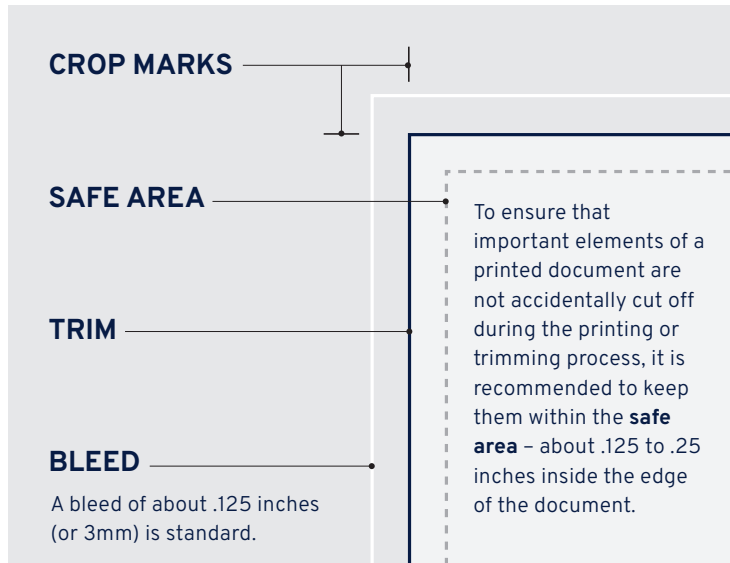




A BEST PRACTICES RESOURCE FOR
QUALITY PRINT PRODUCTION

DEFINE BLEED, SAFE AREA, TRIM AND CROP MARKS

Taking your design from digital to a physical piece involves making sure your file's bleed, crop and cuts are lined up properly. These marks indicate the edges of your design and where cuts should be made once elements are printed. These will give your design that professional, designed-all-the-way-to-the-edge-of-the-page feel.



ENSURE COLOR ACCURACY (PROCESS COLOR VS SPOT)

Design software programs, such as the Adobe Creative Cloud, operate in the RGB color mode by default. However, once your files go to press, the inks used for photographic representation are CMYK (cyan, magenta, yellow and black), also known as process colors. Printers use process colors to overlay different intensities of each CMYK ink tone to create a full range of colors. The basic takeaway for color accuracy is this, set your files to CMYK mode.

Spot colors are colors based on the Pantone Matching System or PMS colors. A spot color is any color generated using special inks (pure or mixed) that is printed on a single pass.

Process Colors (CMYK)



Cyan

Magenta

Yellow

Black

Spot Color Examples (PMS Colors)



Pantone 542

Pantone 2736

Pantone 376

Pantone 123

VARIOUS FILE FORMATS AND HOW THEY ARE USED

In addition to the proper color mode, files also need to be provided in the proper format. For instance, while digital media files, JPGs and PNGs, are acceptable for print in CMYK color mode, print media best practices recommend that images provided for press be in TIFF format. Here's a few other critical file formats to know.



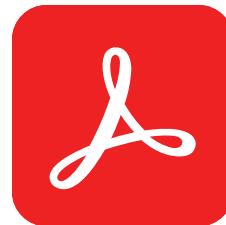
Adobe InDesign has all the best tools for creating complete layouts for print, especially multi-page layouts using its master page system. Use this application to import all your other design assets in the subsequent file formats listed below.



Adobe Photoshop, in addition to Adobe Lightroom, is primarily used to enhance and manipulate images as a means of improving their overall appearance. Photoshop can also provide a means of scaling image size and enhancing resolution. Please be sure your rastered PS files are in CMYK format.



Adobe Illustrator is used primarily for drawing and the creation of vector graphics. Illustrator files are known as **AI** files, however another vector format generated by Illustrator is the **EPS** file or Encapsulated Postscript file. Use these formats when providing logos to the printer.



The PDF File, or Portable Document File, is an Adobe format that provides a digital document, combining text or text and graphics while representing a final printed document. PDFs can be reduced in size in order to view, print and electronically transmit them without image degradation.

VECTOR FILES, RASTER FILES AND THEIR VARIOUS FORMATS

In addition to the four Adobe Creative Cloud formats mentioned above, other file formats that are important to understand when providing assets to your printer include *vector* files and *raster* files.

VECTOR FILES (.ai, .eps, .svg, .pdf)

Dictated by mathematical formulas, **vector files** are comprised of paths and curves. These paths and curves are produced exclusively through special design applications like Adobe Illustrator or Sketch.

Due to their algorithmic makeup, vectors are infinitely scalable, and remain smooth and crisp even when sized up to massive dimensions. This scalability makes them ideal for design work consisting of logos and icons.

RASTER FILES (.tif, .psd, .jpg, .png, .gif)

Raster images, or bitmap images, consist of tiny squares called pixels. These pixels contain small bits of color and, when combined, build images. When you zoom in on a raster image, the pixels become more apparent while the image details become blurry.

Raster images are used in photography. When you take a photo with a phone/camera, the image is recorded as pixel data. When used in design applications, these images are called raster images.

As previously mentioned, a JPG file is a lossy compression file format commonly used in website design, video production and other digital media. While standard in RGB color mode for electronic mediums, JPG files, as well as PNGs, are NOT best practice formats for sending files to press. The recommended file format is TIFF.

IMAGE RESOLUTION

As mentioned above, raster images consist of tiny squares called pixels. The more pixels (or dots) an image has, the higher the image quality. **Resolution** refers to the number of pixels that comprise the image. This is commonly expressed as dpi, or dots per inch. A photograph with high dpi is known as a high-resolution image.

For best results on press, it is recommended that files have a resolution of at least 300 dpi. Submitting files with less than 300 dpi may result in the printed piece being pixelated or blurry. The higher the dpi (at 100% actual size), the greater the resolution. The greater the resolution, the better the image quality. But don't go too crazy. Higher resolution can also create large files.

Due to the abundance of pixels in a raster image, the file size can become quite substantial. Depending on the project, high-resolution images can sometimes be worrisome when there are limits to file storage or limitations in transferring files digitally to your print provider. Please provide files at 100% their usage size.

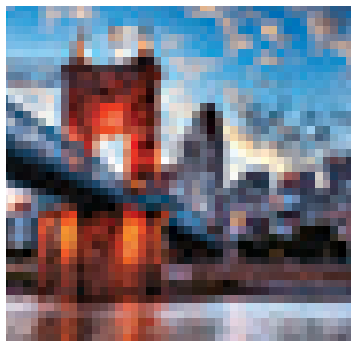
Image resolution is relative and is directly and inversely proportional to an image's physical size.

- Scaled-up, an image *loses* resolution
- Scaled-down, an image *gains* resolution

When importing design assets into Adobe InDesign for layout or sending photographic images to your printer, please be sure that the RGB file is converted to CMYK. By providing a 300 dpi TIFF file in CMYK color format, the preferred raster graphics format for printing, you are ensuring high quality results in your final project.



300 dpi (High-Resolution)



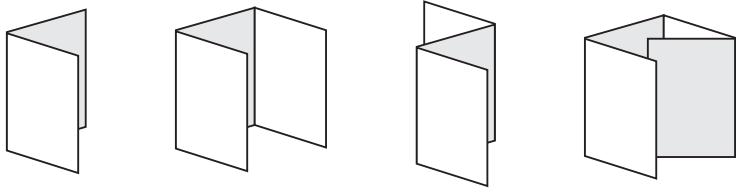
72 dpi (Low-Resolution)

FONTS

Fonts smaller than 8pt are not recommended. If working in a vector-based design application such as Adobe Illustrator or Adobe InDesign, in the PDF advanced settings, please be sure to set "Subset fonts when percent of characters is less than 0%." When sending files to press, please be sure to include all fonts. When packaging a project through Adobe InDesign, the "Package" feature should do this automatically for you. Providing a Press-Quality PDF file with indicated bleed and the fonts embedded is also very helpful.

GV TEMPLATES

Graphic Village can offer you various types of folding options. Before developing your design, consult your GV account manager for fold templates, recommendations and other important information.



STARTING A PROJECT WITH GV

When submitting a project to Graphic Village, it's important you provide your account manager with the vital information listed below:

- Name/Description of piece
- Quantity
- Size – width x height (always provide width first)
- Colors – B/W, four-color, spot?
- Finishing? Digital embellishments?
- Mailing or no?
- Bleed or no bleed?
- Binding (fold, stitch, etc.)
- Type and weight of paper
- How it packages for delivery – boxes or shrink-wrap?
- Date needed by
- Delivery instructions

YOUR PROJECT JOURNEY

Below is the process your project will go through on its journey to becoming an impactful marketing piece.

1. Provide your account manager the job specifics
2. Receive a quote based on the provided specs
3. Approve quote/issue purchase order
4. Quote is converted to a live job
5. Account manager provides GV FTP info for digital file delivery (all native files must be provided)
6. PDF proof is generated
7. Hard copy proof provided if binding work is required
8. Approve proof – ready to print
9. Job goes to press – printing
10. Bindery work executed
11. Mailing (if required)
12. Shipping – shrink wrap or boxed
13. Delivery of your expertly finished product



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