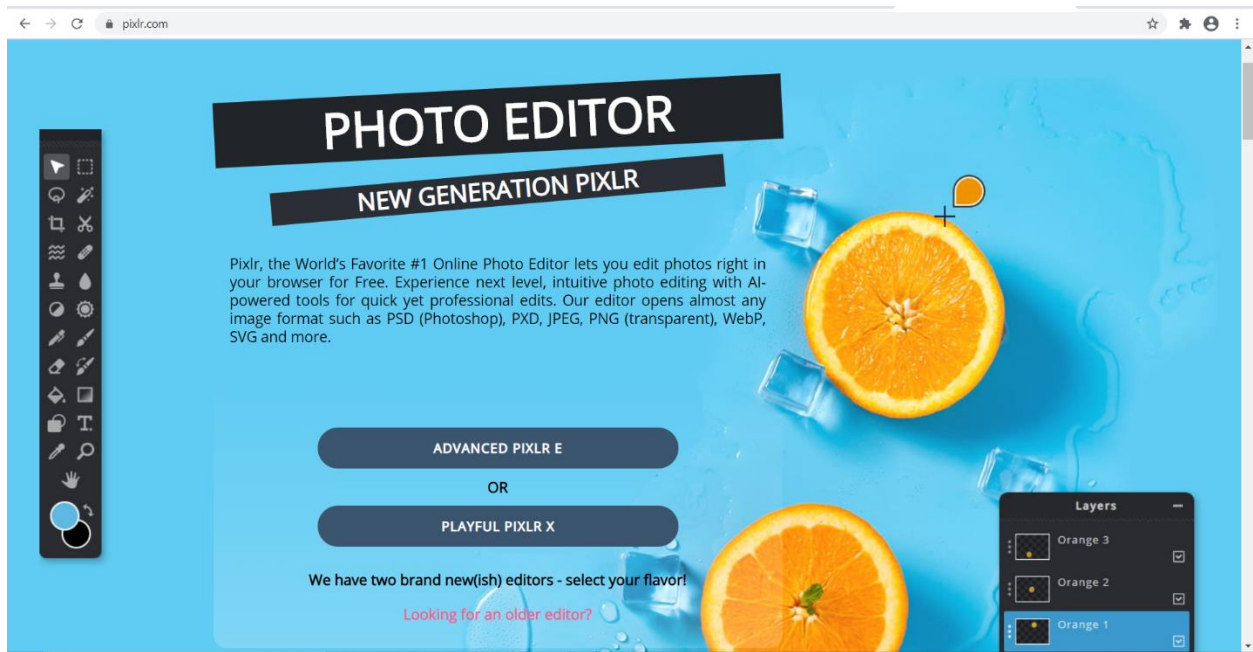# Using PIXLR X

PIXLR offers a group of image editing applications, PIXLR X is their free online editing tool. This tool is more limited in scope than the purchased versions, but it can do most basic image editing.

To get to PIXLR X, use https://pixlr.com/x/

The other two free PIXLR versions: **Editor** and **Express** currently run on Adobe Flash, so you must enable Flash to use the editors. Since January of 2020, Flash is blocked on most internet browsers. PIXLR is developing a new "Editor" version, but it is not yet available. The reasoning behind disabling Adobe Flash is that it is easily exploited and may enable viruses to load to your computer.

Secondly, not all browsers are fully compatible with PIXLR Editor and Express, and the tools on the site may not work correctly. If you do elect to use one of these, Google Chrome is the browser you will need to select to make sure the program runs correctly.

Thirdly, the free versions of Editor and Express run a pane of ads along the side of the screen.
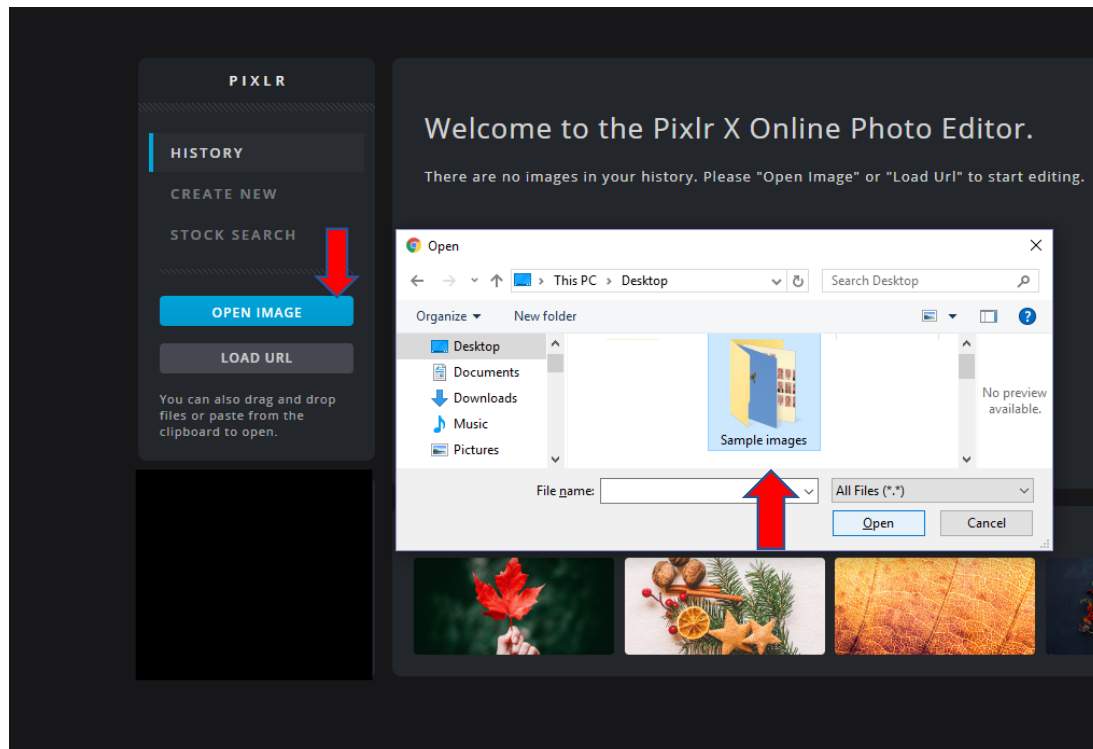
PIXLR Express is in the process of being phased out, and will eventually be replaced by PIXLR X.

To get started with using PIXLR-X:

1.   Go to the Website, https://pixlr.com/x/

      Use the "Open Image" button to open the first file:

I have provided four sample image files for you to use in our exercises today, or you may use your own images.
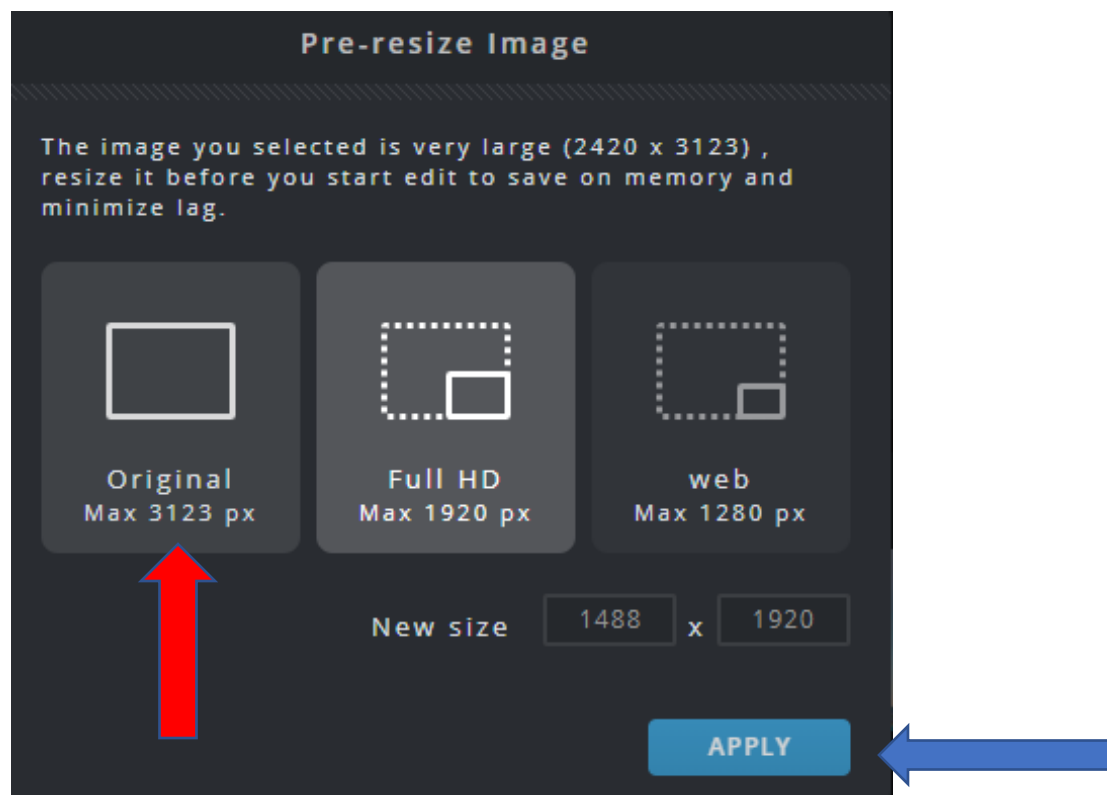

For the first exercise, open the file titled: 1_CropIt

Exercise 1 – Cropping an image

Find image: 1_CropIt in the file "Sample Images" on your desktop, using the "Open Image" button, as shown above.

When you open the image file, Pixlr will ask:

Select the option on the left – "Original" and then click "Apply"

These image size options are here so that you can reduce the size of larger images for use on the internet. Here, we are going to work with the original size.
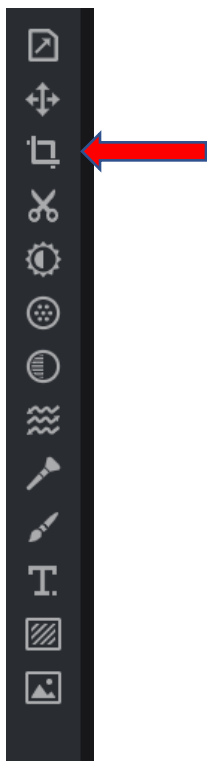
(Why? Because more pixels means there's more to work with when editing.)

The image will open, and you should see:

We are going to use the crop tool to trim the excess and make a more attractive photo.

Click the crop icon on the left edge of the screen:

Clicking the crop icon will place the image in a cropping frame and give you several options at the left edge of the image.

The heavy white lines at the edges of the frame are called "handles"

The corner handles (see red circle) maintain the aspect of two sides of the image, the side handles (see blue circle) crop only the side indicated.

I recommend you crop from the corner handles if you wish to simply crop off a frame around the image.

Use the edge handles to remove one edge or to remove edges unequally.

When you have framed the photo as you wish to crop it, click the "Save" button to complete the crop.
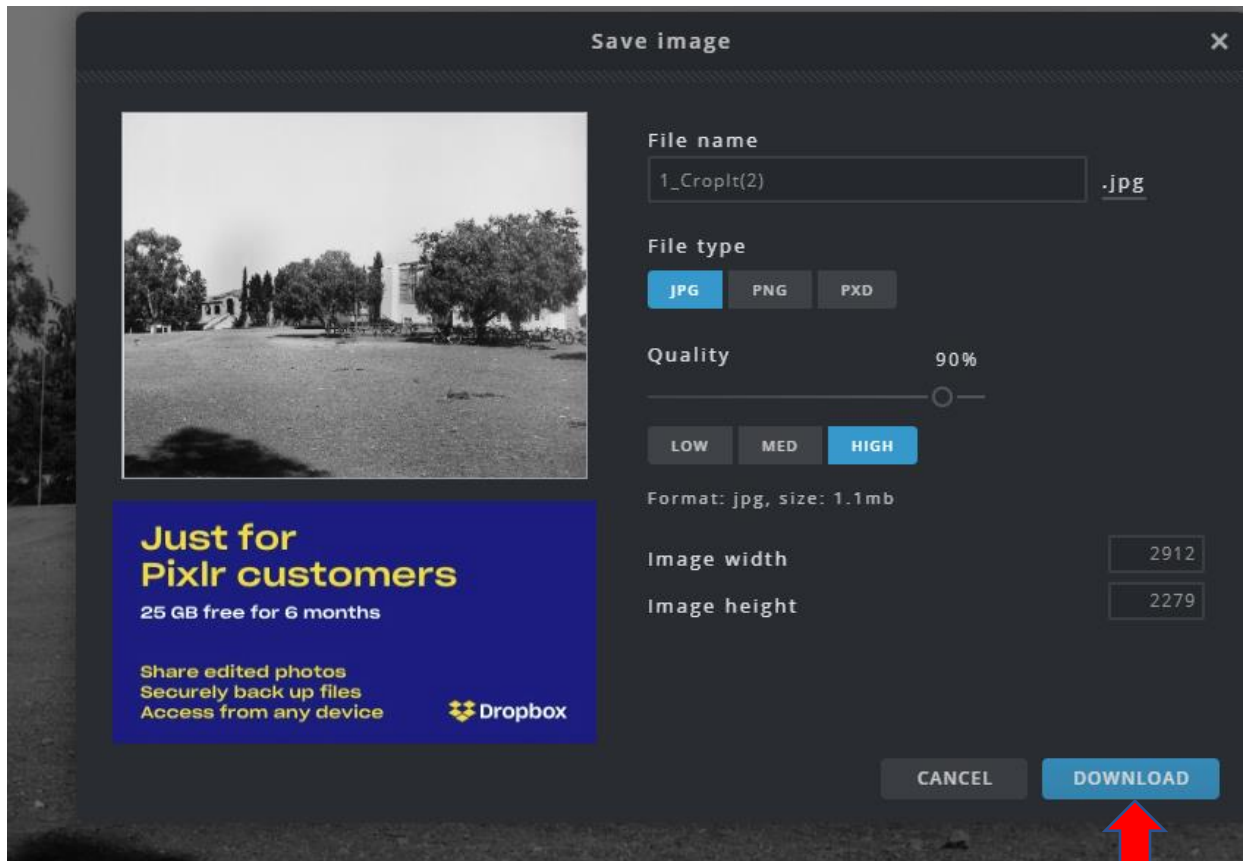
If you do not like the result, you can click "Undo" at the lower edge of the screen, or use the keyboard shortcut (ctrl + z).

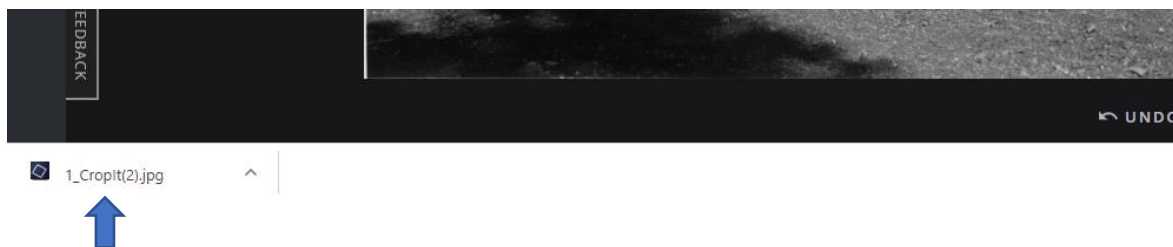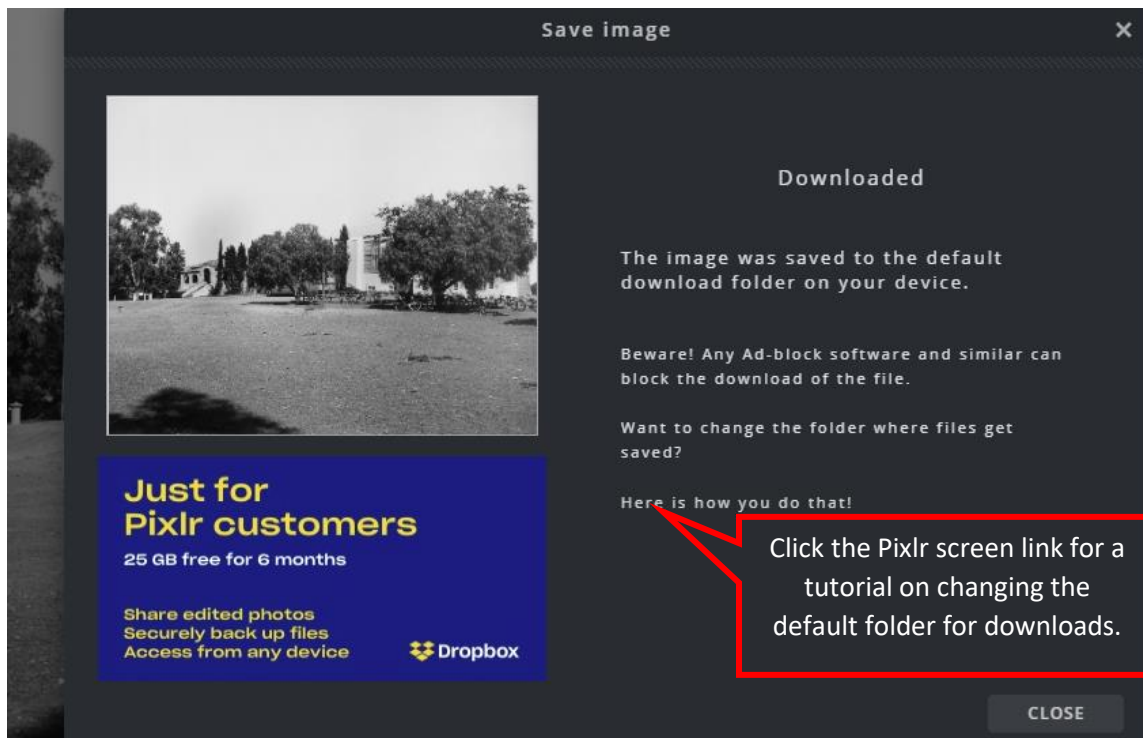If you like your result, you can click the "Save" button to save the item.

When you click "Save" Pixlr will bring up this dialog box, which you can use to download the newly edited image to your computer.

The file name is based on the previous file name, you can re-use or change the name. You can save the file as JPG or PNG, most uses the JPG format is preferable, and will retain more detail. PNG may be used for graphics, especially if you want to use a transparent background. Some internet file uploaders will work better with JPG.

Quality determines how large the file will be, and how pixilated it will look.   High will be the least pixilated, but will be a larger file, that will take longer to load.

Use the Download button to save the new version of the image to your device.

Save image ✕

Downloaded

The image was saved to the default
download folder on your device.

Beware! Any Ad-block software and similar can
block the download of the file.

Want to change the folder where files get
saved?

Here is how you do that!

Just for
Pixlr customers
25 GB free for 6 months

Share edited photos
Securely back up files
Access from any device   ☷ Dropbox

Click the Pixlr screen link for a
tutorial on changing the
default folder for downloads.

CLOSE

1_CropIt(2).jpg   ⌃

After you download, you will see a quick link to the downloaded file on the lower left of
the screen. If you click this link you can edit the location of the file, if it did not go where
you intended. (This is the view using a Chrome browser)

If you are using Firefox, you will see a blue arrow in the upper right of the screen, where you can see downloads.
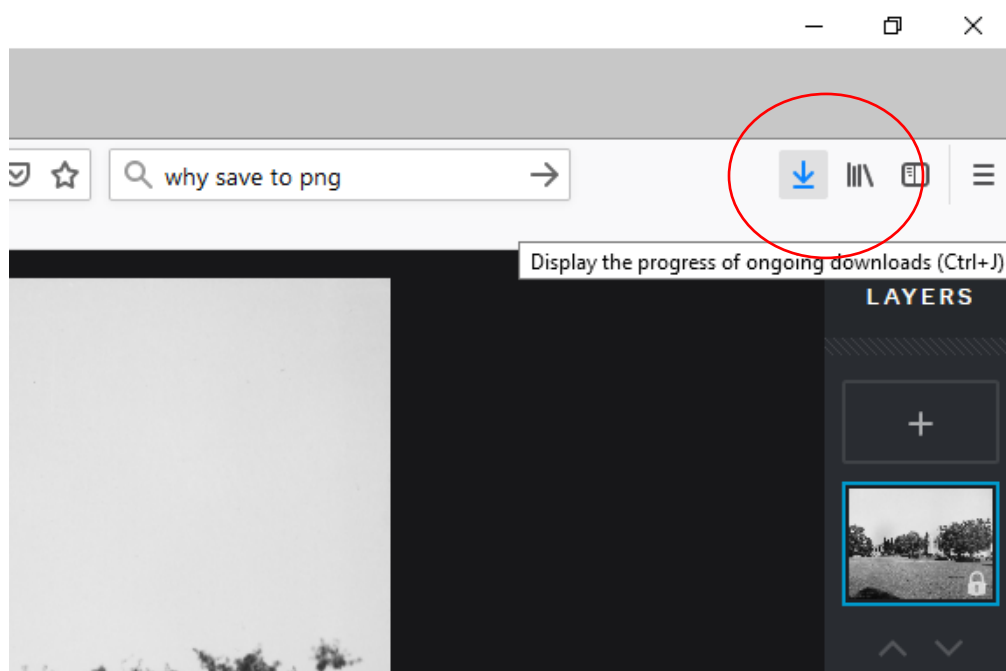

Click the arrow, and you'll see the downloads
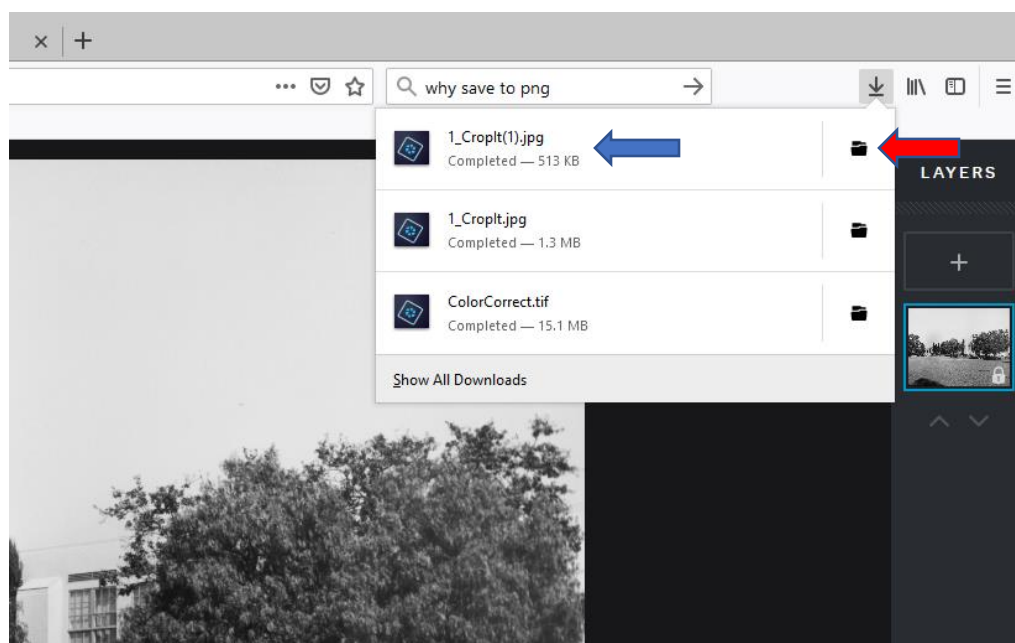
Click on any of the file names (blue arrow), and the image will open in your default photo viewer

Click on any of the file folders (red arrow, to right) and the file directory will open, showing the folder where your file is stored.
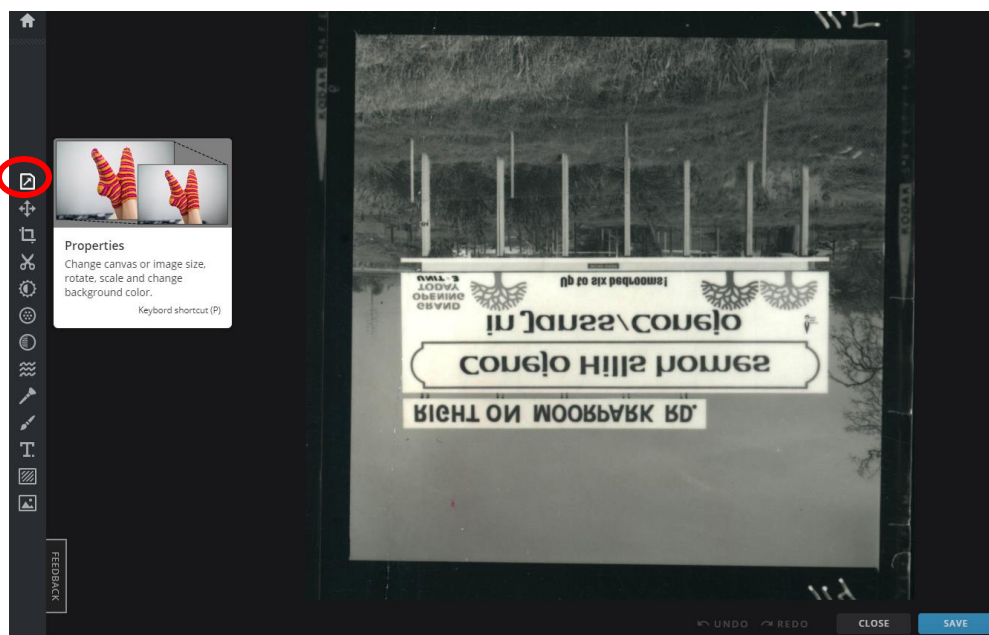
Exercise 2 – Flipping an image

Find image: 2_FlipIt on your desktop, using the "Browse" button, as shown above.
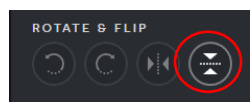
Since you have opened an image previously this session, Pixlr will remember that, and ask:
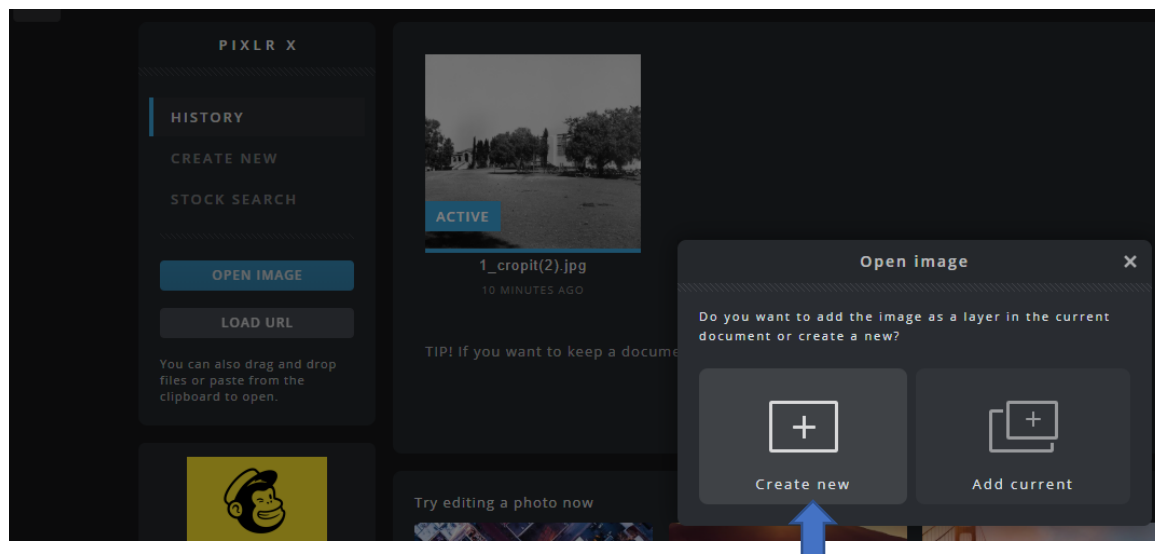
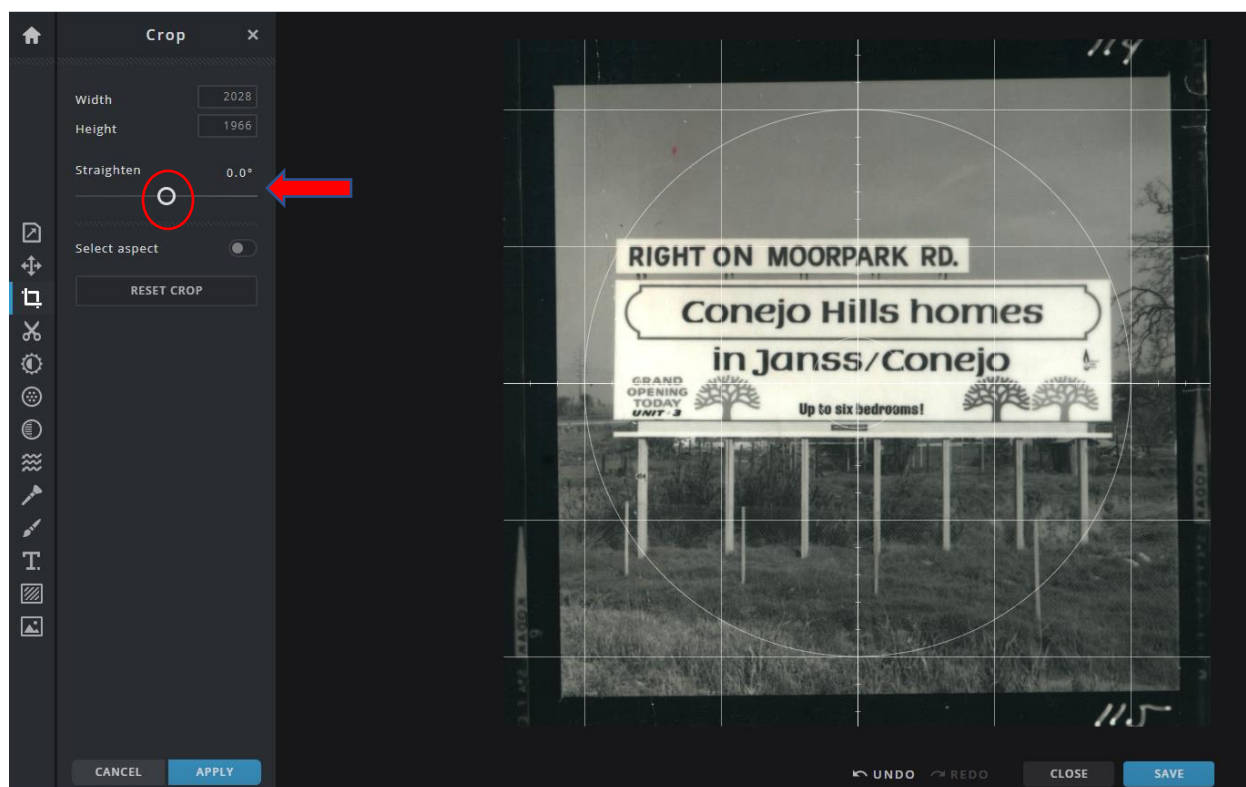Select "Create New" and the image will open, and you should see:

You will start by selecting the Properties tool, and then select "Flip Vertical from the "rotate and flip" menu

With one click the image will now be the correct way up, and the sign is now readable:

You can proceed to use the crop tool from the menu to trim the image as you wish.
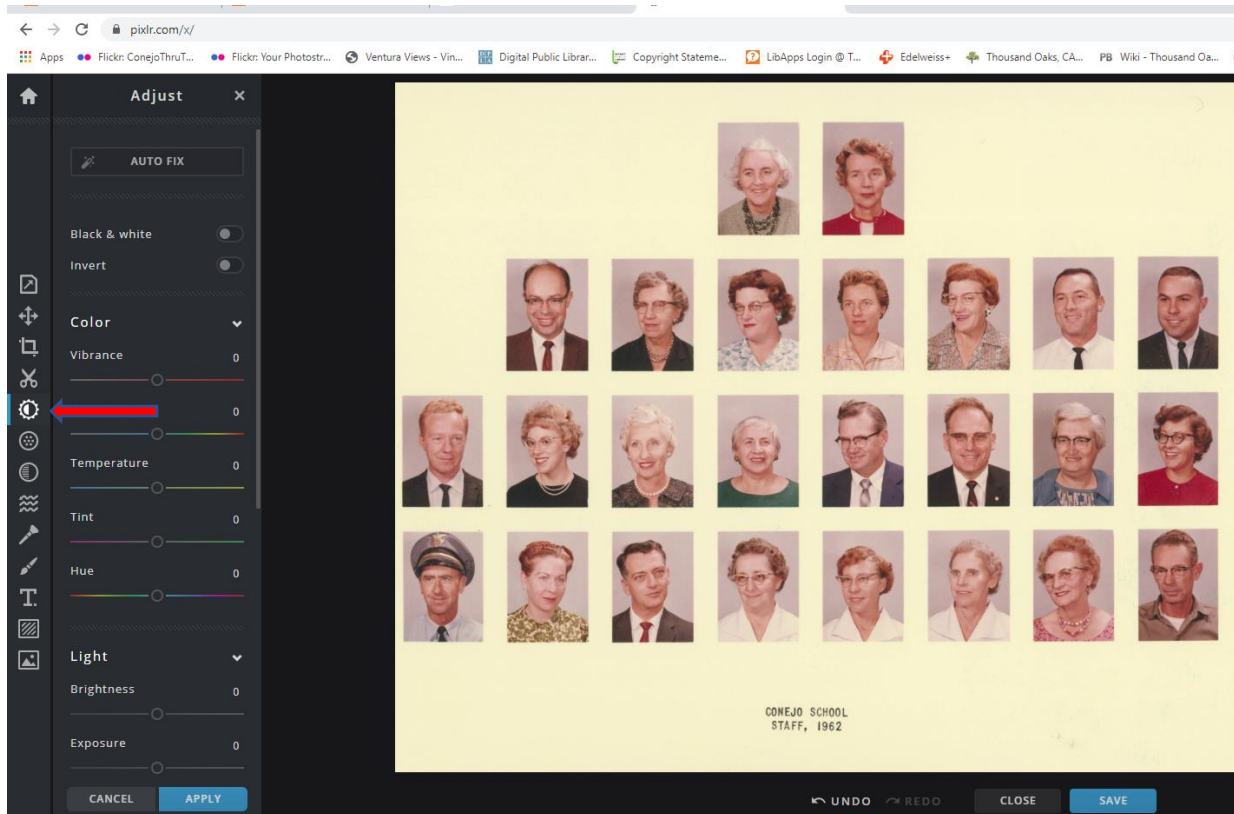

Use the Straighten tool by pulling on the dot (see inside red circle above) to the upper left side, you will get a grid that will help you to make sure the image is also straight.

Exercise 3 – Color Correcting an image

Once you have closed image 2, go back to "Open" and find 3_ColorCorrection on your desktop
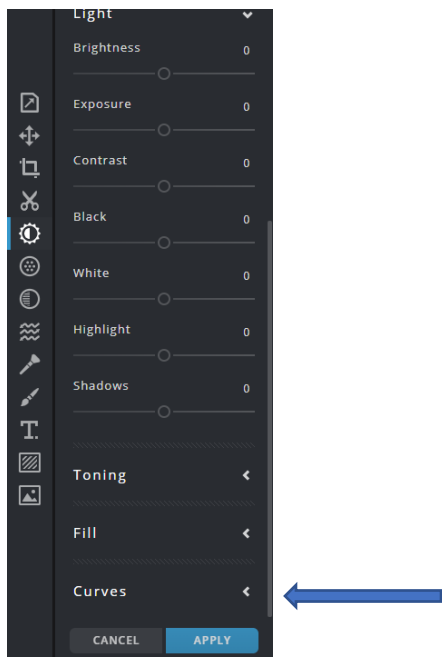
you should see the following image:

You can see the 'white' space of this photo has yellowed significantly.

To get rid of this tone, you Would use the Adjust button ⚙ at the left to change the colors.

If you scroll down the Adjust menu, you will come to the "Curves" option

If you click the arrow next to "Curves" it will open the control panel:

Getting rid of yellowed backgrounds can be tricky, and the curves controller gives you the best way to manage the overall color cast issues.

Yellow is the opposite of blue, so we would use the blue curve to reduce the amount of yellow in the image.

Start by double clicking near the middle of the diagonal line, to add a control point.

You can then use the mouse to click and drag the control point, and change the balance of the blues and yellows in the image.

You can add additional points above and below the middle point, which allow you to adjust colors closer to the blackpoint (lower part of the line) and white point (upper part of the line).

Don't move the points too far, this is a delicate adjustment.
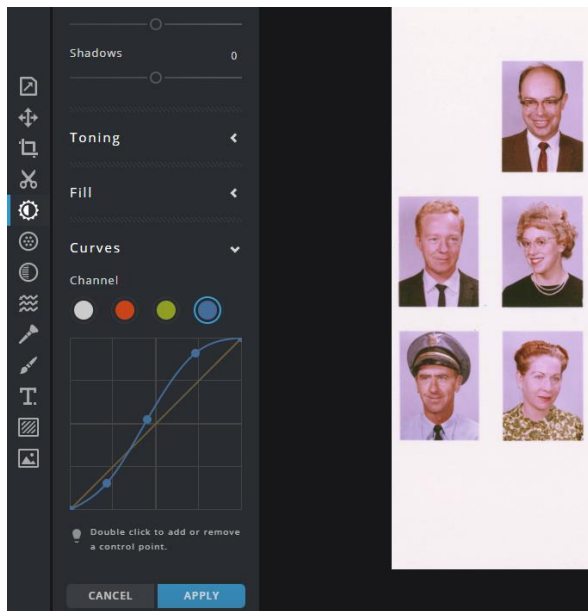
You can see the blue adjustment at these three points removes the excess yellow. The image is now just a little pink, so we can adjust the red point next.
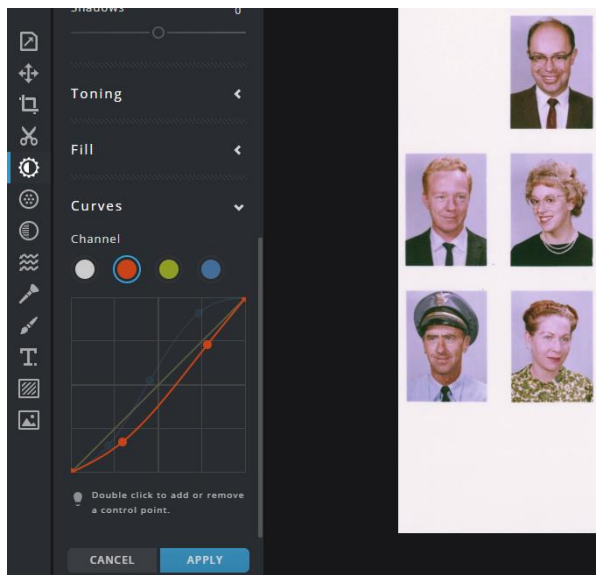
Click on the red channel and then adjust the line a little to pull out the red tones. Now it looks pretty well balanced.

Moving the control point below the line reduces the color of the channel, moving it above the line increases the color. It may take some experimentation to find what works best for a given photo. I suggest you try one option at a time, and use the "Undo" button, or Control Z to reverse the effect if it doesn't work out. Use the "Cancel" option if you want to discard all the color changes and start again.

Exercise 4 – Adding text or captions to an image

Open image: 4_CaptionIt, using the "Open" button, as shown above.
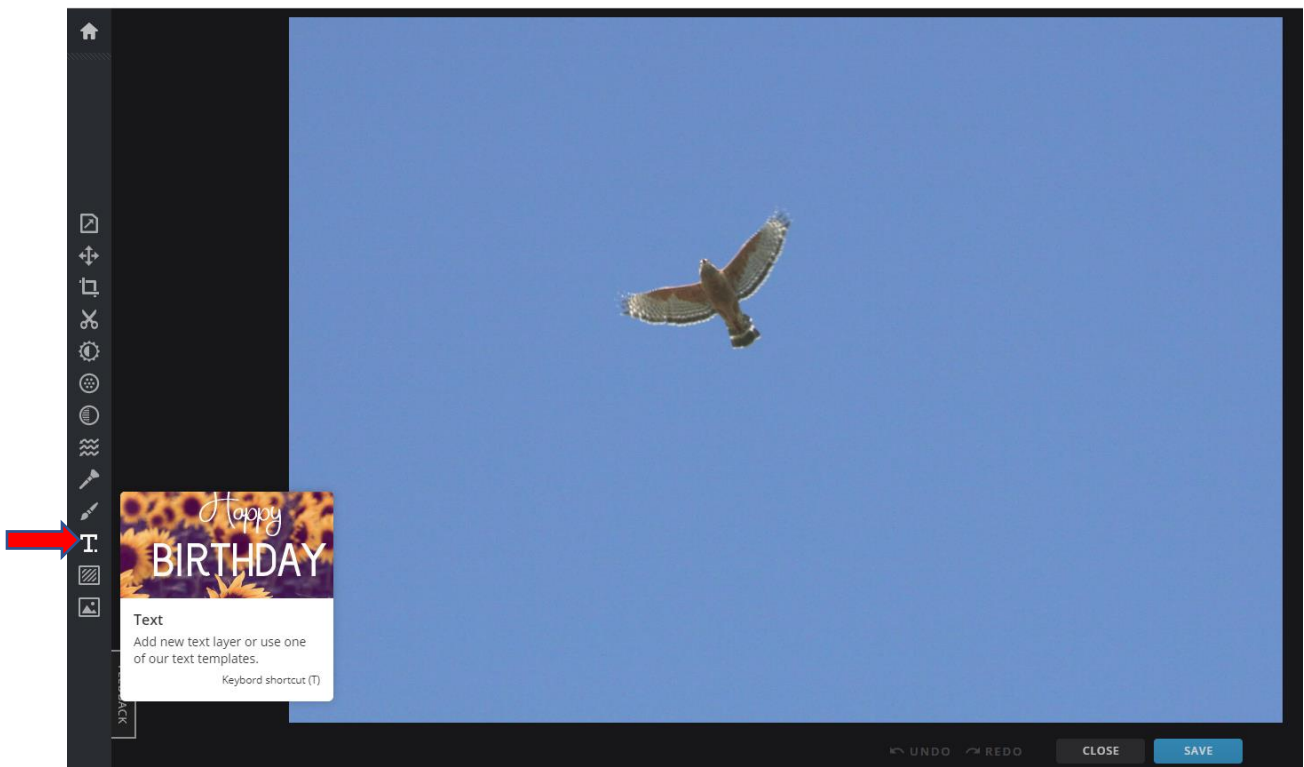
You can add words to an image with the text button,

Click "Add New Text" at the upper left, and a textbox with sample text will be inserted in the image, you can delete this sample text and type in your own words. Use the color and font buttons to make the text appear the style you prefer.

The red arrow points to the text editor – click in this box at the left to edit the text on the image.

The controls below the text box control the color and font, as well as the Align and Case options which allow you to change the alignment (left, right, center, and upper and lower case.)

You can click inside the box on the image to get the four-way arrow, which will allow you to move the box where you want it. The circle at the top of the box (see yellow arrow) allows you to swing the box at an angle to change the orientation.

Note that at the right, you can see the text tool has created a new layer that the text is in. If you switch layers, you can edit the image without editing the text.

More about layers:

In any of the image edit functions you may choose to add a layer. When your image has layers, it may cause the image to be very, very large.

If you select the three dots at the upper left of the "layer" box on the right, you will be able to control your layers:
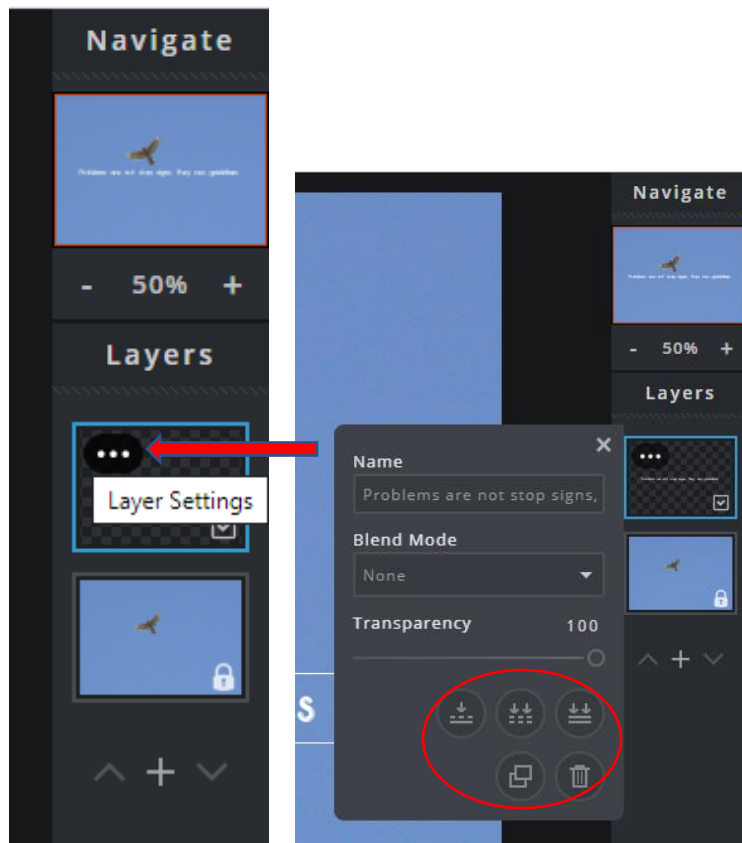
The icons at the lower part of the panel allow you to:

Merge down (when layers are merged they become one layer, and are no longer separately editable)

Merge visible (similarly, this merges down the visible layers)

Flatten image (this locks the layers with the original image, and they are now one merged image with no layers. When you are finished with editing, this is a good option to choose. Be careful, you can't go back…)

Duplicate Layer (makes a duplicate, most often useful if you want to edit out part of an image, without risking the original layer.)

Delete layer (if you decide the text layer, or another edited layer is no good, you can just throw it out without changing the original image – this is one of the very good reasons to edit images by creating duplicate layers!)

Remember to save your work, and when you edit, it is a good practice to change the name of the file to indicate you have a new edited image. This way, you will always have your original if something goes wrong!
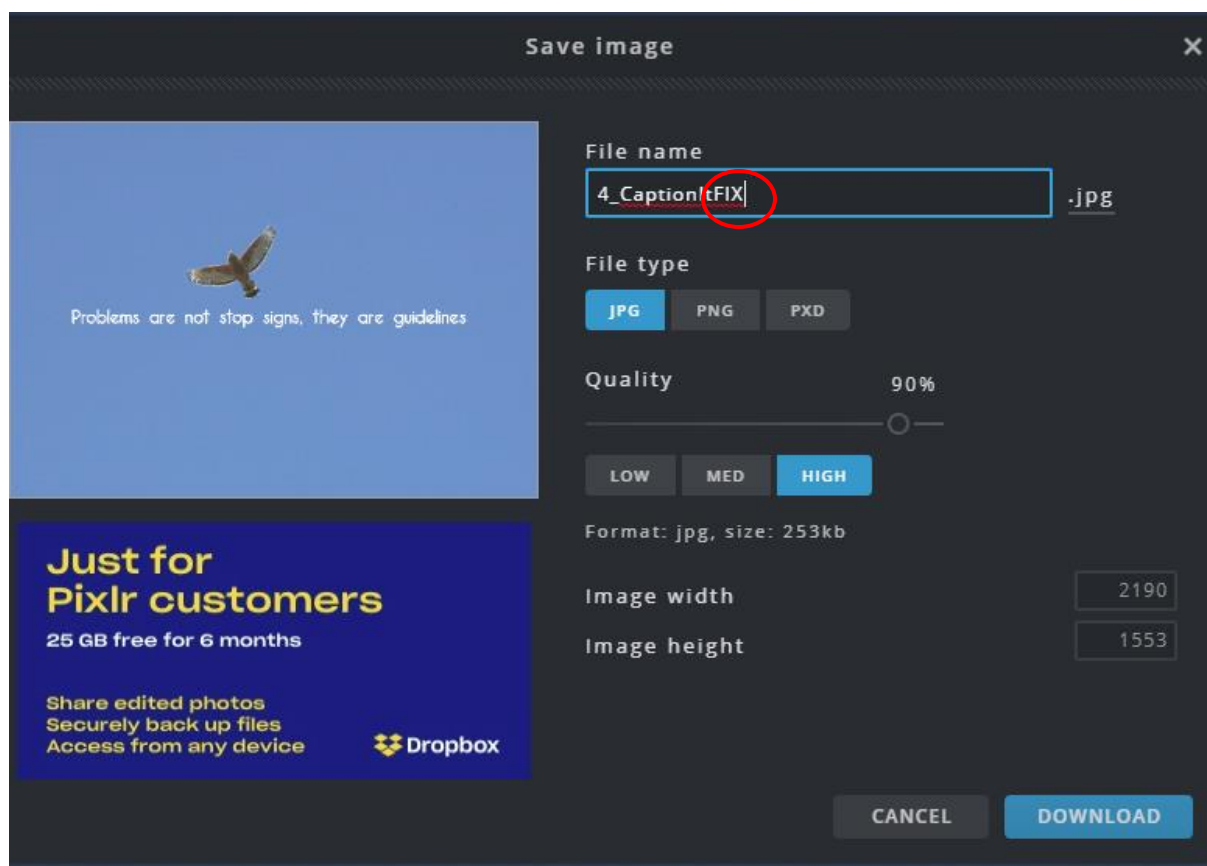
After clicking "Save" I click in the file name box, and add the word "FIX" so I can easily tell which copy of an image is edited.

What to do with my saved images?

When you have images scanned, you may wonder, what is the best way to keep my digital files safe and available?

There are lots of options:

CDs/DVDs – disc storage is an older option, we do not recommend this as a storage medium. Why? Many computers no longer have disc drives to either burn or play back your images. Also, disc technology is not chemically very stable, and is very susceptible to scratching and breaking, even if this doesn't happen the layers of the disc tend to separate and become corroded over time, causing disc rot which is a permanent loss of data.

USB drives – also known as thumb drives, these are nice for portability. USBs are inexpensive, and easily used with most devices that have a USB port. Apple "I" devices can use USBs via an adaptor. They are not good for long-term storage, as they can be dropped, lost, or corrupted. They are also at risk from strong magnetic fields.

Hard drives – can be a great storage media and are stable as a long-term storage solution. If they are in the same place as your computer, though, they may be lost in a disaster such as a fire, flood or earthquake. (Remember, flooding isn't just from the environment, if a pipe bursts or a shower overflows, your electronics may be inundated.)

Cloud drives – inexpensive "cloud" or online storage is increasingly available and provides an excellent way to make sure a copy of your images is safe in the event of a disaster. If you have GMAIL, you have access to Google drive for free. Amazon has an inexpensive cloud storage, as does Apple with its "iCloud" service. Being stored online cloud drives do have potential for hacking, as with ALL online services.

Assess your risks and make the choices that work for you.