

THE INS AND OUTS OF WEBCOMICS



BY JEY PAWLIK

WHAT IS A WEBCOMIC?



A WEBCOMIC IS A COMIC THAT YOU SELF-PUBLISH ONLINE TO YOUR OWN WEBSITE, A HOSTING SITE, OR OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA SITES. THEY ARE USUALLY FREE TO READ AND DON'T TAKE A LOT OF RESOURCES TO CREATE.

THERE'S NO SET STYLE OR GENRE IN WEBCOMICS SO THERE'S INFINITE POSSIBILITIES ON WHAT KIND OF STORY A CREATOR CAN TELL.



WEBCOMICS CAN BE MADE WITH MINIMAL RESOURCES. WHAT YOU USE IS UP TO YOU AND YOUR COMFORT LEVEL. ONE TOOL IS NOT INHERENTLY BETTER THAN THE OTHER, SO IT JUST COMES DOWN TO PREFERENCE. HERE'S SOME TOOLS CREATORS MIGHT USE.



TRADITIONAL ARTISTS USE PENCILS, PENS, INK AND COMIC PAPER TO DRAW THEIR PAGES.

- ✦ TACTILE FEEL
- ✦ SCREENLESS DISPLAY
- ✦ WHOLE COMIC VIEW

- CAN BE MESSY
- TOOLS MIGHT NOT MIX WELL TOGETHER
- ADDED SCANNING AND CLEAN-UP



DIGITAL ARTISTS USE TABLETS, COMPUTERS AND ART PROGRAMS TO MAKE THEIR COMICS.

- ✦ INFINITE AMOUNT OF TOOLS/BRUSHES
- ✦ NO MESS, NO SCANNING, NO CLEAN-UP
- ✦ SHORTCUTS & GUIDES SPEED UP THE PROCESS

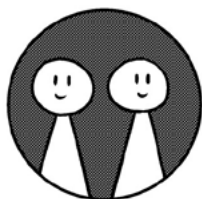
- EYE STRAIN FROM SCREEN TIME
- NOT AS PORTABLE
- GLASS SCREENS CAN BE TOO SLIPPERY



STORY



THERE ARE A FEW DIFFERENT WAYS YOU CAN BE THE ARTIST FOR A COMIC, EACH WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF WRITING AND WORKLOADS. HERE'S SOME EXAMPLES:



CO-AUTHOR COLLAB

- CREATING THE STORY BOTH YOU AND YOUR CO-AUTHOR WANT TO MAKE
- SHARED RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK LOAD
- BOUNCING IDEAS OFF ONE ANOTHER



CLIENT WORK

- A WRITER COMMISSIONS YOU TO DRAW THE STORY THEY WANT TO MAKE
- NOT A LOT OF FREEDOM
- GOOD PRACTICE FOR FIGURING OUT YOUR OWN COMIC MAKING PROCESS



DO IT YOURSELF

- YOU HAVE COMPLETE FREEDOM
- YOU HAVE TO WRITE, THUMBNAIL, SCRIPT, SKETCH, INK, CLEAN-UP/COLOUR, PROMOTE, PRINT ALL BY YOURSELF



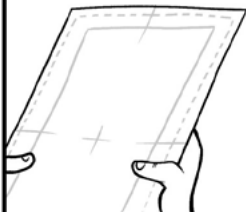
TIP: ALWAYS BE SURE YOU'RE GETTING PAID ACCORDINGLY IF YOU'RE WORKING FOR OR WITH SOMEONE ELSE. WRITE UP OR ASK FOR A CONTRACT AND ENSURE YOU'RE GETTING FAIRLY COMPENSATED FOR YOUR WORK

SETUP

FIRSTLY, YOU HAVE TO THINK ABOUT WHERE YOU'RE GOING TO POST YOUR PAGES. WILL IT BE ON YOUR OWN WEBSITE OR ON A HOSTING SITE LIKE TAPAS.JO OR WEBTOONS? ARE YOU GOING TO BE PRINTING IT AFTER SPENDING A FEW YEARS WORKING ON IT?



6X9" IS THE MOST COMMON SIZE FOR GRAPHIC NOVELS AND A GOOD STARTING POINT FOR A SIZE. YOU CAN BUY COMIC PAPER WITH TEMPLATES ON IT, MAKE YOUR OWN, OR USE GUIDES ON PHOTOSHOP OR CLIP STUDIO PAINT.

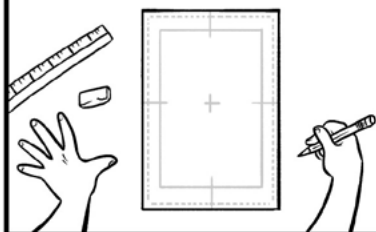


EVEN IF YOU DON'T THINK YOU'RE GOING TO PRINT, IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO WORK IN PRINT SIZES AND THEN SCALE YOUR PAGES DOWN FOR WEB VIEWING.

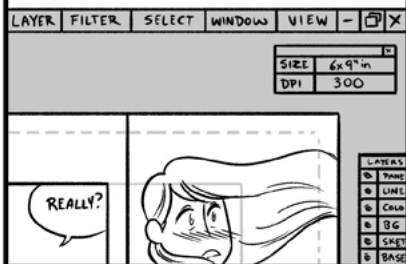
6x9" @ 300 dpi

900px
x 1350px
@ 72 dpi

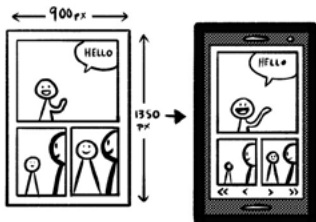
SCAN OR START YOUR PAGES AT 6X9 AND 300DPI (DOTS PER INCH - THIS IS HOW MUCH INFORMATION WILL FIT IN AN IMAGE) OR WORK BIGGER (*MORE INFO ON PG9).



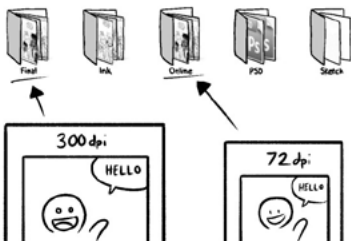
COMPLETE THE ART, LETTERING AND COLOURING IN THIS SIZE.



RESIZE YOUR IMAGE TO 900 BY 1350 PIXELS AND 72DPI TO POST IN ONLINE (THIS WILL ENSURE IT'S NOT TOO BIG FOR COMPUTER AND MOBILE SCREENS).



SAVE YOUR LARGE PAGES AND ONLINE PAGES SEPARATELY IN THEIR OWN FOLDER.

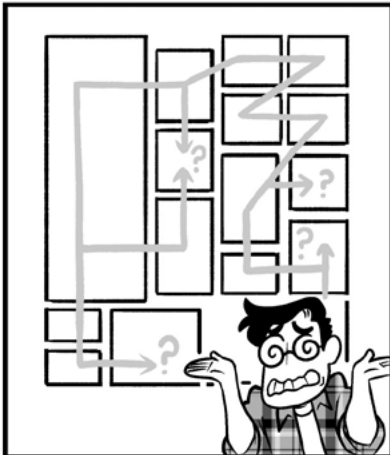


TIP: STAY ORGANIZED AND YOU'LL SAVE YOURSELF A LOT OF TIME LATER ON IF YOU DO DECIDE TO PRINT

PANELS

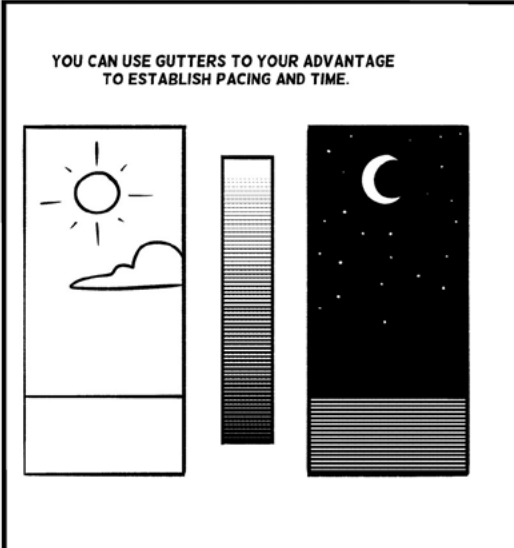
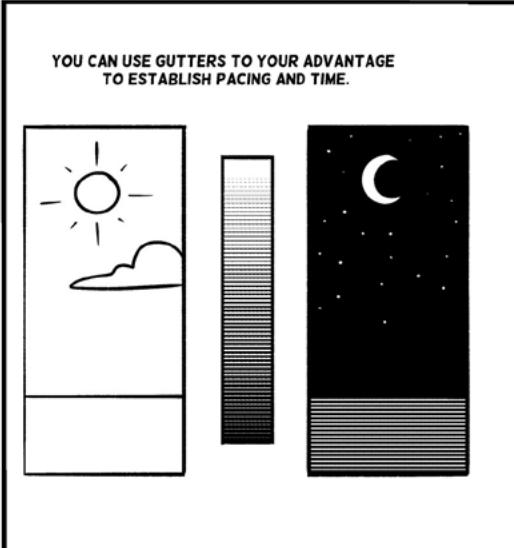


SIMPLE LAYOUTS ARE EASIER TO READ THAN COMPLEX ONES. DON'T MAKE READING A CHORE.



YOU CAN USE GUTTERS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE
TO ESTABLISH PACING AND TIME.

The diagram illustrates how gutters (the spaces between comic panels) can be used to establish pacing and time. It shows three vertical panels. The first panel on the left contains a sun and a cloud. The middle panel is a narrow vertical strip with a gradient from light to dark. The third panel on the right contains a crescent moon and stars. The gutter between the first and second panels is wide, while the gutter between the second and third panels is narrow, indicating a change in time or pacing.



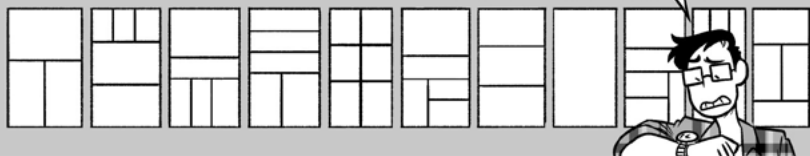
ART



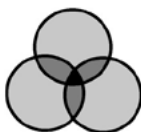
ART!



THIS IS THE GOOD STUFF,
BUT HOW GOOD DOES IT NEED TO BE?
YOU CAN BE AS SIMPLE OR DETAILED AS YOU'D LIKE BUT
KNOW HOW LONG A PAGE TAKES YOU TO DO BEFORE
YOU DECIDE TO DRAW A 500 PAGE EPIC.



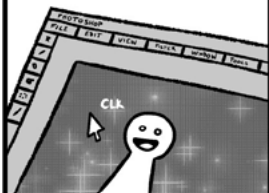
TIME YOURSELF
AND THINK OF YOUR
TIMELINE. IF YOU
ENJOY SPENDING
A LOT OF TIME ON
DETAIL THEN START
WITH A SHORTER STORY.



WILL IT BE IN B&W
OR COLOUR? DOES
COLOUR ADD ANYTHING?
COLOUR DOESN'T MEAN
IT'S A BETTER COMIC.
B&W CAN SAVE
YOU A LOT OF TIME.



WORK SMARTER
NOT HARDER. USE
TOOLS TO YOUR
ADVANTAGE. YOU
CAN SAVE A LOT OF
STRAIN AND TIME BY
USING SHORTCUTS,
SPECIALITY BRUSHES,
AND FILTERS.



DIALOGUE



COMICS ARE ART AND WORDS WORKING TOGETHER TO CREATE STORIES.
DIALOGUE MATTERS JUST AS MUCH AS THE ART DOES.

USE NEAT AND TIDY BUBBLES, YOU DON'T WANT TO MAKE THIS A CHORE FOR YOUR READERS.



Neat and tidy bubbles!



NEAT AND TIDY BUBBLES!



YOU CAN USE WEIRD BUBBLES TO YOUR ADVANTAGE. EXPERIMENT, BUT MAKE SURE IT'S STILL EASY TO READ.

WEIRD.

WEIRD...

WEIRD!!!

weird...

SO THERE I WAS, SO YOUNG AND FREE AND FULL OF JOY AND HAPPINESS AS SCHOOL WAS OUT FOR THE SUMMER. I COULD FEEL THE SUN ON MY SKIN AND THE WIND IN MY HAIR AS I SHOULDED WITH GLEE WHILE RUNNING THROUGH THE FIELDS THAT SCHOOL WAS DONE FOR THE YEAR AND HOW HAPPY I WAS TO BE FREE OF IT FOR A WHOLE SUMMER. I RAN PASSED FLOWERS BLOOMING THROUGH THE FIELD AND THE SUN ON MY SKIN FELT SO GOOD. I WAS OVERJOYED. THE SKY WAS CLEAR AND ONLY A FEW WHITE, PUFFY CLOUDS COULD BE SEEN FAR IN THE DISTANCE AND I WANTED TO RUN TO THEM. I FELT LIKE I COULD RUN FOREVER AWAY FROM THAT SCHOOL. I WOULD RUN UNTIL I COULD NO LONGER RUN ANY MORE, BUT IT WAS FINE BECAUSE I WAS DONE SCHOOL FOR THE SUMMER. AS I RAN I THREW MY TEST PAGES AROUND ME WITH NOT A CARE IN THE WORLD, EVEN AFTER FINDING OUT I GOT PERFECT SCORES ON ALL OF THEM. NOTHING ELSE MATTERED BESIDES MY FREEDOM FROM SCHOOL FOR THE ENTIRE SUMMER. THREE MONTHS OF FREEDOM!



DON'T OVERLOAD YOUR PAGE WITH WORDS. 200 MAX. YOUR ART WILL BE PUSHED ASIDE IF THERE'S TOO MUCH DIALOGUE. TRY SHOWING INSTEAD OF TELLING.



FREEDOM!



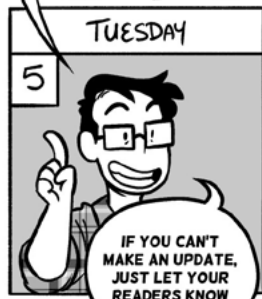
POSTING & PROMOTION



POSTING A WEBCOMIC ONLINE IS THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF A WEBCOMIC. YOU CAN POST YOUR COMIC ON YOUR OWN WEBSITE, OR ANY NUMBER OF HOSTING SITES.



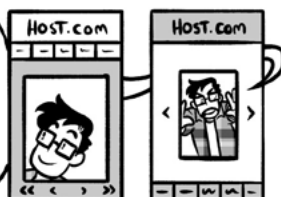
SET UP A COMIC UPDATE DAY. THIS IS WHERE YOU HAVE A SPECIFIC DAY OF THE WEEK THAT YOU POST YOUR PAGE UP. KEEP IT CONSISTENT SO YOUR READERS CAN ANTICIPATE UPDATES.



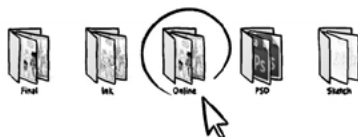
HAVING YOUR OWN WEBSITE GIVES YOU FULL CONTROL OVER THE LOOK, HOW THE PAGES ARE PLACED, AND WHERE ADS ARE. THE SITE IS OWNED BY YOU SO YOU WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ANY DRASTIC CHANGES WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT.



HOSTING SITES LET YOU POST YOUR COMIC FOR FREE, THERE'S A BUILT IN AUDIENCE, AND YOU CAN EARN AD REVENUE. THE DOWNSIDE TO THESE SITES ARE: THEY CAN GO UNDER, CHANGE THE USER INTERFACE, OR BE BOUGHT OUT OVER NIGHT WITH LITTLE OR NO FEEDBACK FROM YOU, THE CREATOR.

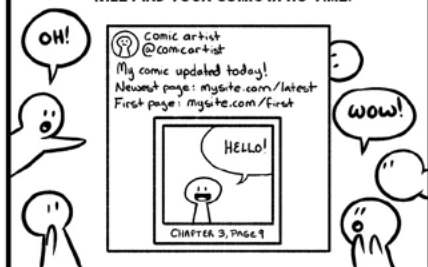


REMEMBER YOUR FOLDER WITH YOUR PAGES AT 900PX WIDE AND 72DPI? THOSE ARE THE PAGES YOU'LL WANT TO POST UP ONLINE ON YOUR UPDATE DAY.



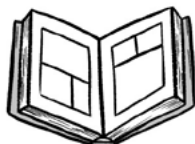
MAKE SURE YOU'RE POSTING YOUR 72DPI PAGES AND NOT YOUR 300DPI PAGES!

THE LAST STEP IS TO TELL YOUR READERS WHEN YOUR PAGE IS UP. POST A PREVIEW OF THE PAGE ON SOCIAL MEDIA LIKE TWITTER AND INSTAGRAM WITH LINKS TO YOUR WEBSITE OR HOSTING SITE. POST REGULARLY AND PEOPLE WILL FIND YOUR COMIC IN NO TIME!



PRINTING

IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE YOUR PAGES PRINT READY FROM THE START, THIS WILL SAVE YOU A LOT OF TIME DOWN THE ROAD.



THIS IS WHERE YOUR 300DPI OR LARGER PAGES COME IN TO PLAY.

B&W PAGES SHOULD BE 600DPI. COLOUR PAGES SHOULD BE 300-400DPI

IT'S JUST HARD TO GET USED TO CALLING YOU JEY.

DPI (DOTS PER INCH) IS HOW MUCH INFORMATION WILL FIT IN YOUR IMAGE.

600DPI

72DPI

WHAT IF REINTRODUCE MYSELF?

HI, MY NAME IS JEY AND I USE THEY/THEM PRONOUNS.

NICE TO MEET YOU!

COLOUR MODES NEED TO BE CHANGED DEPENDING ON IF YOUR POSTING A PAGE ONLINE OR PRINTING. RGB IS FOR IMAGES MEANT TO BE VIEWED ON A WEBSITE. CMYK IS FOR IMAGES THAT ARE BEING PRINTED.

BRING YOUR PAGES INTO A PROGRAM LIKE INDESIGN AND MAKE IT INTO A PDF TO SEND TO YOUR PRINTER. TALK TO YOUR PRINTER ABOUT THE SIZES, LAYOUTS AND BLEED THAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR AND USE THAT AS YOUR GUIDELINE WHEN SETTING UP YOUR .PDF

DID THAT HELP?

ACTUALLY.



TIP: COLOUR IS WAY MORE EXPENSIVE THAN B&W. I SAVED \$300 BY TAKING OUT JUST THREE COLOURED PAGES FROM MY BOOK GENDER SLICES.

RESOURCES

JUST DO IT!



YOU'RE GOOD ENOUGH NOW,
JUST TAKE THE PLUNGE AND
START YOUR COMIC ALREADY!

YOU CAN FIND ME AT

PORTFOLIO: JPAWLK.COM

WEBCOMICS: TOPAZCOMICS.COM

TWITTER/INSTAGRAM: [@JEYPAWLK](https://twitter.com/JEYPAWLK)

EMAIL: JEYPAWLK@GMAIL.COM



PRINTERS

MARQUISBOOK.COM

SUREPRINTANDESIGN.CA

GREKOPRINTING.COM

BIT.LY/TPLBOOKPRINTING



COMIC HOSTING

TAPAS.IO

WEBTOONS.COM

SMACKJEEVES.COM

TUMBLR.COM

MAKE YOUR OWN SITE

WORDPRESS.ORG

SQUARESPACE.COM

WEEBLY.COM

WIX.COM

RESOURCES

CANADACOMICSOL.ORG

CREATORRESOURCE.ORG

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WEB-COMIC.COM

BLAMBOT.COM

BIT.LY/HOWTOSAKANA

SCOTT MCCLLOUD'S BOOKS

"UNDERSTANDING COMICS"

"REINVENTING COMICS"

"MAKING COMICS"

WILL EISNER'S BOOK

"COMICS AND SEQUENTIAL ART"

NAOKI URUSAWA'S DOCUMENTARY
"MANBEN"



paper cat press



THANK YOU FOR READING, I LOOK FORWARD TO READING YOUR COMIC!

The
CANADA
COMICS
OPEN
LIBRARY



TORONTO
 **ARTS**
COUNCIL

FUNDED BY
THE CITY OF
TORONTO