



FILE PREPARATION TIPS

FILE TYPE

For best results, your file should be saved as a print-ready pdf (Portable Document File). Adobe PDF is a universal file format that can be viewed on virtually every computer, regardless of fonts or software that might be installed on the computer. PDF is an ideal format for print documents as they will most accurately reflect the printed outcome. Depending on the software you are using to create your file, you can usually convert your file by looking for something in your drop down File Menu that says "Save As" or "Export As" and setting the outputted file type to pdf. Always choose the press-quality pdf preset when converting your file to pdf. Some programs have a "Convert to Adobe PDF" button built in.

RESOLUTION/RASTER IMAGES

All images need to be at least 300 dpi (dots-per-inch) at the size they are to be printed. (For example, if your jpg is 900 pixels wide by 1200 pixels wide, it is sized to print 3"x4". Take the number of pixels and divide by 300 to get your output size). Enlarging images in your file will decrease your resolution. If your images are at a lower resolution, the quality will be compromised. If you are designing in Photoshop, be sure to check your document setup. Photoshop's default resolution is usually only 72dpi. If you are designing in Illustrator, InDesign, or Publisher remember to choose the press-quality pdf preset when converting your file to pdf. That preset should convert your file, assuming any embedded images are at least 300 dpi. Vector images do not require special resolution as they can be enlarged without losing image quality.

FILE SIZE & PROJECT DIMENSIONS

Make sure your file is sized correctly for output. If you are printing 8"x10", you will want to make sure your file is sized that way.

BLEED & SAFE ZONES

If images or colors bleed, include a 1/8" bleed on all sides. For example, a full bleed business card would be 2.25"x3.75". Your project needs a bleed if the print extends to the edge of the project/page (e.g. no white border). Be cautious of the "Safe Zone" on any project involving cutting, make sure any text or other item you don't want to have cut is at least 1/8" in from the trim line. Crop marks are not required if the file has the proper bleed and "Safe Zone."

CMYK VS. SPOT COLOR

Use CMYK color space for optimal color output. Our digital equipment can make this conversion for you in most cases, but to ensure the best output, send your files in CMYK. If your file is to be printed in spot colors, be sure to define each color as a Pantone spot color and not CMYK.

FONTS

Send your pdf document with fonts outlined or embedded. Although not preferred, we do accept Word Doc, Publisher, Illustrator, Photoshop or InDesign Files; however, it is important to include any font and/or links files we might need.

IMAGE CONTENT

Be sure you are not using unauthorized copyrighted images (e.g. anything you do not have permission to print/use that is owned by someone else). This can vary from Google images to well-known licensed characters to images from professional photographers. If it has a "watermark" on it, odds are you don't have permission to print the file. To be safe, you can purchase images from stock image web sites like www.dreamstime.com. If you are using a photo from a professional photographer, be sure you have written permission to print the image.

SPELL CHECK

Be sure to run spell check before converting your file. It is always a good idea to have a second pair of eyes proofread your project.

Always look at your files before you send them to print and if possible print them out. Pieces sometimes look quite different when printed.

When in doubt, please request to see a printed proof.