Online Image Resizing – Rob Parker

If you're new to digital photography, and/or unfamiliar with any of the many image processing programs (or apps, as some refer to them in modern-day parlance), you might be struggling with how to resize your images to submit them to our website, where we have limits on both image dimensions and file size. These limits are:

- maximum width: 1400 pixels
- maximum height: 1050 pixels
- maximum file size: 1024 kB

A solution is readily available, which does not require you to obtain and learn how to use an image processing program – although you should certainly do this as you progress as a bird photographer; it will undoubtedly improve the quality of your images. *The quick solution to image resizing is to use one of the many free online services that are now available*. A Google search for "free online image resizing" (the exact phrase) returns over 5000 hits; the same words, not as an exact phrase, return nearly 2,000,000 hits!

I've had a quick look at several of the sites near the top of the search results, and found that most of them offer similar services: cropping, resizing (with several options usually available), often some image effects, and sometimes some basic post-processing options. In this article, I'll describe exactly how to use one of these online sites to crop and resize an image. The site that I've chosen to use for this demonstration is **picresize**.

Upload Your Image

*Figure 1. The **picresize** home page, where you select your image to be resized. Advertising images/links on the left side and at the top and bottom of the page have been cropped out.*

The **picresize** home page is where you select the image that you want to resize and upload it to the site; you can upload JPG files (and several other file types, but NOT camera raw files) up to 100 MB in size. You can do this by either clicking the **Browse** button (labelled **1** in the screenshot) which opens a file dialog box allowing you to open your image file; or by dragging/dropping the image file directly from a file explorer window into the text box

(labelled **2**). When you do this, the file name and file size will appear in the text box, as shown in Figure 2; just click the large yellow **Continue** button (labelled **3**) to start the upload of your image to the *picresize* site.
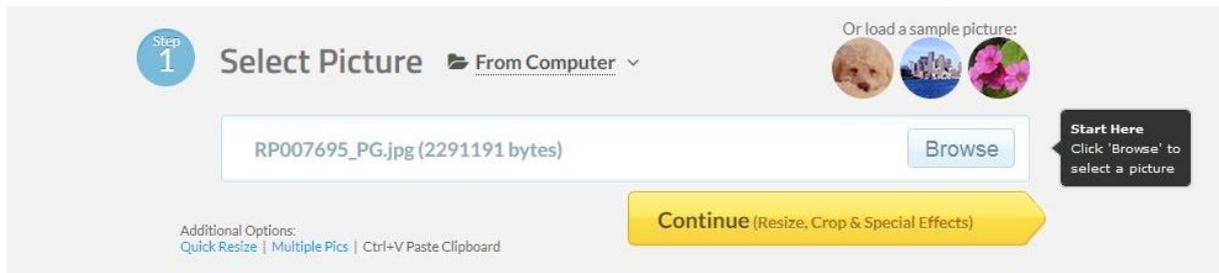
Figure 2. The Select Picture section, showing the name and size of your image file.

When the image has finished uploading (which may take a minute or two, depending on your connection speed – a progress bar is shown during the upload), the main page opens displaying a small preview of your image, as shown in Figure 3.
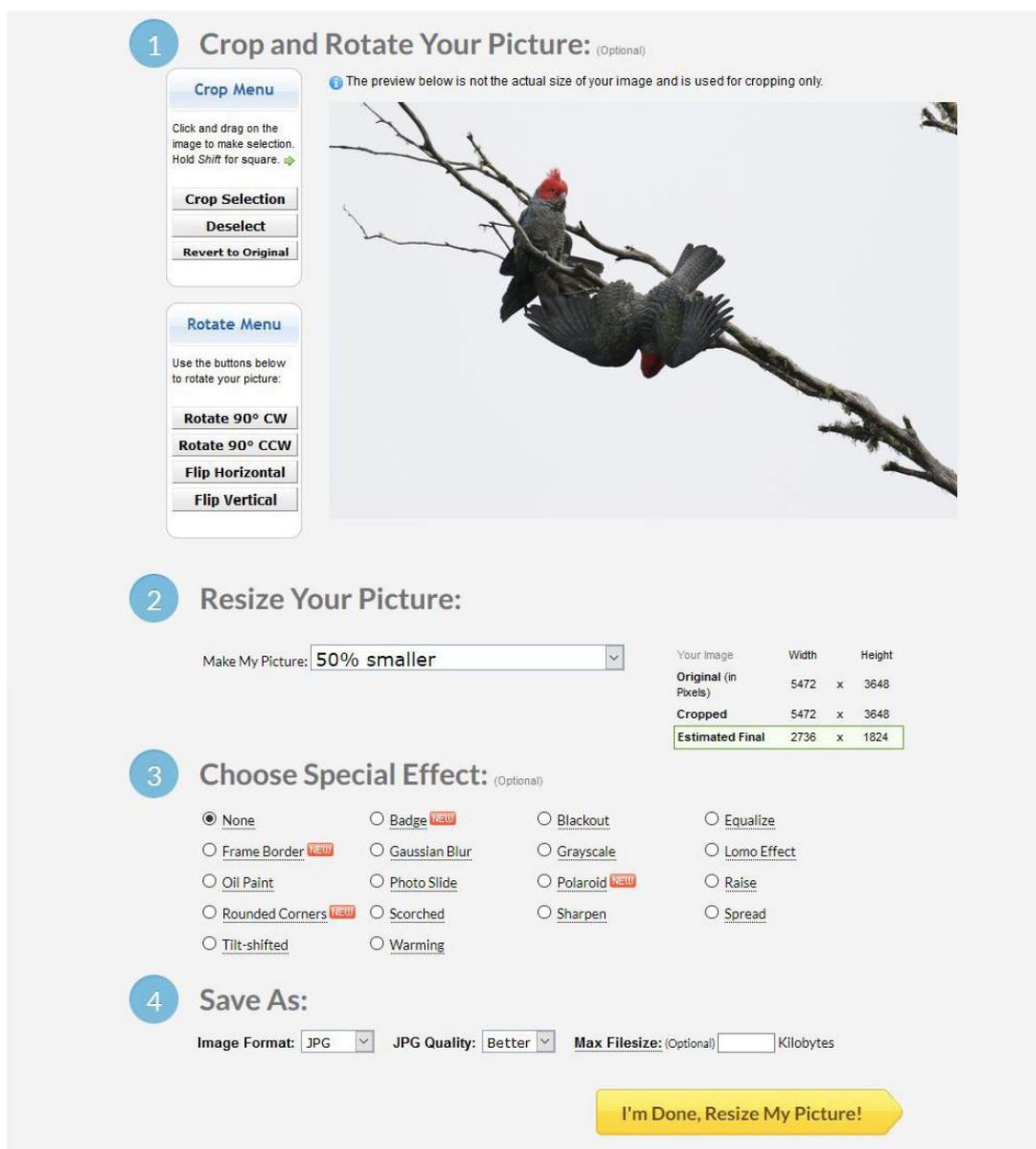
*Figure 3. The main processing page of **picresize**, after your image has been uploaded.*

Cropping Your Image

It's very easy to crop your image, should you wish to do so; just click-and-drag in the preview image, as shown in Figure 4. You can fine-tune the area selected by click-dragging the borders if necessary. Note that the preview image is normally not the full-size image that you have uploaded; it will be the full-size image only if the image is 600 pixels or less in width – unlikely for an image from a modern digital camera!
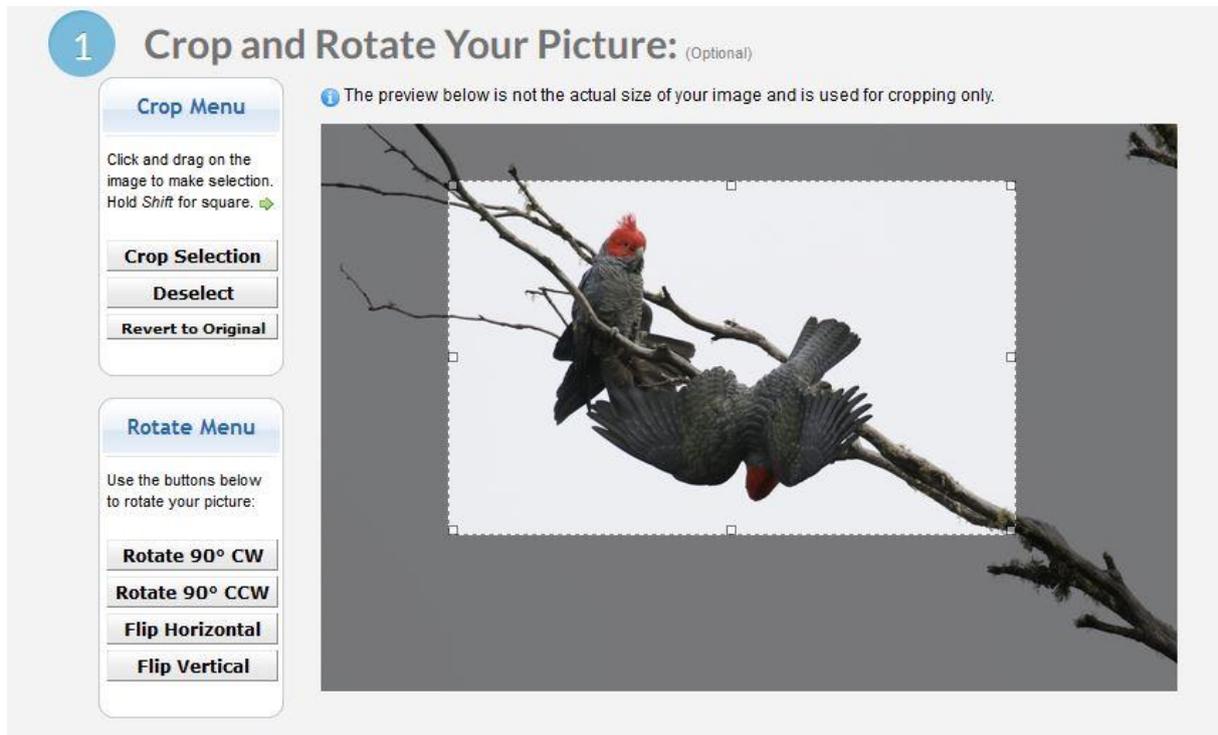

Figure 4. Select the area of the preview image for cropping.

When you are happy with the area you have selected, click the **Crop Selection** button in the Crop Menu area. The preview image will change to show the cropped area only, and the **Cropped** and **Estimated Final** dimensions in the **Resize Your Picture** section will change (see Figure 5) to show the result of your crop action, after resizing using the condition shown in the **Make my Picture:** drop-down selection box.

Figure 5. Image dimensions before (left) and after (right) cropping.

Resizing Your Image

If the **Cropped** dimensions of your image are *both* less than the limits for our website (1400 wide, 1050 high), then you will not need to apply any further resizing to your image; you should select "No change" in the **Make my Picture:** drop-down selection box. If either of the **Cropped** dimensions are larger than the limits, then select "Custom Size…" in the **Make my Picture:** drop-down selection box – see Figure 6. Then enter either 1400 in the width box, *or* 1050 in the height box, and *check the* **Estimated Final** *dimensions to ensure that they are*

within the limits; if either is too large, delete the entry you made and enter the other dimension. **picresize** will maintain the aspect ratio of the original or cropped image; *if you enter both width and height values, and these are not in exactly the same ratio as the aspect ratio of your original or cropped image, the final image will be distorted* (see Figure 7).

Figure 6. Resizing options, Special Effects, and Save As options.

Figure 7. Image distortion resulting from setting both Width and Height for an image. Entering a Width setting of 1400 showed that the Estimated Final height would be 550; overriding this with a Height entry of 1050 produced severe vertical distortion.

Special Effects

There is a **Choose Special Effects:** section, with a number of options available. You should choose either **None**, or perhaps **Sharpen**; the others are all inappropriate for bird images for our website. The image I'm using for this demonstration is rather "soft", and the Sharpen option improves this image, as shown in Figure 8. The Sharpen option will result in a larger file size – approximately 25% for my example file.

Figure 8. Portion of my image saved with Special Effects: None (left) and Sharpen (right).

Save Options

Although *picresize* offers several file types for the resized image, you should set the **Save As:** options as shown in Figure 6 – **Image Format:** JPG, **JPG Quality:** Best, **Max Filesize:** 1024 kilobytes. Then just click the big yellow **I'm Done, Resize My Picture!** button to generate your finished image. A new page will open, as shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Resizing done!

You can use the **View Image** button to view the final full-size image in your web browser. If you're happy with it, click the **Save to Disk** button to download the image to your own computer; you'll probably be presented with a dialog box offering to either Open the image (in your default program for viewing JPG files) or to Save File; choose the latter option and

click OK, and *the resized image will be downloaded to your default Downloads folder*, it will have your original filename with a "rsz_n" (where n is a number) prefix . You must do this within 20 minutes of generating your resized file; your work is deleted from the *picresize* server 20 minutes after this page opens.

Be Careful Where You Click

Most, if not all, free online resizing sites operate by hosting advertising on their site; they get paid when visitors "click-through" to the advertiser's site. This can lead to some sites being rather confusing to users. For example, this is the home page of the Resizr site:

None of the prominent large green "Start Here" or "Start Now" buttons have anything to do with the image resizing service; they all open other advertisers sites!

Some sites also offer paid, or "Premium" services, which may include things such as faster response, larger file uploads, or additional image adjustments. If all you're looking to do is crop/resize your images, you probably don't need these.