

How to supply print-ready artwork

A straightforward guide to preparing PDFs that print cleanly, trim accurately and avoid delays.

THE QUICK VERSION

Please send one print-ready PDF at the finished size, with 3 mm bleed where artwork reaches an edge. Use high-quality images, embed fonts, and check every page before uploading.

Before you export: artwork checklist

1 FINISHED SIZE

Set the document to the exact finished size ordered - for example A5 is 148 × 210 mm. Do not start with a US Letter template unless that is what you need.

2 BLEED

Add 3 mm bleed on every trimmed edge. Extend photographs, colours and backgrounds fully into the bleed. Bleed is trimmed away; it should not be an empty white border.

3 SAFE AREA

Keep text, logos, page numbers and other important details at least 3-5 mm inside the trim edge. Allow more on bound or folded work.

4 IMAGES

For best results, use images at about 300 ppi at their final placed size. Enlarging a small web image does not create extra detail. Line art may need a higher resolution.

5 COLOUR

CMYK is preferred for predictable print. RGB PDFs can usually be processed, but very bright screen colours may shift when converted to print. Tell us if colour matching is critical.

6 BLACK

Use 100% black (K only) for small black text. Large solid black areas may benefit from a rich black mix - ask us if you are unsure.

7 FONTS & LINES

Embed fonts in the PDF. Outline fonts only when embedding is not possible. Avoid text smaller than 6 pt and very fine lines below 0.25 pt.

8 PAGES

Supply pages as single pages in reading order, not printer's spreads. Booklets normally need a page count divisible by four; include blank pages where required.

Final PDF checks

✓ One PDF, correctly named ✓ Correct page size and orientation ✓ 3 mm bleed where needed ✓ Pages in order ✓ No comments, guides or hidden layers ✓ Spelling, dates, prices and contact details checked

Crop marks are useful when your software adds them automatically, but never draw them by hand. Keep marks outside the bleed. If your software cannot add marks, send the PDF without them and tell us the intended finished size.

Exporting your PDF

Choose the instructions for the software you used. Always reopen the exported PDF and check it at 100% before sending.

CANVA	Design at the correct physical size. Go to File > Settings and turn on Show print bleed; extend backgrounds beyond the trim edge. Then Share > Download > PDF Print > tick Crop marks and bleed > Download. Choose CMYK if your plan/export offers it. Avoid PDF Standard, which is intended mainly for screens.
ADOBE INDESIGN	File > Export > Adobe PDF (Print). Choose PDF/X-4. In Marks and Bleeds, tick Crop Marks and Use Document Bleed Settings. Confirm 3 mm bleed, then Export.
ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR	File > Save As > Adobe PDF. Choose PDF/X-4. In Marks and Bleeds, tick Trim Marks and Use Document Bleed Settings. Confirm the artboard is the finished size.
ADOBE PHOTOSHOP	Set the canvas to the finished size plus bleed before designing. Save a working PSD first, then Save a Copy > Photoshop PDF and choose a high-quality or PDF/X-4 setting. Photoshop is less convenient for multipage or text-heavy layouts.
AFFINITY DESIGNER / PUBLISHER	File > Export > PDF. Choose PDF (for print) or PDF/X-4, include bleed and export all pages. Add printer marks only if the crop marks remain outside the bleed.
MICROSOFT WORD / POWERPOINT	File > Save As or Export > PDF and choose Standard / Best for printing, not Minimum size. Office does not provide reliable professional bleed controls; ask us before using it for artwork that must print to the edge.

What we check - and what remains your responsibility

WE CHECK	YOU CHECK
File opens correctly Page size and page count Obvious bleed or resolution concerns Basic technical suitability for production	Spelling, grammar and factual content Names, dates, prices and contact details Image permissions and copyright Final design, colour expectations and page order

Not sure? Send us the file before placing the full order.

We are happy to advise on bleed, colour, binding, folds and export settings. A printed or digital proof may be recommended. Please note that screen appearance is not a reliable colour proof, and minor colour variation is normal in print production.