



CHECKLIST

IS YOUR FILE PRINT READY?

Follow our handy check-list to help to expedite your project – staying on budget and on schedule.

If necessary, review the other pages in this document for more details on how to meet the print-ready file specifications below.

Section 3

- ☐ Document is the correct size and meets the quoted specs.

Section 4

- ☐ Allowed ample caution area (important information is at least .125" from any trim edge).
- ☐ Bleeds set up correctly (background images, colors, objects should extend at least .125" past trim edge).
- ☐ Crop marks and bleeds are included on final, print-ready PDFs.
- ☐ The front and back of a PDF have been combined into a single file.

Section 5

- ☐ If printing 4-color, all RGB and spot colors (Pantone) are converted to CMYK.
Check the Separation Preview palette (InDesign) or Output Preview (Acrobat) – there should be no spot colors showing in your file if properly converted.
- ☐ All unused color swatches have been deleted from the swatches palette in your native file.
- ☐ The "Registration" swatch in your color palette has not been used. Please use 100% black or our recommended CMYK breakdown for a rich black.

Section 6

- ☐ Reversed out text is no smaller than 6 pt. and preferably a bold sans serif font.
- ☐ Fine lines and small text are one color (100% black, gray or white – not rich black or rich gray).

Section 7

- ☐ Image resolution is high enough (minimum 300 ppi at 100% size) to avoid pixelation.

Section 8

- ☐ If submitting native Illustrator or InDesign files, they have been **packaged** to ensure all fonts or images are included.
- ☐ All fonts have been embedded.

Section 9

- ☐ Direct mail pieces meet the USPS regulations for the address panel.

Other

- ☐ Artwork has been proofread to ensure no spelling or grammar errors.
- ☐ Fold-in panels are shorter than outside panels to avoid buckling when folded (.03625" for pieces printed on text weight or .125" if printing on cover stock). Please contact us for more info or to request a template.



1. Acceptable File Types

The preferred format is an **Adobe Acrobat PDF** (Portable Document Format) file created with a high-resolution PostScript from the native application. *Include bleed and crop marks (see section 4c), embed fonts and use CMYK, not RGB, settings.*

The following native files are also accepted (in order of preference) and should adhere to the guidelines listed in this document:

Preferred



Adobe Acrobat PDF
(.pdf)

Also Acceptable



Adobe InDesign
(.indd or .idml)



Adobe Illustrator
(.ai or .eps)



Adobe Photoshop
(.psd or .jpg)



2. Working in the Right Software

Prepare your art in the program best suited for the task.

Illustrator is a drawing (vector) program, ideal for logos, packaging, posters and single-page layouts.

Photoshop is a pixel-based (raster) program that lets you size, color-correct and manipulate scanned images such as photos and flat art (fonts in Photoshop do not print as sharp as they do in a vector-based program).

Neither is intended for multi-page documents.

InDesign is a layout program, perfect for creating anything from single page documents to multi-page books. It is ideal for importing vector and raster images from Illustrator and Photoshop as well as adding/formatting text.

Canva has become an increasingly popular layout program and has many similarities to InDesign. Please always generate a hi-resolution print-ready PDF from Canva, following all file preparation guidelines listed in this document.

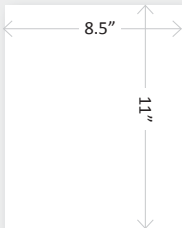


3. Build to Size

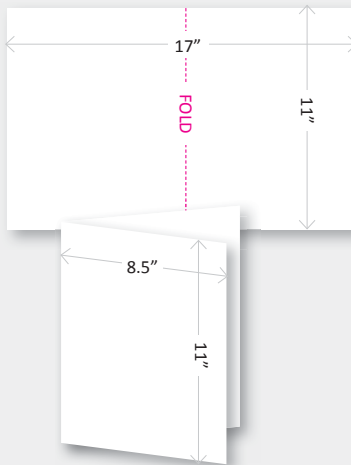
Build your documents to actual size. Please do **not** float your document within a larger page size.

For instance, based on a finished size of 8.5" wide x 11" high:

A **single sheet** with a final size of 8.5" x 11" should be built to 8.5" x 11" page size.



A **brochure** with a flat size of 17" x 11", folded to 8.5" x 11", should be created as 17" x 11".

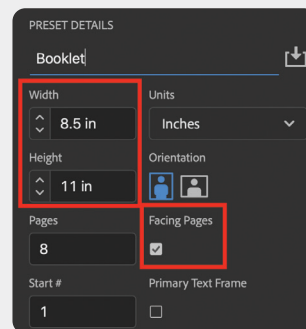


TIP: Templates

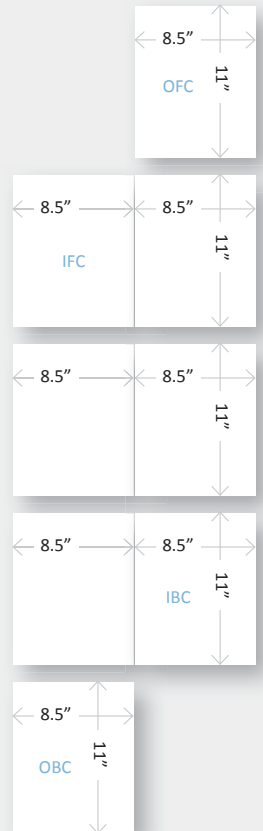
We have numerous templates for various sized documents. Contact us to see if we have the size you need!

Booklet spreads should be created as two 8.5" x 11" pages, not 17" x 11" forms, with the Facing Pages box checked in your document setup (see Figure 1).

Figure 1



Important: Please output PDFs for booklets as single pages (not spreads) as we have software that will impose in the necessary page order.



Incorrectly specified page settings cannot necessarily be fixed by simply scaling up or down, so make sure your document is built at the correct size.



4a. Bleed, Trim Edge and Caution Area

Bleed is printed area that extends beyond the edge of a printed document. Trimmed off after printing, it is necessary to prevent a sliver of white from showing at the edge(s) of the final piece.

The **trim edge** is the intended edge of a printed document.

The **caution area** is a margin in which to keep all important information (names, contact info, etc.) contained within, ensuring it won't be cut off in the trimming process. We recommend keeping these elements at least .125" away from the trim edge (see Figure 2).

Adding Bleed in Adobe InDesign and Illustrator

1. Start by opening your program and clicking File > New > Document (InDesign) or File > New (Illustrator).
2. In the New Document window, click on the "Bleed and Slug" drop-down menu (InDesign) or go to the "Bleed" section directly under "Width" and "Height" (Illustrator).
3. Type in .125 in the "Top" and "Bottom" section. If the chain link box to the right of "Top" and "Bottom" is checked, the bleed will auto-populate in all sections. Click OK.

You should see a red line around your document. If you don't you may be in *Preview Screen Mode* or your guides may be hidden.

Any graphics that you want printed to the edge of the document must extend beyond it and touch the red bleed line (see Figure 2).

Adding Bleed in Adobe Photoshop

1. To add bleed in Photoshop, click File > New, and indicate the width and height of your file. Click Create.
2. Activate your rulers: View > Rulers. Click on the vertical ruler, and while holding down your mouse, pull out guides to the left- and right-hand edges of your document. Then add guides to your top and bottom document edges by repeating the same steps of clicking and dragging from your horizontal ruler.
3. Go to Image > Canvas Size. By default, the Anchor box should show all arrows pointing outward from the center. Any canvas you add to the existing file will be added equally around whole the piece. In the width and height boxes, add .25 to each existing measurement. Click OK.

Your canvas should expand .125" beyond your guides on each side. The guides indicate your trim edge. Area beyond the guides is bleed area.



4b. Crop Marks (a.k.a. Trim Marks)

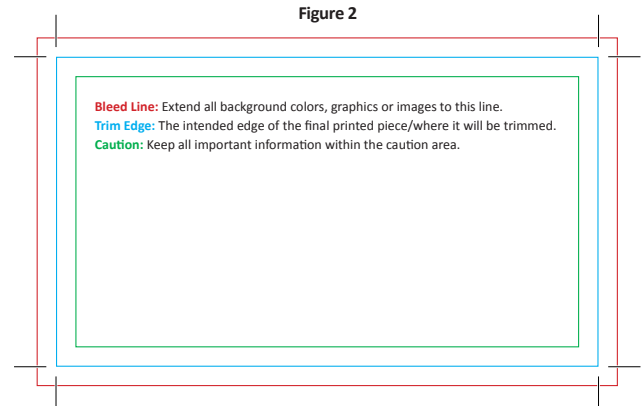
Crop marks are small lines that are placed/set back from the corners of print-ready artwork. They indicate the intended edges of the final print product and show us where the piece needs to be trimmed (see Figure 2).



4c. Generating a Print-Ready PDF

A print-ready PDF should always include the following:*

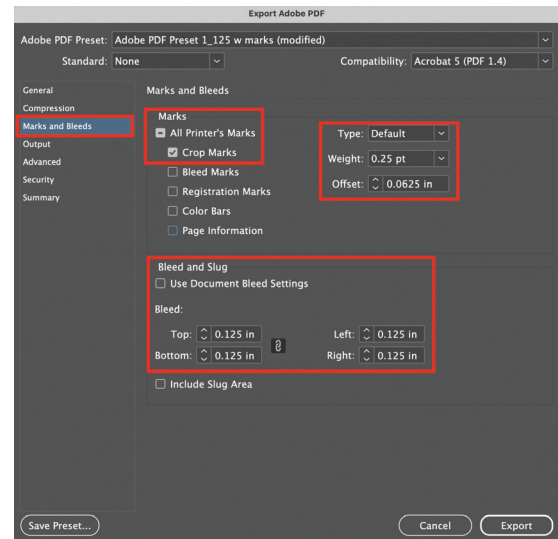
- 1) The **bleed** that you added when designing your file.
- 2) **Crop marks** set back .0625" from the corners of the document (see Figure 2).



Adobe InDesign and Illustrator

For bleed and crop marks to show up in your PDF, you must include .125" in each section under "Bleed and Slug" in the Export Adobe PDF setup. Also make sure that the "Crop Marks" box is checked (see Figure 3).

Figure 3



*Adobe Photoshop

Photoshop doesn't have the ability to add trim marks when you save it as a Photoshop PDF file. **Do not manually add them.** As long as you have included bleed in your document (see section 4a), our software will add the necessary trim marks when we prep the file for production.

Combine individual PDF pages into a single file before submitting.





5. Document Colors

CMYK vs. RGB

CMYK stands for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black (also known as process colors). They are the ink colors used in the printing industry.

RGB (Red, Green, Blue) are the colors used by our computer monitors. Many of the bright colors produced by our monitors' RGB displays cannot be reproduced in print.

By default, InDesign creates new documents in CMYK mode, however, Illustrator and Photoshop give you the option to design in either CMYK or RGB mode (the latter necessary for web design and creating graphics using various transparency effects).

For print purposes, please make sure all of your print-ready files have been converted to CMYK prior to submitting them to us (see Figure 4). This gives you the opportunity to tweak the colors to your liking if there is a color shift in the conversion process.

Pantone Matching System (PMS or "Spot" Colors)

The Pantone Matching System is a standardized color matching system used worldwide. It helps printers and designers to specify and control colors when color consistency is critical to maintaining a company's overall brand.

For a project such as a business card with a logo and text, it might make sense to use only PMS colors when printing the job. For more complex projects, such as a brochure with four-color images, it typically makes more sense to print the job using process colors only, while using the Pantone-to-CMYK conversion guide to ensure the closest possible match to any brand-specific colors (see Figure 5).

If your project is meant to print in CMYK, it's best to use the CMYK equivalencies of any PMS Colors as you design. Also note, while you can convert a PMS swatch to CMYK in the swatch palette of your design program, all programs convert colors differently, and rarely does the conversion match the official Pantone-to-CMYK color percentages.

Keep Track of Your Colors

Please delete unused colors from your swatch palette before submitting your file (see Figure 6).

Rich Black

Use only on large areas of black. Refrain from using it on small or fine fonts as well as thin lines. The rich black combination we prefer is C 25, M 25, Y 25, K 100 (see Figure 7).

Registration black should never be used in a layout. Its only use is for your layout program to create necessary marks (ie. Crop Marks) that are automatically generated when a PDF is created.

Figure 4

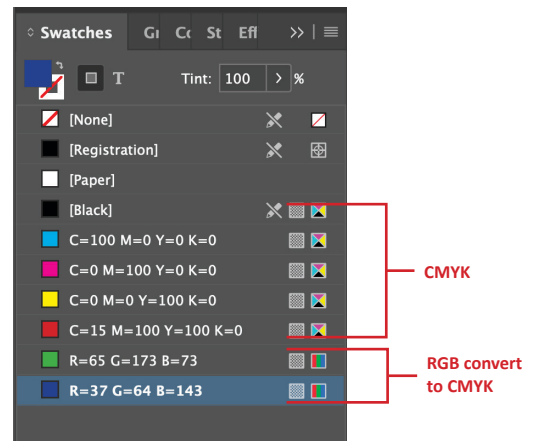


Figure 5

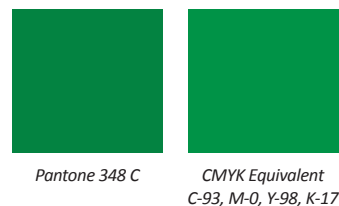


Figure 6

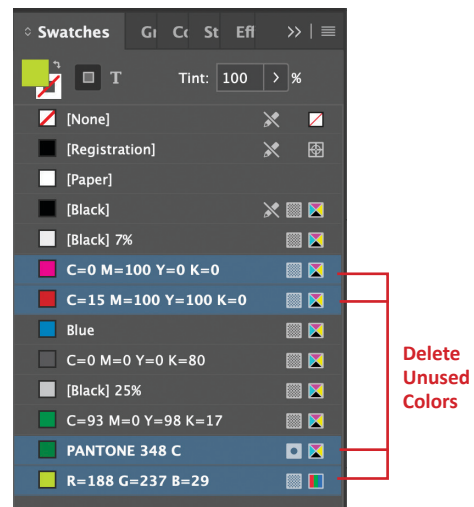
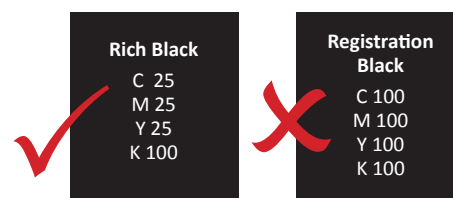


Figure 7





6. Minimum Font and Rule Lines Size Requirements

Small/Reversed Type

- Reversed type should be no less than 6 pt., and if possible, a bold sans-serif (i.e., *Helvetica Bold* or *Arial Bold*)
- Fine lines and type (such as serif fonts) or small type should be restricted to one color (ie. 100% black, gray, or white) for best registration. It should not be rich black nor a shade of rich black (ie. rich gray).
- For digital art files not supplied at the correct size, the effect of reducing the artwork should be considered for small text and for thin rules or lines.

Rule Lines

All lines and line art images should be a minimum .5 pt. thickness at final size to reproduce effectively on press.



7. Image Handling

Maintain Image Quality

Images should conform to the specifications for minimum image resolution – 300 ppi for color and 150 ppi for grayscale.

Photoshop provides tremendous pixel control, however, raster software cannot enlarge images without a loss in quality. It's better to start out big when producing a digital image, as you can scale down with impunity.

If you need to make an image larger, it is best to re-scan or re-shoot it at a higher resolution. Vector graphics, however, retain high image quality at any size.

Make Image Changes Before Importing Them

Placed images should not be scaled, cropped, or rotated within the page layout application. Instead they should be manipulated in a proper image editing program (i.e., *Photoshop*) before importing them into the page layout program. If done in a page layout program, these steps consume a lot of computer memory. (See *actual ppi* vs. *effective ppi* below.)

Actual PPI vs. Effective PPI

Actual ppi is the resolution of the image at 100% size, as set in Photoshop. **Effective ppi** is the resolution of the image at the size it's been scaled down to in InDesign or Illustrator.

For example, a 300 ppi Photoshop image with the dimensions of 5" x 7", if scaled by 50% in InDesign, is actually 600 ppi at its new size. This can produce unnecessarily large InDesign, Illustrator, and ultimately PDF files, which not only consumes a lot of computer memory, but also creates lengthy upload and download times when transferring files.



8. Packaging Your Files (Fonts and Linked Graphics)

All fonts and graphics must be included when submitting packaged files.

Take advantage of the "Package" feature in InDesign or Illustrator: File > Package. It will help you collect all the fonts and images used, and search for missing items. (Your document may show the placed image, but the actual file may have become unlinked when saved in a folder that differed from its original location. Missing links can cause graphics to print out low-res or not at all.) Also be sure to include fonts for any embedded graphics.



9. Direct Mail Considerations

When creating a direct mail piece, please take into account these consideration when designing your artwork:

- **Address panel:** The address area must be at least 4" wide x 2.25" high to ensure there is adequate space for the bar code and address.
- **Lasering variable info on a colored background:** The colored background can be no more than 30% of all CMYK combined. This is to ensure that the laser ink will adhere properly to the printed shell and to create contrast for USPS scanning equipment. For example:

Not Acceptable	Acceptable
100C, 35M, 7Y, 0K	20C, 7M, 2Y, 0K
= 142% Total CMYK	= 29% Total CMYK

- **Orientation of Address Panel:** The number of tabs used on a direct mail piece that folds closed is determined by the orientation of the mailing panel. Two tabs will cost more than one. Check with us about orientation that is best for mailing.
- **Perfs:** Please indicate perfs with a 20% black dotted line.



10. Submitting Files

Please upload your files to our FTP site. You can access it through our website at www.gofranklingo.com.

Click on "Send a File" in the upper right-hand section of our home page. Fill out all pertinent job info on the upload page, add your zipped file, and click UPLOAD.

