

Sharing Your Map: Export to a PDF or JPG File

Okay – you have created a great map and ArcGIS, saved it as an *.mxd file, and you want to share it with someone else, for example send it to me as an Email attachment for a homework assignment.

Remember

It makes no sense to email me the *.mxd map file! Why?

Because the map file does not contain the underlying data! The map file just tells ArcGIS how to display the underlying data. Furthermore, if you send someone a *.mxd map file, but that person does not have ArcGIS installed on their computer...they cannot even open the file.

Solution

Export your map! ArcGIS allows you to export your map into many different file formats. The two most convenient ones are a) PDF and b) JPG.

- PDF files are great for viewing and printing – and everyone these days has Adobe Acrobat Reader installed on their computers.
- JPG files are even better: you can look at them, but also easily insert them in MS Word documents, MS PowerPoint presentations, or websites.

Here's how you export a map in ArcGIS

1. Select File – Export Map...to open the map export window.
2. Specify the Save in: location.
Always export your map to the appropriate weekly folder or project folder.
3. Specify the file name.
Recommendation: all lower case, no blanks, letters and numbers only.
4. Select the Save as type
Here you have 10 choices. The two most useful file types are PDF or JPG.
Depending on your choice, different Options will be displayed.

For JPG Files

- General Tab: Set Resolution = 150 dpi to give you a good balance between file size and print quality. Remember, the higher the resolution, the better the print quality and the larger the resultant file.
Do not check the Write World File checkbox.
- Format Tab: Keep the default selections.

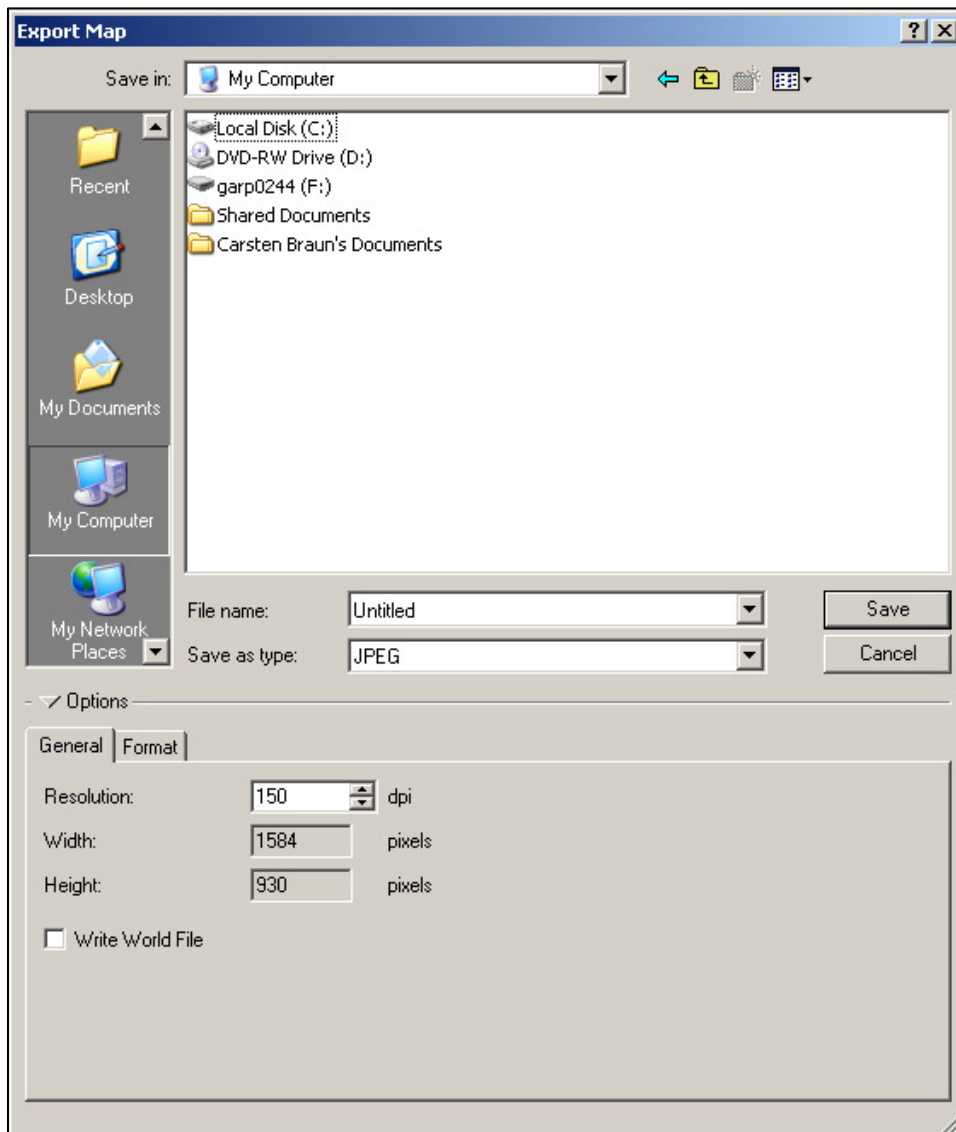
For PDF Files

- General Tab: Set Resolution = 150 dpi for the reasons explained above.
- Format Tab: Keep the default selections.
- Advanced Tab: Keep the default selections.

5. Click the Save button.

➔ *Now you can email the file directly.*

Or, if you exported your map as a JPG file, you can insert it into your homework or project report and email me the entire report with map as a MS Word file.



Screenshot of the Export Map window in ArcGIS

One Final Word

There are many other good ways to share your maps and data which we will explore this semester, for example:

- Zip Archives: Create a zip archive containing your map and your data files.
- ArcGIS Online: Create layer package files and upload them to ArcGIS Online.
- Google Earth: Export your map layers as kml/kmz files for viewing in Google Earth.