

FILE SUPPLY GUIDE



Everything you NEED to know
before sending files to us



WE WANT YOUR FILES TO PRINT PERFECTLY



ignore the
rules and
it could be
fatal

We want the same thing that you want. We want your graphic files to print without fuss and look like you meant them to. We'll be honest with you – of the small number of jobs that don't print as expected, the overwhelming majority are from files supplied to us. Even if you're a seasoned professional and are used to supplying files for print, please read this guide anyway – our process is likely to be different from what you're used to.

It usually takes our designers around three months with us to acquire the knowledge and understanding to correctly create graphic files for our print process. Whatever your print and design experience, whether you're a novice or seasoned professional, please read this guide in full before you start designing – **it's the best way to ensure that you don't suffer any unnecessary delays, costs and heartache.**

Supplying files for print without following this guide is a lot like driving without following traffic laws. If you follow the law, your journeys are more likely to be safe. Start bending the rules and there's a greater risk of accidents occurring. Ignore the rules and it could be fatal! If you follow this guide, your file should print like a breeze. Please call us before you start work on anything big or complicated – it'll save tears later.

Happy Designing!

P.S. It's easy to miss something when you're under pressure – we're all human.





link

www.us.printing.com/downloads

HOW SHOULD WE WORK TOGETHER?

where
are you
in this
chart?

We're all different. Some of us are more different than others. That's why we work with our customers in lots of different ways, depending on their level of file supply expertise. If you don't know your InDesign from your elbow, then let us take care of the design for you. It's safest that way. If you're an "amateur-dabbler," then you'll probably need to rely on us to Make Your File Work. At the other end of the scale, if you know what you're doing and can follow our process, we'll happily check your file for you. Where are you in this chart?

OPTION	FILE SUPPLY EXPERTISE	RECOMMENDED ROUTE
1	NONE 	WE'LL DESIGN FOR YOU Creating effective design is more important than saving a few dollars trying to botch it yourself. Feel free to mock something up in Word, send us digital images or leave it entirely up to us. Ask us for a price.
2	LOW 	WE'LL MAKE YOUR FILE WORK Someone else created your design then went backpacking around Australia? Don't panic. Give us what you've got and we'll do our best to Make it Work . See page 4 for details.
3	MEDIUM 	WE'LL CHECK YOUR FILE Follow all the advice in this guide, send us your file and our Hand-Holding service will run technical checks to look for potential problems. See page 4 for details.
4	HIGH 	WE'LL LET YOU RISK IT When you've been supplying files to us correctly for a while, it may be right for you to become a File Risker. But only if you've been good. See page 6 for details.



WE'LL MAKE IT WORK

If someone else has created the file, or you're just stuck, give us everything you've got, we'll give you a price and we'll do our best to make it work. We may have to make a few compromises along the way, which we'll tell you about, so it's really best if you get us involved from the outset.



HAND-HOLDING SERVICE

Our Hand-Holding service is a comprehensive series of final technical checks to ensure that your file complies with all of our production requirements. We thoroughly recommend you let us do this, especially on your first order, or if someone else is creating the graphic file for you.

Note: This service doesn't include checking your spelling or grammar, or whether your design will work on an aesthetic level – if you'd like us to do this for you, ask us for a price.



WE **WILL** DO THIS

- Check your document for technical errors – please allow 24 hours for this



IF WE FIND **ERRORS** – WE **WILL** DO THIS

- Notify you of incorrect items
- At your instruction, correct errors for you (see 'We'll Make it Work'), **or** return your file
- Provide you with a proof
- Once errors are corrected, verify your file will print correctly



IF EVERYTHING IS **FINE** – WE **WILL** DO THIS

- Go straight to print
- Provide you with a proof for reference only – **no changes can be made**



IF WE FIND **ERRORS** – WE **WON'T** DO THIS

- Go to print until you sign-off the proof



IF EVERYTHING IS **FINE** – WE **WON'T** DO THIS

- Wait for you to sign the proof

HAND-HOLDING SERVICE continued

We've divided our product range into four groups, depending on how long it typically takes to check a file (more complicated files may take more time). Locate the item you have designed and ask us for the price for complete peace of mind.



THE **BRONZE** HAND-HOLDING SERVICE

Approximately **15** minutes of our designer's time, and will typically* cover file checking of:

Appointment Cards, Business Cards, Letterheads, Note pads, Stickers.



THE **SILVER** HAND-HOLDING SERVICE

Approximately **30** minutes of our designer's time, and will typically* cover file checking of:

Bookmarks, Greetings Cards, Invitations, Laser Mailers, Laser Price Lists, Flyers, Posters, Postcards, Report Covers, Showcards, Wobblers.



THE **GOLD** HAND-HOLDING SERVICE

Approximately **45** minutes of our designer's time, and will typically* cover file checking of:

Folder Inserts, Folio Wallets, Menu Covers, Menu Grips, Plastic Fantastic Menus, Receipt Holders, Shaped and Creased Cards, Table Tent Cards, Voucher Cards.



THE **PLATINUM** HAND-HOLDING SERVICE

Approximately **60** minutes of our designer's time, and will typically* cover file checking of:

Booklets, One Piece Mailers, and all Folders.

* More complex files may take longer to check.

FILE RISKER

Once you're used to our ways and you've built up a clean track record of supplying files correctly, we'll let you become a **File Risker** – **if that's what you really want**. We'll need a PDF proof (preferably in color), a completed file supply checklist (copy one at the back of this guide), and a mock-up if your design is more complicated (see page 10).

When you send your file as a **File Risker** this is what will happen:



WE WILL DO THIS

- Check that the page size is correct
- Check that no images are missing
- Check that no fonts are missing
- Go to print if these items are OK
- Notify you if they are not and wait for your new file



WE WON'T DO THIS

- Check anything else
- Provide you with a proof
- Refund or reprint the file if it fails to print as expected as a result of not following all of the advice in this guide

We would much rather you took advantage of our Hand-Holding service – **we'd hate your job to fail because you've missed some of our instructions** (see page 4).

SETTING YOUR PAGE SIZE

before you start designing **Large Format Posters**, see additional information on page 18 – for **Booklets** see page 16 – for other items, all the dimensions you need are on page 32

Adobe InDesign is our design application of choice.

We've created design templates for the vast majority of our products in InDesign. If you prefer to use InDesign too, then **we can supply you with a template** to make things easier – either as an InDesign CS5 format, as an InDesign markup language file to be opened in CS4 or as an InDesign interchange file to be opened in CS3. If you are using an alternate design application, then we can supply you with the correct dimensions.

Before you start designing any job with **folds, creases, cut-outs, StarMarque (spot UV) or perforations, CALL US**. These items need to be positioned precisely and supplied in a specific manner – we don't want to have to reject your file if it isn't right. This includes **Brochures, Punched Business Cards, Greeting Cards, Postcards or Thick Flyers** with an added crease, **Folders, StarMarque** products and many others – See common sizes on page 32.

EXAMPLE: BUSINESS CARD



SETTING YOUR PAGE SIZE continued



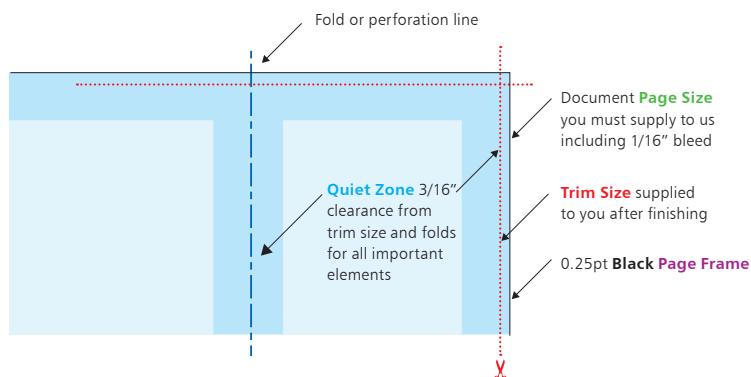
it's best not to put any important objects, such as text or logos, closer than $\frac{3}{16}$ in. from the trim edge, or from any fold or crease



if you're unsure call us for advice

It's very important that you **set your page size correctly**. If you don't, parts of your design may be chopped off, look off-center, or have areas of undesired white space. Here's what to do:

1. Locate the product size you're interested in on page 32.
2. Make a note of the **Page Size**. This is the size you should set your page on your document.
3. Add a **black** (100% K) **Page Frame** (0.25pt).
4. Now look at the **Trim Size**. You'll see that this is $\frac{1}{16}$ " smaller on both dimensions. This difference is known as the 'bleed' – $\frac{1}{16}$ " on all four sides – that's approximately where our automated cutter will make its cuts. The bleed allows for any small variations in this cutting.
5. To remind yourself where the cuts will be made, you could add some guidelines $\frac{1}{16}$ " in from each edge on your document.
6. See the example on the previous page. For a business card, you'd set your page size as **3.625x2.125 inches**. We'll trim down to approximately **3.5x2 inches**. No objects may extend beyond the page size – use the 'paste inside,' 'clip,' or 'crop' tool.
7. Finally, it's good practice to leave a '**Quiet Zone**' of $\frac{3}{16}$ " ($.25$ " for Booklets and Posters) from the trim edge (that's $.25$ " or $.3125$ " from the page edge). The same goes for any folds or creases. Avoid placing any important objects such as text or logos within this quiet zone. This will make your job look more professional and ensure objects don't look like they're about to fall off the edge.



CHECKING YOUR QUIET ZONE AND BLEED

Allowing for the correct bleed and quiet zone are really, really important and they are some of the most common file supply errors we see. Here are a few examples of how to get it right (and wrong):



Design set up correctly



Design set up correctly



Logo and text within **Quiet Zone**
– may be trimmed off



Logo within **Quiet Zone**
– may be trimmed off



Flower image stops at trim line
– white border may be visible



Hotel image stops at trim line
– white border may be visible

MAKE SURE IT WORKS!



make a
mock-up
and make
sure it
works!

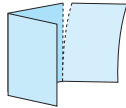
You'd be amazed at the number of great looking designs we see which simply don't work on a functional level. Things like tear-off slips that don't match up between front and back, or greeting cards where the inside is upside down. Be sure to **print out a copy** of your document and **make a mock-up** before you send it to us. As well as your document looking good, consider the practicality of what it will be like when it has been printed, folded and cut down.

Simple things set incorrectly can ruin your design. The following items are famous for mishaps, so make sure your job works:



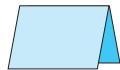
simple
things set
incorrectly
can ruin
your design

Perforation



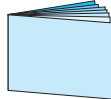
Check that both sides have the perforation in the same place – remember that the reverse is a mirror image of the front.

Landscape Greeting Card



Ensure that you flip the inside artwork in your document so that it's upside down. This way, when you open the final greeting card product, the inside is the correct way up.

Booklets



Check that all the pages are numbered in the right order. Save in one document as single pages – don't paste them up, or supply 'printer's pairs' – make sure you read pages 16-17 of this guide, as they're expensive jobs to go wrong!

Folded Brochures



Check that all the pages are in the correct position – the front panel is where you want the front panel to be, and so on – please ask for exact sizes.

MAKE SURE IT WORKS!

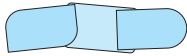
continued

Roll Folded Brochures



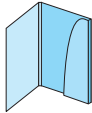
Check that you've allowed for the flap that folds in to be trimmed smaller, to prevent buckling. Ask for panel sizes or a template if you're unsure.

Punched Business Cards



Check that you've designed the reverse of your artwork to fit into a mirror image of the front – if unsure, make a mock up!

Presentation Folder



Check that when the pockets are folded, they don't obscure any text you want to be visible.



please
check your
imposition
very, very
carefully

It is **very important to supply us with a mockup**. If you are using our Hand-Holding service, we will be able to check that your document works the way you think it works. If you aren't using our Hand-Holding service, please check your imposition very, very carefully – we can't be held responsible if you've not been thorough enough. Don't forget that we have templates available.

COMMON PITFALLS

if you're
using **layer**
effects,
follow the
advice on
page 13

Today's graphics applications are incredibly sophisticated.

So much so, that many contain features not compatible with the latest developments in printing technology. Likewise, some things can look great on screen, but not when printed. Based on our extensive experience, we've prepared a list of items that we know can cause problems. So please, follow the advice below.

ITEM

WHAT'S THE DANGER?

Hairlines



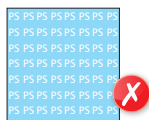
Hairlines are 'device dependent'. This means they print at different resolutions on different machines. They may print fine on your 300dpi laser printer, but will disappear on our 2540dpi plate-setter. Use 0.25pt instead.

Texture Fills



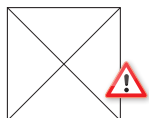
These print erratically (or not at all). Best to convert any of these to a bitmap. Make sure you choose 300dpi and CMYK though, and don't make the background transparent.

Postscript Fills



Postscript fills give a low resolution repeat effect that can print erratically. They don't look good anyway, best to use something else.

Quark Picture Boxes



A 'feature' of older versions of Quark Xpress (before v.7) is that if you don't fill a picture box with color, the TIFF inside may print with a ragged edge. So, make sure your picture box is filled with 'white' rather than 'none.' Cut-out EPS or cut-out TIFF files are OK.

COMMON PITFALLS continued



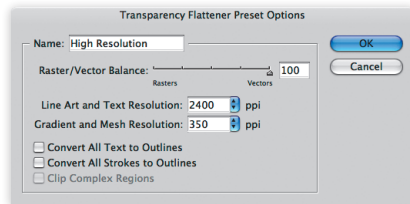
the safest
file
formats for
images are
flattened
files saved
as TIFFs

ITEM

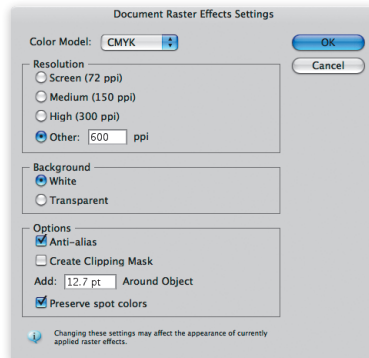
Layer Effects And Transparency Effects

WHAT'S THE DANGER?

These can be used providing that your Transparency Flattener preset is set on high resolution ready for printing and that in Illustrator the Raster Effects settings are set toward vector (see the screenshots below).

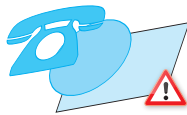


InDesign CS3 screenshot



Illustrator CS3 screenshot

Unflattened Image Files



The safest file formats for images are flattened files saved as TIFFs. Avoid layered TIFF and layered Photoshop EPS files as these can cause problems.

COMMON PITFALLS continued

ITEM

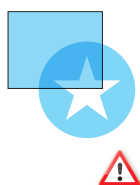
WHAT'S THE DANGER?

Compression



You can happily use WinZIP or StuffIT to compress your files, but never compress images using LZW compression. Doing so has been known to cause problems and may result in your file not printing at all.

Overprint



Be careful with overprint settings (especially in Quark). If you set objects to overprint, they will not 'knock-out' the background, and will look very different from what you see on screen or proof (see page 22). Black text generally defaults to overprint, (as does the 100% black swatch in some applications). This is usually OK. Please refer to your application manual for more details.

OLE Objects



Windows applications are happy to copy objects back and forth between themselves. Unfortunately, they don't print properly. Always convert OLE objects to bitmaps before sending your file.

EPSs within EPSs



Not a good idea as this massively increases the risk of a Postscript error. Certain Illustrator EPSs also cause problems in Quark.

Duotone/RGB images



These may print in black and white, or with washed out colors – always convert to CMYK.



be careful
with
overprint
settings

COMMON PITFALLS continued



avoid using
borders where
possible

ITEM

WHAT'S THE DANGER?

Borders



Avoid using borders where possible (especially on small items such as business cards), since even a slight movement when cutting could make your border look uneven and unprofessional.

Embedding Images



Some of the graphics packages allow you to “embed” image files. Avoid doing this as we can’t check the images and it results in large file sizes. It’s better to supply the images as linked files.

Gradients



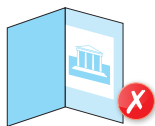
Vignettes, or gradient fills are best avoided – these are difficult to print and they have a tendency to show ‘banding’ and look unprofessional. There is advice on gradients in the Help section on the Adobe web site which you may find useful.

Watermarks



Be careful with watermarks, if they’re too heavy it can make text or writing difficult to read. We recommend using a tint between 5%-7% for the best results. We cannot guarantee to print below 5%.

Aligning Elements to Folds



Avoid trying to line up design elements with folds or creases. There’s a chance they may not land perfectly on the fold or crease which can look unprofessional.

Large Areas of the Same Color


See the advice on page 22 for more information.

DESIGNING BOOKLETS

Before you start, are you sure you've got the skills to tackle a project of this size? Designing a Booklet requires a lot more experience than Business Cards or Brochures. If you're certain you want to design it yourself, read this whole guide and follow this additional advice. It's best to call us before you start work – it may save you some heartache later on.

DESIGN AS SINGLE PAGES

Create a separate page in your artwork for each page of your Booklet. You can supply as a multi-page document or as one document per page. Please don't supply as "printer's pairs" or spreads.



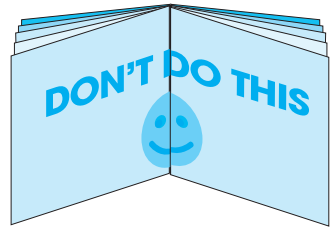
add 1/8"
bleed to
each side
when you're
designing
booklets

ADD 1/8 INCH BLEED TO EACH SIDE

Booklets need more bleed than other products. Look at the finished page size of the Booklet. Add 1/8" to all sides of your page – a total of 1/4" across each axis. You even need to add bleed to the edge which forms the spine. Our process chops this off and merges the spine together.

AVOID OBJECTS WHICH CROSS PAGES

It's unlikely that objects which cross pages will line up exactly. It's best to avoid them, or accept that there will be some vertical movement throughout your Booklet. You'll also need to allow for the bleed being trimmed off – ask us if you're not sure.



avoid trying
to match
colors
throughout
the booklet

COLORS

Avoid trying to match colors throughout the booklet. Some color variation is inherent in the process and will be most noticeable where two pages of the same color meet.

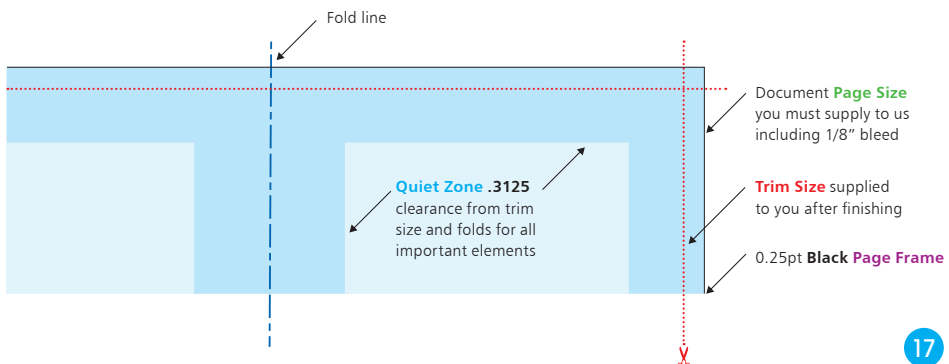


ALLOW FOR CREEP

In a stapled Booklet, the bulk of the paper causes the inner pages to extend (creep) further out than the outer pages when folded. When trimmed, the inner pages are narrower than the outer pages. The amount of creep is dependent on the number of pages and paper thickness. The thicker the Booklet, the more you need to keep important objects away from the edges.

MIND YOUR MARGINS

Normally, we recommend that you keep important objects at least $\frac{3}{16}$ " from the 'trim' size. As a result of creep, we'd advise you to increase your margin to avoid anything being chopped off. When we design Booklets ourselves, we tend to leave at least $\frac{3}{8}$ " of 'Quiet Zone' or 'white space' on the trimmed edge. This means that creep isn't as noticeable and items won't be chopped off.



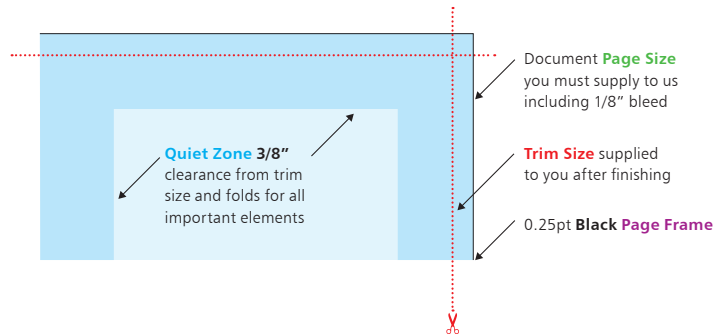
DESIGNING LARGE FORMAT POSTERS

these are printed using a different process than our main litho printed range

Designing Large Format Posters is slightly different than designing for litho print, partly because of their increased size but also because of the difference in technology. The basic principles are the same – you still need to prepare everything in CMYK and follow the rest of the instructions in this guide, but here are some extra tips...

RESPECT THE 'QUIET ZONE' OF 3/8 INCHES

You should position images and text at least 3/8" from the edge of the Poster. For best results, make your background bleed fully to the edge of your artwork if it is within 3/8" of the edge.



WATCH THE RESOLUTION

Large Format Posters are designed to be viewed at a distance (usually of at least 3-5 ft.). This means that images don't need to be as high resolution as on litho printed items. We recommend that you provide images for Large Format Posters at a **maximum of 150 dpi**. Any higher won't make much difference to final print, but will take much longer to process, and may delay the processing of your job.



keep all
elements
under
225% total
ink limit

BE CAREFUL WITH COLOR

To create a good solid black, use rich black (see page 26). Don't use four-color black and pay attention to the ink coverage limits on page 24. Keep all elements under 225% total ink limit. It's best to avoid solid colors of only one ink (i.e. pure cyan, magenta, yellow or black) as these can be susceptible to slight "banding." Using rich black avoids banding. Also, any greyscale images should be converted to CMYK prior to being printed on our large format equipment.

Due to the different technology used to produce our Large Format range, it's **unlikely that colors will match** our range of litho printed products.

PAY ATTENTION TO SMALL TEXT

We'd recommend that you keep your text to a **minimum of 14pt**. Overlay your text in a vector-based application like Illustrator, InDesign or Quark, rather than creating it in a bitmap-based application such as Photoshop.

POP-UP DISPLAYS

As with booklets, avoid elements and graphics crossing over the panel joints if possible, they can be hard to line up when the posters are printed.



ABOUT COLOR

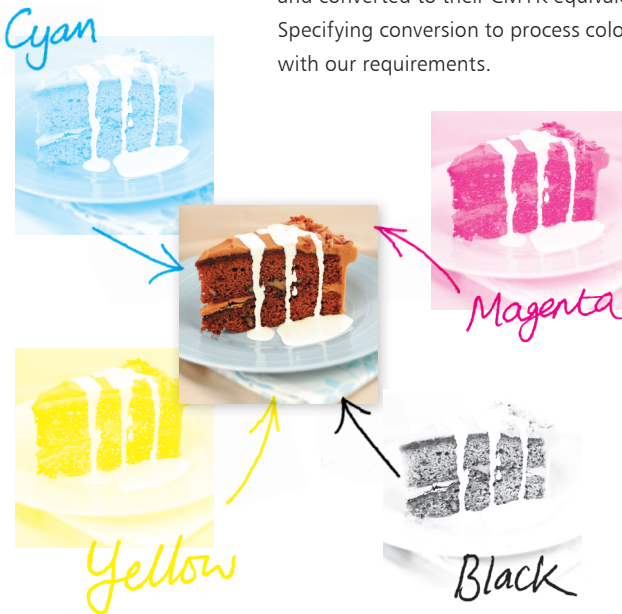
for best results when choosing colors, we strongly recommend you choose your colors from our color charts

CONVERTING TO CMYK

Your computer, scanner, digital camera and monitor create images using combinations of just three colors: Red, Green and Blue (RGB). Printing presses use four different colors to print these images – Cyan (light blue), Magenta (pinky red), Yellow and Black (or CMYK – also known as Process Color). At some stage of production, RGB images and colors must be converted to CMYK.

Conversions on images from RGB to CMYK are best done using software such as Photoshop, and you should do this before sending your file to us. If you don't perform the conversion yourself, our process will apply an industry standard profile RGB-to-CMYK conversion, meaning that colors may not print as expected. See page 28 for more information on working with photographs.

Traditional printers often use Pantone® Spot color inks. Spot colors are mixed like paint and printed one at a time. As we use Process CMYK Color, all Pantone® **Spot colors must be changed to 'process color'** and converted to their CMYK equivalent, before your file is sent to us. Specifying conversion to process colors at the print stage will not meet with our requirements.



If you don't convert spot colors to process, then an extra separation printing plate may be produced when we process your job. This means objects may not appear on your printed job and may result in you incurring unnecessary costs and time delays.

ABOUT COLOR continued

You can check that your document is in CMYK process color in one of three ways:

- 1 By printing 'separations' on your desktop printer – see the Help file that came with your application for more details. If anything other than cyan, magenta, yellow and black separations print, then you have unwanted colors that you need to convert. This is also a good way of checking knock-out/overprinting settings.
- 2 Or create a PDF file and use Adobe Acrobat Professional's Output Preview tool to check the separations.
- 3 Or create a PDF file as a Separated PDF



Some RGB and Spot colors do not have a direct CMYK equivalent – the technical term for this is “out of gamut.” If you have chosen a color that is out of gamut, your software will choose the closest equivalent CMYK color, which may be different from the color you intended. This is something that everyone has to put up with, so for best results, we strongly recommend you choose colors from our color charts. These have been produced on our presses and will give a more predictable indication of the color.

ABOUT COLOR continued



avoid tints
that contain
less than 5%

GETTING THE BEST FROM CMYK

You'll get best reproduction from colors that are made up from one or two inks (i.e. magenta and cyan, etc). When using lighter shades, **avoid tints that contain less than 5%** of either Cyan, Magenta, Yellow or Black, as they usually print much lighter than they appear on screen and you may be disappointed with the outcome. For best results, use tints containing 5% to 30% where possible.

If possible, choose from the colors on our complimentary color charts. These are printed on our presses, and apart from printing your job for real, these color charts will give you the closest approximation to how your finished job will look, although some variation may occur.



try to avoid
large areas
of the same
color

Try to **avoid large areas of the same color too** – that's where color issues (banding, ghosting etc.) become most noticeable – ask us for advice. Try to break up large areas of color with alternate elements or add a background image. Vignettes, or gradient fills are best avoided – they have a tendency to show 'banding' and look unprofessional. The Adobe web site offers some advice on gradients if you wish to use them.

A NOTE ABOUT PROOFING

As part of our Hand-Holding service we will supply you with an emailed proof. This proof is not color accurate. The proof acts as a guide as to how the finished print will look and should only be used to check layout.

An emailed proof can't be relied upon to spot items such as objects set to overprint, hairlines, JPEGs/RGB/Duotone images (which may proof in color, but print in black and white).

ABOUT COLOR continued

ask for your
free color
chart!



We have a **color chart** available for each of our paper stocks

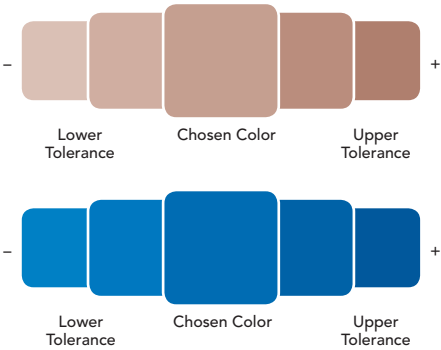


color
variation is
inherent in
any print
process

COLOR TOLERANCES

You can produce fantastic results with full color process – and without breaking the bank. It pays to bear in mind that **color variation is inherent in any print process** and you shouldn't expect a perfect match to your chosen color.

The examples below will give you an idea of how your chosen color may actually look when printed. We'd be delighted to explain this in more detail – just ask.



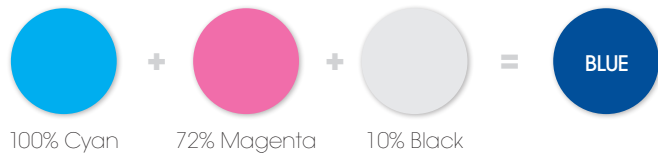
AVOIDING OFFSET

be careful
with which
colors you
choose

'Offset' is the marking of the underside of a sheet of paper

caused by the transfer of ink from the sheet on which it lays. It can occur when pressure is applied during cutting or simply while the paper is stacked. Offset is caused by the fact that the ink is still wet, and it is most prevalent on uncoated stocks like letterheads. Our process adds an extra gloss or silk coating to all jobs printed on coated paper. This reduces the likelihood of offset occurring, but you should still be careful with which colors you choose, and in most cases you will be fine if you limit your choices to the colors on our color chart.

Let's just remind ourselves of how process color is created. As an example, a mid blue color consists of 100% cyan ink, 72% magenta ink and 10% black ink. If we add these percentages together, we can work out that mid-blue has a total ink coverage of 182% (100% + 72% + 10%). The maximum ink coverage that is possible is 400% (which is of course 100%C, 100%M, 100%Y and 100%K).



our
recommended
ink coverage
limit is 225%

We have some guidelines to help avoid offset. **Our recommended ink coverage limit is 225%.** This means that, wherever possible, the colors you use should contain a total of 225% or less when you add together cyan, magenta, yellow and black. When it comes to black, there are other considerations – see page 26.

AVOIDING OFFSET continued



please don't
use colors
above 300%

On coated stocks you can use colors made up of more than 225%, but **less than 300% in smaller areas** (such as small sections of images, headline text or logos). However, you'll run into problems if you were to use this level of ink on larger areas. Treat with caution, and if possible use lighter colors. Due to the nature and absorbency of uncoated papers, avoid using above 225% at all on uncoated items such as stationery. Use the eyedropper tool in Photoshop, or the swatches palette in any vector packages, to check the darkest elements of your artwork.

Please **don't use colors above 300%** – you're putting a lot of ink on the page, and our quick turnaround may mean that your job doesn't have time to dry before it is cut. At ink levels above 300%, your job may even begin to adversely affect other jobs printed at the same time. If this is the case, we may be forced to quarantine your job at the print stage. Please ask for advice if you are unsure.

You may be surprised to learn that you can perform 'GCR' (Grey Component Replacement) to minimize the amount of ink being put onto the page, but keeping the color the same – see page 28 for more information on this. You can also find in-depth discussions on this subject at www.adobe.com/support


link

www.adobe.com/support

GETTING THE MOST FROM BLACK

it may surprise you to learn that there's more to black than meets the eye...

Black is black! Isn't it? It may surprise you to learn that there's more to black than meets the eye...

To get the best from our process, black can be produced in two ways. The first method is **single color black**, made from 100% black ink. This is ideal for small areas less than 1x1 inch such as text or logos. 

On areas of over 1x1 inch in size, single color black can appear washed out and uneven. This is because the rollers on printing presses roll the ink off over a large area. The alternative is **rich black**, which consists of 100% black and 40% cyan. A rich black should be used on larger areas to ensure an even, dark coverage, as the second ink color disguises any inconsistencies. However, rich black should never be used on small text as any tiny deviance in registration will lead to a blurred effect.

Be aware that the higher the percentage ink coverage, the longer the drying time required. This is particularly true of uncoated stocks such as letterheads (see page 25).








'Single Color' Black


100% black

'Rich' Black

100% black
40% cyan

GETTING THE MOST FROM BLACK continued

	
10pt	
9pt	
8pt	
7pt	
6pt	
5pt	


black text
should
never have
more than
140% ink
coverage

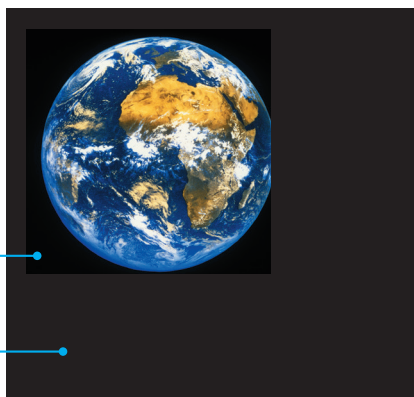
Black will inevitably appear duller on uncoated stock because of the absorbency of the paper. This absorbency also means that any fine detail reversed out of black may disappear. We do not recommend less than 8pt text, for example, on uncoated stock.

You may think that it would be okay to have 'three or four color' black text as long as the total ink coverage is less than 300%. You'd be wrong! **Black text should never have more than 140% ink coverage.** "Four color black" text is virtually impossible to print, will look blurred and may cause sheets to stick together.

Also be aware that black within a photograph as a background may have a different CMYK make-up to other parts of your design. This will be noticeable when printed, even if not on screen. Placing a photograph with a black background over a black area in Quark, for example, may reveal a difference between the two shades of black when printed. To overcome this, take a sample of the black that the background is required to match in an application such as Photoshop (use the color picker tool). Then simply mix the matched color in, say, Quark or InDesign – paying careful attention to the overall ink coverage.

4 color black

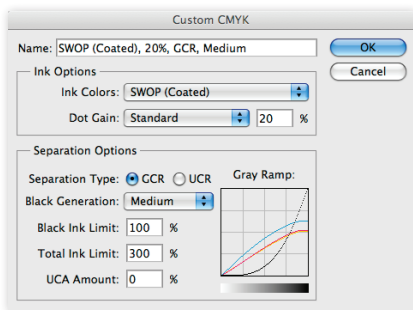
100% black



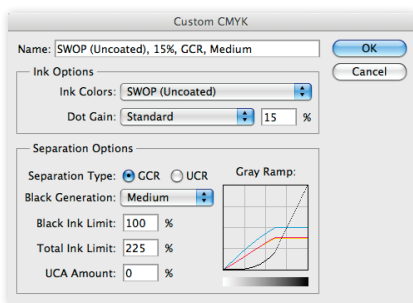
WORKING WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

If you are sourcing or scanning photographs yourself, save them as either EPS or TIFF files as this will preserve the color and clarity of your images. If you are scanning a previously printed item, such as a magazine photo (obviously with permission from the copyright holder) or an old brochure you will need to 'de-screen' the image, blurring it slightly to avoid a moiré effect (see your scanning software manual for more details).

GIF or JPEG formats compress the image and actually discard information, causing color shifts and blurriness. Don't use either of these file formats – they may even print in black and white and you won't like the results.



Photoshop CS4 screenshots



Consider the final size your image will be used at.

Photographs should be 300-350dpi at the size you are going to use them. There's no point taking a postage stamp at 300dpi and then blowing it up to a Letter size – for scans, use your scanning software to help you calculate the output resolution. Conversely, photographs at more than 300dpi will have little or no effect on the actual printed quality and will unnecessarily increase file size and processing time.

Don't enlarge or reduce your images in your drawing/vector software (such as Illustrator) – it's always best to use an image-editing application such as Photoshop for this task.

When converting photographs from RGB to CMYK, refer to the settings on the left (from Photoshop 11 or CS4). In the 'Edit' menu in Photoshop, choose 'color settings...'. From the window that appears, choose 'custom CMYK' from the list in the 'CMYK' section of 'working spaces' (please note that there are two screen shots illustrated, one each for coated

and uncoated stocks of paper). You may need to apply a medium or maximum Black Generation setting, depending on the image. For more advice on converting colors, please give us a call.

WORKING WITH PHOTOGRAPHS continued

remember to
convert all
colors to
CMYK

Scan **black and white line art** (i.e. a logo), **at 1200dpi** for best results. Any lower, and the logo may look blurry. Pay careful attention to the CMYK makeup of any 'black' in your logo. The automatically-created Photoshop black, for example, is made up of varying percentages of CMY (see page 27). You may need to adjust the color settings in your application to get a sharper black that is made from 100% black ink.

Make sure that any alpha channels are removed and all **layers are flattened** before finally saving your image. You shouldn't compress your image either, or it will cause problems. So LZW, JPEG and ASCII encoding are all no-nos. Although JPEG will not cause our rip any trouble, it should not be used if possible. And don't use DCS files, LAB color, Duo-tones or Tri-tones either – convert them all to CMYK. Please don't embed any color profiling, as this may accidentally overwrite your color settings. Images to be used on the black & white reverse of a job should be saved as grayscale.

DIGITAL CAMERAS

There is a huge range of digital cameras available, from mobile phone cameras to high-end digital SLR cameras. Images taken with lower-end cameras may not be suitable for printing, as these may have been compressed by the camera during the download process, whereas a digital SLR can output a high-resolution un-adjusted raw file. Even if an image looks okay on screen, it's no guarantee that it'll look okay when it's been printed. As with design, we would suggest that you leave photography to the professionals. Poorly taken images can do more harm than good to a company's image, or the promotion of its products / services. Professional photography can significantly enhance a design.



WORKING WITH TEXT



When working with small text it's best not to use colors which contain more than one ink. All printing presses have a tiny variation in the positioning of the different color printing plates. It's fine to use colored text in headlines or type above, say, 12 point, but below that the blurring may be noticeable and won't look too hot. The same thing happens when you knock white text out of a colored background made from more than one ink.

it's fine to
use colored
text in type
above 12pt


Be careful if you are putting text over a photographic background as the text may be hard to read. To overcome this you may want to lighten or darken the image in an image editing package such as Photoshop. You may need to adjust the image more than you expect – always think to yourself, “Is it more important to see the image, or read the text?” If the text is more important, it may be best not to put it over the photograph at all.



Adobe InDesign, Illustrator and the latest version of Quark Xpress have some interesting layer effects that work in a similar way to Photoshop. While we recommend that all special text and layer effects are done in Photoshop, the layer effects in InDesign and Illustrator can be used, providing that your flattener/raster effect settings are correct – see ‘Layer Effects and Transparency Effects’ on page 13 for more information.

WORKING WITH TEXT continued

Some text effects in Quark and Freehand are unreliable, so **avoid underline, shadow, strikethrough, and false bold/italic** options.



include all
fonts you
have used

Include all fonts you have used. Postscript fonts come in two parts – the screen font and the printer font. We need both, so please make sure you send both. TrueType and OpenType fonts only come in one part. Where possible supply Postscript fonts as these are much more reliable in a prepress environment than TrueType fonts have been known to cause more issues with embedding and subsetting which can lead to unpredictable results. To comply with the licence agreement, you should remove the fonts from your system while we are processing your jobs.



we advise
against
setting text
in Photoshop

If you are going “cross-platform,” i.e. from PC to Mac, remember that fonts don’t travel well. Check that we’ve got the same font and provide hard copies. We’ll need you to check a proof carefully since even fonts from the same place can have slight differences resulting in reflow and words disappearing.

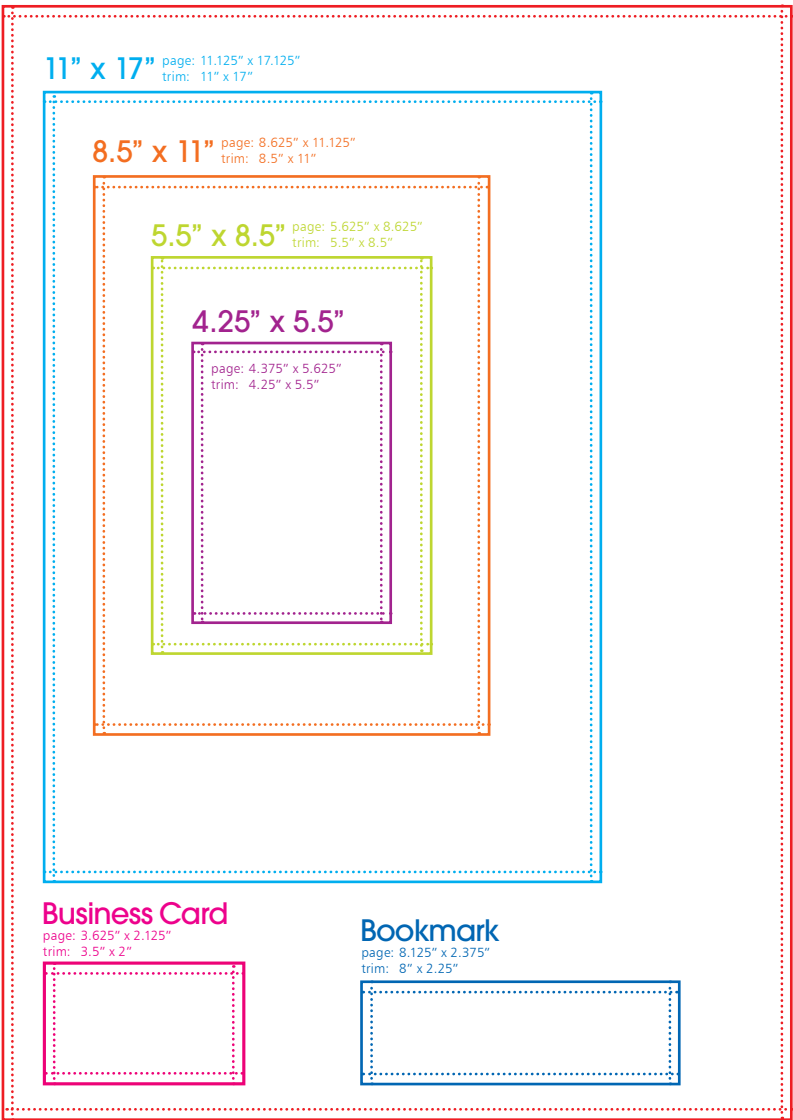
It’s fine to convert headlines and large text to curves, paths or outlines (which means you won’t need to supply the fonts). Avoid converting large areas of body copy as this could make your file over-complicated.

We really advise against setting text in a bitmap application like Photoshop – the text will not be nearly as clear as if it were vector text from Illustrator or Freehand. Also, Photoshop by default does not apply any trapping, and thus the chances of mis-registration are increased.

Finally, **don’t use “Multiple Master/Metric” fonts** as they are not compatible with our process. These fonts have ‘MM’ in their title.

COMMON SIZES

17" x 22" page: 17.125" x 22.125"
trim: 17" x 22"



— 'page' — supply your file at this size (see page 8)
..... 'trim' — this is the finished size of the product

FORMATS WE ACCEPT



please send
us a high
resolution
printready
PDF file

Software changes incredibly frequently, so it's best to call us before you start work to check which versions we support, especially if you want to send native files for us to check. To avoid confusion, it would be helpful if your disk contained only the relevant files you want printed. We can accept files supplied by email, USB device or on a CD. If you are using any other format please check with us first. We prefer a high resolution print-ready PDF.

WHAT TO DO NOW

We want your file to print the way you want it to print. And more than anything else, we want you to be happy with the work that we produce for you. So, if there's anything at all that you don't understand – give us a call (preferably before you start designing).



we want you
to get the
best out of
your print,
if you've got
any questions
please give us
a call

Chances are, if you've followed our advice (and remember, we've seen thousands of files in our time – we know what works and what doesn't), your file will probably print just fine. But for your peace of mind, even if you're a design superstar, we'd recommend our Hand-Holding service. For a small cost, we'll check your file and help you achieve the results you want – see page 4 for full details.

Remember to complete a File Supply Checklist to ensure you've not missed anything prior to supplying your files to us (copy the one on pages 34-35).

If someone else is creating the file, we strongly suggest you opt for our 'Make it Work' service. Alternatively, make them responsible for placing the order, and paying for the print. That way, if their file turns out to be incorrect (as they sometimes do), you won't be stuck in the middle.



Complex items

For complex items like punched cards or spot UV, we have to apply precise control information. Therefore PDFs may not be acceptable for this kind of work, especially if you haven't set the files up exactly as we need them to be. There are certain things we can't check within a PDF so there's an element of risk involved. We much prefer the original artwork so we can turn it into a PDF using our special process. This optimizes your file to put "underpinning" in place. If you have no alternative but to supply us with a PDF, talk to us first – we may be able to 'make your file work' – see page 3 for more details.

FILE SUPPLY CHECKLIST

Filename:	Mac/PC:
Application:	Version:
Your name:	
Business name:	

Page Size/Layout

<input type="checkbox"/> Product page size is correct	see page 7
<input type="checkbox"/> Page includes correct bleed	see page 7
<input type="checkbox"/> All important elements are at least .25" (.375" for booklets) from the page edge	see page 7
<input type="checkbox"/> No object extends beyond the page edge	see page 7
<input type="checkbox"/> No pronounced borders are used	see page 15
<input type="checkbox"/> A black page frame has been added (0.25pt, 100% k, set to overprint)	see page 8

Format/Files

<input type="checkbox"/> Design is created in an application we accept	see page 33
<input type="checkbox"/> Design is saved as the native file from the application	see page 33
<input type="checkbox"/> Design is supplied on a media type we accept	see page 33
<input type="checkbox"/> Only files required for this job are included and are clearly labeled	see page 33

Colors

<input type="checkbox"/> All colors are converted to CMYK, including any Pantone® or Spot colors	see page 20
<input type="checkbox"/> No tints contain less than 5% of either Cyan, Magenta, Yellow or Black	see page 22
<input type="checkbox"/> All colors (including images) have a total ink coverage of less than 225% (uncoated) or 300% (coated)	see page 19
<input type="checkbox"/> Large areas of black made up of 'Rich Black' (100k/40c)	see page 26

Images

<input type="checkbox"/> All images are converted to CMYK, and saved as TIFF or EPS files	see page 28
<input type="checkbox"/> Photos are scanned at 300dpi at 100%	see page 28
<input type="checkbox"/> Line-art images are scanned at 800 to 1200dpi at 100%	see page 29
<input type="checkbox"/> Images for large format posters are at 150dpi at 100%	see page 18
<input type="checkbox"/> TIFF and EPS files are saved without any image compression (not JPEG, LZW or ASCII encoded)	see page 29
<input type="checkbox"/> Any alpha channels are removed and images are flattened	see page 29
<input type="checkbox"/> All linked/placed TIFF or EPS files are supplied	see page 15
<input type="checkbox"/> Picture boxes in Quark Xpress have a fill other than 'none'	see page 12
<input type="checkbox"/> Correct GCR settings applied	see page 28
<input type="checkbox"/> Ink coverage below total ink limit	see page 24

Fonts

<input type="checkbox"/> All screen and printer fonts are supplied (including those used in EPSs)	see page 31
<input type="checkbox"/> No Multiple Master, Metric or Mac system fonts are used	see page 31
<input type="checkbox"/> No effects from the 'text effect' menu in Quark or Freehand are used	see page 30
<input type="checkbox"/> All text above 5pt (litho) / 14pt (Large Format)	see page 19
<input type="checkbox"/> Text under 12pt avoids using tertiary colors	see page 30
<input type="checkbox"/> Text set as vector	see page 31

Imposition

<input type="checkbox"/> A mock-up or hard copy is supplied and the design works on a functional level	see page 11
<input type="checkbox"/> All files are imposed within the document correctly	see page 10

Other

<input type="checkbox"/> No hairlines/fine lines less than 0.25pt are used	see page 12
<input type="checkbox"/> No Corel texture or postscript fills have been used	see page 12
<input type="checkbox"/> All OLE objects have been converted to bitmaps	see page 14
<input type="checkbox"/> There are no EPS files within other EPSs	see page 14
<input type="checkbox"/> Overprint items are set correctly	see page 14
<input type="checkbox"/> All special instructions for designing Booklets have been followed	see page 16
<input type="checkbox"/> All special instructions for designing Large Format Posters have been followed	see page 18

Signed: _____ Date: / /

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OR REQUEST FREE SAMPLES

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877-858-8732

This is an example of a 36 page 6" X 9" Booklet printed on 100# gloss text.

KM/6-15

