Print Services How to create a print-ready PDF

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PDF workflow is the industry standard.

It is reliable and allows for faster production, fewer errors, and higher quality output.

What should your artwork look like?

To make sure your artwork prints all the way to the edge of the page, the PDF should have **bleed** – ie the image should run off the edge by 3mm all around. This ensures that trimming the artwork to the finished size won't produce a white line along the edge of the artwork.

Crop marks show you where the page will be cut after printing. Anything outside the crop marks will not show up on the page. If the artwork does not extend all the way to the crop mark, there will be a white 'gap' on the page.



Once you've set up the bleed, there will be a red bleed line around your artwork. This won't appear in the final print. Extend your images/background to the red line.



Create a print-ready PDF in InDesign

Step 1

Set the page size to the finished size of the document (eg A4 or A3), and set the bleed as 3mm.

A If you are creating a new document, go to File > New Document.

Under **Bleed and Slug** click on the 'Make all settings the same' icon **I**. Click on OK.

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B If you are working on an existing document, go to File > Document Setup.

Under **Bleed and Slug** click on the 'Make all settings the same' icon **B**. Click on OK.

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Go to Step 2

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Step 2

when your artwork is ready, choose File > Export

Step 3

specify a name and location for the file

Step 4

in the Format tab, choose Adobe PDF (Print), and click Save

Step 5a

in the Adobe PDF Preset tab, at the top of the dialog box, choose High Quality Print

Step 5b

under Marks, tick Crop Marks and Bleed Marks. Under Bleed and Slug, tick Use Document Bleed Settings

Step 5c

click Export to create the print-ready PDF

Create a print-ready PDF in Illustrator

Step 1

Set the page size to the finished size of the document (eg A4 or A3), and set the bleed as 3mm.





Step 2

when your artwork is ready, choose File > Save As

X: 105 mm

Y: 148.5 mm

Step 3 specify a name and location for the file

Step 4 in the Format tab, choose Adobe PDF (pdf), and click Save

Step 5a

in the Adobe PDF Preset tab, at the top of the dialog box, choose High Quality Print

Step 5b

under Marks and Bleed: Marks tick Trim Marks. Under Marks and Bleed: Bleeds, tick Use Document Bleed Settings

Step 5c

click Save PDF to create the print-ready PDF

Create a print-ready PDF in Photoshop

Step 1

Set the page size to the finished size of the document (eg A4 or A3), and set the bleed as 3mm.

A If you are creating a new document, go to File > New.

For 3mm bleed all around the artwork, add 6mm to the width and height of the canvas. For an A4 document, this will be 216 x 303mm.

You can use guides to show the artwork area while you are working on the document.



Save your artwork and go to **Step 2**

B If you are working on an existing document, go to Image > Canvas Size.

For 3mm bleed all around the artwork, add 6mm to the width and height of the canvas. For an A4 document, this will be 216 x 303mm.

Current Size: 24.9M	Canvas S			1	
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New Size: 26.1M					
Width	216	Millimeters			
Height	303	Millimeters			
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A white border (3mm wide) will appear around the edges of the artwork.



You need to extend the existing artwork to the edges of the document. To do this, go to **Edit > Free Transform.** Small boxes (handles) will appear at the corners and mid-points of the artwork.

Hold the Shift Key (to maintain the proportions of the image) and drag the top left corner handle outwards so that the artwork extends to the left edge of the document.

Still holding the Shift Key, drag the bottom right corner handle outwards so that the artwork extends to the right edge of the document.

The white border around the artwork should now have disappeared.



Save your artwork and go to **Step 2**

Step 2

There is no easy way to add crop and bleed marks in Photoshop, so you should do this in InDesign. Create a new document in InDesign, import the artwork that you have adjusted in Photoshop, and export the document as a print-ready PDF following the instructions on page 2 of this guide.