A&A GRAPHICS

File Preparation Instruction

If you're in need of help in getting your file ready for print, our team of graphic designs are ready to help, but if you have the capability to handle it yourself here are some tips that will help you. To achieve the best print, we ask that your files comply with the below requirements.

File types we prefer:

If possible, provide a layered file. It will help in the printing process.

> **What is a layered file and why we need it** *– All of the Adobe Creative programs that we noted above; Adobe Illustrator, InDesign, and Photoshop, provide files with layers that can be edited individually if there is an issue with the file when printing. A layered file provides the best way to adjust the file in any way needed to achieve the best print quality possible and to reach the desired size of the finished print.*

Composite (Flattened) File

Always save a composite (flattened) image along with the layers of your document. All files can be flattened. Flattening files combines all the layers into a single layer to achieve a non-editable version. The purpose of flattening your artwork is to preserve and reduce the file size of the approved design. You will not be able to reopen and edit after flattening and saving an image. This file is to be used as a guide to make sure all elements of the layered file transferred to us properly.

Steps for setting your file up for printing:

1. Creating a vector file

Vector files allow for more flexibility because there constructed using mathematical formulas rather than individual-colored blocks. Vector file types can be drastically sized with no loss in quality. This means vector images can be significantly enlarged or decreased while maintaining smooth, crisp edges. All text and logo elements should be in a vector format for best print results.

File format for vector files: ai, eps, psd, pdfs originating from vector files
Programs to use: Adobe Illustrator or Adobe Photoshop

2. What is 'Image Resolution'?

Digital images are made up of thousands of pixels (blocks of color). The number of pixels printed per inch is known as the image resolution, which determines the quality of the print. Higher number of pixels means higher quality, clearer imagery, and the best print possible. Here is a small table on different DPI's (density per inch) of images.

Print Size	100 dpi	150 dpi	200 dpi	300 dpi
4 x 6	400 x 600	600 x 900	800 x 1200	1200 x 1800
5 x 7	500 x 700	750 x 1050	1000 x 1400	1500 x 2100
8 x 10	800 x 1000	1200 x 1500	1600 x 2000	2400 x 3000
11 x 14	1100 x 1400	1650 x 2100	2400 x 2800	3300 x 4200
12 x 18	1200 x 1800	1800 x 2700	2400 x 3600	3600 x 5400
16 x 20	1600 x 2000	2400 x 3000	3200 x 4000	4800 x 6000
20 x 24	2000 x 2400	3000 x 3600	4000 x 4800	6000 x 7200
20 x 30	2000 x 3000	3000 x 4500	4000 x 6000	6000 x 9000
24 x 30	2400 x 3000	3600 x 4500	4800 x 6000	7200 x 9000
24 x 36	2400 x 3600	3600 x 5400	4800 x 7200	7200 x 10800
30 x 40	3000 x 4000	4500 x 6000	6000 x 8000	9000 x 12000
40 x 60	4000 x 6000	6000 x 9000	8000 x 12000	12000 x 18000

Recommended resolution for printing: 300dpi (can be lower depending on size of print)
Note: Images downloaded from the internet do not print clearly due to their low resolution.

3. Create file with CMYK in mind

You might design in RGB, proof in RGB, preview in RGB, however, we print in CMYK format. It is very rare that a computer monitor will accurately display the colors chosen in your layout. Your images may print in black and white or with inaccurate color if you neglect to convert images. We prefer colors to be submitted in CMYK or Pantone selected from one of our shop printed Pantone charts.

RGB
Digital

CMYK
Print
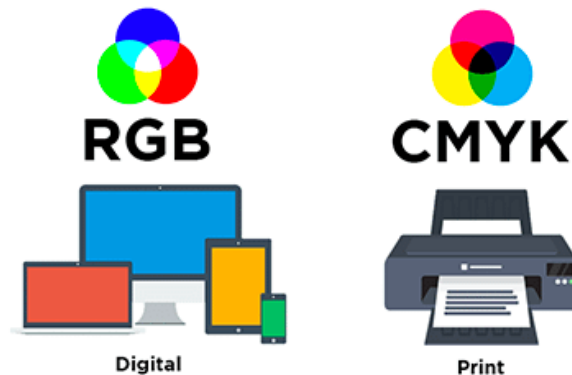
Produce a Print-Ready Adobe PDF File

If you're using a color-managed workflow, you can use the precision of color profiles to perform an on-screen preview (a *soft proof*). You can examine how your document's colors look when reproduced on a particular output device.

Note: Unless you are using a color management system (CMS) with accurately calibrated ICC profiles and are sure that you have properly calibrated your monitor, don't rely on the on-screen appearance of colors.

1. Prepare the document for exporting to Adobe PDF.
2. Export using preset: PDF/X-1a2001
3. Compression: Color Images: 300 ppi, Grayscale Images: 300 ppi, Monochromatic Images: 1200 ppi.
4. Marks and Bleed: Select to include bleed if you have built this into your document
5. Output: Color Conversion: No Color Conversion, Profile Inclusion Policy: Include All Profiles
6. Proof and correct the PDF file.
7. Send the press-ready PDF via WeTransfer

Inadequate Bleeds

A bleed is any area on a printed sheet where ink extends to the cut edge. One problem of inadequate bleeds is that an image that you expect to extend to the edge will show a tiny white line on the trimmed edge. It leads to an unpolished, unfinished look that you want to avoid. We prefer at least 1/8 (.1250) bleed.

Compressing and Transferring the File

Once your files are completely setup and saved, you will want to compress your file if it is too large to email. Follow the steps below to compress and then if still too large send with WeTransfer.

1. Right-click the folder and choose "Compress" (Mac) or "Send to ZIP" This will create a zip file.
2. Send compressed file via WeTransfer