

TIPS + TRICKS / FAQ'S

1. what format should I send my artwork in?

Preferred formats are PDFs or JPGs.

We can work from open files in the following applications: Word, InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, but cannot guarantee the outcome - Word files are particularly unstable and should be converted to PDF first whenever possible. We do not accept Publisher or Corel Draw files - please convert to PDF.

2. what is bleed and why do I need it?

BLEED DIAGRAM

The bleed area is the part that gets trimmed off during the finishing process to allow your design to “bleed” off the edge of the page.

The minimum bleed required is 3mm on each side.

Also note the safety zone when designing to avoid important information being too close to the edge of the page.

3. what is resolution and what resolution should my images be?

Resolution, also known as ‘res’ or ‘file size’, refers to the number of elements per square inch that make up your images. Screen images are measured in ‘pixels per inch’ (ppi) and printed images in ‘dots per inch’ (dpi).

The higher the resolution the better the quality.

The minimum resolution required for an image at its final printed size should be:

150dpi for large format (ie posters bigger than A3), 200-300dpi for laser printing and 300dpi for litho printing.

The Magic Resolution Formula

To find out if your image is large enough for your end use without pixelating the image, divide the number of pixels by the resolution. For example:

$$3000px / 300dpi = 254mm$$

This means the printed piece can be a max of 254mm before some loss of image quality. If your printer only requires 150 dpi, then you can print the image as large as 508mm.

What size image do I need for web or print?

Size	Pixels	Reproduction size	Uses
XSmall	426 x 283	150mm x 100mm @ 72 dpi	Small Web Photo
Small	850 x 567	300mm x 200mm @ 72 dpi	Large Web Photo
Medium	1772 x 1180	150mm x 100mm @ 300 dpi	Business card / small print piece
Large	2717 x 1772	230mm x 150mm @ 300 dpi	Brochure / medium print piece
XLarge	4134 x 2717	350mm x 230mm @ 300 dpi	Brochure / full page brochure

4. what is the difference between CMYK and RGB?

RGB refers to Red, Green and Blue coloured light that make up the screen display we see on our monitors.

CMYK refers to Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black ink that is used for printing colour images.

It is impossible to print in RGB, so digital print devices receiving RGB images automatically convert them to CMYK for output so you do not need to worry about converting your files beforehand.

5. what is the largest printable size?

For laser printing, our maximum paper size is 488mm x 330mm with a maximum printable area on the sheet of 480 x 323mm.

Most laser print work is imposed on standard SRA3 (450mm x 320mm) sheets whose printable area is 440mm x 310mm including bleed.

The largest poster we can print is 1.3m wide x any length.

6. what is the heaviest paper I can print onto?

We can laser print onto paper grammages from 50gsm to 350gsm depending on the type of paper. The paper for our large format printers ranges from 180gsm to 260gsm.

Litho printing can go onto stock of up to 450gsm.

If thicker results are required, we can laminate the print onto a thicker substrate or mounting board.

7. what papers are available at Hot Ink?

We carry the following ranges of paper in stock at all times but we can order in other papers if required: Magno Satin, HiQ Titan matt and gloss coated, Triple Green coated,

Colotech, Reviva, Masuga, Cocoon, Curious Metal, Munken, bond paper, liner board and trace.

We have swatches in the office of the paper ranges from various suppliers for you to come in and view.

Alternatively, The Deckle Edge in Woodstock, <https://www.deckleedge.co.za> is a great place to go for a wide selection of paper and envelopes.

8. can I supply my own paper?

Yes you can, but please check with us if we are able to print on it first - we may need to test the paper before confirming this.

To avoid a surcharge, paper should be supplied at the following size: 450mm x 320mm.

9. how should I set up my business cards for print?

Artwork should be submitted to size as JPGs or PDFs and should include at least 3mm of bleed on all sides (see our notes on bleed for guidelines on trim areas and safety zones [here](#)).

Images / JPG files should have a resolution of 200dpi minimum (see notes on resolution [here](#)).

Standard size cards are (but not limited to) 90mm x 50mm. Another common size is 85mm x 55mm, but note that the wider cards cost 10% more to print.

10. how should I set up my brochure for print?

All artwork should be supplied to size as JPGs or PDFs and should include at least 3mm of bleed on each side (see our notes on bleed for guidelines on trim areas and safety zones [here](#)).

Images / JPG files should have a resolution of 200dpi minimum (see our notes on resolution [here](#)).

Standard sizes are the most cost effective. Below are some examples of standard formats but you are not limited to these only - contact us if you require an irregular size.

A5: 148mm x 210mm

DL: 99mm x 210mm, single or double sided

DDL: 188mm x 210mm folded to 99mm x 210mm

A4 z-fold: 297mm x 210mm folded to 99mm x 210mm

A4 folded to A5: 297mm x 210mm folded to 148.5mm x 210mm

11. how should I set up my booklet for print?

Supply artwork to size as a multi pg PDF, no spreads please, we will do the imposition for you (see our notes on imposition [here](#)). Artwork should include at least 3mm of bleed on all sides (see our notes on bleed for guidelines on trim areas and safety zones [here](#)).

Images / JPG files should have a resolution of 200dpi minimum (see our notes on resolution [here](#)).

Saddle stitched booklets should always have a page count divisible by 4 as each folded section equates to 4 printed pgs ([view our handy diagram](#)).

12. how should I set up my poster for print?

Supply artwork to size as a PDF or JPG Images / JPG files should have a resolution of 150dpi - 200dpi (see our notes on resolution [here](#)).

Artwork should include at least 2mm of bleed on all sides (see our notes on bleed for guidelines on trim areas and safety zones [here](#)).

13. what is imposition and do I need to do it?

Imposition refers to the way artwork is set up for print. E.g.: multiple elements may be imposed together on one print sheet; a booklet may be imposed in a certain way to ensure the correct pg order after printing.

You do not need to worry about this at all, we will do it for you.

14. how do I get my artwork to Hot Ink?

E-mail files of up to 10MB directly to your designer. Larger files can be uploaded to our FTP site located on the [home page](#) of our website.

Deliver it to us on a CD, flash drive or portable hard-drive.

Bring in your laptop and connect to our Wi-Fi or let us download your artwork onto our flash drive.

Alternatively we can collect it from you (learn more about our delivery service [here](#)).

15. should I supply the fonts used with my document?

Ideally we would prefer to receive your files as PDFs or JPGs to ensure that your files maintain their integrity until they are printed. In this case no fonts need to be supplied.

Only if we need to edit your artwork will we request open files or the accompanying fonts.

16. Can pantone colours be printed digitally?

Yes and no.

Certain pantone colours can be matched identically but others simply cannot be reproduced on a CMYK device.

We will be able to advise you on your options and print proofs to indicate what is achievable and what is not.

17. what should I avoid when designing my document?

Very light fonts in light tints.

Designs that rely on critical alignment front and back.

Designing too close to the edge of the page or not allowing sufficient bleed (see our notes on bleed for guidelines on trim areas and safety zones [here](#)).

18. how do I ensure that the colour on my screen matches the print?

Screens are notoriously unreliable for checking colour and colours displayed differ dramatically from one screen to the next. The only reliable method is to make use of certified colour charts for colour selection and then to see a calibrated print proof before proceeding with your run.

19. why do I need to see a printed proof?

Although one can check things like content and layout on screen, screens are not reliable for checking colour as they display reflective light in RGB as opposed solid printed colours in CMYK.

Print results also differ depending on the stock that they are printed on and the only way to get a feel for this is to see a printed proof on the actual grammage and type of stock before proceeding with your run.

Often mistakes that were overlooked on screen are picked up in a hard copy.

20. Who can help me with my design?

We can! Our team of designers have a wide range of skill sets and are waiting to assist you with all your design needs. We can conceptualise and design from scratch or just help tweak your existing design to make it perfect. We also have an in-house expert in the creation, design and printing of customised wedding stationery and invitations.

21. What binding options do I have for my document?

Saddle stitch binding: 2 staples through the spine, very quick to do and the most economical binding solution.

Plastic comb binding: also very cost effective and easy to use plus documents will lay completely flat when open. These can be opened and re-used.

Metal wiro binding: very sturdy, durable and easy to use, documents will lay completely flat when open.

Interscrews: available in sizes from 2mm upwards, these work well for menu's or special presentations and can be opened and re-used.

Glue binding with soft wraparound covers: for a more professional look.

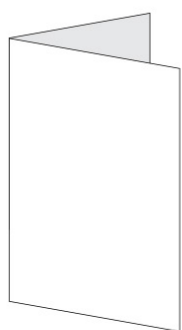
Glue binding with casebound covers: the ultimate in bookbinding, ideal for annual reports and photo albums

Threadsewing and stitching: this specialised finish can either be used with casebinding or left exposed to create a handcrafted effect. - [view samples](#)

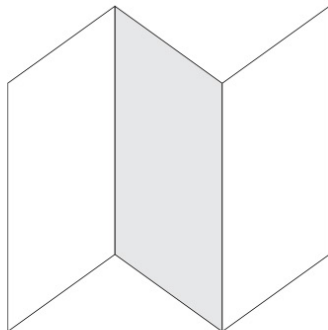
22. How should I create a rich black?

Use the default setting of 100% K. If you wish to create a really rich black, then mix as follows: 30% Cyan + 30% magenta + 30% yellow + 100% black. Never exceed the percentages listed above.

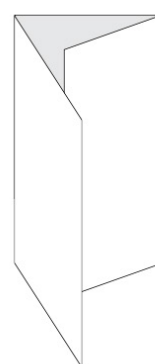
23. What's the difference between a z-fold and a roll-fold brochure?



4-pager



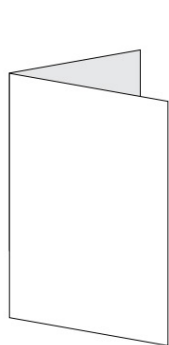
z-fold



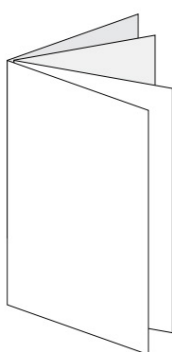
roll-fold

24. How many pages does my booklet have?

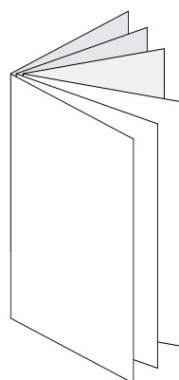
A page refers to one printed side of a piece of paper, a leaf refers to one sheet of paper which may be printed on one or both sides.



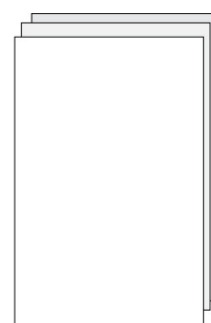
4-pager



8-pager



12-pager



6-pager

25. What is Letterpress Printing?

Letterpress is the original technique of relief printing where one composes and locks movable type into the bed of a press, inks it, and presses paper against it to transfer the ink from the type. The resulting print has an almost relief like finish. Nowadays, letterpress printing has been revived in an artisanal form for bespoke stationery.

- [view samples](#)