

Print-ready files in 5 steps

Follow these five steps and your artwork will print sharp, in the right colours and without white edges. Not sure about any of it? Send what you have and we'll check it for free.

Step 1 Set the size and resolution

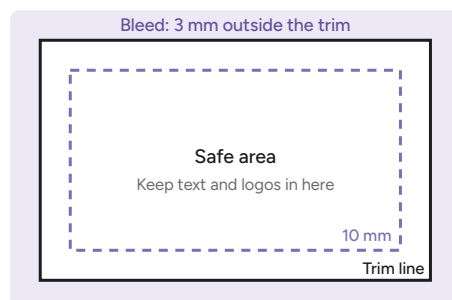
Build your artwork at the finished size, or to scale for very large pieces.

- Set the document to the exact finished size, for example 600 × 900 mm for a welcome sign.
- For hoardings and very large backdrops, work at 1:10 scale and tell us. We scale it up at print.
- Photos should be about 150 dpi at full size for large format. Pieces seen up close, like seating plans and canvas, look best at 300 dpi.
- Don't enlarge a small web image. It will look soft or pixelated when printed big.

Step 2 Add bleed and a safe area

Bleed stops thin white edges appearing when we trim your print.

- Extend backgrounds and images 3 mm past the trim line on every side. This is the bleed.
- Keep text, logos and names at least 10 mm inside the trim line. This is the safe area.
- Banners, fabric backdrops and dance floors need more room for hems, eyelets and panel joins. Ask us and we'll tell you exactly how much for your job.
- On hoardings and dance floors, keep faces and key text away from the joins between panels.



Step 3 Use CMYK colour

Printers mix four inks (cyan, magenta, yellow and black), and screens mix light.

- Set your document colour mode to CMYK, not RGB.
- Bright RGB colours, especially neon greens, blues and oranges, print duller than they look on screen.
- If you need to match a brand colour exactly, give us the Pantone reference and we'll match it as closely as the material allows.
- For large areas of black, use a rich black (for example C40 M30 Y30 K100) so it prints deep, not grey.

Step 4 Fonts, layers and cut lines

Tidy files print faster and avoid surprises.

- Convert all text to outlines, or embed the fonts in your PDF.
- Link or embed every image. Missing images print as blank boxes.
- Keep all artwork on one layer called Artwork.
- For shaped pieces like cut-out signs, arches or logos, draw the cut path as a thin line in a spot colour on its own layer called Cut. Remember the bleed goes outside the cut line too.

Step 5 Export a print-ready PDF and send it

A PDF keeps your layout exactly as you designed it.

- Export as a high-quality PDF. PDF/X-4 is ideal, and PDF/X-1a is fine too.
- Turn on crop marks and use the document bleed settings.
- Open the PDF and check it before sending: bleed on every edge, nothing important near the edge, all text showing.
- Send it on WhatsApp with your quote. For large files, email a WeTransfer link to info@printstation.co.uk.

Quick checklist

- Finished size set, or 1:10 scale noted
- Images about 150 dpi at full size (300 dpi for close-up pieces)
- 3 mm bleed on every edge
- Text and logos 10 mm inside the trim
- CMYK colour mode, Pantone refs noted
- Text outlined or fonts embedded
- Cut line on its own layer, if the piece is shaped
- Exported as PDF/X-4 with crop marks and bleed

FREE FILE CHECK

Every order

WE CHECK	Size, bleed, resolution, colour and cut lines
WE FIX	Small issues, or our designers set it up for you
YOU APPROVE	A digital proof before anything prints
SEND BY	WhatsApp, or email a WeTransfer link

Artwork FAQs

What if my file isn't print-ready?



Send it anyway. We check every file for free before printing, and our in-house designers can fix or set up artwork for you.

Which file types do you accept?



A print-ready PDF is best. We also accept AI, PSD, EPS and high-resolution JPG, PNG and TIFF files.

Do I need a designer?



No. Our in-house design team can create artwork from scratch, match your wedding stationery or resize your agency's files.