Photoshop Pixel Art Animation



Here is a great resource for the settings you will need in Photoshop as you get started. I took some of my information from this tutorial, and just updated the images for this version of Photoshop:

http://www.brandontreb.com/configuring-photoshop-for-pixel-art

Set-up

- 1. First you have to decide the size of your image. This will be much smaller than you are used to working. Some suggested sizes:
- 80x80 pixels for a simple square world.
- 96x54 pixels for an HD-friendly aspect ratio with a modest room for detail.
- 128x72 pixels for an HD-friendly aspect ratio with more room for detail.
- 256X144 pixels for an HD friendly aspect ratio with even more room for detail (great for rotoscoping video but this WILL be labor intensive.
- 2. Next go to Edit → Preferences → General. Then change the Image Interpolation to Nearest Neighbor (preserve hard edges):

Preferences

General	Color Picker: Adobe 🗘			
Interface Workspace	HUD Color Picker: Hue Strip (Small) +			
Tools	Image Interpolation: Nearest Neighbor (preserve hard edges) 🗘			
HistoryLog Sync Settings File Handling Export Performance	Options Auto-Update Open Documents Image Export Clipboard Do Not Show Welcome Screen On Launch Image Resize Image During Place Beep When Done Image Always Create Smart Objects when Placing			
Scratch Disks Cursors Transparency & Gamut Units & Rulers Guides, Grid & Slices Plug-Ins	Reset All Warning Dialogs Reset Prefe	rences On Quit		

3. Within the Preferences, now go down to Edit → Preferences → Guides, Grid & Slices. Change the Gridline to 1, change the Subdivisions to 1, and change the unit to Pixels:

General	Guides
Interface	Color: Cyan +
Workspace	
Tools	Style: Lines +
HistoryLog	
Sync Settings	Smart Guides
File Handling	Color: Agenta +
Export	
Performance	
Scratch Disks	Grid
Cursors	Color: Oustam
Transparency & Gamut	
Units & Rulers	Stider Lines +
Guides, Grid & Slices	Gridling Eveny 1 Divola
Plug-Ins	Gildinie Every.
Туре	Subdivisions: 1
3D	
Technology Previews	Slices
202.4.5	

- 4. Next go to View → Show → Grid, to turn on your grid. This will help you to see ahead of time, where your pixels are going to land.
- 5. Now we need to set up our drawing tool. Instead of the brush, we are going to use the pencil, which is hidden under the brush tool in the toolbar. Make your pencil 1 or 2 pixels in size (very tiny).



6. After choosing the pencil, click the following:



7. A pop-up menu will come up. Choose: Append:



8. Make sure the Mode of your Eraser is also set to Pencil, with the same settings. Note: you can make your eraser larger if you are erasing larger areas of pixels.

Animation

Animate as you would normally do in Photoshop, only drawing in pixels rather than smooth lines. I HIGHLY recommend doing a quick thumbnail board first. Even better, sketch your frames out with the regular brush FIRST, and then convert to pixel art. It's much easier/more natural for us to see in smooth/sketch lines, than it is to see in pixels. You can sketch the frames out with the brush and then draw over them on a separate layer with the pixel pencil for "clean-up."

<u>Tip</u>: to cut down on the layers of both sketch and pixel art: after you are done animating the rough "sketch" lines, export a Quicktime movie. Then, re-import the movie back into Photoshop, and work on top of it. In this way, the sketch art will be in its own flat layer. You can then animate your pixel layers over that.

Exporting a Scaled up .Gif

This is the most important piece. Your animation is tiny, so if you blow it up as it is, it will get blurry. Use the following export technique: File \rightarrow Export \rightarrow Save For Web (legacy) when you want to have your animation in .gif format.

When the window pops up, use the following settings. Choosing Nearest Neighbor for the quality is crucial. <u>Note</u>: the Percent Scale is really dependent on you. I scaled mine up to 500%. You may want to go larger if you are going to put this on a website/vimeo/etc.

	Preset: [] Innamed]
	Percentual Y Colors: 256
	No Dither
	✓ Transparency Matte:
	No Transparency Dither Y Amount:
	☐ Interlaced Web Snap: 0% ▼
	Lossy: 0 V
	Convert to sRGB
	Preview: Monitor Color
	Metadata: Copyright and Contact Info
	Color Table
	Image Size W: 480 px Percent: 500 % H: 270 px Quality: Nearest Neighbor
	Animation
	Looping Options: Once
	3 of 6 44 41 1 11 11
0% dither Perceptual palette 19 colors	
a: Hex: Index:	
Save	Cancel Done

Exporting for Vimeo

If you want to convert this to a movie file, so that you can upload it to <u>www.vimeo.com</u>, or <u>www.youtube.com</u> there are a few additional steps.

 First you will need to increase the size/scale of your movie, just like you did in the .gif export. Vimeo movies will look their best if they are 1920x1080 pixels in size. Go to Image → Image Size and input the following settings:

Image Size				×
	Image Size:	: 5.93M (was 15.2K) : 🔹 1920 px × 1080 px		\$₽.
	Dimensions:			
	Fit To:	Custom		~
	ເມີຍ Wi <u>d</u> th:	1920	Pixels	~
	ت Height:	1080	Pixels	~
	<u>R</u> esolution:	72	Pixels/Inch	~
	✓ Re <u>s</u> ample:	Nearest Neighbor (hard edges)		Y
	ОК	\longrightarrow	Reset	

- 2. Hit OK to save the settings. You will notice that your image is full size but none of the pixels look blurry.
- 3. Next you can Export a movie file for Vimeo. Go to File → Export → Render Video. In the window, use the following settings, and save the movie to the Desktop:

Render Video		×
Location <u>N</u> ame: Pixel_ Select <u>F</u> olde	Animation_For_Vimeo r C:\Users\hansons\Desktop\ Subfolder:	Render
Adobe Media	a Encoder v	
For <u>m</u> at:	H.264 ~ <u>P</u> reset: High Quality ~	
Si <u>z</u> e:	Document Size ~ 1920 x 1080	
Frame <u>R</u> ate:	Document Frame Rate v 30 fps	
F <u>i</u> eld Order:	Preset (Progressive) ~ Aspect: Document (1.0) ~	
	✓ Color Manage	
Range	Render Options	
• <u>A</u> ll Frames	Alpha C <u>h</u> annel: None ~	
O <u>S</u> tart Frame	: 0 End Frame: 149 <u>3</u> D Quality: Interactive OpenGL ~	
O <u>W</u> ork Area:	0 to 149 High Quality Threshold: 5	

4. Now you are ready to upload and share your movie on the web!