard Windows® Interface

1. Choose **Edit/Preferences** or press **F2**. A dialog box opens.
2. Select the User Interface tab. In the User Interface Type group, select the Windows® Standard User Interface option (see the preview image).
3. When done, Click **OK**. The interface switches back to Windows® classic (or the active XP theme).

### To switch to Axialis Interface

1. Choose **Edit/Preferences** or press **F2**. A dialog box opens.
2. Select the User Interface tab. In the User Interface Type group, select the Axialis Software User Interface option (see the preview image).
3. When done, Click **OK**. The interface switches back to Axialis model.

### To Change the Color of the Axialis Interface

1. Choose **Edit/Preferences** or press **F2**. A dialog box opens.
2. Select the User Interface tab. In the User Interface Type group, select the Axialis Software User Interface option (see the preview image).
3. In the **Color** list below, select the desired color.
4. When done, Click **OK**. The Axialis interface color changes.

## To Change the Colors of the Full Screen and Documents Backgrounds

1. Choose **Edit/Preferences** or press **F2**. A dialog box opens.
2. Select the **User Interface** tab. In the **User Interface Type** group, select the **Axialis Software User Interface** option (see the preview image).
3. In the **Background Colors** group, select the desired colors.
4. When done, Click **OK**.

## To Customize the Main Toolbar Buttons

1. Right-click the main toolbar and choose **Customize Buttons** or press **Ctrl+F9**. A dialog box opens.
2. You can remove, add or move buttons using this standard Windows® dialog box.
3. When done, Click **OK**.

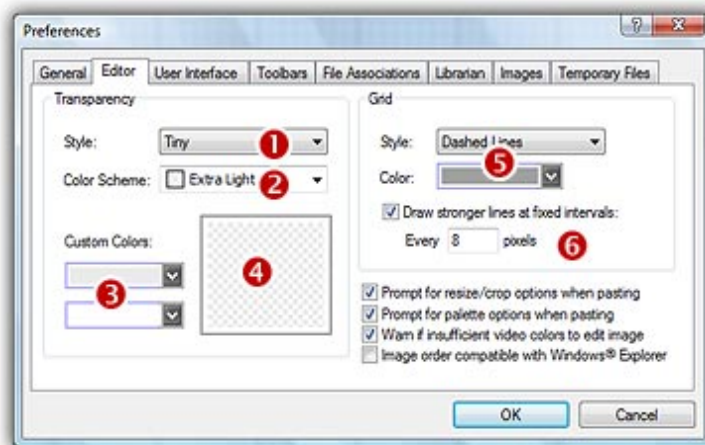
## To Customize the Main Toolbar Aspect

1. Choose **Edit/Preferences** or press **F2**. A dialog box opens.
2. Select the **Toolbars** tab. In the **Main Toolbar** group, you can change various settings.
3. When done, Click **OK**.

# How to Change the Editor Drawing Area Aspect

## To Change the Chessboard Texture of the Transparent Areas

1. Choose **Edit/Preferences** or press "**F2**". A dialog box opens, choose the **Editor** tab:



2. You can modify the size of the **Transparency** chessboard squares (❶). Then, to change the colors of the texture you can either select a predefined scheme (❷) or choose custom colors (❸). You can see the changes in the preview area (❹).
3. When done, click **OK**.

## To Change the Grid Aspect

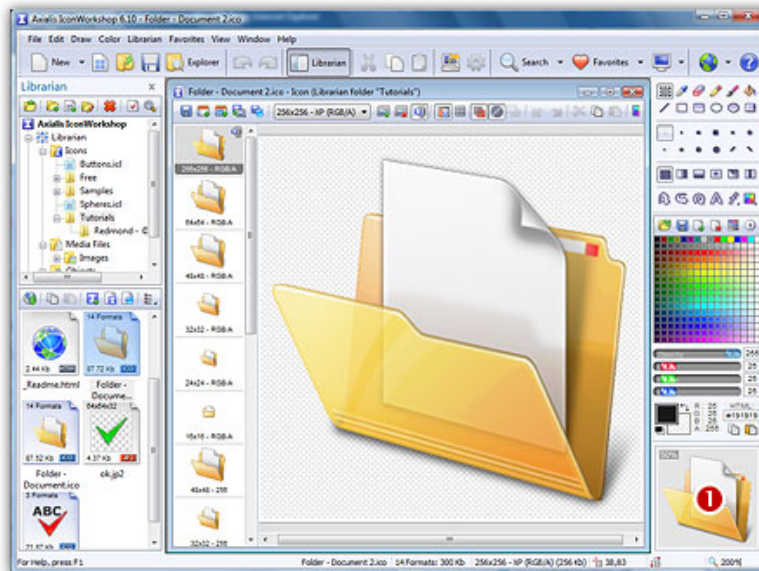
1. Choose **Edit/Preferences** or press "**F2**". A dialog box opens, choose the **Editor** tab (see above picture).
2. Change the **Grid** aspect in the related group (❺). To finish, you can activate or deactivate a feature which permits to draw stronger (darker) lines at fixed intervals. By default this interval is 8 (❻).
3. When done, click **OK**.

## How to change the Scale 1:1 window size

If you create **Windows Vista™** or **Macintosh® OSX 10.4 Tiger®** icons, you need to work with **256x256 images**. Also, all the image objects provided by Axialis have a native 256x256 resolution. In order to get the best results possible, you must frequently preview the artwork at scale 1:1 in the associated window in Axialis IconWorkshop™.

In previous versions of Axialis IconWorkshop™, the **Scale 1:1 window** was fixed to 128x128 for a better integration in the application interface. Now the preview window can be resized to display 256x256 images at scale 1:1. Some features has been implemented to deal with this new size in order to have limited impact on the user experience.

By default, the **Scale 1:1** window's size is 128x128 (❶):

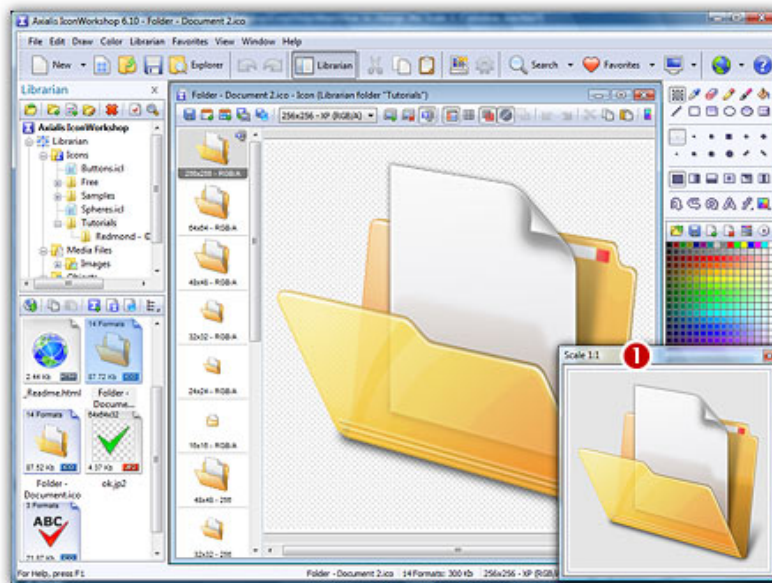




In this topic, we'll see how to switch the window size to 256x256 and vice-versa. Also, we'll see how to change the ability of the window to be docked to the interface.

## Switch the Preview 1:1 window to 256x256

1. If the **Preview 1:1** window is not visible, choose **View/Preview 1:1** or press **Alt+F10**.
2. Using the mouse, **right-click** in the Scale 1:1 window, a local menu opens.
3. Choose **256x256 Display**. The Scale 1:1 window is automatically resized to 256x256 and becomes a **floating window** (📌):



When the window is in **floating mode**, it can be placed anywhere over the user interface without docking. It is set in this mode to avoid the annoying side effect of docking a 256x256 window: The side-bars are so stretched that it creates a lot of **wasted spaces** in the interface. For that reason, we recommend you to keep the Scale 1:1 window in floating mode. To revert this mode to docking mode, see below "Switch between docking and floating mode".

## Switch the Preview 1:1 window to 128x128

1. If the **Preview 1:1** window is not visible, choose **View/Preview 1:1** or press **Alt+F10**.
2. Using the mouse, **right-click** in the Scale 1:1 window, a local menu opens.
3. Choose **128x128 Display**. The Scale 1:1 window is automatically resized to 128x128.

Note that the window state does not switch back to docking mode. If you want to dock the window you need to manually switch the mode. See "Switch between docking and floating mode".

## Switch between docking and floating mode

1. Using the mouse, **right-click** in the Scale 1:1 window, a local menu opens.
2. Choose Floating Window (no docking).

**If the window was docked:** It is changed into a floating window (a frame and a title bar appear). It can be placed anywhere over the user interface without docking.

**If the window was floating:** Nothing is visually changed but if you move it over the right or left borders of the main window it will be docked when you'll release the mouse button.

## How to Search the Icons I have on My Computer

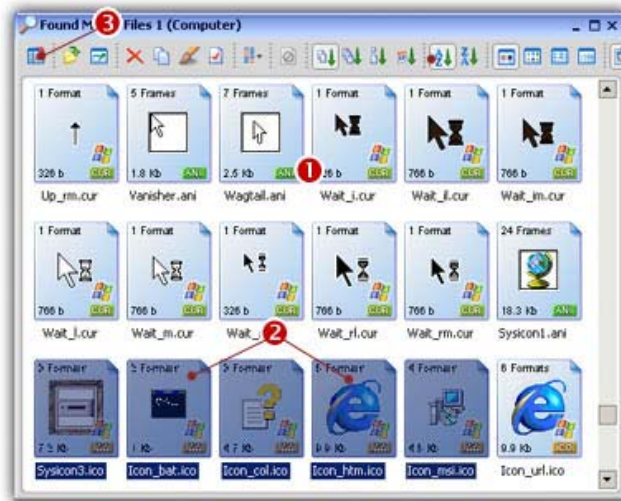
Many files containing icons are present on your computer's hard disks. Axialis IconWorkshop™ includes a **search feature** to help you locate and **grab these icons**.

### Searching for files on your computer

1. Choose Edit/Search/On the Computer or press Ctrl+G.
  2. A search option dialog box opens. In the **"Named"** zone (❶), specify a **filename search criterion**. If the filename contains a portion of the specified text, the file is selected. You can also use the standard DOS characters **"\*,?"**. Example : Image\*.\*
  3. In the **"Look In"** zone (❷), specify the folder from which you wish to start the search. If you want to perform a deep search (including subfolders), select the **Include Subfolders** option.
- If you specify folder "C:\\" with subfolders, the whole disk will be scanned. It can be a very long process!
4. In the **"Type"** list (❸), specify the type of file you wish to find ("All Icon Files").
  5. You can also specify Date and Size options (❹ and ❺).



6. When done, click **OK**. The search begins... When finished, a Search Results window opens, containing the found items (❶):



## Grab the Icons, add them into a library

1. Create a new Icon Library in the Librarian (or select an existing one). Select the items you wish to add to the library (2).
2. Choose **File/Add to the Librarian** or press **F3** (3). The files are added.

## How to Create Different Color Versions of an Icon...

An interesting effect is to create different color versions of the same icons. For example, creating Red and Green versions of our "Blue Sphere" icon:



## Opening the existing icon, modifying the image HUE (overall color)

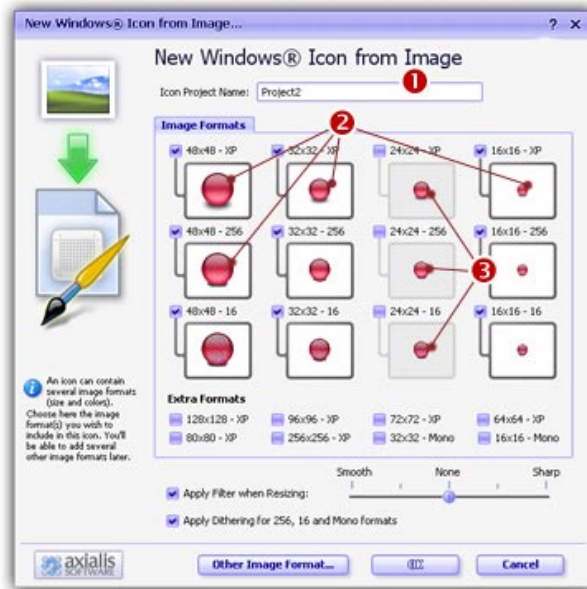
1. Open your original icon file. As example, we'll work on the Blue Sphere icon which is located in the **Librarian** (if not displayed, press ESC). In the **Icons/Tutorial** subfolder, select and open the "MySpherelcon.ico" icon.
2. The image file opens in a document window. In the image format list, select the 48x48 Win XP image:
3. Choose **Draw/Adjustments Effects/HUE-Saturation** or press "U". A Dialog box opens. In the **Hue** group specify **140** either using the slider or the edit zone. When done, click **OK**. The sphere color has been changed to Red!

4. Select the whole image (press Ctrl+A) then Choose **Draw/Adjustments Effects/HUE-Saturation** or press "U". A Dialog box opens. In the **Hue** group specify **140** either using the slider or the edit zone. When done, click **OK**.

The sphere color has been changed to Red!

## Creating a new icon from this image

5. In the menu choose **Edit/New Windows® Icon Project from this Image** (Ctrl+Shift+Y).
6. The dialog box **New Windows® Icon From Image** opens. In the **Name** group (1), enter the icon project name "Red Sphere". Do not specify any extension.



7. In the **Image Formats** group, **select** the image formats you wish to add in the icon (2) and **unselect** the unwanted images (3). Just click on the image preview to select/unselect. To know more about the desired Windows® standard image format, see [What is an Icon](#) topic.
8. When done, click **OK**. The icon is automatically created with the various image formats you've selected.

## How to Create a PNG, BMP, PSD or JPEG 2000 Image with Transparency...

If you work with external programs such as Macromedia® Freehand®, Adobe® Photoshop® or Jasc® Paint Shop Pro®, you may need to save an Icon Image to an external file.

Axialis IconWorkshop™ permits you to save an icon image to **PSD, PNG, BMP or JPEG 2000** file formats preserving the transparency areas of the icon.

## Open the image file in Axialis IconWorkshop™

1. **Open** your original icon file (from the librarian or using **File/Open...**).
2. The image file opens in a document window. In the image format list, **select the image** you wish to save to an external file.

## Save the Image as an External Bitmap

3. Choose **Draw/Save Image as Bitmap**. A dialog box opens. Choose to **Preserve Transparency Information** (this will permit you to keep transparent areas in your image file). When done, click **OK**.
4. A standard **Save Image As** dialog box opens. In the **Save as Type** list, select the format you wish to use to save the image. Choose a **destination folder** and type a **new filename**. When done, click **OK**. The file has been created.
5. In your external program, open the newly created file. It opens, containing the icon image with transparency. Now you can retouch it or use it as necessary.

## The JPEG 2000 options

JPEG 2000 is the latest generation of compressed image format. It permits to compress images with low quality loss. Additionally it permits to encode images with alpha channel.

When you save an image in JPEG 2000 format you need to specify the type of compression you want for this image:

- **Lossless compression** – This will result in perfect image quality but larger file size (about 30-50% of original image).
- **Lossy compression** – This can be adjusted to create smaller files (high compression means low quality – see preview).

If you use lossy compression, we recommend you to adjust the compression level using the slider and compare the difference between the original and the resulting image in the preview window.

## How to create a Web-optimized GIF image from an icon

CompuServe GIF image format is widely used in Web pages because the majority of Web browsers recognize it. However this format has some limitations and images need to be optimized to meet Web requirements like size, colors and transparency:

- GIF Images **don't support partial transparency** (alpha channel). It means that either a pixel is transparent, either it isn't.
- GIF Images cannot contain more than 256 colors.
- GIF Images **support reduced palettes**. Limited number of colors will result in smaller file but will produce lower image quality.

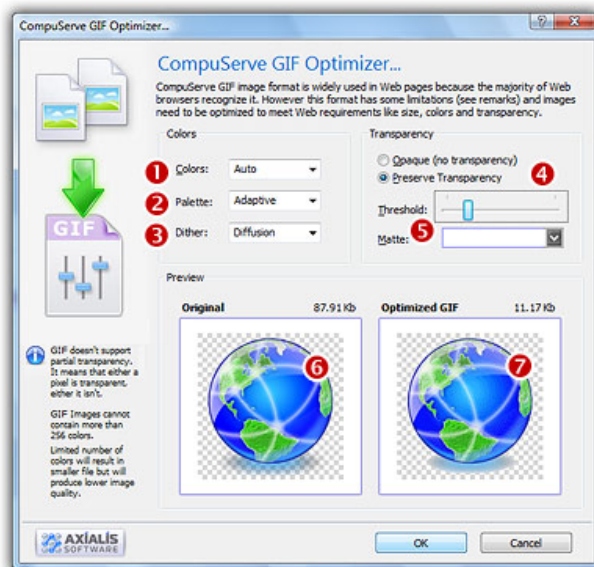
Axialis IconWorkshop™ permits you to save an icon image to **GIF** file formats preserving the transparency areas of the icon. Only one image will be extracted from the icon. We recommend you to extract the 256 color image from the icon if available.

## Open the icon file in IconWorkshop™

1. Open your original icon file (from the librarian or using **File/Open...**).
2. The image file opens in a document window. In the image format list, **select the image** you wish to use to create the GIF file. We recommend you to extract the 256 color image from the icon if available, otherwise use RGB/A.

## Save the image as a GIF file with Web optimization

3. Choose **File/Export/CompuServe GIF (Optimized for the Web)** or press **Ctrl+Shift+G**.
4. A standard **Save Image As** dialog box opens. In the **Save as Type** list select the format.
5. Choose a **destination folder** and type a **new filename**. When done, click **OK**.
6. A dialog box **CompuServe GIF Optimizer** opens:



7. In **Colors** (1), specify the number of colors you wish to use in the image palette. Limited number of colors will result in smaller file but will produce lower image quality. Choose **"Auto"** if you're not sure about desired the number of colors.
8. In **Palette** (2), choose the type of palette desired:
  - **Adaptive** – The palette will be calculated to get the best results possible (recommended).
  - **Web Safe** – This is the default Netscape® Web palette.
  - **Windows®** – This is the default palette used under old Windows® versions in 256 color screen mode.
  - **Macintosh® OS** – This is the default palette used under old Macintosh® OS versions in 256 color screen mode.
9. In **Dither** (3), choose "Diffusion" if you want IconWorkshop™ to simulate colors not present in the palette by pixel mixing using the "error diffusion" method. Choose "None" to encode the image without dithering. Diffusion produces the best results but usually creates slightly larger images.



10. In **Transparency** (4), specify if you want to preserve transparency or not. Of you choose opaque, the transparent areas of the icon will be converted to solid color (the "Matte" color). If you choose to preserve transparency and encodes your GIF file from a RGB/A images, you may need to adjust the "Threshold" value (5) to produce better results on image edges.
11. In **Preview**, compare the original (6) and the optimized (7) images (image quality and size) to find the best adjustments possible.
12. When done, click OK. The image file has been created.

## How to modify or extract icons included in program files

Axialis IconWorkshop™ permits to modify icons directly in program files like EXE, DLL, OCX... This feature is handy to customize existing applications.

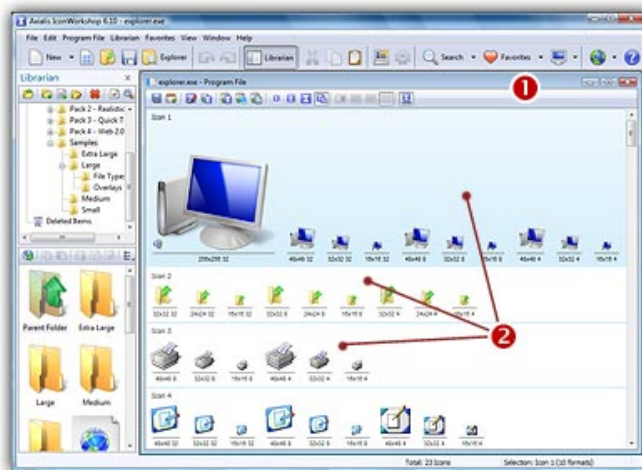
---

**We strongly recommend to make a copy of the original program file before modifying it using this feature**

---

### Modifying an icon included in a program file

1. Choose **File/Open** and select a program file EXE, DLL, OCX... You can also open an Explorer window (Ctrl+E) and double click on a program file.
2. The program opens in a document window (1) displaying all the icons it contains. If not already set, we recommend you to choose the display option "**All Formats In Raw**". In this mode, one icon is displayed on each row with all the formats it contains (2):



3. To modify an icon just **double click** on it or select it and press **Enter**.
4. The icon opens in an editor window. Just modify it as if it was a standard icon file (don't forget the above limitations though).
5. When done, update it by choosing **File/Save** or press **Ctrl+S**. Close the editor window.



6. The icon has been updated in the list (if you modified the displayed format).
7. Repeat steps 3 to 7 for other icons if necessary.
8. Update the program file by choosing **File/Save**.

## Extracting icons from a program file

1. Choose **File/Open** and select a program file EXE, DLL, OCX... You can also open an Explorer window (Ctrl+E) and double click on a program file.
2. The program opens in a document window displaying all the icons it contains.
3. Select the icons you wish to extract.
4. Choose **Icons/Export as Windows® icons** (🌐: choose **Icons/Export as Macintosh® icons**)
5. Select the destination folder and click OK.
6. The icons are extracted as **ICO** (🌐: **ICNS, RSC or BIN** as chosen).

## Adding to the Librarian icons from a program file

1. Choose **File/Open** and select a program file **EXE, DLL, OCX...** You can also open an Explorer window (Ctrl+E) and double click on a program file.
2. The program opens in a document window displaying all the icons it contains.
3. Select the icons you wish to add to the librarian. Choose **File/Add to the Librarian** or press **F3**.

### If the selected item in the librarian is a folder

4. A dialog box opens. Choose either to extract them as separate icons (**ICO**) or to create an icon library (**ICL**).
5. Click OK. The icons are extracted as requested.

### If the selected item in the librarian is an icon library

4. The icons are immediately added to the selected library.

## How to Create a Snapshot Picture of My Icons...

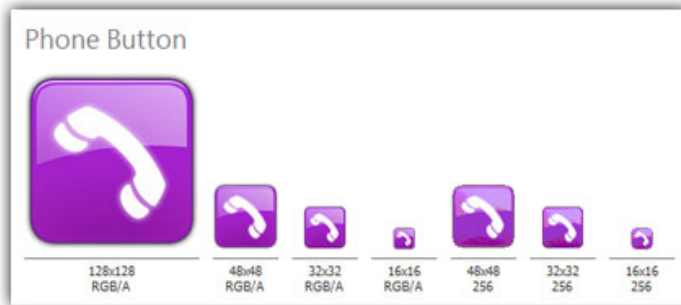
A Snapshot is an image created automatically by Axialis IconWorkshop™ to show one or several icons (with embedded formats) on a decorated background. Creating a Snapshot Picture of your icons may be useful to make a visual archive of your icons, illustrate a website or just promote your work. Three kinds of snapshots are available:

- **Detailed snapshot of one icon** – The icon image formats are displayed in one row.
- **Detailed snapshot of several icons** – One icon per row, several images per icon.
- **Quick/Thumbnail snapshot of several icons** – Only one image per icon, several icons per row.

## Creating a Snapshot of an Opened Icon

When an icon is opened in an editor window, you can create a snapshot of the work in progress.

1. From the opened icon window, Choose **Edit/Create Snapshot** or **Ctrl+Shift+P**
2. A dialog box **Create Icon Snapshot** opens. Adjust the various options then click **OK**.
3. The Snapshot image (see sample below) is created in a new window. Now you can save, copy, print this image as necessary.



## Creating a Detailed Snapshot of Several Icons

You can create a snapshot of several icons from within an opened Icon Library (ICL), Program File (EXE, DLL, OCX...), a Search Result window or from the built-in Explorer.

1. Select several icons from a list (only icons within libraries or Macintosh®/Windows® files). Choose **Edit/Create Snapshot** or **Ctrl+Shift+P**
2. A dialog box opens, select **Detailed Snapshot** then click **OK**.
3. A dialog box **Create Icon Snapshot** opens. Adjust the various options then click **OK**.
4. The Snapshot image (see sample below) is created in a new window. Now you can save, copy, print this image as necessary.



## Creating a Quick Thumbnail Snapshot of Several Icons

You can create a snapshot of several icons from within an opened Icon Library (ICL), Program File (EXE, DLL, OCX...), a Search Result window or from the built-in Explorer.

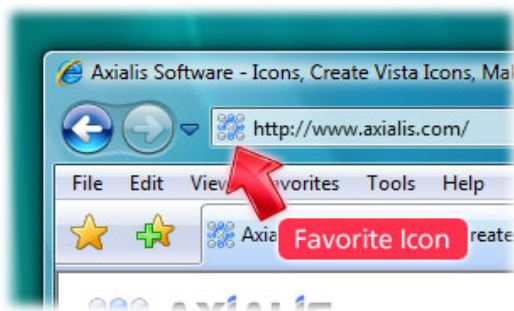
1. Select several icons from a list (only icons within libraries or Macintosh®/Windows® files). Choose **Edit/Create Snapshot** or **Ctrl+Shift+P**
2. A dialog box opens, select **Quick Thumbnail Snapshot** then click **OK**.
3. A dialog box **Create Icon Snapshot** opens. Adjust the various options then click **OK**.
4. The Snapshot image (see sample below) is created in a new window. Now you can save, copy, print this image as necessary.



## How to Add a Favorite Icon to my Web Site

If you own a website, it's interesting to associate an icon to it. This is what is called a "shortcut icon". In fact, this icon will be displayed on the visitor's computer if he chooses to bookmark your site. It will be displayed in the Favorites menu as well as in the Address bar (see below) if the user comes back to your site.

Shortcut icons work with Microsoft® Internet Explorer® v5.0 or later. They have no special Web server requirements and are a great way to add brand recognition without requiring the user to download a custom version of Internet Explorer®.



## Create the Correct Icon Formats

First you must create your icon. You can either start from scratch or create an icon from an existing image (your company's logo for example).

We recommend you to include these image formats in order to be compatible with all visitor configurations: **16x16 256 colors**, **16x16 16 colors**. You can optionally add **16x16 Windows® XP**.

---

**Make sure to create an icon that is 16x16 pixels. Otherwise, the icon will be ignored by Internet Explorer.**

---

## Saving Your Icon To your Local Hard Disk

1. When you've finished creating your icon, choose **File/Save** or **Ctrl+S...**
2. The standard Windows®save dialog box opens, select a specific location, then specify **favicon.ico** as your icon filename. This is important to name it "**favicon.ico**". If you use a different filename, it will not be considered as a Shortcut Icon. Uploading it to your Web Site
3. Launch your FTP client (or any program) you use to upload/update your files to your web site. Connect it to your website.
4. When you're connected, upload your file to the **root folder of your HTML pages** (where is located your home page html file). You must keep the "**favicon.ico**" filename unchanged during the upload.

## Associate the Icon with a Web Page

You can also associate the icon with a Web page by saving the icon with a file name other than favicon.ico and adding a line of HTML code in the head section of your Web document. The line of code includes a link tag that specifies the location and name of the file. You can include this link tag on a per-page basis.

---

```
<HEAD>
<LINK REL="SHORTCUT ICON"
HREF="http://www.domain.com/iconname.ico">
<TITLE>Page Title</TITLE>
</HEAD>
```

---

## My Icon is ignored, Why?

First, check that it meets the IE requirements (see above). If this is the case, keep in mind that the only way a shortcut icon appears on a user's Favorites menu and Address bar is if the user chooses to add your page as a favorite. You can add a button or link on your page that prompts the user to add your page. Use the following code to test with this feature:

---

```

<SCRIPT>
<!--
if ((navigator.appVersion.indexOf("MSIE") > 0)
&& (parseInt(navigator.appVersion) >= 4)) {
    var sText = "<U><SPAN STYLE='color:blue;cursor:hand;' ";
    sText +=
"onclick='window.external.AddFavorite(location.href, ";
    sText += "document.title);'">Add this page to your
favorites</SPAN></U>";
    document.write(sText);
}
//-->
</SCRIPT>

```

---

## How to Compile Icon Libraries with Activation Codes...

This new version of Axialis IconWorkshop™ includes a feature to compile Icon Libraries as install package ready for distribution. Additionally, a feature has been added to force the user to enter an activation code to proceed with installation (optional feature).

**Important:** Before reading with this topic, you need to know how to compile an Icon Library. Click [here](#) to read the related topics if necessary.

### A word on Activation Codes

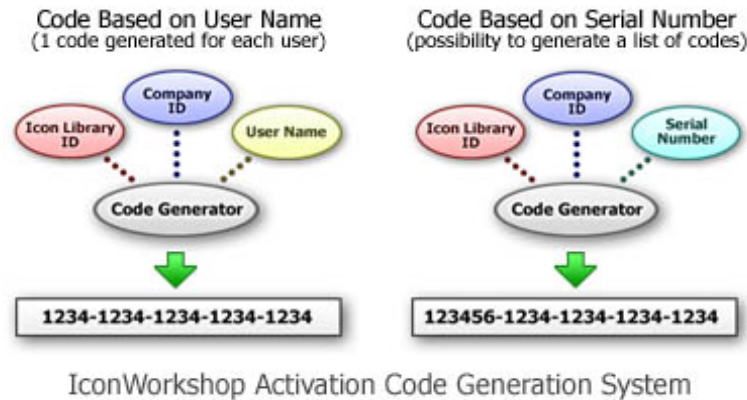
Two kinds of Activation Codes have been implemented in Axialis IconWorkshop™:

**Based on the user name:** The user has to enter **its name** and the activation code using this format: 1234-1234-1234-1234 (4 groups of 4 digits).

- **Pro:** The user has to provide his name if he wants to publish the code.
- **Con:** The author has to manually generate a code for each user.

**Based on a Serial Number:** The user **just enters a longer activation code** using this format: 123456-1234-1234-1234-1234

- **Pro:** The author can automatically generate a list of codes.
- **Con:** The user can anonymously publish his code.



## Compile an Icon Library with Activation Code

1. When preparing to compile an Icon Library (using the Compilation Wizard), you see the following screen (Step 5 of 6):



2. Click to check the option **"Use an Activation Code"** (1). The whole dialog box enables.
3. In the **Icon Library ID** zone (2), you see a large hexadecimal number. This ID will identify your Icon Library (used during activation code generation and verification). This is just a proposal based on your Icon Library properties.  
You can change it but we recommend you to keep it "as is" and to enter the same ID each time you compile THIS library. Of course, you will change this ID when you'll compile another Library.
4. In the **Company/Author ID** zone (3), you see another large hexadecimal number. This ID will identify yourself or your company (used during activation code generation and verification). This is just a proposal based on your Company Name properties.  
You can change it the first time you compile a Library, but we recommend you to keep it unchanged after.
5. If you want to use the Activation Codes based on the username (see the figure above for the differences), check the option **"Code Based on User Name"**.
6. When done, click **"Next"** to proceed with the compilation...

## Generate Codes based on the User Name

1. If you have chosen to use the system of activation codes based on the username during the compilation: Choose **Edit/Generate Activation Codes** or press **Alt+F6**. A dialog box opens:



2. In the **Library ID** (1) and the **Company ID** (2), enter the hexadecimal numbers you entered at compilation for the requested Icon Library. If you can't recall these numbers, click on the **"Get IDs from History File"** button (3). A dialog box opens, displaying a list of the compilation you have done, select the right line then **OK**.
3. In the **User Name** zone (4), enter the name of the user then click the **"Generate"** button (5), the code is generated and displayed in the **Code** zone (6). A text is also automatically copied in the clipboard as in this example (useful if you send an email to your customer):

**Your User Name : John Smith**

**Your Activation Code : 1527-9872-0984-6717**

## Generate Codes based on Serial Numbers

1. If you have chosen to use the system of activation codes NOT based on the username (i.e. based on Serial Codes) during the compilation: Choose **Edit/Generate Activation Codes** or press **Alt+F6**. The above dialog box opens.
2. In the **Library ID** (see above 1) and the **Company ID** (2), enter the hexadecimal numbers you entered at compilation for the requested Icon Library. If you can't recall these numbers, click on the **"Get IDs from History File"** button (3). A dialog box opens, displaying a list of the compilation you have done, select the right line then **OK**.
3. In the **From** and **To Number** zones (7), enter the first and the last number of the list of codes to generate. When done, click the **"Generate To File"** button (8). A standard Save As dialog box opens. Select a location and a new filename (TXT). When done, click **OK**. The file is generated.







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