

# SAP Icon Style Guide

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## Introduction

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## Introduction

The SAP Icon Cookbook supports people involved in the production of icons for SAP. In general, this guide explains the icon production process and methodology behind creating SAP Icons. Current R/3 icons are shown as examples to help designers and developers maintain design language consistent with SAP guidelines.

For a complete list of the current SAP R/3 icons see the *SAP Reference Lists*.

## Status

Added in July, 2002:

- [How to Create Icons that Make Sense](#)
- [Usability Checklist for an Icon Request](#)

This guideline can be found in *Resources* on the SAP Design Guild Website ([www.sapdesignguild.org](http://www.sapdesignguild.org)).



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## How to Create Icons that Make Sense

Here we present some rules of thumb for those who consider to request new icons.

### Using Existing Icons

#### Don't Misuse Icons!

It confuses our users when the same icon is used for completely different purposes in different places in the system. It is sometimes a good idea to "recycle" an existing icon, but only if the new usage does not contradict the original meaning of the icon.

### When/How Is a New Icon Sensible?

#### Space-Saving

Short, clear terms are better than icons whose meaning has to be learned.

In contrast, groups of terms and long terms can be better represented by an icon.

#### Easy to Locate

Icons make sense only when you do not have a lot of them scattered around the screen, all competing with each other, and when each icon can always be found in the same place (whenever possible).

#### Association

Good icons do not necessarily have to be self-evident, but they should **make an impression and be easy to learn**. This means the picture must be easily associated with its meaning.

#### Context and Consistency

Good icons clearly differ from their neighbors.

Develop your icons early on, in parallel to the overall design. Also be sure to consider any necessary related icons! Do conflicts exist with other icons/areas?

#### Internationality and Political Correctness

SAP icons must be comprehensible and acceptable in a wide range of language areas.

#### Color Legend

- **Red:** Strong warning, stop, error, "Don't!", critical situation
- **Green:** OK, allowed, not critical
- **Yellow:** Advance warning, critical question
- **Gray:** Inactive status

### Don't Forget...

- **No icons on tabstrips!** (Exception: status displays)
- No icons, only text for "Recording", "Parking"
- Only icons, no text for "Simulating", "Generating"
- Icons for "Save", "Post" only in the application toolbar
- Icons are allowed in pushbuttons in the application toolbar, pushbuttons in the screen, pushbuttons in table controls
- The rule: Icon without text (exception: only when the text is absolutely essential for description) or only text
- Icons as field labels only in extremely limited cases (such as generic objects like date, time), including checkboxes and radio buttons.
- Status display: Flat on the screen or in a table control
- In a tree control: As an additional display of the object type when a differentiation is truly helpful
- System icons are reserved for use in the system toolbar



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## Usability Checklist for an Icon Request

The following checklist helps to evaluate the request for a new icon from a usability point of view. In case it really makes sense to create a new icon, this checklist will help you provide the icon designer with the right information and a thorough briefing.

### How to Proceed

To create a recognizable and consistent icon, the icon designer will need information about other, existing icons related to the new one, common symbols and visual conventions already used to visualize certain meanings, and so on. Use this checklist to prepare screen shots or sketches showing the context in which the new icon is going to be placed, including all other icons used in that environment.

Additionally, offer an overview of other existing icons which may be relevant in terms of meaning or style, even if your application does not use them. Well-prepared information and visual material are an invaluable source to the designer, which helps avoid too many design iterations, thus saving a great deal of cost and time in the end.

For answering the checklist questions, download the checklist file, fill it in online and save it. Use the file, together with relevant screen shots and sketches, to communicate your request with the person responsible for icons at SAP, and later on with the icon designer.

- [Icon checklist - English version](#) (Word format)
- [Icon checklist - German version](#) (Word format)

Below, you find an overview of the questions in the checklist.

### Checklist - Overview of the Questions

1. Do similar icons (in either appearance or content) exist? If so, which ones?
2. Is an existing icon with additional text adequate?
3. Which existing icon would be almost right if...
4. From which existing icon must the new icon differ? Why?
5. Which term should the new icon replace? (A brief text is better than an unfamiliar icon!)
6. In which context will the new icon appear? (Screen, tree, list, ...)  
Number of times icon will be used (estimate): ...
7. How many icons are already present in the screen and/or the application toolbar?
8. Does the new icon belong to an icon group?
9. Which other SAP applications and products will the end-user likely have open at the same time?  
(conflicts, consistency)
10. Are any important user groups involved? (other cultures, languages, special legal issues...)
11. Is any special color scheme required?
12. Do you have specific ideas of how the icon should look?
13. Has a user test been performed with sketches (outside development!)?
14. Is the icon intended for use in tab strips? (Only allowed in status displays!)
15. Icon used as field labels / checkboxes / radio buttons?  
(Only allowed in extremely limited cases, such as generic objects like date, time)

## Style

There are two sets of icons in the SAP R/3 System. The "Standard Toolbar" icons and the "Application Area" icons. Generally, both sets of icons are two-dimensional line art combined with highlights and shadows to create a 3-dimensional look. The SAP R/3 Color Palette is used as a tool to assist developers in making color selections for the icons.

### Standard Toolbar Icons

The Standard Toolbar Icons by SAP should be used for a reference in creating new icons. They provide an excellent example of the look and feel of all SAP icons.



The Standard Toolbar Icons are created with a two-dimensional symbol and adding three-dimensional qualities to that icon. This is achieved through the application of highlight and shadow on the icon. Conceptually, the Application Area Icons are generated using the same system.

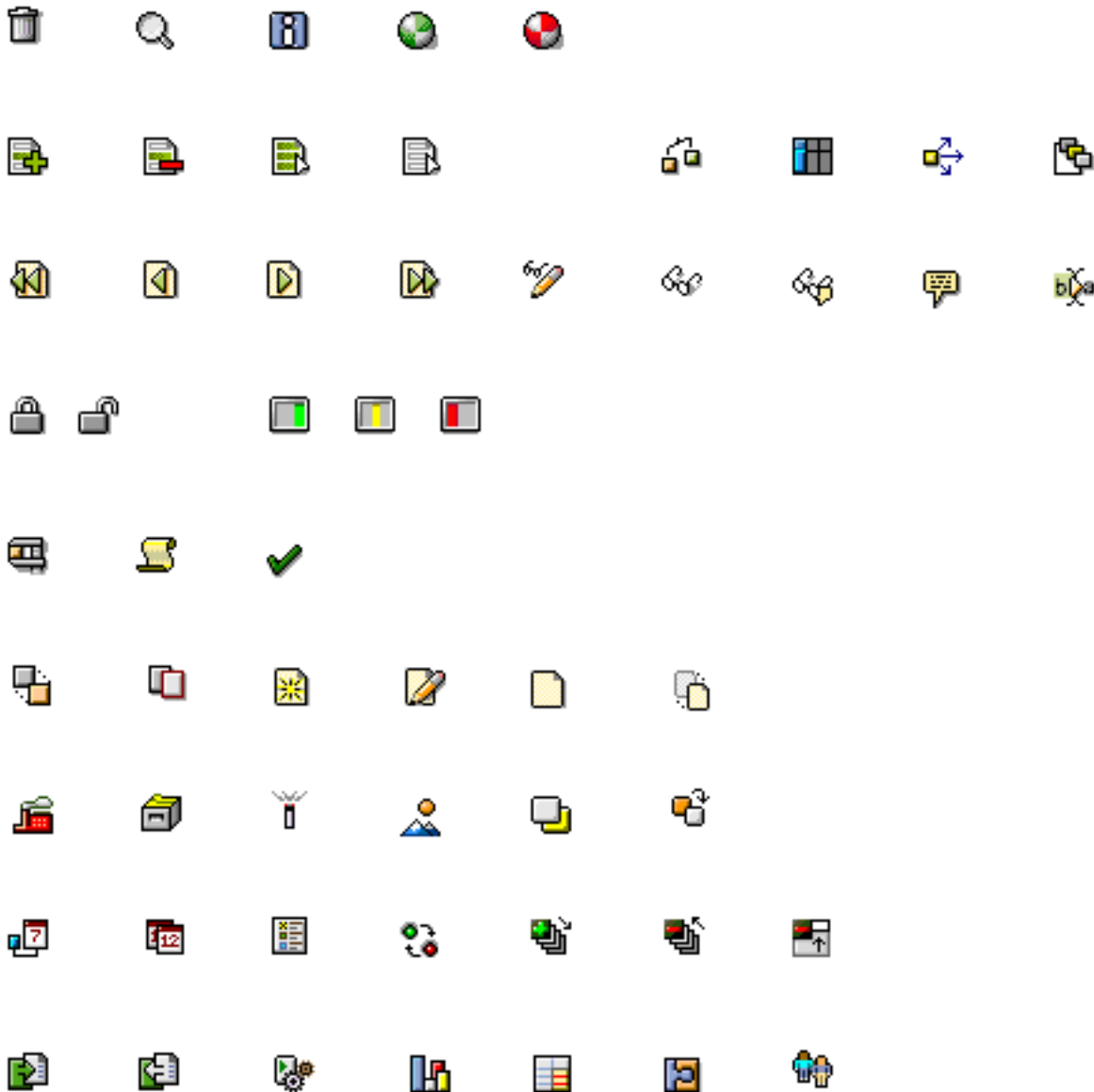
### Application Area Icons

The design process for icons - the process of making icons - can be broken down into four steps. First, refer to other icons to see if similar icons are existing already. Second, create line art for the icon using black for your outline color. Third, add color to the line art from the [SAP color palette](#). Lastly, add dimension to the icon.

#### The Steps

1. Refer to Icon Library
2. Create Line Art
3. Add Color
4. Add Dimension

### Example Application Icons



## Step 1: Using the R/3 Icon Library

The purpose of the R/3 Symbol Library is to create consistency throughout the R/3 Icon set as well as speed the process of making icons.

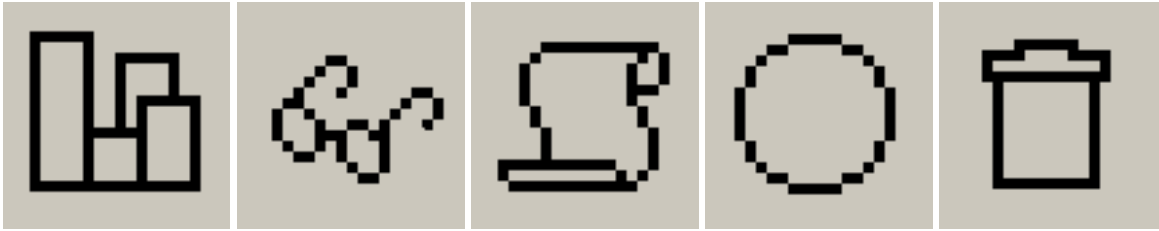
Before generating line art, refer to the R/3 Icon Library to see if artwork for your concept has already been generated. The library contains arrows, pages, lists, etc. which are already colored with the R/3 Icon color sets. The pieces in the Icon Library are meant to be used in combination with new line art and with other pieces in the library. If the objects in the library are too large to fit the needs of a new icon, crop the object to fit. If this does not work and new line art must be generated, refer to the icon library for coloring of the icon.

**Note:** The complete R/3 Icon Library can be found in the *SAP Reference Lists* on the SAP Design Guild.

## Step 2: Generating Line Art

Once an icon concept has been conceived, line art must be generated to make the icon.

### Examples



Color can be added in conjunction with generating line art. All colors must come from the [SAP Icon Color Palette](#), however the black line art of the icon must be maintained.

### Step 3: Adding Color

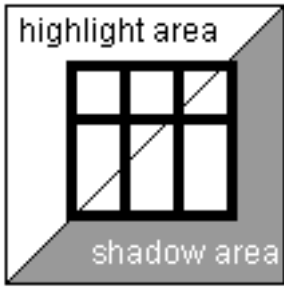
Please consult the [color section](#) before coloring icons. Rendering of icons should correspond to [similar icons](#) already created in the SAP style. For example, icons containing a list should contain the same "list" in previous SAP icons. Icons containing a "x" should borrow an existing "x" from a previously rendered icon.

### Examples



### Step 4: Adding Dimension

Dimension is added to icons through the use of highlight and shadows. In general, icons are highlighted with a one pixel wide highlight color in the top and left sides of the icon, shadows are added with a one pixel wide shadow color in the bottom and right sides of the icon. Drop shadows should be added to the bottom right of icons and also to symbols within an icon. A diagram is provided for general highlight and shadow rules. This diagram is based on a light position at the top left corner of the icon.



## Examples

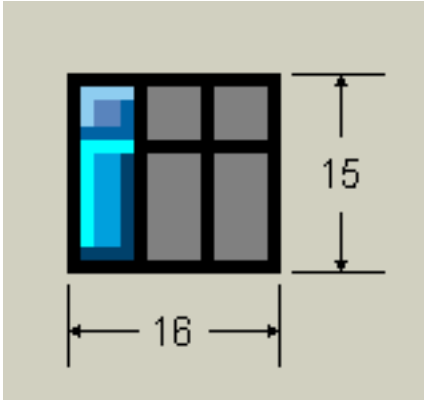


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## Size

The icons adhere to a nominal size of 15 pixels high by 16 pixels wide. In special cases, icons are larger than 15 x 16.



## Tips, Troubleshooting, Suggestions

### Shadows

Drop shadows should be added to icons where possible. Shadows should also be added to symbols which are in front of the icon. If there is not enough room for a drop shadow, do not add it. Shadows can still be added to symbols which overlay the body of the icon. This used in combination with the shadowed edges gives dimension to the icon.

Drop Shadows = (R:153 G: 153 B:153)

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## Color

A custom color palette has been created to SAP R/3 icons.

### Color Language

The following colors are typically used with special meanings:

- Red Colors = error messages, stopping, negative items or attention grabbing alerts.
- Yellow Colors = warnings, cautions and need to know information.
- Green Colors = success messages, continue and positive items.

### Custom Color Palette

The SAP icons contain five main color groups. The first group contains 11 color sets. The values in each set are used to compose the base, highlight and shadow color of the icons. In some cases, the highlight or shadow color may come from a different color set inside group #1. A new drop shadow color has been added to the color palette.

[Download the Color Palette for Photoshop](#)

#### Color Group #1 - Main Colors

Highlight - used for highlights

Base - used for primary color

Shadow - used for shadows

	highlight		base		shadow
	R: 255 G: 204 B: 204	R: 255 G: 153 B: 153	R: 255 G: 102 B: 102	R: 196 G: 0 B: 38	R: 153 G: 0 B: 0
		R: 212 G: 190 B: 222	R: 165 G: 134 B: 179	R: 129 G: 84 B: 144	R: 83 G: 0 B: 93
	R: 204 G: 204 B: 255	R: 143 G: 146 B: 192	R: 92 G: 106 B: 166	R: 0 G: 61 B: 132	R: 0 G: 40 B: 86
		R: 198 G: 214 B: 243	R: 143 G: 167 B: 209	R: 89 G: 132 B: 189	R: 0 G: 99 B: 164
R: 217 G: 238 B: 249	R: 142 G: 205 B: 240	R: 51 G: 153 B: 255	R: 0 G: 0 B: 255	R: 0 G: 0 B: 170	R: 0 G: 0 B: 136
	R: 179 G: 211 B: 155	R: 140 G: 192 B: 108	R: 77 G: 166 B: 25	R: 50 G: 108 B: 17	R: 36 G: 77 B: 12
	R: 209 G: 223 B: 156	R: 184 G: 210 B: 107	R: 146 G: 192 B: 0	R: 95 G: 125 B: 0	R: 68 G: 89 B: 0
	R: 255 G: 255 B: 214	R: 204 G: 204 B: 153	R: 153 G: 153 B: 102	R: 102 G: 102 B: 51	R: 80 G: 80 B: 30
	R: 255 G: 240 B: 158	R: 255 G: 235 B: 0	R: 232 G: 210 B: 88	R: 170 G: 157 B: 0	R: 121 G: 112 B: 0
R: 255 G: 204 B: 51	R: 247 G: 179 B: 87	R: 255 G: 153 B: 0	R: 255 G: 102 B: 0	R: 154 G: 100 B: 0	R: 110 G: 71 B: 0
	R: 255 G: 204 B: 153	R: 199 G: 159 B: 109	R: 166 G: 126 B: 78	R: 110 G: 74 B: 32	R: 86 G: 53 B: 13

## Color Group #2 - System Colors

R: 255	R: 0	R: 255	R: 0	R: 0	R: 255
G: 0	G: 255	G: 255	G: 0	G: 255	G: 255
B: 0	B: 0	B: 0	B: 255	B: 255	B: 255

R: 128	R: 0	R: 128	R: 0	R: 0	R: 0
G: 0	G: 128	G: 128	G: 0	G: 128	G: 0
B: 0	B: 0	B: 0	B: 128	B: 128	B: 0

**Color Group #3 - Greyscale Colors**

R: 255	R: 230	R: 217	R: 191	R: 166	R: 153
G: 255	G: 230	G: 217	G: 191	G: 166	G: 153
B: 255	B: 230	B: 217	B: 191	B: 166	B: 153

R: 140	R: 128	R: 102	R: 64	R: 0
G: 140	G: 128	G: 102	G: 64	G: 0
B: 140	B: 128	B: 102	B: 64	B: 0

**Color Group #4 - Transparent Color**

R: 255
G: 0
B: 255

**Color Group #5 - Drop Shadow Color**

R: 111
G: 140
B: 156

!!! ATTENTION:THIS COLOR IS TO BE USED FOR DROP SHADOWS ONLY. DO NOT USE IT TO FORMULATE ICONS. (R: 111 G: 140 B: 156)!!!



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