



CHECKLIST: PRINT-READY ARTWORK REQUIREMENTS



To help ensure the accuracy and quality of your printed projects, we have compiled a print-ready artwork requirements checklist overview to help you ensure your artwork is ready for print.

☐ COLOR ACCURACY

- Graphic design files for print should be saved using a **CMYK color profile** to ensure color accuracy during printing.
- If your print job is CMYK only, make sure all spot colors (Pantone, etc.) are changed to CMYK.
- If your print job is a **spot color** (Pantone color) only, convert all CMYK or RGB images to your selected spot color.
- Make sure all black type is 100% black and not a build of CMYK.
- The **RGB color profile** is intended for displaying graphics on screens, not for printed materials. RGB files should be converted to CMYK color, and any images placed in the art file should also be CMYK color to ensure proper printing.

☐ FONTS & TEXT

- To avoid font conflicts or issues during the printing process when working in a vector-based software, like **Adobe Illustrator**, we recommend:
 - Save your .AI file with the fonts intact as text
 - Save an .EPS file with the fonts outlined
 - For final art for print, outline fonts and save as a .PDF file
- When working in **Adobe InDesign**, be sure to embed the fonts when exporting the document as a .PDF for print.
- If your project is designed in **Adobe Photoshop**, flatten your image before generating a .PDF file to send for print. This will rasterize your fonts to prevent font issues.
- Follow **recommended guidelines** when choosing a font size, font style and font color for your printed projects.

RESOLUTION

- For an image to print properly, its resolution must be at least 300 dots per inch (DPI) at the final output size.
- Files with resolutions higher than 300dpi are ok to send for print, but not necessary, and the higher resolution will not improve the printed quality of your project.

FILE SIZE

- Design files should be built to the final cut-trimmed size, plus bleed allowance. That means the edges of the design should be 1/4-inch larger than the actual finished size of the project.
- For example, a 4x6-inch postcard should be built as a 4.25 x 6.25-inch graphic file to account for bleed allowance.

MAIL

- If Plum Grove is mailing your project, verify there is a clear area sized 3.75-in wide x 2.875-in tall to imprint mailing information.
- Indicate if Plum Grove is to add an indicia and which indicia to add.
- Always have the Plum Grove Mailing Department review and approve your project before printing.

CROP MARKS

- Design files for print should be saved with crop marks to indicate where to trim the final printed piece.
- Make sure to verify the file is set to the correct dimensions before sending to print.
- Crop marks in a design file are considered part of the artwork and will be printed.

SAFE ZONE

- Designs for print should not include any text or images in the Safe Zone — the space 1/8"-inch from the final trimmed size.
- Text or content in the Safe Zone could potentially be cut off when your printed document is trimmed down to size.

THICKNESS OF LINES

- When designing for print, make sure any lines in your files are at least 0.25 points or 0.003 inches thick.
- A one or two-point line is a popular thickness to use around photographs or images.

Inches	Points
.003	.25
.007	.50
.010	.75
.014	1.00
.021	1.50
.028	2.00
.069	5.00
.139	10.00

COMPRESSION

- When sending files to print, they should first be compressed into an archive file. Compressing files allows you to combine multiple files into one file, which saves time during uploading files for print.
- A single compressed archive file is smaller than the total size of all uncompressed files, allowing files to be uploaded faster.
- The ability to compress files is built into all recent computer operating systems.

□ TYPOS & GRAMMAR

- Make sure to spellcheck and proofread documents in detail before sending to print.
- Printers assume no responsibility for typographical errors or grammatical mistakes.

□ FILE FORMATS

- High resolution, print-ready PDF files are the preferred file format.
- Macintosh and Windows files are accepted.
- Acceptable file formats for final artwork and their file name extensions are shown in the list below:
 - Adobe Acrobat – .PDF
 - Adobe Illustrator – .AI or .EPS
 - Adobe InDesign – .INDD
 - Adobe Photoshop – .PSD
 - Microsoft PowerPoint – .PPTX
 - Microsoft Word – .DOCX
 - QuarkXpress – .QXD or .QXP
- Always include the program extension as part of your file name.
- Include fonts used.
- Include placed images.
 - Photos should have a final resolution of 300 dpi. Bitmap or line art should have a final resolution of 1200 dpi.
 - Acceptable image file formats are: .EPS, .TIF, and .JPG