

Image Analysis for ArcGIS FAQs¹



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How Do I Build Pyramid Layers for an Image?

Use ArcCatalog and ArcMap to build pyramid layers for an image. Pyramid layers are used to improve the displaying speed of raster images as you zoom in and out by creating varying levels of resolution. This document describes how to build pyramid layers using two different approaches—ArcCatalog and ArcMap.

What You Will Need and Other Assumptions

- A raster image (satellite image, DOQ, DEM, etc.)

Overview of Steps

1. Use the Build Pyramids option in ArcCatalog to build pyramid layers for any raster image.
2. Specify the Raster Layer Pyramid Calculation preference in ArcMap.

Step-by-Step Example

ArcCatalog:

1. Start ArcCatalog from your Desktop, or on the Windows Taskbar click **Start | Programs | ArcGIS | ArcCatalog**.
2. Navigate to and select the image that requires pyramid layers.
3. Make a **Single Right-click** on the image you've just selected and choose **Build Pyramids**.

ArcMap:

1. Start ArcMap from your Desktop, or on the Windows Taskbar click **Start | Programs | ArcGIS | ArcMap**.
2. From ArcMap's main menu, select **Tools | Options** and click the **Raster** tab.
3. In the Raster tab, enable the **Always Prompt For Pyramid Calculation** (*Note: you will be prompted to build pyramid layers every time you add a raster image to the Data Frame in ArcMap that does not already have pyramid layers*), or **Always Build Pyramids and Don't Prompt in the Future** (*Note: this option will automatically build pyramid layers for raster images added to the Data Frame that do not already have pyramid layers*).
4. Select **OK**.

¹ Produced by the USDA Forest Service RSAC (<http://fsweb.rsac.fs.fed.us>). A Forest Service version of Image Analysis for ArcGIS was used to develop this reference document. No warranty is made as to completeness or accuracy.