

Preparing Files For Printing



Quick Guide to Preparing Your Files for Best Printing Results

To ensure your printed materials look their best, please follow these simple guidelines. If you have any questions, please contact us for further assistance.

Key Elements for High-Quality Printing

- 1. Recommended File Format:** PDF for print or high-resolution PNG. These formats ensure that all elements, including fonts and images, are embedded and displayed correctly.
- 2. Color Mode:** CMYK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Black). CMYK is the standard color mode for printing, ensuring colors are printed accurately.
 - **Note:** CMYK color mode is available on Canva Pro. If using the free version, we will convert your file to CMYK, but colors may shift slightly.
- 3. Resolution:** 300 DPI (dots per inch) for Printing and 150 DPI for Banners and Signage. High resolution ensures that images and text appear sharp and clear.
- 4. Bleed and Safe Zone:**
 - **Bleed:** 0.125" (3mm) on all sides.
 - **Safe Zone:** Keep important elements at least 0.25" (6mm) away from the edges.

Bleed ensures that there are no white edges after trimming. The safe zone prevents important elements from being cut off.
- 5. Fonts:** Embed all fonts or convert them to outlines/curves. This prevents font substitution and ensures text is displayed correctly.

Need Help? If you need assistance or have any questions about preparing your files, please reach out, we're here to help you achieve the best printing results!

- **Contact Us:** us450@alphagraphics.com, or 615 263 4444

Instructions for Canva Users

Step 1: Click on the "Share" button in the top right corner.

Step 2: Click on "Download"

Step 3: Choose "PDF Print" for the best quality. This automatically sets the resolution to 300 DP.

Step 4: Ensure "Crop marks and bleed" is checked.

Step 5: For Canva Pro users, select "CMYK (best for professional printing)" in the color profile section. CMYK color mode is available on Canva Pro. If using the free version, we will convert your file to CMYK, but colors may shift slightly.

Step 6: Click "Download."

The image displays two screenshots of the Canva interface, illustrating the steps to download a design as a PDF. The first screenshot shows the 'Share' button in the top right corner, highlighted with a blue callout labeled 'Step 1'. Below the 'Share' button, the 'Share this design' panel is visible, including options for 'People with access', 'Collaboration link', and social sharing options. The 'Download' button is highlighted with a blue callout labeled 'Step 2'. The second screenshot shows the 'Download' menu, where 'PDF Print' is selected (Step 3), 'Crop marks and bleed' is checked (Step 4), and 'CMYK (best for professional printing)' is selected in the 'Color profile' section (Step 5). The 'Download' button is highlighted with a blue callout labeled 'Step 6'. The 'Download' button is a large purple button at the bottom of the menu.

Instructions for Adobe Illustrator/Photoshop Users

For Existing Files and Projects: To ensure your existing files are print-ready, follow these steps:

1. Color Mode: Go to "File" > "Document Color Mode" > Select "CMYK Color."

2. Resolution:

- a. In Illustrator: Go to "Effect" > "Document Raster Effects Settings" > Set "Resolution" to 300 DPI for standard prints.
- b. For large format prints (e.g., banners, posters), 150 DPI is sufficient to avoid excessively large file size.

3. Bleed:

- a. Ensure a bleed of 0.125" on all sides is included.
- b. In Illustrator: Go to "File" > "New" > Set "Bleed" to 0.125" on all sides.

4. Embedding Fonts:

- a. Select the text.
- b. Go to "Type" > "Create Outlines."

Download / File Format:

1. Go to "File" > "Save As."
2. Choose "Adobe PDF." This will open a follow-up window with more details.
3. Select "High Quality Print" or "PDF/x-4" from the Adobe PDF Preset menu.

Additional Tips

- **Check File Dimensions:** Ensure your file dimensions match the intended print size.
- **Large Format Prints:** Use 150 DPI for large format prints (e.g., banners, posters) to ensure good quality without excessively large file sizes and reach out to team to discuss bleed settings, as it may vary on type and quantity of print.
- **Safe Zone:** Keep important elements (text, logos) within a safe margin of at least 0.25" (6mm) from the edge to prevent them from being cut off.
- **Proofread Thoroughly:** Proofread your content thoroughly before finalizing your design.

Instructions for Adobe Illustrator/Photoshop Users

Setting Up New Files with Print Settings: In Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop, when you set up a new file, you can set certain parameters like Bleed and Color Mode directly from the New Document window. Here are the steps for each program:

Adobe Illustrator:

1. Open Illustrator: Go to "File" > "New".

2. New Document Window:

a. Document Preset Details:

- **Width and Height:** Set your desired dimensions.
- **Units:** Choose your preferred units (e.g., inches, millimeters).
- **Bleed:** Set the bleed to 0.125" (3mm) on all sides.

b. Advanced Options:

- **Color Mode:** Choose "CMYK Color."
- **Raster Effects:** Set to "High (300 ppi)."

3. Create Document: Click "Create" to open your new document with the specified settings.

Adobe Photoshop

1. Open Photoshop: Go to "File." > "New".

2. New Document Window:

a. Document Preset Details:

- **Width and Height:** Set your desired dimensions.
- **Resolution:** Set to 300 pixels/inch for standard prints or 150 pixels/inch for large format prints.
- **Color Mode:** Choose "CMYK Color."

b. Advanced Options: Background Contents: "Choose White"

3. Bleed: Photoshop does not have a direct bleed setting like Illustrator. You need to add bleed manually by increasing your document dimensions by 0.25" (6mm) for both width and height to account for a 0.125" (3mm) bleed on all sides.

4. Create Document: Click "Create" to open your new document with the specified settings.