

Digital Prepress... the most complicated part of printing for both printers and designers alike.
Common Problems: no bleed, missing fonts, low resolution photos, full colour black text, files saved and packaged incorrectly. Oh my!

The next time you design a project and submit it to us for printing, take a peek at this list and your life and our job should be much easier!

When creating documents to send for digital output, please ensure that:

- The document dimensions are correct and at the right size for output.
- All images are correctly positioned and linked.
- Logos or graphics created in programs like Illustrator, have all type converted to paths or outlines.
- In your page layout program, the status of all imported pictures or links should be "ok."
- You have only used fonts that you intended to use for output.
- All unused colours have been deleted.
- The pasteboard's surrounding all design pages are empty.
- All document bleeds have been extended at least 3mm beyond the desired finished size of your project.
- All documents have been proof-read and double-checked before submission. Have a friend proof read it!

Design & Pre-Press Checklist:

- Do not use Publisher or Freehand. Stick to Adobe Products for ease of use.
- Try not to use Microsoft programmes like Word or Excel, if you have no alternative generate a PDF of your final file.
- Remember, Photoshop is for photos. Illustrator is for illustrations. InDesign is for Page Layout.
- Do not enlarge images beyond 120% of original size when placing it in your document.
- Do not use images downloaded from Google.
- Do not use compression methods (i.e. LZW or JPEG) on placed images for output.
- Do not use RGB images whenever possible. Convert them to CMYK.

Before submitting files, please make sure that you have included:

- All fonts required to process and print the document.
- All attached EPS and/or TIFF/JPG files.
- Final laser prints of all document pages.

If all else fails, submit a PDF with appropriate bleeds and crop marks. Please reference Print-Ready PDF files for more information.

Print-ready PDF files Adobe's Portable Document Format (PDF) is great for a multitude of uses. The trick is, because a PDF can be created many different ways, to create it the correct way and pack it with the essential information for high-quality digital or offset printing.

Here are a few of the minimum requirements for a PDF file to be usable for high-resolution printing.

- All fonts used in the document should be embedded in the PDF file. The preference for "Subsetting" the fonts should be set to 100%.
- For CMYK printing, all colour in the document should be CMYK. This goes for ink colours as well as photos and illustrations. Do not use the registration colour for anything other than crop marks. Make sure black type is 100% black only.
- For SPOT colour printing, make sure the spot colours are Pantone colours and are created as spots NOT process.
- Make sure that the photos and line art in the document do not have their resolution reduced (downsampled) when the PDF is created. Photos should retain their 300 dpi resolution.
- The compression should be fine set on "automatic" but we say "zip" is better than "jpeg" for quality. You can also choose "none" and the photos will not be compressed when the PDF is created but, this will result in a larger PDF.

If you follow these guidelines, your PDF will work for high-resolution printing. The same PDF will also work in all the processes that require less resolution as well.