

# Guidance For Developing App Icons - Publishers

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## The Importance of App Icons

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"A brand is a living entity - and it is enriched or undermined cumulatively over time, the product of a thousand small gestures" - Michael Eisner, Former CEO Disney

You've put many development hours into your App and are ready to submit it to the Autodesk App Store. Now, you want your App to stand out from the crowd and convey the quality that you've invested in your work. One of the best things you can do is to produce a professional looking, appealing and attractive icon.

Your app icon artwork is extremely important and is a contributing factor to your success in the App store. No matter how good your app is—if you don't have an attractive and appealing icon, customers will not be drawn to view and download your app. Icons create a lasting impression and are therefore well worth your investment in creating a unique, eye-catching and memorable icon.

Note: An icon defines a concept – that is what is meant to be eye catching. Icons are pictorial representations --- they are like "shorthand" to convey meaning that users perceive almost instantaneously.

To help you, this document provides guidance for developing your App icon. In this document, you will find:

1. Icon Design Guidelines (Do's and Don'ts)
2. File Requirements (Size, formats)
3. Resources (Templates, getting help designing icons)

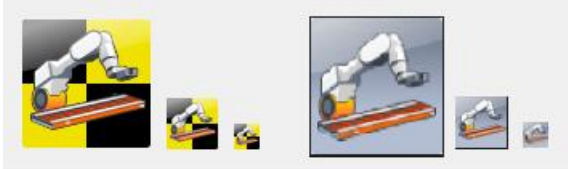
icons and logos are not the same. A "logo" defines a brand of a company. An "icon" defines a concept – that is what is meant to be eye catching. Icons are pictorial representations. They are important not only for aesthetic reasons (visual identity of a program) but also practical reasons --- they are like "shorthand" to convey meaning that users perceive almost instantaneously.

Good icons should be more like road signs than illustrations, easily comprehensible, and not cluttered with extraneous detail.

## Icon Design Guidelines

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As you start planning for your icon, there are some things you should keep in mind. While you have quite a bit of freedom in developing the design for your icons, there is a possibility that your app submission might be delayed (or possibly rejected) if the icon you intend to use is determined to conflict with the guidelines and policies of the Autodesk App Store.



**Good Icon Examples** | These samples are made from vector artwork and scale well. They were made using the Autodesk App Store Icon template file and Autodesk App Store Icon Specifications.

### Please Do:

1. Do research on what icons are available in the store already - especially for any app related to the one you're submitting.
2. Do consult with a design professional if you don't currently have one identified on your team or within your company
3. Do consider how this icon reflects your current company's identity, and how you might be able to develop a "family" of icons if you plan to publish more than one app.
4. Do leverage our resource templates for designing your own icon.
5. Do have fun and be creative!



**Things to Avoid** | The first two examples don't scale well and become unrecognizable at small sizes. The second two infringe Autodesk branding and will certainly cause your App submission to be rejected.

### Please Don't:

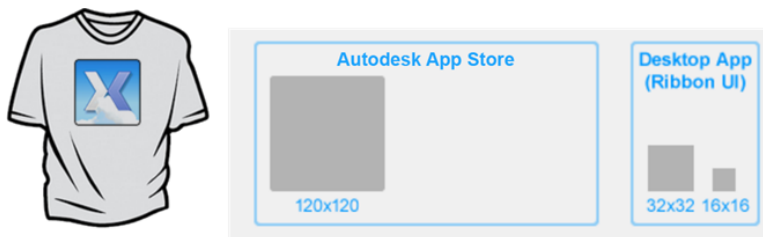
1. Don't use an Autodesk product icon as part of your own icon - this infringes on our brand, and does not help you set yourself apart in Autodesk App Store.
2. Don't use screenshots – trying to cram a screen capture down to a small icon image rarely looks good, and detracts from any impression of quality you may try and convey with your app.
3. Don't use any image, logo or graphic element that you do not have the rights to use.
4. Don't fill your icon with text. An icon is meant to be an image. An icon that is only text gives the impression that no effort or thought was put

into the icon and therefore makes the customer query the quality of the app.

## File Requirements

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In order to develop the best icon to represent your product, it is important to understand how things will look at various sizes, especially small sizes. You may wish to have a large version of your icon for your own marketing purposes, but ultimately the icon must look good at 120x120 pixels all the way down to 16x16 pixels in some cases. It is for these reasons that we strongly suggest you work with a design professional to develop these resources.



**Icon Size** | You may use your icon for marketing and promotion too, so it has to work large and small.

While we use the word, “icon” to describe this graphic element, the file format used online with **Autodesk App Store** is actually “.png” which stands for portable network graphic and not “.ico” which is a traditional icon file format for desktop applications. There is only one file submitted when you publish, and that is a single 120x120 pixel PNG file. This graphic is scaled to various sizes automatically as needed.



**Note** | If your App icon is also used within the interface of AutoCAD, Inventor or Revit, you should be prepared to supply additional sizes of your icon. Have your designer craft additional bitmap (.bmp) files of your app at 32x32 and 16x16 pixels.

## Icon File Standards

Please prepare your icon file according to the following standards:

### *Icon for use online and with Autodesk App Store App Manager:*

1. File format: PNG
2. Color depth: 32-bit (24-bit RGB + 8-bit transparent alpha)
3. Corner radius: 3 px<sup>1</sup>
4. Resolution (in pixels): 120x120
5. Deliver to Autodesk: as part of the app publishing process using the online form
6. Specs: see AutodeskAppStore\_Specs\_Publishers.pdf

### Icon for use within an Autodesk product interface:

1. File format: BMP, PNG and ICO<sup>2</sup>
2. Color depth: 24-bit
3. Corner radius: none
4. Resolution (in pixels): 32x32, 16x16
5. Deliver to Autodesk: as part of your developer files (.zip)
6. Specs: see AutodeskAppStore\_Specs\_Publishers.pdf

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1. Autodesk can provide you with a layered Photoshop file that includes a mask that will create the proper corner radius for you. Please see the “Resources” section for information.
  2. You can use <http://iconverticons.com/> as an easy online tool to create .ico files.

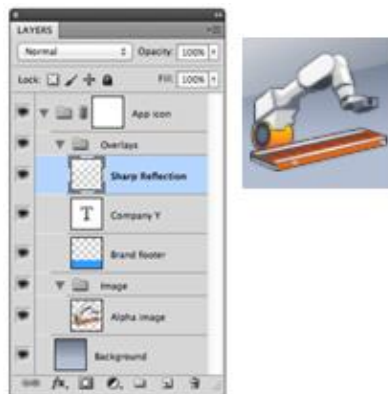
## Resources

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To help you or your designer develop your icon, we've assembled the following resources.

### Icon File Template

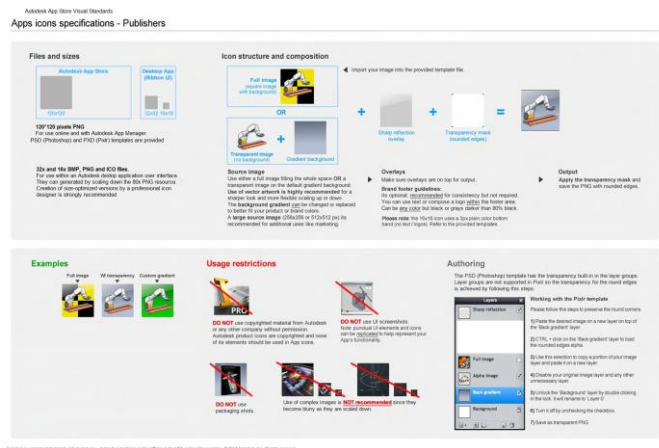
To help you create your App icon, we can provide you with a layered Photoshop or Pixlr (<http://pixlr.com>) file. These files make it easier to develop the 120x120 pixel size icon. We also provide templates for the 32x32 and 16x16 icons.



*IconTemplate\_Publishers.psd | the layered file provides the standard background and mask to create the proper radius on the rounded corners.*

### App Icon Guidelines

Please prepare your icon file according to the following standards:  
The below standards pdf file can be found in the same zip file downloaded.



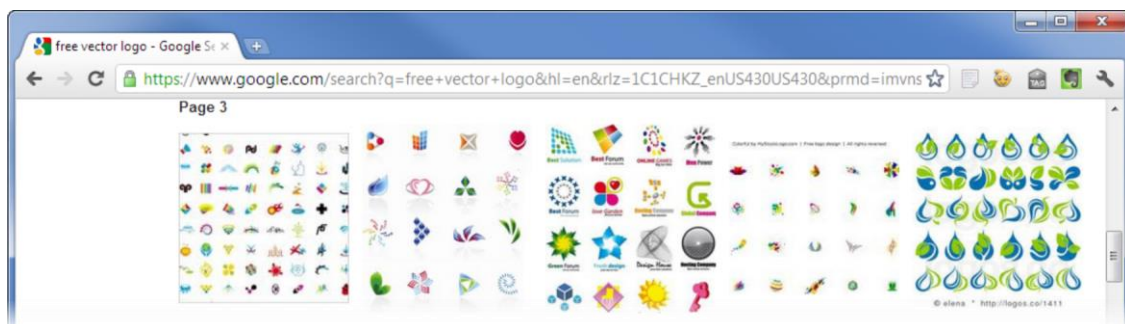
*AppStore\_Specs\_Publishers.pdf | provide your designer with the specs document*

## Professional Icon Design

If you feel that creating the icon for your app is something you'd rather leave to a professional, we recommend that you perform a web search for 'icon design' to find professional icon designers that will help you develop your ideas into professional icons that meet the specifications.

## In Praise of Vector Artwork

While you might be able to create a successful icon using elements from photographs, screen captures or scans, you shouldn't overlook the benefits of designing the icon in a vector art program. Almost every professional icon you see was developed in a vector program using mathematical shapes and gradients that can scale up or down to almost any size without becoming "chunky" or losing resolution.



*Search: Free Vector Icon | an online search for vector icons will provide near-infinite inspiration*

If you decide to create your own icon, we recommend that you perform a web search for 'vector graphics' to find inspiration, or ready-to-use graphics to help compose your icon.