XPRESS

DESIGN | PRODUCE | DEPLOY

Preparing Art Files for Printing

About Vector Art vs. Raster Art:

VECTOR ART
PREFERRED

Can be infinitely scaled with crisp edges
and no pixelation (jagged edges).

RASTER ART
BE AWARE OF RESOLUTION ISSUES

Can NOT be infinitely scaled. Enlargement
will produce jagged/fuzzy edges and pixelation.

ABOUT SCALING ARTWORK:

When providing artwork to scale (smaller than actual final print size), please use a common scaling factor... 1/2 scale, 1/4 scale, 1/10 scale, etc.

Be sure to include the scale factor in your art file name.
For example: Anycorp New Product Brochure - HALF SIZE. pdf

About Acceptable Art File Formats:

Provide print-ready files. Art files should preferably be vector files, fonts outlined, with images embedded (not merely linked). Save the files as .ai, .eps, or .pdf formats.

NOTE: Files with live fonts and linked images may ONLY be submitted if packaged for printing. In Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign, use the File > Package function. This is important if you expect XPRESS to be able to edit your files for some reason.

Photoshop raster files can be used if saved at 300 ppi at actual size and with unflattened working layers. Remember to rasterize text layers, please.

Microsoft Word, Publisher and Powerpoint art files need to be submitted as actual size, or properly scaled print-ready .pdf files (see above).

If you have questions, please contact us.

About Bleed and Safe Zones:

Most projects will require a 0.125" bleed on all sides to aid in trimming finished pieces. Two-sided large format projects should include a 0.25" bleed on all sides.

All critical text, logos, etc. should be kept within an appropriate safe zone ... 1" for large format printing and 0.125" for smaller pieces and traditional paper printing

Please refer to the following chart:
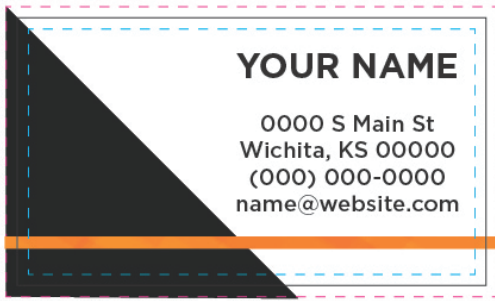
CORRECT BLEED & SAFE ZONE
Good bleed and
no text in safe zone.

INCORRECT BLEED & SAFE ZONE
No bleed and text in safe zone
that risks being trimmed off.

About Dielines:

If required, properly setup die lines guide our computer controlled cutting tables. Please provide die lines for projects that require trimming to a non-rectangular shape and/or that require scoring.

Die lines should be placed on their own layer, be 1 pt center strokes, and made a spot color. Use a different spot color for each type of die line. Please name spot colors as follows:

Through Cut	For die cuts that go completely through printed material.
Kiss Cut	For cutting through vinyl stocks with backing sheets so that the vinyl is cut, but the backing sheet is not.
Crease Wheel	Scoring the material with a crease wheel.
Knife Score	Scoring the material with knife cutting part way through.
Drill Holes	Be sure to make the drill holes the actual size and placement you need.
V-Notch	Used for thicker materials requiring crisp 90 degree folds.

NOTE: Projects that require only simple square trimming only need proper bleed and crop marks. Color bars, etc., are not required.

Don't have software to add dielines? No worries. XPRESS can add them. Simply let your XPRESS sales representative know and they can gather your requirements and discuss any art charges that might apply.

About White Ink:

White ink is commonly used for printing on clear material or on darkly colored material. White ink is often printed under other color to render it opaque.

Flood White ink covers the entire surface of the printed piece.

Spot White (Selective White) ink only prints in certain defined areas of the surface and requires care to be correctly setup for printing.

Setting Up Spot White Ink:

Artwork that needs to be printed with Spot White should be setup as a spot color on a separate layer in your vector art file. Make sure that layer is the bottom layer. Select a spot color that contrasts with the other colors in your art and rename it "White". You will need to set color artwork above the white to Overprint Fill in your software's Attributes menu. You can check your work using Overprint Preview in Adobe Illustrator, InDesign or Acrobat Professional.

If you have questions, please contact us.

White Ink and Backlit Signs:

White ink is recommended for use in backlit signs (see the illustration below). This will help prevent you sign from looking washed out when lit. We will normally flood a layer of white ink between two layers of color to yield the best viewing results.

About RGB Mode, CMYK Mode and Spot Coated Color:

Our equipment prints CMYK color. If you design in RGB or in CMYK mode, make certain all elements in your artwork are in the matching color mode. For example, all elements in a CMYK file should be CMYK. Mixing RGB and CMYK elements in an art file can yield undesireable print results.

If you use spot colors in your design, please use Pantone Coated Spot Colors. Do NOT use Uncoated or any other Pantone colors. Our equipment is set up to emulate Coated Spot Color. Please call out any Coated Spot Colors used in your artwork when placing your order. A Pantone Color Coated Bridge book is available at XPRESS for you to view and select color from as needed.

About Black vs. Rich Black:

Using simple 1 color 100 K black in artwork can create transparency problems in designs with Spot Color, gradients, and/or transparent elements. In general, text can be left as 1-color 100 K, but we recommend all other black used in your artwork be set up to use 4-color Rich Black, 20 C 20 M 20 Y 100 K.

About 2-sided Signs with Arrows:

Most 2-sided signs with arrows are meant to be viewed with the arrow pointing the same way no matter which side is being viewed (to direct people coming from two different directions into an entrance, for example). If your arrow points to the right on the front side artwork, then the arrow on the backside needs to point to the left.

The art preparation information is intended to help yield a final printed piece that you intend. If you have any questions about artwork prep, please contact XPRESS.