

One-pager: how to make an animated GIF

Animated GIFs are those animated images you sometimes see at the footer of emails, and sometimes also used as animated email new year greeting cards. Animated GIFs can be used also for animations on websites (qoolcat.com/gif for example) however on the web there are usually better options for animation, like scripting or CSS with SVG, but these are not available with emails.

So, to create an animated GIF, first prepare the individual images for each individual state that you want to use for your animation (as in the "Hello" example on the right), then...

1. In Photoshop go » **File** » **Scripts** » **Load Files into Stack...** then use the Shift key to select multiple images. Your selected images are now imported into Photoshop, as one image per Photoshop layer.
2. Access the Timeline Panel: go » **Windows** » **Timeline**.
3. In the centre of the Timeline Panel is a button "Create Video Timeline": click the dropdown symbol on the right or the button and choose "Create Frame Animation". The button will now say "Create Frame Animation": click this button.
4. From the menu icon (four horizontal lines) at the top right of the Timeline Panel, go » **Make Frames From Layers**. On the Timeline you now see thumbnail images of each layer. It is possible to change the image sequence by dragging the thumbnails.
5. Click the play icon in your Timeline Panel to see the animation. To modify the time-lapse between each image, use the dropdown for each thumbnail image.
6. To export, go » **File** » **Export** » **Save for Web (Legacy)** and you will see a settings dialogue box
 - for Preset, select GIF 128 Dithered.
 - for Colors, select 256.
 - choose a required image size
 - confirm "Forever" as looping options (assuming this is what you want)
 - and click on "Save" at the bottom.

