

# Basic Web Page Construction Using Photoshop

By James Watrous

## Lesson Introduction

This lesson provides the technical steps to convert a Photoshop design into a Web page and the creation of intermediate Photoshop image files that provide the graphics for rollover buttons and inactive buttons. We will review the general steps in creating your design. However, the primary emphasis is the steps to convert your designs to Web pages with Photoshop and Dreamweaver.

## Topics

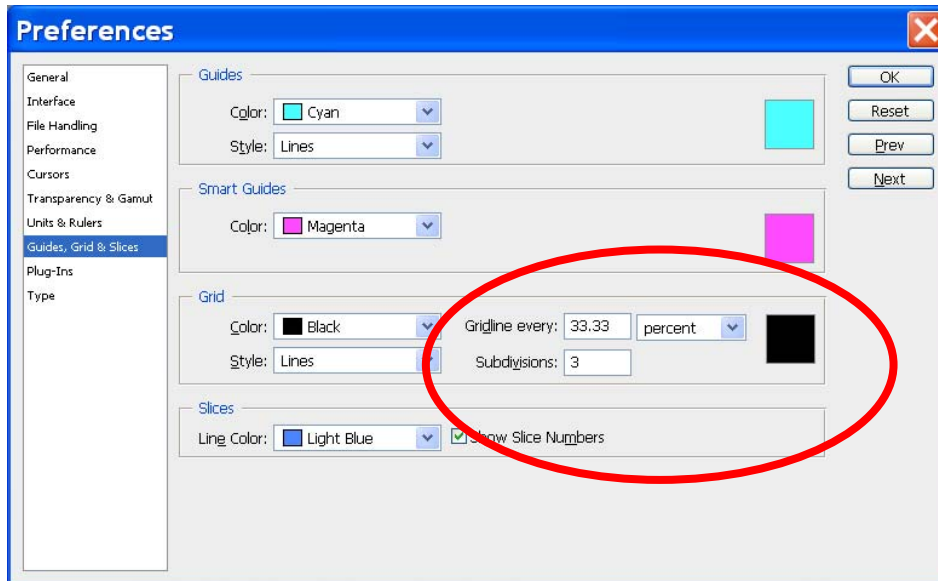
- ❖ General Review of Web Page Design Steps for a site of several pages.
  - With paper and pencil sketch several Layout Designs Using the Golden Ratio and Possible Navigation Designs
    - Page Layout Designs – choosing the best that suites the client and Web site type
    - Navigation Designs – choosing an appropriate navigation
  - Grayscale version of Layout done in Photoshop
  - Choose Color Scheme
  - Create color version of Layout done in Photoshop and save a proper color swatch for the color scheme chosen.
  - Create the Header/Logo for your Web site as well as any animation desired and appropriate.
  - Add Textures for inside the Web pages and outside the Web pages, which may include tiles.
  - For this saved home page, do a “Save As ...” for each additional web page for the site and give these Photoshop files appropriate names.
  - Create any other textures needed for inside the additional Web pages.
  - Choose Typography and Content
  - Select Images
  - Convert the Designed Pages to Web Pages
- ❖ For the purposes of this discussion create a Mock Layout in Color to use for following the conversion from Photoshop design to a Web Page.
- ❖ Create additional Photoshop Group/Folders of layers of graphics for the rollover button (or link) and inactive button (or no-link). Leave these groups of layers turned off (not visible).
- ❖ Slice the Mock Layout to create the equivalent of XHTML tables for all main elements contained in each Web page.
- ❖ Name each Slice and add URL’s for those slices that are used for links or buttons.
- ❖ Do “Save As ...” to create the Photoshop files for the other three Web pages and change the following Slice names: animatedLogo to Logo; homeImageArea to studyTechniquesImage Area; homeContentArea to studyTechniquesContentArea. Make similar changes for the readingSkills.psd and contact.psd files.

- ❖ Use Photoshop's "Save for Web & Devices..." to create the Web pages for the Photoshop files that create the initial Web pages.
- ❖ Open the index\_Over.psd and indes\_NoLink.psd files in Photoshop. The regular (up state) button-links graphic group should be turned off (not visible) and either the rollover group turned on or the no-link group turned on. Use the "Save for Web & Devices..." to create the Rollover or NoLink button-link graphical images only.

Special Note: Please recognize that in your real Project site each of the different Web pages may have different sub-slices in the Content and/or Image areas or whatever is appropriate for your actual Site design. Make sure that you name each sub-slice appropriately.

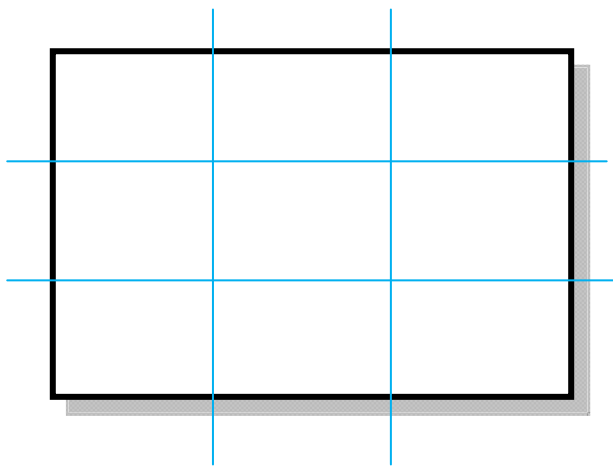
## Sketches and Layouts with use of the Golden Ratio

For any sized Web page, create the appropriate sized canvas with a resolution of 260 ppi. Next, set the Rule of Thirds in the Grid section of the Preferences of Photoshop as illustrated below.

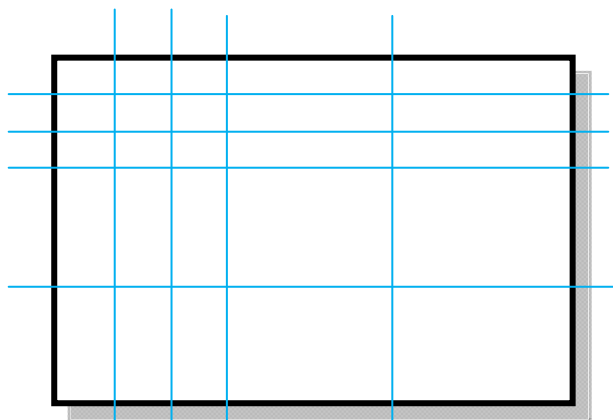


The use of thirds incorporates the use of the Golden Ratio for best design layout. It is common to divide the outer 1/3 into thirds for more refined positioning of design elements (such as, logo area, navigation area, content area, footer area, header area and so on).

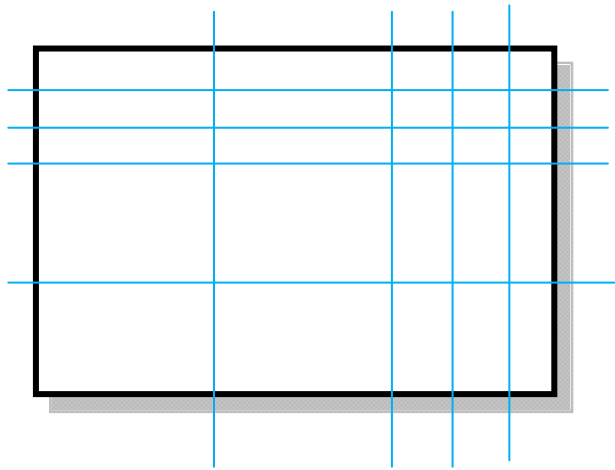
Here are some examples of canvas layouts using the Golden Ratio (commonly called the Rule of Thirds).



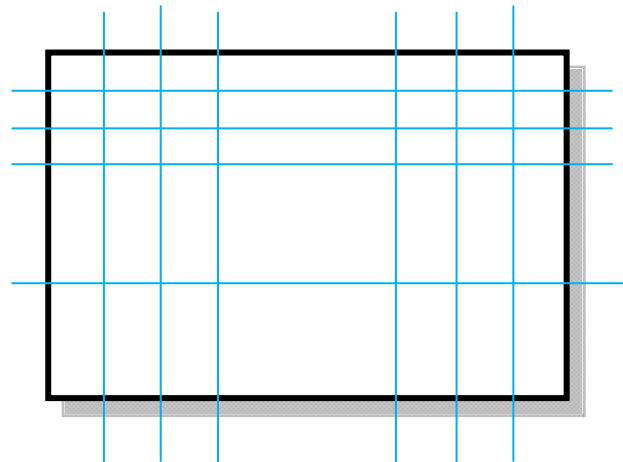
First Set of Guide Lines for Layout



Advance Set of Guide Lines for Layout



Alternate Set of Guide Lines for Layout



Alternate Set of more completed Guide Lines for Layout

These three canvas layouts are among several possible layouts that can be created for designing layouts.

Keep in mind that all designs truly start with pencil and paper and not the computer. The paper sketches should always utilize the Golden Ratio or the more commonly used Rule of Thirds. You may have to create several sketches before you pick the best starting design. The final design may go through several variations along the way to the final implemented design.

### **Grayscale version of Layout done in Photoshop**

Once you have picked the design, you create a grayscale layout of the area elements such as Logo area, Header area, Navigation area, Footer area, Content area and so forth.

#### **Choose Color Scheme**

#### **Create color version of Layout done in Photoshop**

#### **Save a proper color swatch for the color scheme chosen**

Next, you add a color scheme that you are going to use. When you have finished selecting the colors, you create a color swatch that contains only the colors in your design.

### **Add Textures for inside the Web pages and outside the Web pages**

Other aspects of your design include textures, background colors, background images, and background textures. During the design layout process, the navigation/links are an integral part of the design. In the design layout of navigation, you need to create normal graphic state to the buttons, links. This would include text, background color or background image associated with the actual button/link. The button can be flat or three dimensional. Then decide what the over state graphics should look like. This is the graphic change that occurs when the mouse is moved over the region of any given button. Examples of over state graphics may be no more than the color of the text changes, changes in effects like outer glow, or more sophisticated graphic changes. Similarly, create graphic design for the no-link state.

## **Create the Header/Logo for your Web site as well as any animation desired and appropriate**

Select the Logo to be used for branding your service or product. Decide if animation is useful and appropriate. Choose the main header for all Web pages. This may be part of the logo or it may not be part of the logo. For example, it may be appropriate to provide the full company name in addition to the logo used for branding if the company is relatively new or new to the Web and internet presence.

## **Choose Fonts for you Web site**

Next, select no more than three fonts for the main type that you are using in your Web pages and do not display more than two fonts on any given page. The exceptions are usually associated with the logo for the business, organization or group associated with the Web page. Serif fonts are only used for the large headers and large titles. The normal font for most of the text that appears in the Web page should only be sans serif. The last part of the design is the image selection that best helps your communication or helps the viewer focus on your message.

## **Photoshop Detail**

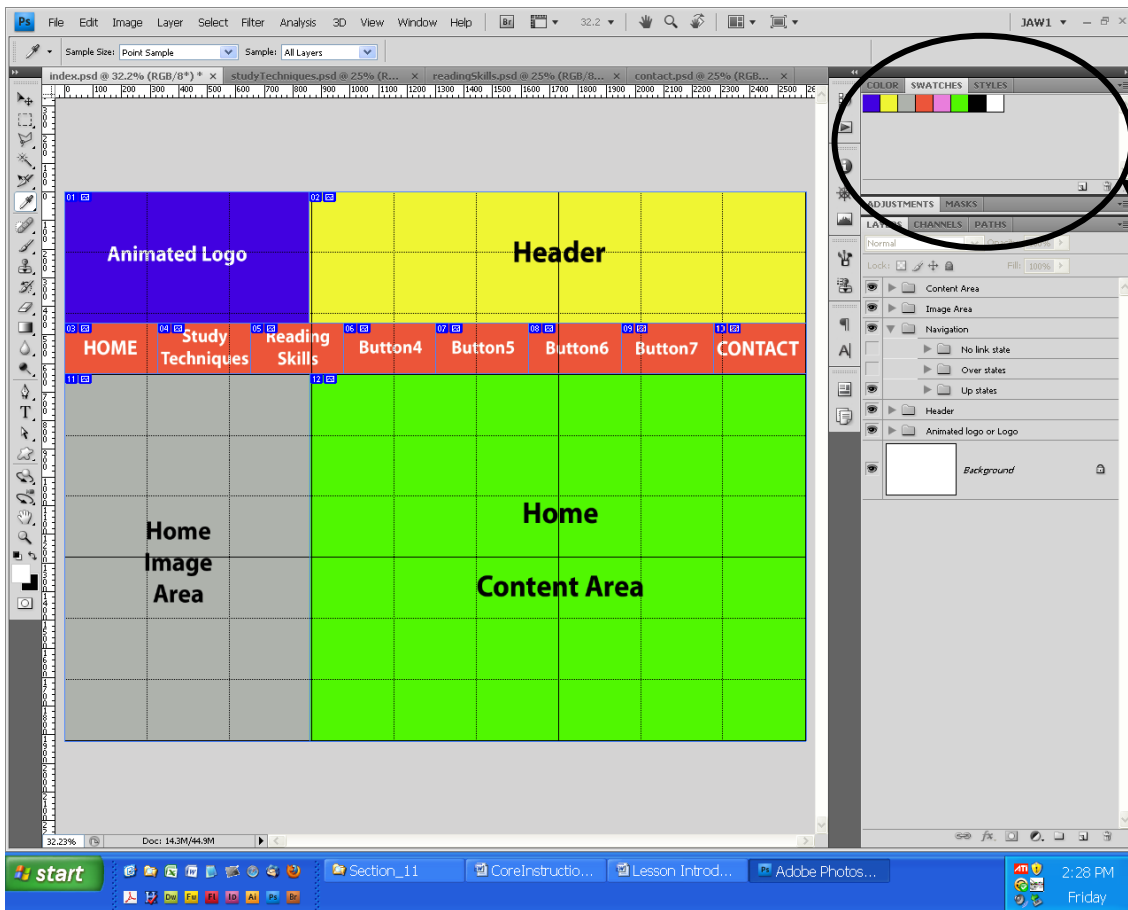
The development of your design in Photoshop must use lots of layers with no more than one specific graphic element, image, or text per layer. In addition, you need to group, sub-group or even sub-sub-group layers associated with any specific layout area. For example, the navigation area needs to be in its own group with sub-groups for regular button graphics and another sub-group for over state button graphics.

Once you have finished the complete design of the Home page including all navigational aspects, then slice up the main elements for this page. In the take home Project, you are asked to name all slices so that there are no auto slices (only user slices). Make sure that you name every slice. In the navigation area, make sure that you name each button and add the URL, target type and alternate text. If the button is for a page that does not yet exist, then use the number symbol (#) for the URL. When you use the # symbol for the URL, you can test the button's overstate functionality.

In Photoshop do a "Save As..." and name the home page file index.psd. Next, do a "Save As..." and name the index.psd file index\_over.psd. In this file turn the regular button-link graphic group off and the rollover graphic group on. Save the index\_over.psd again. Repeat the "Save As..." step and name the index\_over.psd file index\_nolink.psd. In this file turn the rollover button-link graphic group off and the no-link graphic group on. Save the index\_nolink.psd again. Then reopen the index.psd file. Now, do a "Save As..." and name a second file reading\_comprehension.psd file, the study\_techniques.psd file, and the contact.psd file. For the reading\_comprehension.psd, study\_technique.psd and contact.psd files, you only need to redesign the content areas, since the logo, header, and navigation areas remain the same. This creates the Web site page consistency needed for any Web site. The index\_over.psd and index\_nolink.psd files are only going to be used to generate the rollover button-link and no-link graphic images. This will be done after you create the home page for your Web site and not before.

In a mock layout, the animated logo slice is blue, the header slice is yellow, the image area slice in gray, the content area is green and the navigation area is red in the up state, pink in the over state and green in the no-link state. The green graphic represents an inactive button (the no-link graphic) that only appears when its page is linked to and displayed. For the other Web pages the animated logo area becomes a logo area with no animation.

The following five images are the five Photoshop files created in layout only for the purposes of outlining the steps for creating the Web pages in Photoshop as well as the minimal steps in Dreamweaver to create rollover states, no link states and background images beyond the Web page canvas size for monitors that use pixel sizes greater than 1024 by 768 pixels.



Note: the saved swatch colors in the swatch palette. White and black are also included. Each swatch color is named the web color in the hexadecimal notation and a color name. This swatch group is named and saved.

### Slice Options

Slice Type: Image

Name: animated logo

URL:

Target:

Message Text:

Alt Tag: Animated Logo graphics

Dimensions

X: 0 W: 859

Y: 0 H: 459

Slice Background Type: None Background Color:

OK Reset

### Slice Options

Slice Type: Image

Name: header

URL:

Target:

Message Text:

Alt Tag: Header graphics

Dimensions

X: 859 W: 1741

Y: 0 H: 459

Slice Background Type: None Background Color:

OK Reset

### Slice Options

Slice Type: Image

Name: home\_imageArea

URL:

Target:

Message Text:

Alt Tag: Home image area graphics

Dimensions

X: 0 W: 861

Y: 637 H: 1287

Slice Background Type: None Background Color:

OK Reset

### Slice Options

Slice Type: Image

Name: homeContentArea

URL:

Target:

Message Text:

Alt Tag: Home content area graphics

Dimensions

X: 861 W: 1739

Y: 637 H: 1287

Slice Background Type: None Background Color:

OK Reset

### Slice Options

Slice Type: Image

Name: homeButton

URL: index.html

Target: \_self

Message Text:

Alt Tag: Home Button

Dimensions

X: 0 W: 328

Y: 459 H: 178

Slice Background Type: None Background Color:

OK Reset

### Slice Options

Slice Type: Image

Name: studyTechniquesButton

URL: studyTechniques.html

Target: \_self

Message Text:

Alt Tag: Study Techniques Button

Dimensions

X: 328 W: 325

Y: 459 H: 178

Slice Background Type: None Background Color:

OK Reset

### Slice Options

Slice Type: Image

Name: readingSkillsButton

URL: readingSkills.html

Target: \_self

Message Text:

Alt Tag: Reading Skills Button

Dimensions

X: 653 W: 325

Y: 459 H: 178

Slice Background Type: None Background Color:

OK

Reset

### Slice Options

Slice Type: Image

Name: contactButton

URL: contact.html

Target: \_self

Message Text:

Alt Tag: Contact Button

Dimensions

X: 2278 W: 325

Y: 459 H: 178

Slice Background Type: None Background Color:

OK

Reset

### Slice Options

Slice Type: Image

Name: button\_4

URL: #

Target:

Message Text:

Alt Tag: button\_4 graphics

Dimensions

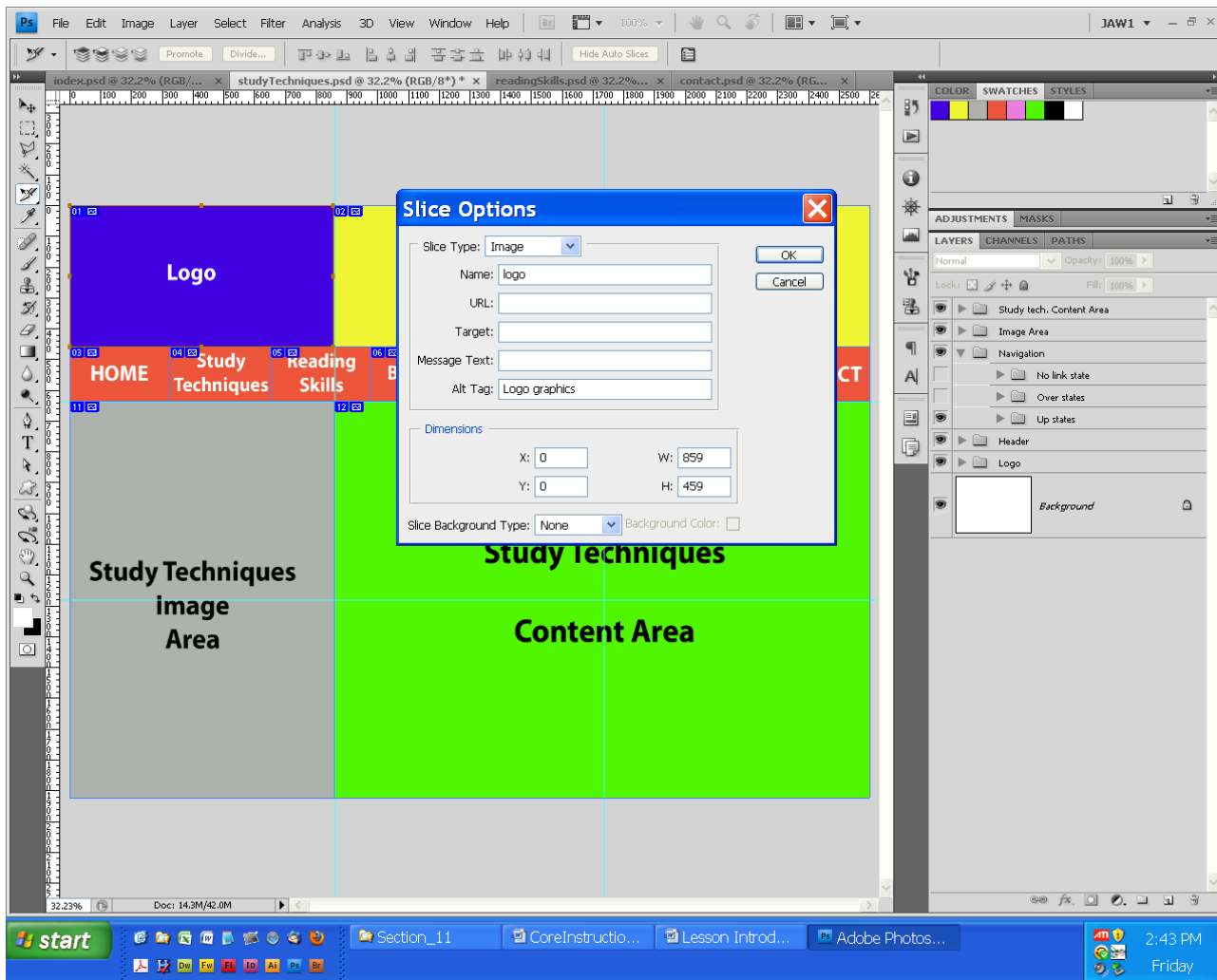
X: 978 W: 325

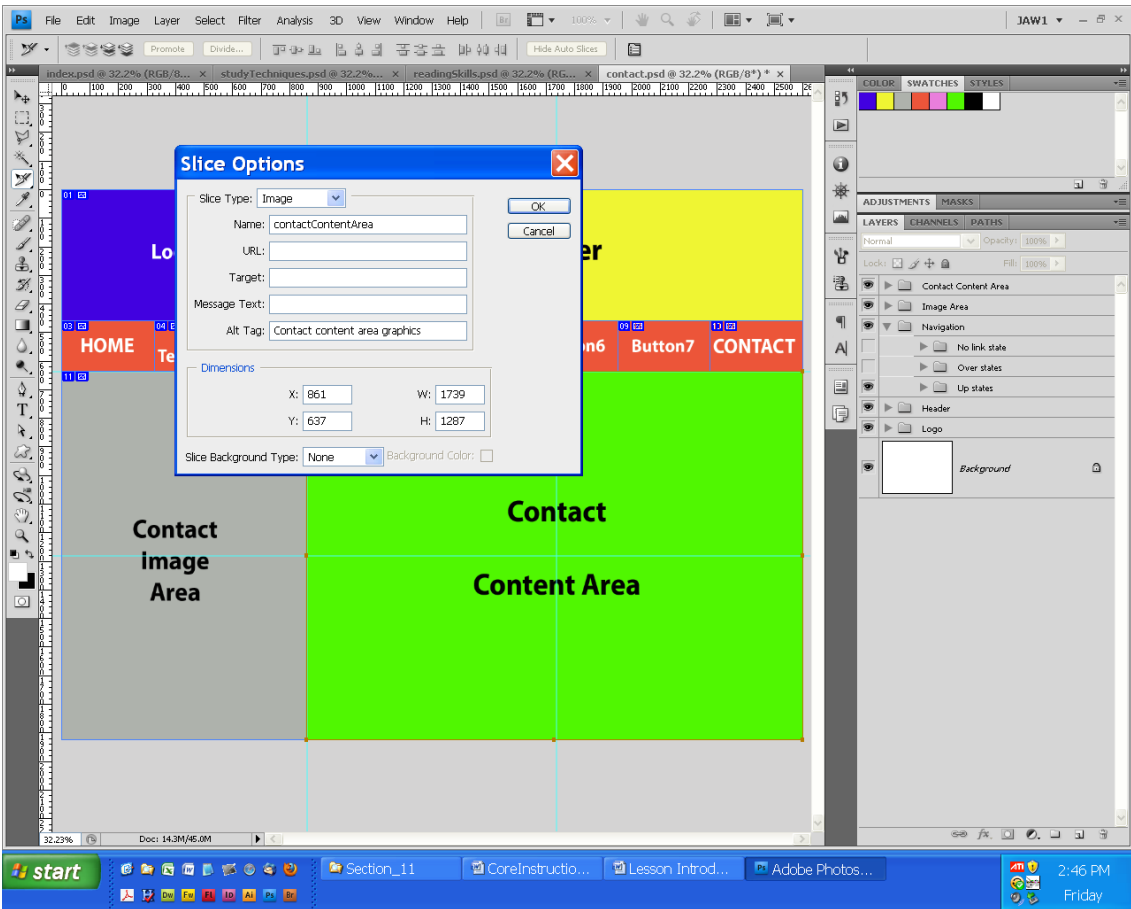
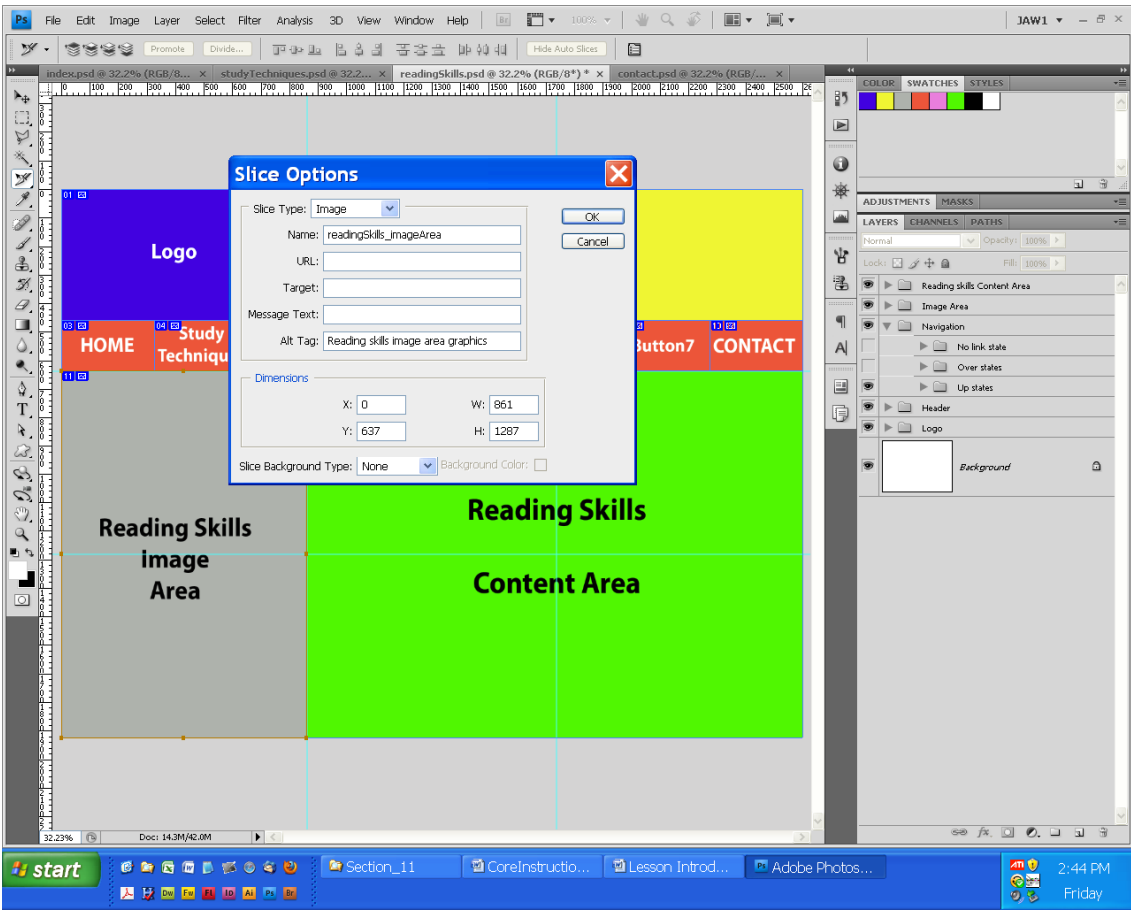
Y: 459 H: 178

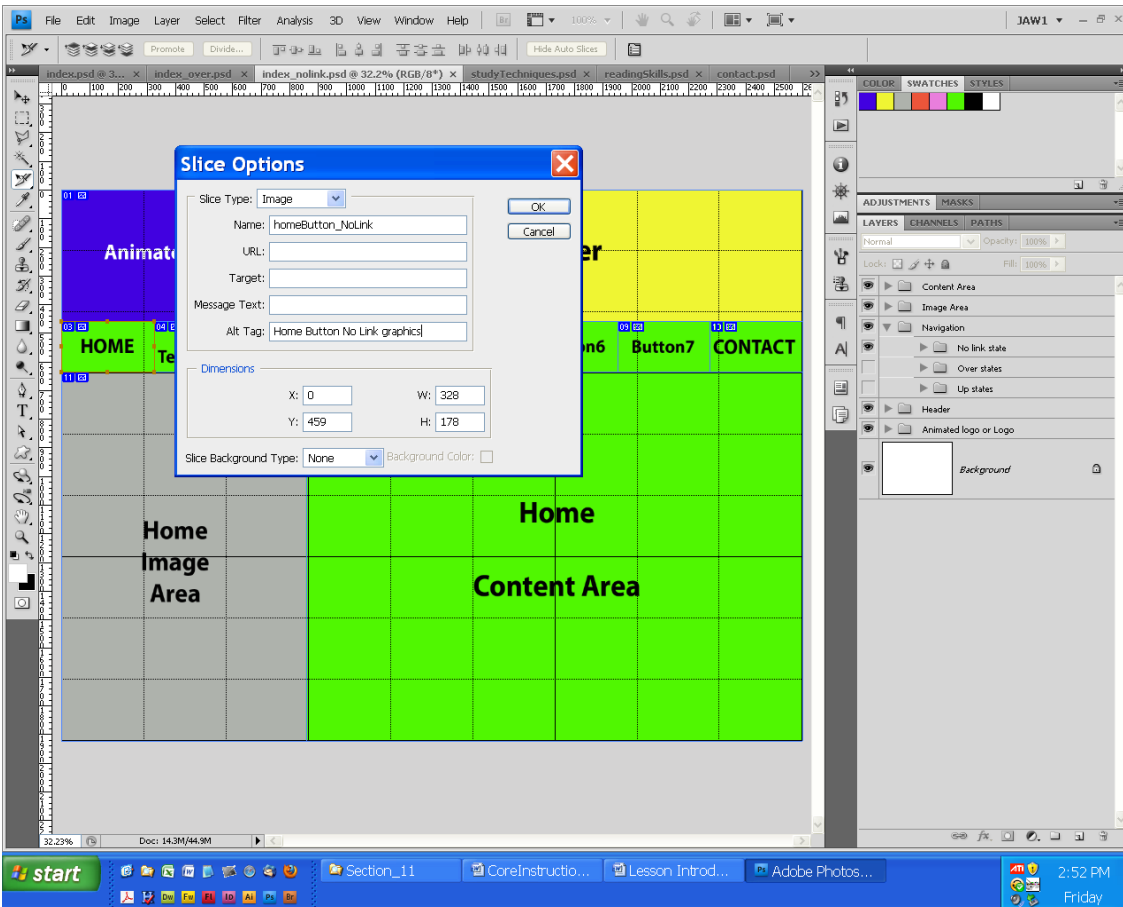
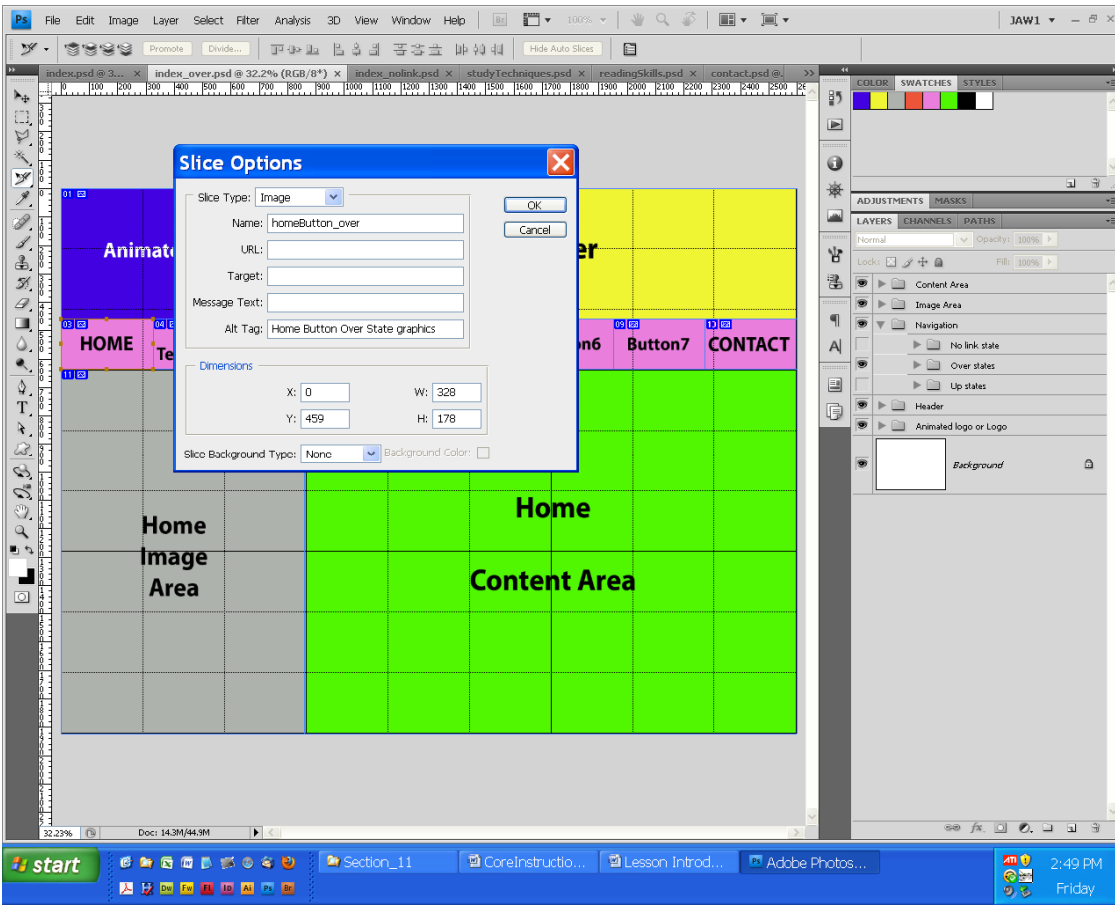
Slice Background Type: None Background Color:

OK

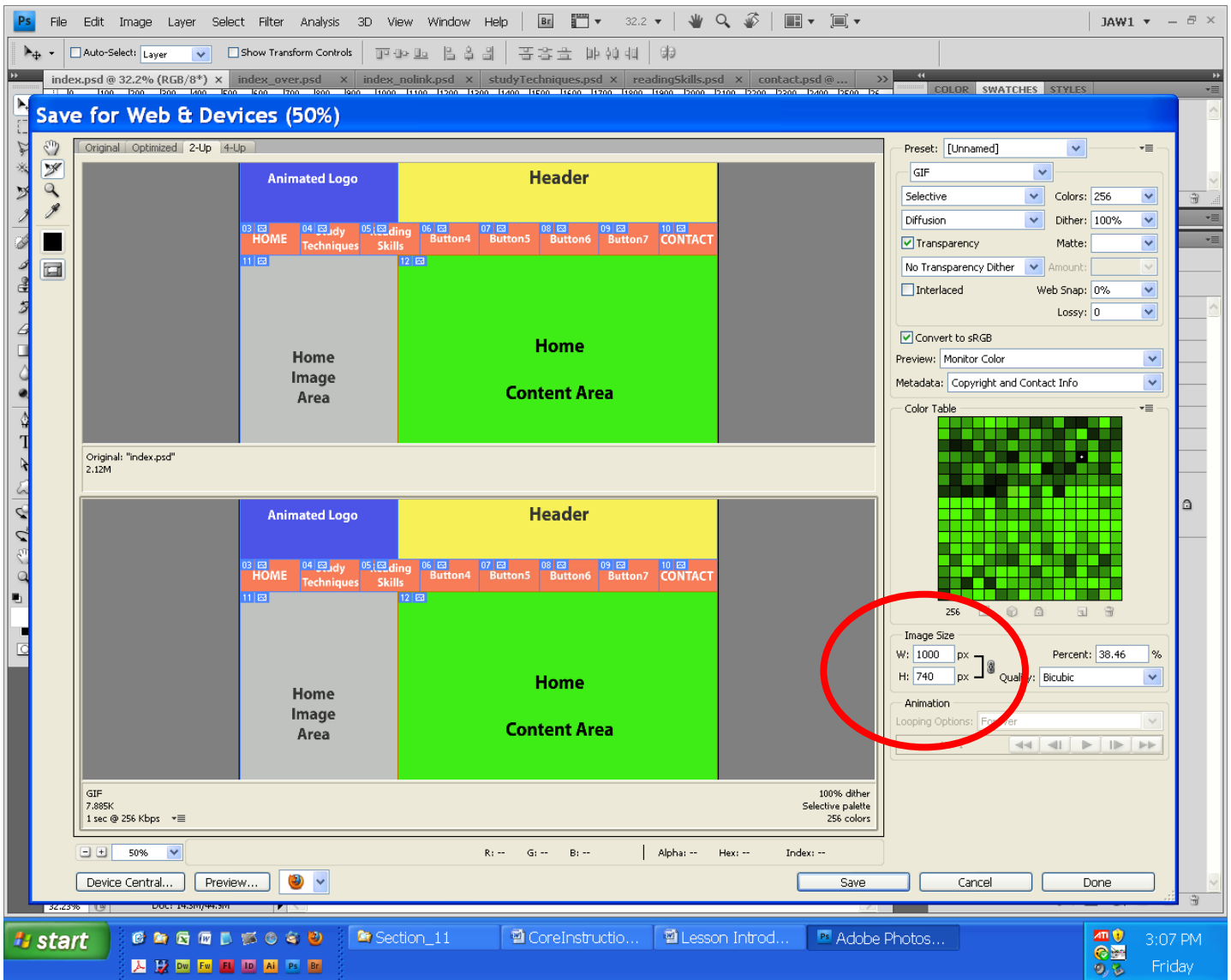
Reset



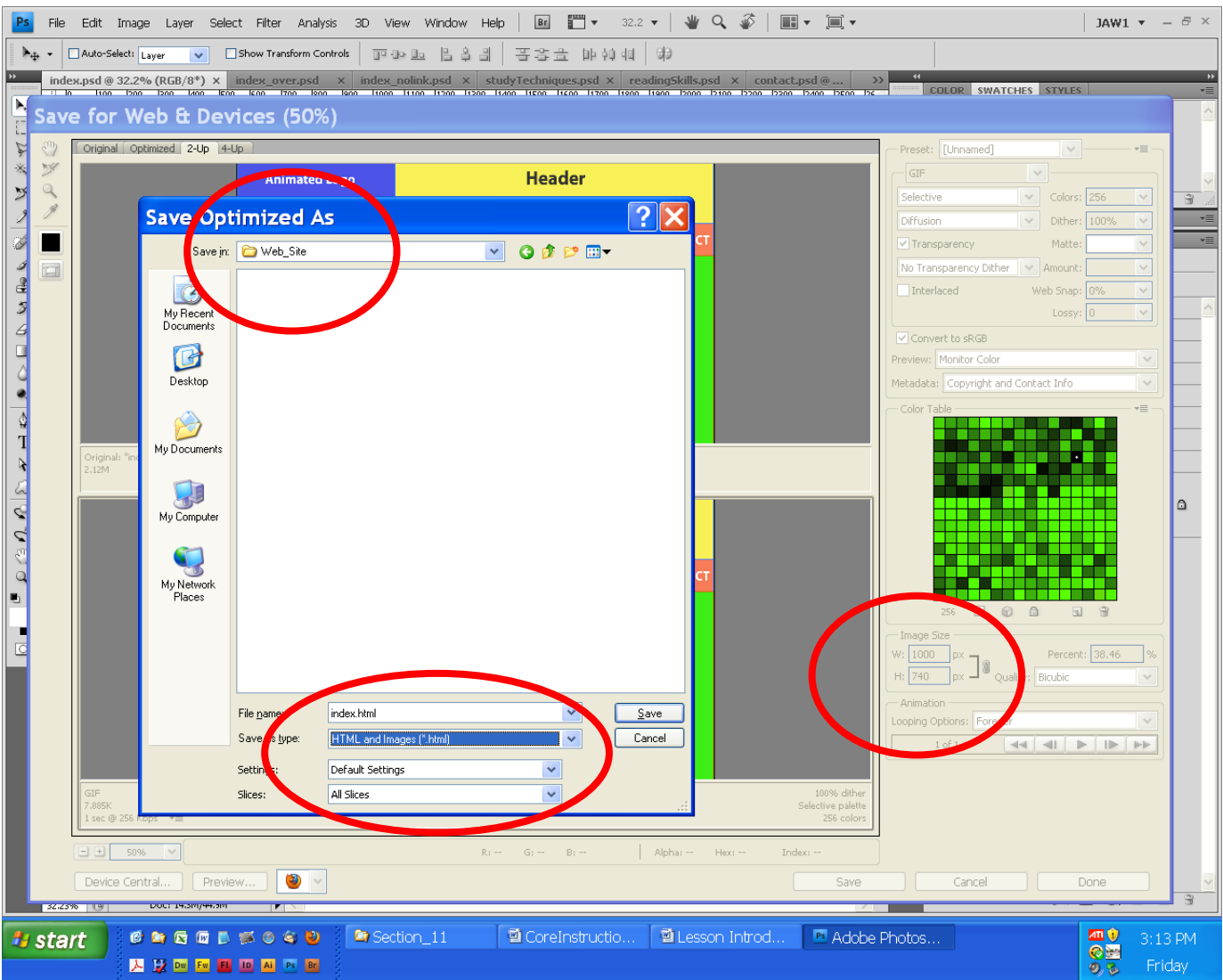
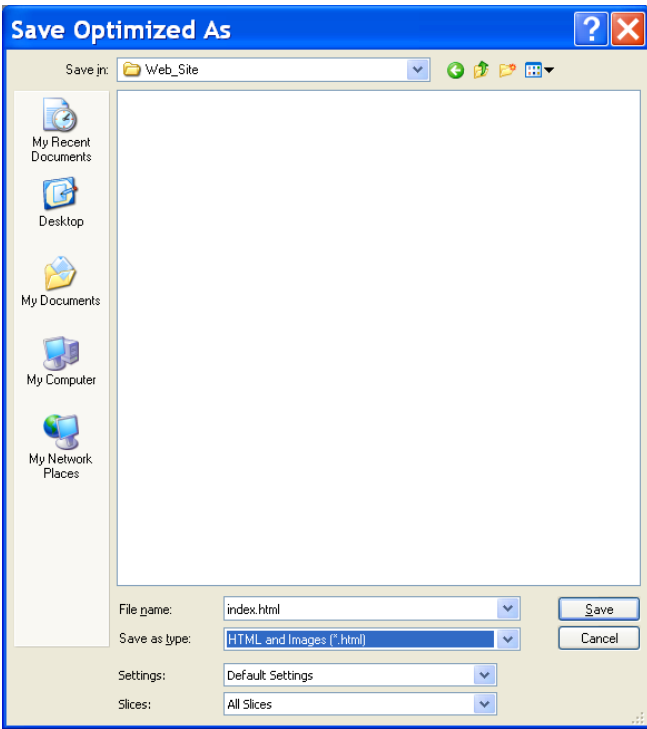




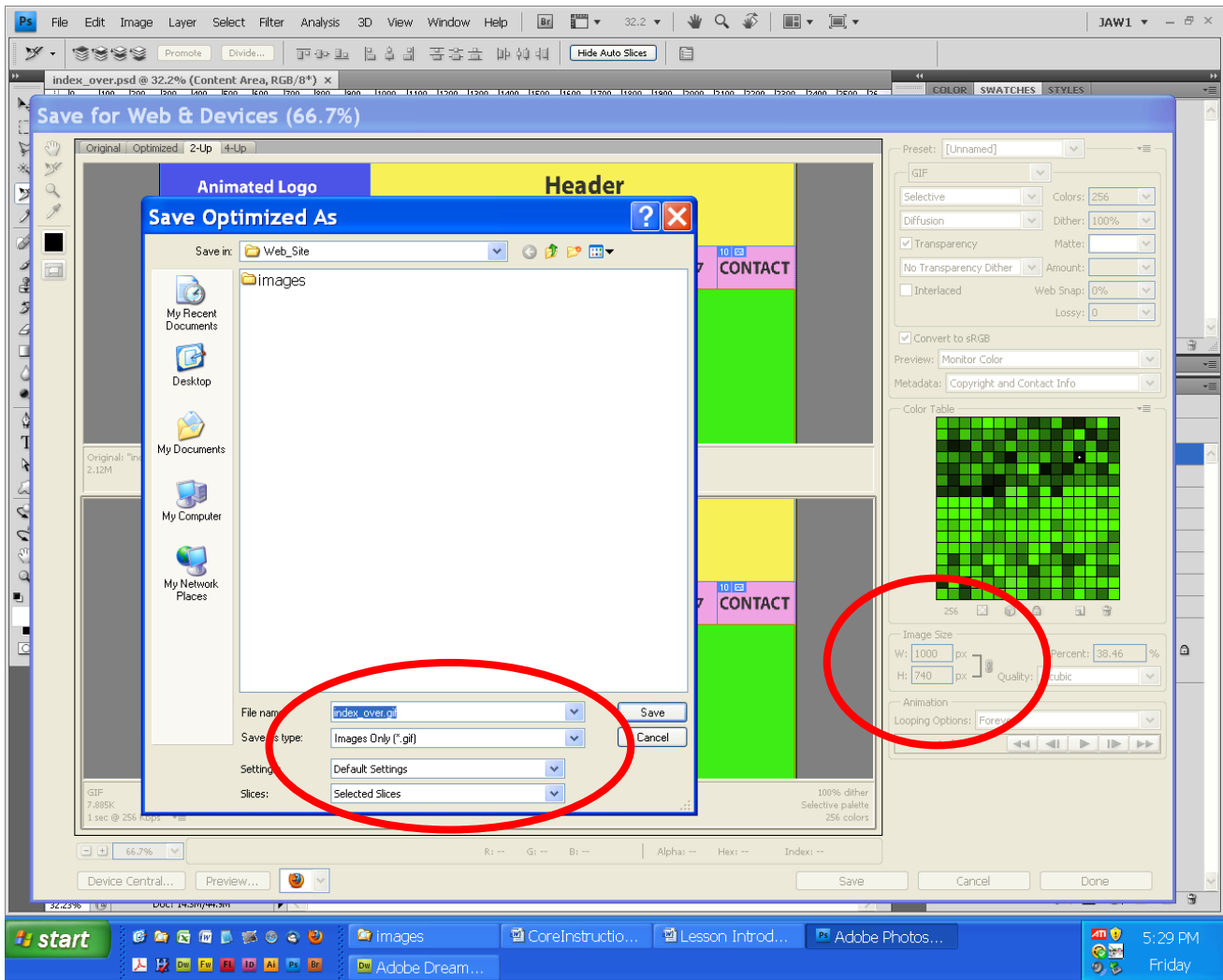
Reopen the index.psd file and do the Photoshop “Save for Web & Devices. In the Save for Web & Devices window, select each slice and set the image file type (.jpg or .gif), as well as the quality of the jpg or gif color set number. Set the Image Size to 1000 pixel width (see the circled area below). After you have completed the slice graphic type selection and changed the Image Size width, then select the “Save” command.



In the Save window shown below, make sure that the “Save in:” box you choose the proper storage device and the “Web site” folder to place the HTML files and associated images sub-folder.

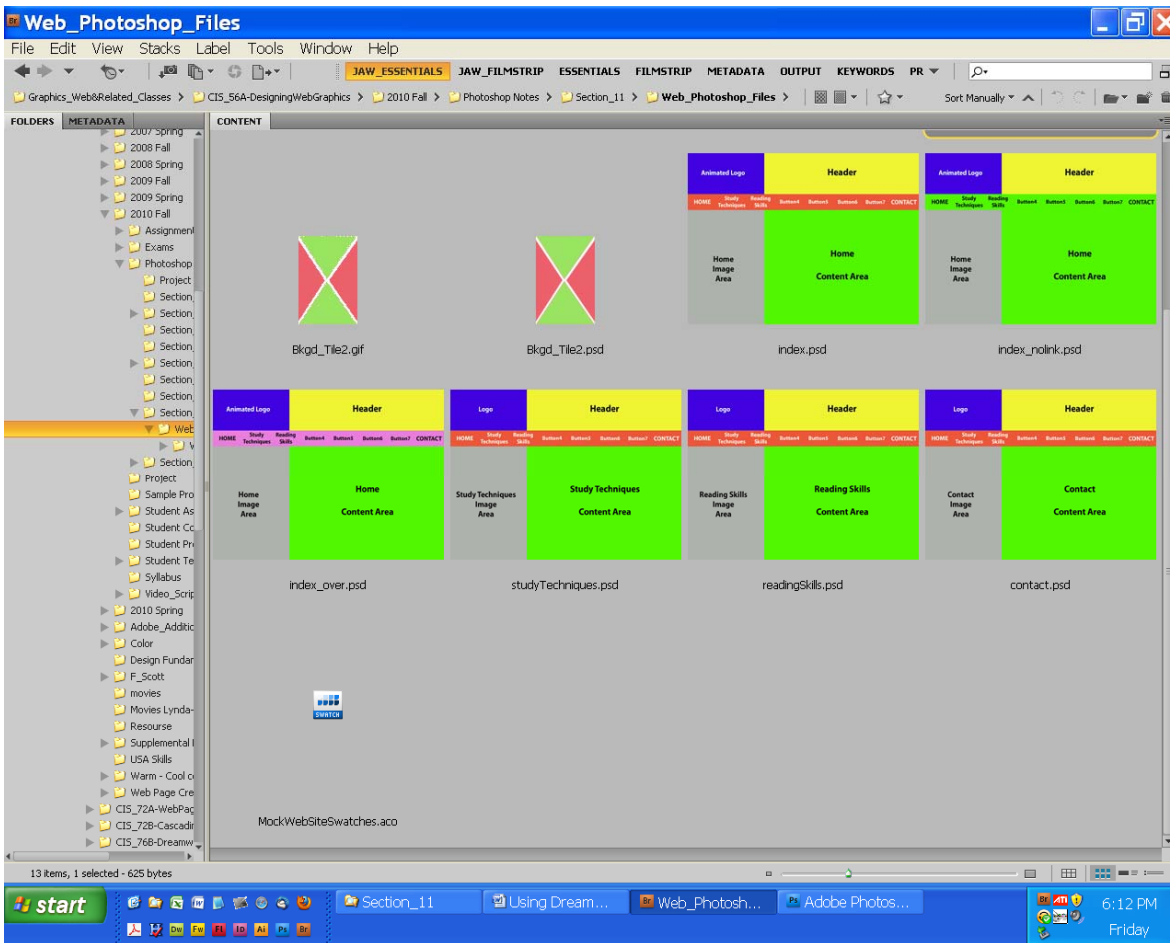


In the “Save as type:” box select the “HTML and Images(\*.html), in the “Settings:” box select the “Default Settings”, and in the “Slices:” box select the “All Slices”. Choose the “Save” button to complete the HTML page creation. Reopen the index\_over.psd file and turn on the over state graphics section in the layer’s palette and then turn off the regular state graphics section. Next, rename the button slices by adding the phrase “\_over” to each button name. Now, select the “Save for Web & Devices...” command to open the “Save for Web & Devices...” window. In this window select only the button states and select the Save button. In the Save window, choose the same settings shown in illustration below.

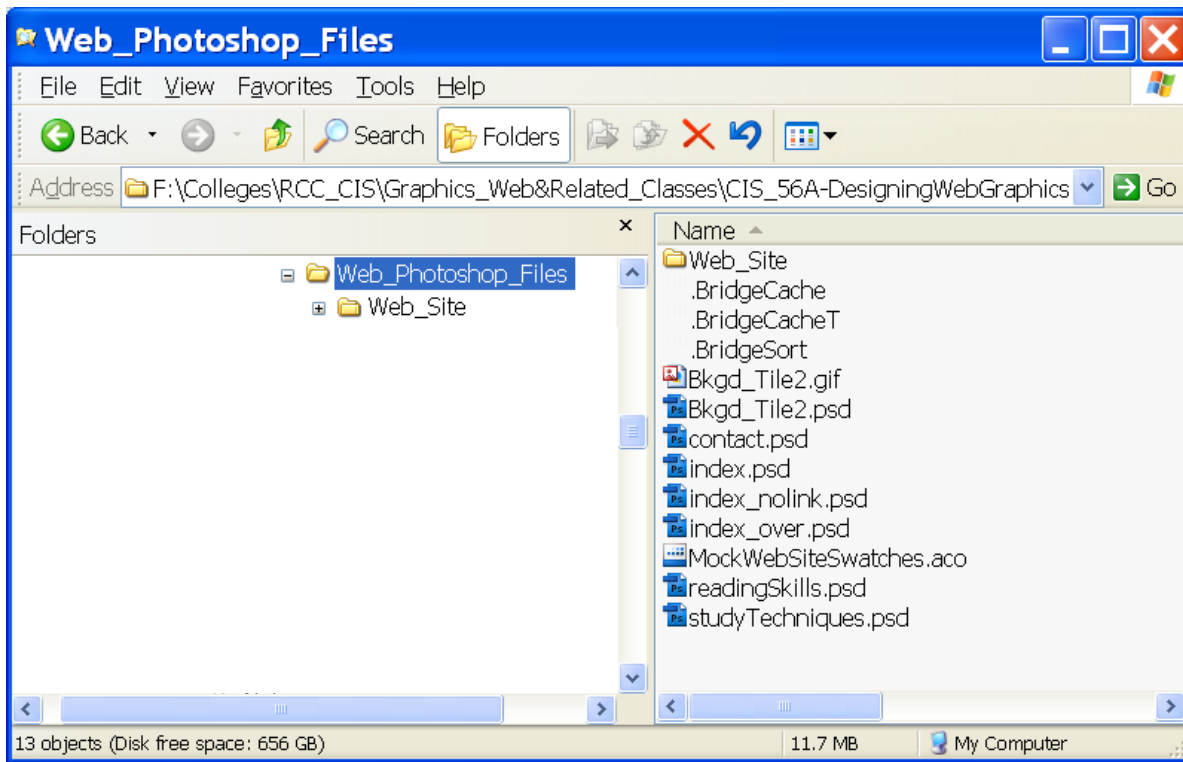


When you have finished the content design for the studyTechnique.psd, readingSkills.psd and contact.psd files, make sure that you rename the content area appropriately for all three files as well as change the name of the animated\_logo slice area to logo. The logo area is animated in the home page only. In the studyTechniques page, readingSkills page and the contact page, the logo area only has one frame without animation in the animation panel. If you modify the image area to the left of the content area, make sure that you rename that specific slice. In a similar manner, rename the header slice, if it changes from that in the home page. Now repeat the above “Save as Web & Devices...” steps that were done for the index.psd file. When the Replace image window comes up

in the Save step for Web page creation for these three files, deselect the check marks for the button images that already exist from the creation of the index web page as shown below. Then select the replace button to create your studyTechnique page. Similarly, do the same for the readingSkills page and the contact page. When you display your Web\_Photoshop files folder in Bridge, you will see the following nine files as shown below. The first two files are the external background tile for your web site. This background tile is used for display outside of the physical page size on client monitors using higher resolutions. The next three files are the index page for the three different button states associated with the Web page button navigation. These are for the regular button state, the rollover button state and the No Link state. Then the next three files are the three remaining web pages for this web site. The last file is your color Swatch file containing all colors used including those for all type with its color.



The same Web\_Photoshop\_Files folder displayed in Windows Explorer.



The files for your Web site are shown in Windows Explorer for both the Web\_site folder and the images folder.

