

PRINT&BEYOND HOW TO SUPPLY YOUR FILES

Always include trim marks (except for Business Cards)

Trim area is the final size of your job. We need all of your jobs to contain trim marks - this is how we know where to cut/trim your job. Make sure you also check out our information on internal and external bleed below.

Always include 3mm of internal bleed will see you right.

Internal bleed is the area just inside your trim marks (the final size of your job). We require 3mm of internal bleed on all files - this means you need to keep all of your important information away from this 3mm area. Background images and graphics are fine, just no critical information that can't be trimmed away.

Including a small area of internal bleed on your print files allows for slight deviations when your job is being cut down to size.

Always include 3mm of external bleed will see you right.

Your job is printed on a larger sheet than its finished size and then trimmed down to size. External bleed is the area extending just past your trim area (the final size of your job). This is the area that will be trimmed off with any other excess paper. We require 3mm of external bleed - this means your artwork must extend 3mm past your trim marks.

Supplying your files with external bleed allows for a small amount of movement that may occur when your job is being cut down to size.

Always supply your files in CMYK mode.

Your computer screen displays your images in RGB colour mode, we print your job in CMYK. Before your job can go to press, these RGB files must be translated to CMYK. It's best that you do the RGB-to-CMYK conversion of your own files. In most cases the colour change is very slight - too small to even notice. However, once in a while the conversion will produce a noticeable colour change. You'll have more control over the final appearance of your job if you convert all of your images from RGB to CMYK before you send them to us.

300dpi image resolution at 100% for best results.

Resolution is the number of pixels within an image. The more pixels in an image the higher the resolution of that image. The higher the resolution, the better picture. Higher resolution images produce greater detail and subtler colour transitions than lower resolution images.

We want to make sure that your images don't have jagged edges or pixilation, so we suggest making your artwork at 300dpi when it's at full size.

Resolution has an inverse relationship with size. If you enlarge an image you lower its resolution and if you reduce an image you increase its resolution. How an image is originally attained will determine its resolution and the size it can be printed clear and crisp.

Never more than 300% colour.

The maximum ink coverage that's possible in our printing process is 400% - that's 100%C, 100%M, 100%Y, 100%K. However, if you were to print a file with this amount of ink coverage, the ink on the sheet would never dry!

The maximum ink coverage we recommend is 300% for coated stocks and 240% for uncoated stocks. This means the colours you use should contain less than a total of 300% (or 240%) when you add together cyan, magenta, yellow and black.

Printing a file with too much ink can cause a number of different problems. Set-off is one of the most common - when ink from one page is transferred or rubbed off onto another page. It's caused by ink that has not dried properly. Our fast turnaround times don't allow extra drying time for jobs with too much ink. Once your job has been printed, it's either turned over for printing on the reverse, or sent to the guillotine for cutting.

You might be surprised to learn that you can perform 'under colour removal' to minimise the amount of ink used on the page, while keeping the colour the same.

Tricks of the trade: If you're looking for a deep, rich black, the best combination to provide this is 100%K and 40%C.

Always embed your fonts or convert to outlines.

Embedding the fonts that you use in your files allows us to print them even if we don't have those particular fonts installed on our computers. Your fonts will look exactly the way you want them to. Fonts can be embedded into formats such as PDF files.

Typeface manufacturers are a little precious about their fonts, and rightly so! Certain manufacturers allow you to embed certain fonts into your documents for the purpose of viewing and printing only. But remember, you must have a license for the font if you want to embed it in your document. Sending fonts on disc with your print job is not legal, as they can be installed and used as fonts by other people for other documents.

Always flatten transparency.

To print your job we require all transparent objects in your files, as well as any linked files that contain live transparency, to be flattened. This converts your transparency information into a format that our printing process can understand.

At its very simplest, the process of flattening converts all of your overlapping areas in a stack of transparent objects into a collection of opaque objects that retain the appearance of the original transparent objects when printed - you see exactly what you want to see.

When you save or export your document as a PDF you need to specify the flattener settings. To do this, we require you to supply all your files as Adobe PDF 1.3.

When you supply us with your files, never use file formats that preserve live transparency. The PDF formats that contain live transparency are: PDF 1.4, PDF 1.5 and PDF 1.6. We don't accept these formats.

When working with transparent objects that overlap, keep in mind that changing the stacking order can change the appearance of overlapping areas. When you are creating transparent effects that involve overlapping objects, make sure the stacking order is producing the results you want to see. Generally, type should be on top of all other objects unless it's supposed to interact with transparency.