



hello

Let us help you with your files

tgm

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We want the best outcome for all of our clients.

That means sending graphic files to print without fuss and the final product coming out like it's supposed to. Tgm has a really high standard and there aren't often mistakes. However on the odd occasion when there is a mistake we often find that the file supplied to us is the cause.

That's why we ask when you're supplying files for print, that you read our guide fully – and ensure that the files you are supplying are in the correct format, so that we can help you get the best out of your print work.

Correct file supply is the best way to ensure there are no unnecessary delays, costs and frustration.

hello

how should we work together?

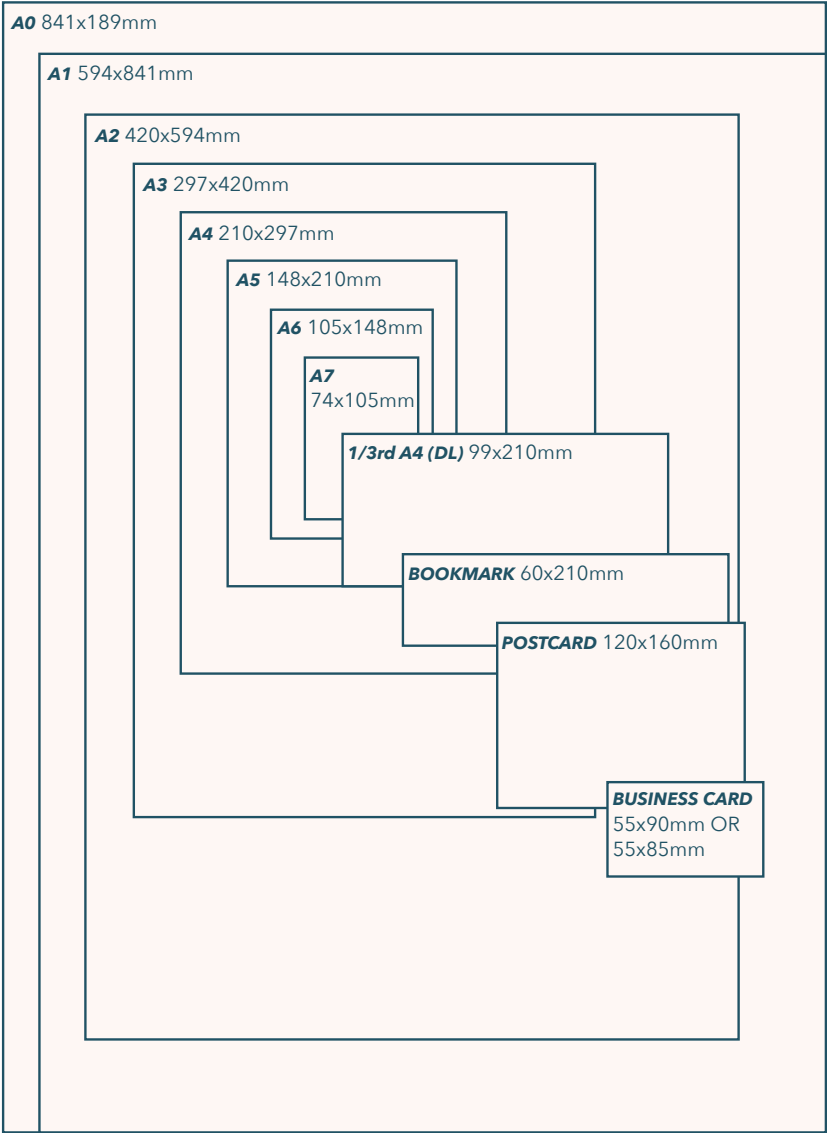
We work with our customers in lots of different ways, depending on their level of file supply expertise. If you don't know InDesign well, or at all, then let us take care of the **Design for you** - it's often the fastest, most effective and safest way. If you're slightly experienced, then you'll probably still 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.		<p>We'll design for you</p> <p>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.</p>
2.		<p>We'll make your file work</p> <p>Someone else created your design and now has gone backpacking round Europe? Don't panic. Give us what you've got and we'll do our best to Make it Work. See below for details.</p>
3.		<p>We'll check your file</p> <p>Follow all the advice in this guide, send us your file and our print specialists will run technical checks to look for potential problems.</p>

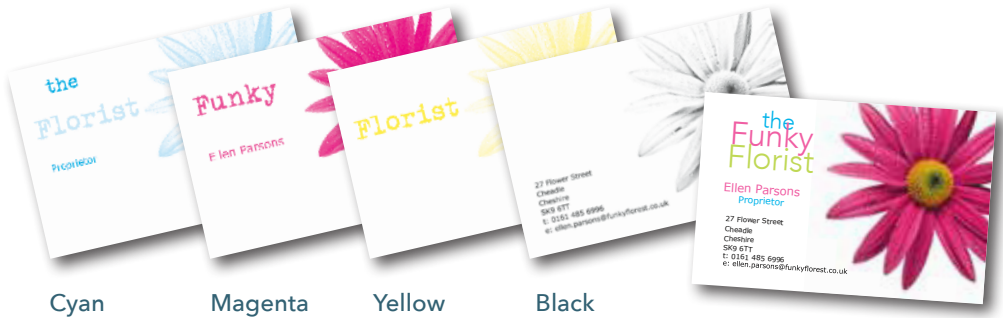
We'll make it work

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.

Common page sizes



About colour



Cyan

Magenta

Yellow

Black

Converting to cmyk

Your computer, scanner, digital camera and monitor create images using combinations of just three colours: Red, Green and Blue (RGB).

Printing presses use four different colours to print these images – Cyan

(light blue), Magenta (pink-red), Yellow and Black (or CMYK – also known as Process Colour). At some stage of production, RGB images and colours must be converted to CMYK.

Conversions of 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 colours may not print as expected.

Traditional printers often use Pantone® Spot colours when printing work. Spot colours are mixed like paint and printed one at a time. As we use Process CMYK Colour, all Pantone® Spot colours must be changed to 'process colour' and converted

to their CMYK equivalent, before your file is sent to us. Specifying conversion to process colours at the print stage will not meet with our requirements. (Use spot colours only when designing envelopes or invoice books. Ask us for details).

If you don't convert spot colours 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.

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

Checking cmyk

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

1.

My printing 'separations' on your computer

Or create a PDF file and use Adobe Acrobat Professional's Output Preview 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 colours that you need to convert. This is also a good way of checking knock-out/overprinting settings. tool to check the separations.

2.

Or create a PDF file as a Separated PDF.

3.

You'll get best reproduction from colours 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 10%

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 10% to 30% where possible.

If possible, choose from the colours on our complimentary colour charts – these are printed on our presses and apart from printing your job for real,

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

colour
cmyk

Getting the best from cmyk

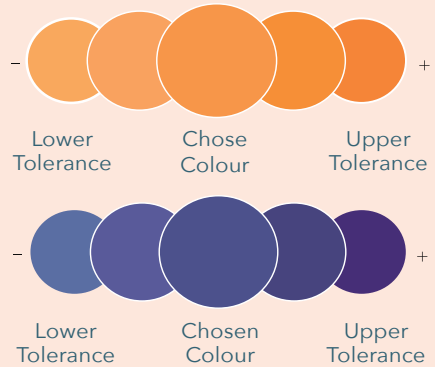
We will supply you with either an online proof, an emailed proof, or a printed proof. As with all proof types, none of these are colour accurate. The proof acts as a guide as to how the finished print will look, and should only be used to check layout.

None of the proofing types can be relied upon to spot items such as objects set to overprint, hairlines, JPEGs/RGB/Duotone images (which may proof in colour, but print in black and white).

Colour tolerances

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

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



A note about proofing

We do not supply proofs of print work for files and designs provided to us that do not require any adjustments. This just creates an extra, unnecessary step that delays your print work.

 ***Colour variation is inherent in any print process***

noted

Avoiding set-off

'Set-off' 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 guillotining or simply while the paper is stacked. Set-off is caused by the fact that the ink is still wet, and is most prevalent on uncoated stocks like letterhead.

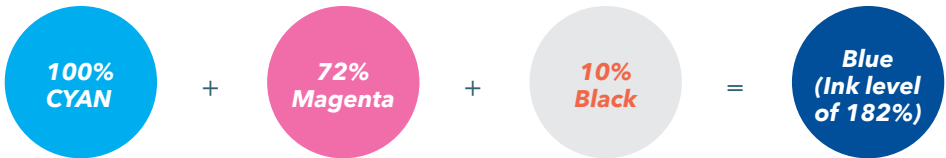
Let's just remind ourselves of how process colour is created. As an example, a mid blue colour consists of 100% cyan ink, 72% magenta ink and 10% black ink. If we add these percentages together, we can work out that mid-blue has a total ink coverage of 182% (100% + 72% + 10%). The maximum ink coverage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

 **Keep all Elements under 275% total Ink coverage**

We have some guidelines to help avoid set-off.

Our recommended ink coverage limit is 275%. This means that, wherever possible, the colours you use should contain a total of 275% or less when you add together cyan, magenta, yellow and black. When it comes to black, there are other considerations. 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 colours above 275% – you're putting a lot of ink onto 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 275%, 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 'UCR' (Under Colour Removal) to minimise the amount of ink being put onto the page, but keeping the colour the same – see page 16 for more information on this. You can also find in-depth discussions on this subject at www.adobe.com/subject.



'Single Colour' Black
100% black

'Rich' Black
100% black, 40% Cyan

Getting the most from black

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 colour black, made from 100% black ink. This is ideal for small areas less than 25mm² such as text or logos.

On areas of over 25mm² in size, single colour 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 colour 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 letterhead.

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 colour' black text as long as the total ink coverage is less than 275%. You'd be wrong! Black text should never have more than 140% ink coverage. "Four colour black" text is virtually impossible to print, will look blurred and may cause sheets to stick together.



'Single Colour' Black '4 colour' Black

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 InDesign, 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 colour picker tool). Then simply mix the matched colour in, say, InDesign – paying careful attention to the overall ink coverage.

Digital vs. litho blacks

Because Digital and Litho printing is so different it is important that you set your blacks up dependent on the printer. Below is a table that will help you when designing across Digital and Litho printing.

Elements	Digital	Litho
Text	100K	100K
Areas < 25mm ²	100K	100K
Areas > 25mm ²	100K	40C 100K



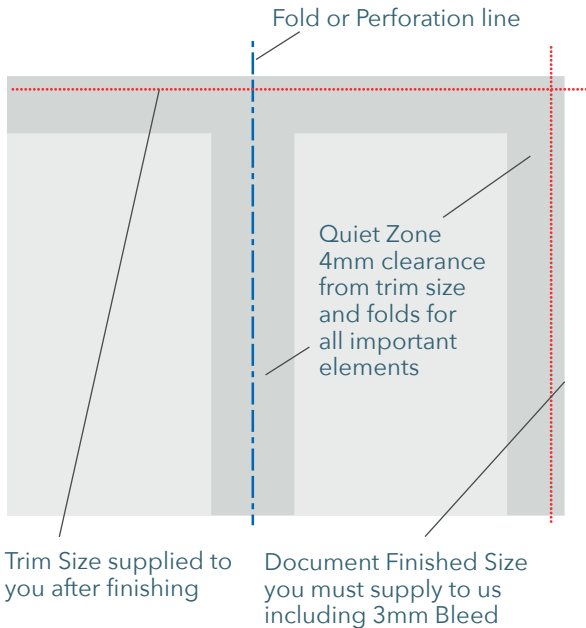
**Never use C100, M100 Y100
K100 or RGB black mixes.**

The file set up

Application choice

Adobe InDesign is our design application of choice. We've created design templates for all of our products in InDesign. If you prefer to use InDesign too, then we can supply you with a template to make things easier in an InDesign CS6 format. If you are using an alternative design applications, then we can supply you with dimensions.

Before you start designing any job with folds, creases, cut-outs or perforations - CALL US. These items need to be positioned precisely and we don't want to have to reject your file if it isn't right. This includes Folding Business Cards, Folded Leaflets, Cut-out Shapes, Greeting Cards and many others.



Page set up

For Large Format Posters, see additional information on page 24 For Booklets see page 20. For any other items, you can find all the dimensions you need on page 5.



It's best not to put any important objects, such as text or logs, closer than 4mm from the trim edge, or from any fold or crease

See the file set up visual of a business card on the next page

Example business card

 **Don't forget your trim/ crop marks**

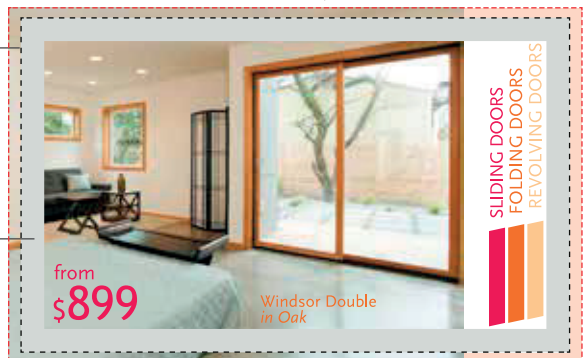


Keep important objects out of this Quiet Zone area (4mm from the page edge).

Set your page/s up with a 1.5mm - 3mm Bleed. Extend any objects which bleed, to the edge of your bleed. The Bleed allows for any small variations in cutting.

Your page will be cut down to the Finished Size (e.g. 55x90mm).

Keep important objects out of this Quiet Zone area (4mm from the page edge).



Checking quiet zone and bleed

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



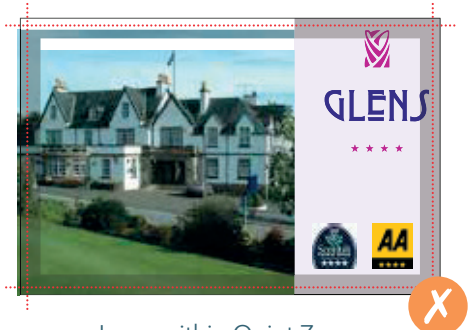
Design set up correctly



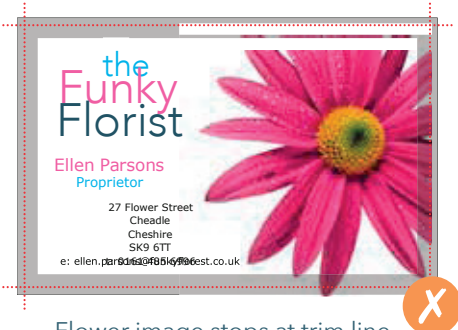
Design set up correctly



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!

You'd be amazed at the number of great looking designs that 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 greetings 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:

PERFORATION

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

GREETING CARD

Ensure that you flip the inside artwork 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 as one document with individual pages – don't paste them up, or supply 'printer's pairs' - see page 20

FOLDED LEAFLETS

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 panel sizes.

ROLL FOLDED LEAFLET

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.

CUT-OUT SHAPE

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 obliterate any text you want to be visible.



Simple things set incorrectly can ruin your design

It is very important to supply us with a mockup. Our print specialists will be able to check that your document works the way you think it works. If you aren't using our print specialists to check your document, 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.

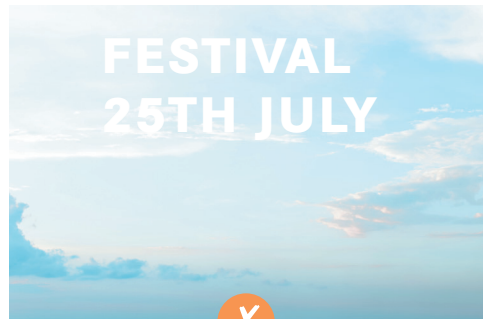
note

Working with text

When working with small text it's best not to use colours which contain more than one ink. All printing presses have a tiny variation in the positioning of the different colour printing plates. It's fine to use coloured 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 coloured background made from more than one ink.

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 and Illustrator have some interesting layer effects that work in a similar way to Photoshop. Whilst we recommend that all special layer effects are done in Photoshop, the layer effects in InDesign and Illustrator can be used, provided that your flattened/raster effect settings are correct – see 'Layer Effects and Transparency Effects' on page 28 for more information.



It's ok to use coloured text in type above 12pt

Working with text continued

Some text effects in design applications are known to cause problems so avoid underline, shadow, strike through, and false bold/italic options.

Include all fonts that 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. True Type and Open Type fonts only come in one part. Where possible supply Postscript fonts as these are much more reliable in a prepress environment than True Type fonts, True Type fonts have been known to cause more issues with embedding and subsetting which can lead to unpredictable results.

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 that you won’t need to supply the fonts). Avoid converting large areas of body copy as this could make your file overcomplicated.

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 InDesign. 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.



Do not set text in Photoshop



Avoid using text under 5pt



Include all the fonts that you have used

When using InDesign you need to package your files:

Open your file from InDesign. Click on the ‘File’ option in your menu bar along the top of the page. Now select ‘package’ towards the bottom of the drop down menu.

Working with photographs

If you are sourcing or scanning photographs yourself, save them as either EPS or TIFF files as this will preserve the colour 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 colour 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.

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 an A4 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.

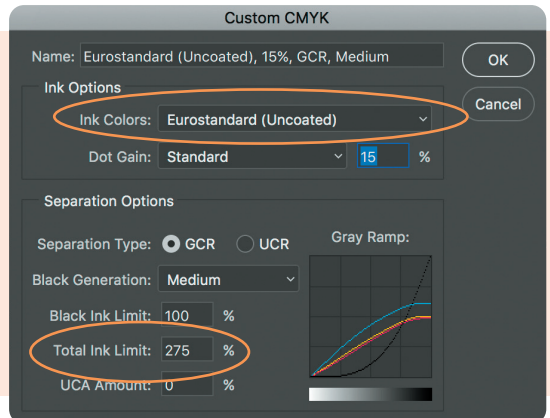
Don't enlarge or reduce your images in your drawing/vector software (such as Illustrator) – it's always best to use an image-editing application such as Photoshop for this task.

 **Set all your images to CMYK, Eurostandard Uncoated with a total ink limit of 275**

Converting photographs to our CMYK profile & fixing total ink limits

To convert photographs to our CMYK profile (from Photoshop), go to the 'Edit' menu, choose 'Convert to profile'. Set Destination Space to 'CMYK' with profile 'Custom CMYK'.

Then use the settings in the image to your right.

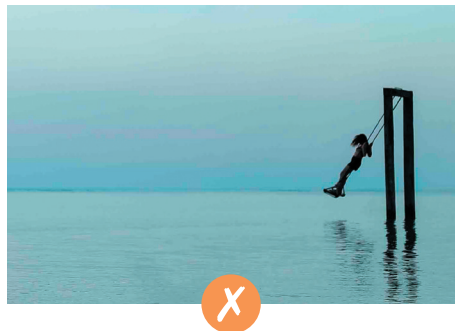
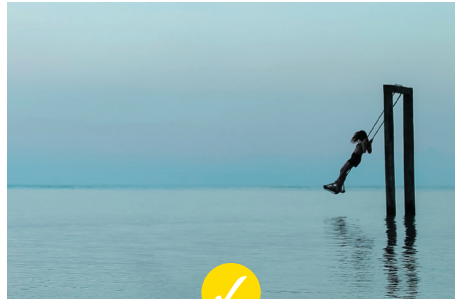


Scan black and white line art (i.e. a logo), at 1200dpi for best results. Any lower, and the logo may look blurry. Pay careful attention to the CMYK makeup of any 'black' in your logo. The automatically-created Photoshop black, for example, is made up of varying percentages of CMY (see page 9). You may need to adjust the colour 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. And don't use DCS files, LAB colour or Tritones either – convert them all to CMYK (you may use spot colours or Duo-Tone images for Invoice Books and Envelopes). Please don't embed any colour profiling, as this may accidentally overwrite your colour settings.

digital cameras

There are a huge range of digital cameras available, ranging from mobile phone cameras to high end digital 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 unadjusted raw file. Even if an image looks okay on screen, there'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.



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 Leaflets. If you're certain you want to design it yourself, read the whole of this 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 one file

Save your booklet as one file with all pages within your booklet included. You can't supply "printer's pairs" or spreads.

Add 3mm bleed to each side

Booklets need more bleed than other products. Look at the finished page size of the Booklet. Add 3mm to all sides of your page - a total of 6mm 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

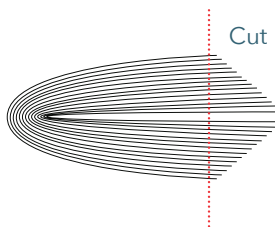
It's unlikely that objects which cross pages will line up exactly. It's best to avoid them, or accept that there will be some vertical movement throughout your Booklet. You'll also need to allow for the bleed being trimmed off - ask us if you're not sure.

Colours

Avoid trying to match colours throughout the booklet. Some colour variation is inherent in the printing process and will be most noticeable where two pages of the same colour 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 (see diagram below).



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.

Supply Single Paged

Supply your booklets as a single page NOT SPREAD layout in pdf form. If your bind type is not saddle staple then supply the cover pages separately as a spread with the appropriate spine included.



Avoid trying to match colours throughout the booklet

margins

Mind your margins

Normally, we recommend that you keep important objects at least 4mm from the 'finished' 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 a 10mm margin of 'Quiet Zone' or 'white space' on the page edge.

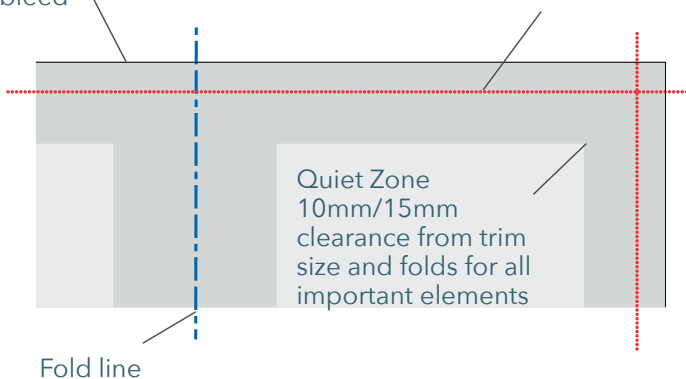
For booklets with page counts higher than 32 pages and novels, please increase the inside margin with the bind edge to 30mm and the trimmed sides to 15mm. This means that creep isn't as noticeable and items won't be chopped off.



**Don't forget your trim/
crop marks**

Document PDF Size
you must supply to us
including 3mm bleed

Finished Size supplied to
you after finishing



Spot uv and clear coat

Certain products have an option to add a Spot UV (StarMarque) or Clear Spot Ink (Clear Cover) varnish shape onto the areas that you mark with a special finishing swatch. This swatch is available in our templates, please ask for a copy before starting your design.

spot uv

Spot UV Varnish - can only go on front page

- When covering a printed element include StarMarque margin for movement

both

Clear & Glossy

- Set elements to over print
- Elements must be vector
- Text must be converted to outlines
- Solid elements only - no tints

clear coat

Spot Ink - can go on all pages

- When covering a printed element include StarMarque margin for movement

Don't try to align fine detail

StarMarque and Clear Coat are not suited to alignment with fine detail, such as small type, or shapes with thin lines.

One rule of thumb

Avoid positive lines thinner than 1 mm, and avoid reversed-out lines thinner than 2 mm. You'll get best results when you don't try to match printed objects, and instead treat the StarMarque and Clear Coat as design element in their own right.

Avoid large spot uv areas over the edge

Avoid large solid areas bleeding to the edge as chipping and flaking may occur once the job has been guillotined or die-cut.

Vectors only

StarMarque and Clear Coat elements must be supplied in vector format; any text shapes to be spot-varnished must be converted to paths/outlines.

Remember to:

Avoid positive lines thinner than 1 mm, and avoid reversed-out lines thinner than 2 mm. That includes the counters, stroke width and serifs on fonts.

Solid; no tints

StarMarque and Clear Coat elements cannot be specified as a gradient or tint, i.e. a changing tint from 100% to 0% over an area of artwork.

keep it simple



We use the latest technology and experts to reduce any issues that may happen but please remember that spot UV can sometimes shift up to 3mm from where your overprint gloss is drawn. Try to keep things simple to avoid this issue. The more complex the spot UV the more likely it may not align correctly.



Designing large posters

Designing Large Format Posters is slightly different to 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...

Respecting the 'quiet zone' of 10mm

You should position images and text at least 10mm from the edge of the Poster. For best results, make your background bleed fully to the edge of your artwork if it is within 10mm of the edge.

Watch the resolution

Large Format Posters are designed to be viewed at a distance (usually of at least 1m). 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 150dpi. 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.

Be careful with colour

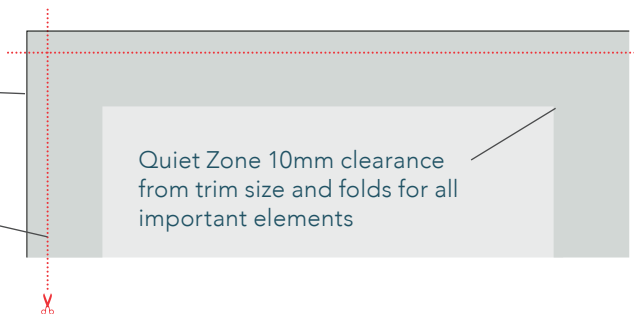
To create a good solid black, use rich black (see page 10). Don't use four-colour black and pay attention to the ink coverage limits (see page 9). Keep all elements under 275% total ink limit. It's best to avoid solid colours of only one ink (i.e. pure cyan, magenta, yellow or black) as these can be 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, and the limitations of the substrates, it's unlikely that colours 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 InDesign, rather than creating it in a bitmap-based application such as Photoshop.

Document PDF Size
you must supply to us
including 3mm bleed

Finished Size supplied
to you after finishing



Designing flags



teardrop

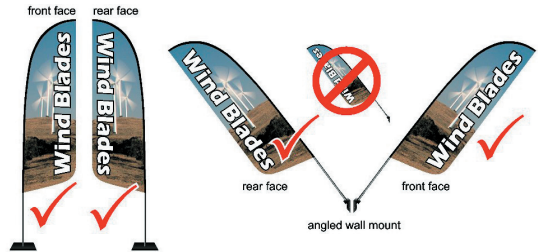


windblade

Template do's and dont's:

- Firstly make sure you have the correct template, getting half done then realising you're working with the wrong template is not ideal.
- Keep all text and essential imagery within the sewlines.
- Do not distort the template in anyway, we suggest locking the layer to avoid this.
- Only use the template for the product it was made for, using a Double Sided template for a Single Sided product is incorrect.
- Clip all final artwork into the flag using a clipping mask.
- Take note of the reverse side - DO NOT flip your artwork:

Designing Flags is slightly different to 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 but all text must be set to outlines before supplying. Here are some extra things you'll need to know...



tips

Pay attention to small text

We'd recommend that you keep your text to a minimum of 14pt. Once you have completed your design outline all text.

Respect the 'quiet zone' of 10mm

You should position images and text at least 10mm from the edge of the Flag. For best results, make your background bleed fully to the edge of your artwork if it is within 10mm of the edge.

Watch the resolution

Flags are designed to be viewed at a distance (usually of at least 1m). This means that images don't need to be as high resolution as on litho printed items. Images should be supplied at a minimum of 150dpi and no larger than 350dpi when at full size. Images larger than 350dpi could present processing problems and should be avoided.

Embed images into the art file. Supplied image quality will reflect final production quality.

Be careful with colour

To create a good solid black, use rich black (see page 10). Don't use four-colour black and pay attention to the ink coverage limits (see page 9). If using grey only use a tint of black (K) and no CMY to get the best print.

Due to the different technology used to produce our Flag range, and the difference of the substrates, it's unlikely that colours will match our range of litho printed products.



Convert all text to paths!
From InDesign, you can click on the text box, click on 'Type' and 'Create Outlines'.

Common pit falls

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.

hairlines

Hairlines are 'device dependent'. This means that they print at different resolutions on different machines. They may print fine on your 300dpi laser printer, but will give unexpected results on our 2540dpi plate-setter. Use 0.2pt 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.



unflattened image files

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



large areas of the same colour

See the advice on page 7 for more information.



EPS within EPS

Not a good idea as this massively increases the risk of a Postscript error.



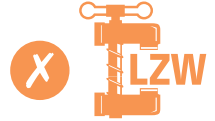
layer effects and transparency effects

These can be used provided that your Transparency Flattener preset is set on high resolution ready for printing and that in Illustrator the Raster Effects settings are set towards vector.



compression

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



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.



overprint

Be careful with overprint settings. If you set objects to overprint, they will not 'knock-out' the background, and will look very different to what you see on screen or proof (see page 6). Black text generally defaults to overprint, (as does the 100% black swatch in some applications). This is usually OK. CHECK YOUR OVERPRINT and look for white text on overprint, images set to overprint and backgrounds set to overprint. These will print over the top of all other elements so will not appear on the final print.



 **Be careful with overprint settings**

This only takes 6 easy steps: 1. PDF your file, 2. Open your file in acrobat, 3. Go to 'print production' in your side tool bar, 4. Click on 'Output Preview', 5. A menu should appear, click on 'colour warnings' under the separations in the box's window, 6. Simply tick on the 'show overprint' option in the bottom of the window and any objects on overprint will show up in the highlight colour selected.

InDesign automatically switches on overprint on black - which is great for text, not so great for backgrounds. To switch this feature off go to 'InDesign' at the top corner of your screen. Select 'preferences', 'Appearance Of Black'. A window should pop up, un-tick the 'overprint black' option. This will need to be done for each new file as it's an automatic set up.

duotone/rgb images

These may print in black and white, or with washed out colours – always convert to CMYK. You can only use Duotone images when designing for Invoice Books and Envelopes.



borders

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



 **Avoid using borders where possible**

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 website which you may find useful.



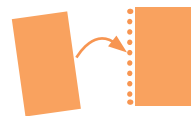
watermarks

Be careful with watermarks, if they’re too heavy it can make text or writing difficult to read. We recommend using a tint of 10% for the best results. We cannot guarantee to print below 10%.



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.



 **The safest file formats for images are pdf files with bleed**

Formats we accept

Software changes incredibly frequently, so it's best to call us before you start work to check which versions we support. Please make sure your PDF file is clearly labelled. To avoid confusion, it would be helpful if your disk contained only the relevant files you want printed. We can accept files supplied via the website, uploaded to your printing.com account, email, USB device or on a CD/DVD. If you are using any other format please check with us first.

What to do now

We want your file to print the way that 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).

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 seeing our print specialists. For a small cost, we'll check your file and help you achieve the results you want.

Remember to complete a File Supply Checklist (see page 31) to ensure you haven't missed anything prior to supplying your files to us.

If someone else is creating the file, we strongly suggest you see our print specialist. 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.

We are happy to accept any of the following file formats and media types from PC (Windows) or Macintosh:

Preferred applications*

PDF, InDesign (Packaged Files), Illustrator (Converted to paths / outlines)

Preferred media types*

Emailed PDF, USB, Email, CD-ROM, DVD-ROM or wetransfer.com

* Please call us to see what other applications and media types we may accept.

don't forget



When using InDesign you need to package your files: Open your file from InDesign. Click on the 'File' option in your menu bar along the top of the page. Now select 'package' towards the bottom of the drop down menu.

File supply checklist

Page size/layout

- Product page size is correct see page 12
- Page includes correct 3mm bleed see page 13
- All important elements are 4mm from the page edge.
(15mm for booklets and a 30mm quiet zone for the bind edge)..... see page 13
- No pronounced borders are used see page 29
- File is supplied with crop/trim marks N/A

Format/files

- Design is created in an application we accept see page 30
- File supplied as a PDF see page 30
- Design is supplied on a media type we accept see page 30
- Only files required for this job are included and are clearly labelled see page 30

Colours

- All colours are converted to CMYK, including any Pantone® or Spot colours see page 6
- No tints contain less than 10% of either Cyan, Magenta, Yellow or Black see page 7
- All colours (including images) have a total ink coverage of less than 275% see page 9
- Large areas of black made up of 'Rich Black' (100k/40c) see page 10

Images

- All images are converted to CMYK, and saved as TIFF or EPS files see page 18
- Photos are scanned at 300dpi at 100% see page 18
- Line-art images are scanned at 800 to 1200dpi at 100% see page 19
- Images for large format posters are at 150dpi at 100% see page 24
- TIFF and EPS files are saved without any image compression see page 19
- Any alpha channels are removed and images are flattened see page 18
- All linked/placed TIFF or EPS files are supplied see page 18
- Ink coverage below total ink limit of 275 see page 18

Fonts

- All screen and printer fonts are supplied (including those used in EPSs) see page 17
- No Multiple Master, Metric or Mac System fonts are used see page 17
- No effects from the 'text effect' menu in Quark or Freehand are used see page 17
- All text above 5pt (litho) / 14pt (Large Format) see page 17 & 24
- Text under 12pt avoids using tertiary colours see page 16
- Text set as vector see page 16
- Fonts are embedded in the supplied pdf.....see page 34

Imposition

- A mock-up or hard copy is supplied and the design works functionally..... see page 15
- All files are imposed within the document correctly see page 15

Other

- No hairlines/fine lines less than 0.25pt are used see page 27
- No Corel texture or postscript fills have been used see page 27
- All OLE objects have been converted to bitmaps see page 28
- There are no EPS files within other EPSs see page 27
- Overprint items are set correctly see page 28
- All special instructions for designing Booklets have been followed see page 21
- All special instructions for designing Large Format Posters have been followed see page 24

tips for printing

We do our best to provide you with high quality print work. But, there are some things to keep in mind during the design process you can do to guarantee an amazing print.

Guillotines & Margins

Guillotines can shift 2.5 mm each way in a stack of paper when being cut so keep important elements like logo and text 4mm away from the edge. We have the latest technology to avoid this issue but even if the stack shifts 0.2 of a millimetre the human eye can pick up the difference.

TIP: By moving elements 4mm minimum away from the edge on small products like business cards and A6 flyers it's harder for the human eye to pick up any issue. For anything A5 or larger try 7.5mm away from the edge as a minimum. (Excluding booklets as there margin is larger - See page 15).

Laminating a product?

If you laminate a product you should have no set off, chipping or transference issues. BUT! Keep in mind that you can not write or stamp a laminated product with most stationary so check there are no areas that will need to be written on before laminating.

Cracking

Keep in mind with brochures that if they have full colour along a fold line (unless laminated) cracking may occur. The ink simply won't stick to the fold line which is why all folds look white.

Envelopes

All envelopes that are printed have to conform to NZ post standards to ensure they will be useable once printed. Details and who to email your design for approval is available on their website:

<https://www.nzpost.co.nz/sites/default/files/uploads/shared/standards-guides/adv391-domestic-bulk-mail-envelope-layout-standards.pdf>

Grey images / photo

Make sure these are set to greyscale. If images are set to CMYK hints of magenta could appear and make the greys pinky looking.

Uncoated stock (letterheads)

Uncoated stock is matt looking and used for products like letterheads. Colours used in uncoated stock will differ from the same colours used on a coated stock like glossy business cards when printed due to the paper type and how it absorbs ink. Printing colour blocks on uncoated stock can have a slight motley effect due to the absorption as well.

Public Holidays & Deadlines

We do our best to meet everyones deadlines with streamlined work flow but we need your help to do so. Public holidays do not count as working days. If a product takes 5 working days to produce and there is a public holiday in the middle of those 5 days you can expect your print work in 6 working days. Let us know your deadlines as soon as possible so we can organise things to meet your deadline and needs.

Embedding Fonts

Always embed your fonts when you pdf your file. This is usually done automatically from the programme you have used to pdf from but it pays to check.

To check if fonts are embedded in a pdf go to the fonts tab of the document properties in acrobat.

ON A MAC: Open your pdf file in acrobat and hold the command key down, then press 'D' on your keyboard. Your document preferences will the pop up in a window.

Next to each font in your font list the word 'embedded' in brackets should appear

TIP: Where possible convert your fonts to paths/outlines.

Spreads over a bind

We do our best to align print work perfectly however a cover image spread across to the first page of a booklet can shift. This is very common with all printers and you may have noticed this with your favorite magazine. This is why this design type is not recommended unless the client is fully aware some copies may not align exactly.



Inside cover

1st page

tgm

DESIGN | BRAND | MARKETING | WEB | PRINT | SIGNAGE

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