

Scan Big - Adjust Scanner Resolution to Create Larger Pictures

a seat of the pants production

One of my earliest jobs was in a toy store chain's warehouse where the owner's mantra was "Handle It Once." As shipments arrived, we sorted the toys as they came off the delivery truck into our trucks or into piles destined to our different stores.

This mantra applies to scanning old family photos.

The more you do to size, crop, restore/color correct and properly save the digital image files as you scan, the more time you will save later.

The first thing I learned from the School of Hard Knocks when I just started scanning was "Scan Big."

If you allow your scanner's software to do what it wants - its default settings - it will create a digital image file that will be the exact size of the photo print. A 3"x3" print file size will be 3"x3". What if you want to crop that image to just the people in the picture and blow it up into an 8"x10" print to hang on the wall. You can't. The result will be an extremely fuzzy print.

All-In-One/Multifunction printer/scanners and flatbed scanners come with software that allows you to adjust and control the scanner and the image files it creates.

The scanning software may have several operational modes like Automatic, Home / Basic, and Advanced / Professional.

Any Scanning mode can work as long as you can control:

- Resolution - Scan Big!
- Filename
- Save Location

There may be additional adjustments you may make in the scan including:

- Target Size / Proportion
- Cropping
- Image correction

All should be adjusted to Handle It Once, but the key adjustment is Resolution, also known as DPI.

To scan anything to the exact size of the original, Resolution is set to 300 dpi - which is your scanner software's default setting.

To increase the size of the digital image, increase the Resolution setting.

If you double Resolution to 600 dpi, you will double the digital image output size.

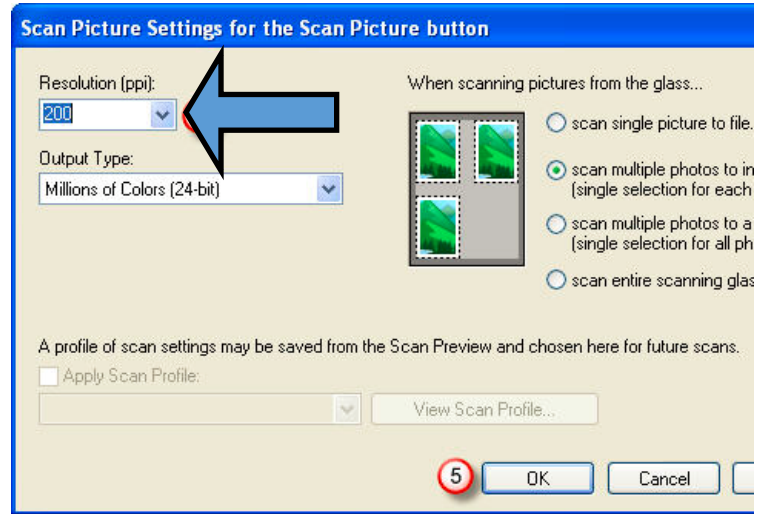
If you triple Resolution to 900 dpi, you will triple the digital image output size.

If you quadruple Resolution to 1200 dpi, you will increase the digital image output size by four times.

For example - if we scan a 3"x3" print at 1200 dpi, you will increase the digital image to 12"x12" - four times the original size.

If your scanning software uses Percentage instead of Resolution to increase the digital image size, 100% is same size, 200% is double, 300% is triple, 400% is four times the size of the original.

	Resolution	Percentage	Final Size
3" x 3"	1200 dpi	400%	12" x 12"
4" x 6"	800 dpi	300%	10.5" x 16"
5" x 7"	600 dpi	200%	10" x 14"

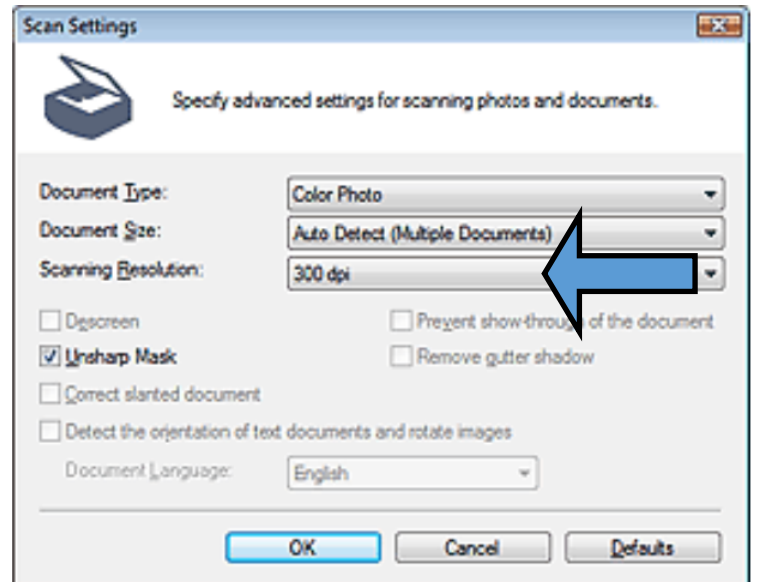
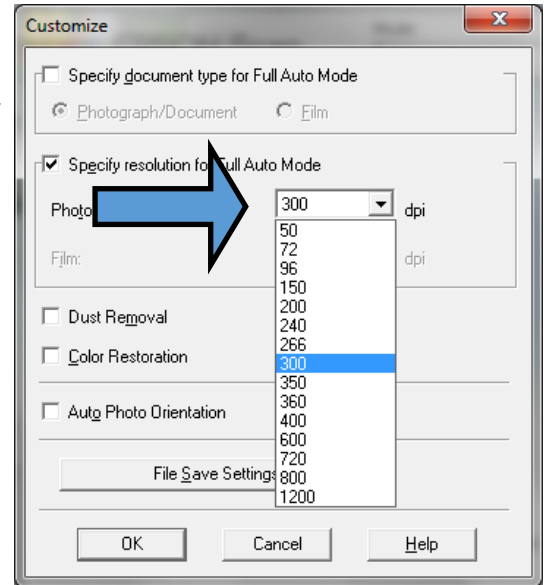


Resolution Settings

HP (top)

Epson (right)

Canon (below)



More Scanning Hints and Tips at ctkruger.com