



FILE PREPARATION CHECKLIST

Thank you for choosing Harmonic Media to print your graphics! In order to ensure that the printing process goes as smooth as possible, please go through the following checklist before sending your files to us. If you are unfamiliar with any of these terms, you can find more information about them on the following pages.

CORRECT SIZE

Double check that your files are at the correct size. If they are scaled down, please let us know.

BLEED

Please add a minimum of 1" of bleed to all sides of your file.

OUTLINE FONTS

If you are designing in Illustrator or Photoshop, please outline your fonts before saving your file for print.

EMBED IMAGES

In Illustrator, be sure to embed any linked images you have used in your design.

COLOR PROFILE

Your design must be saved in CMYK color mode (not RGB), in order for the colors to print correctly.

RESOLUTION/DPI

At least 150 DPI at full scale. DPI will be based upon viewing experience and final application.

FILE TYPE

*We prefer to work with the following file types: .AI, .EPS, .PDF.
If those are not available, we also accept the following: .PSD, .TIFF, .PNG, .JPEG
****IF POSSIBLE PLEASE DO NOT DESIGN YOUR FILES IN INDESIGN***

TEMPLATE (if applicable)

If we have supplied you with a template to work in, please make sure the artwork has been designed in the "Artwork" layer, and that you include the original template in the file that is sent back to us.

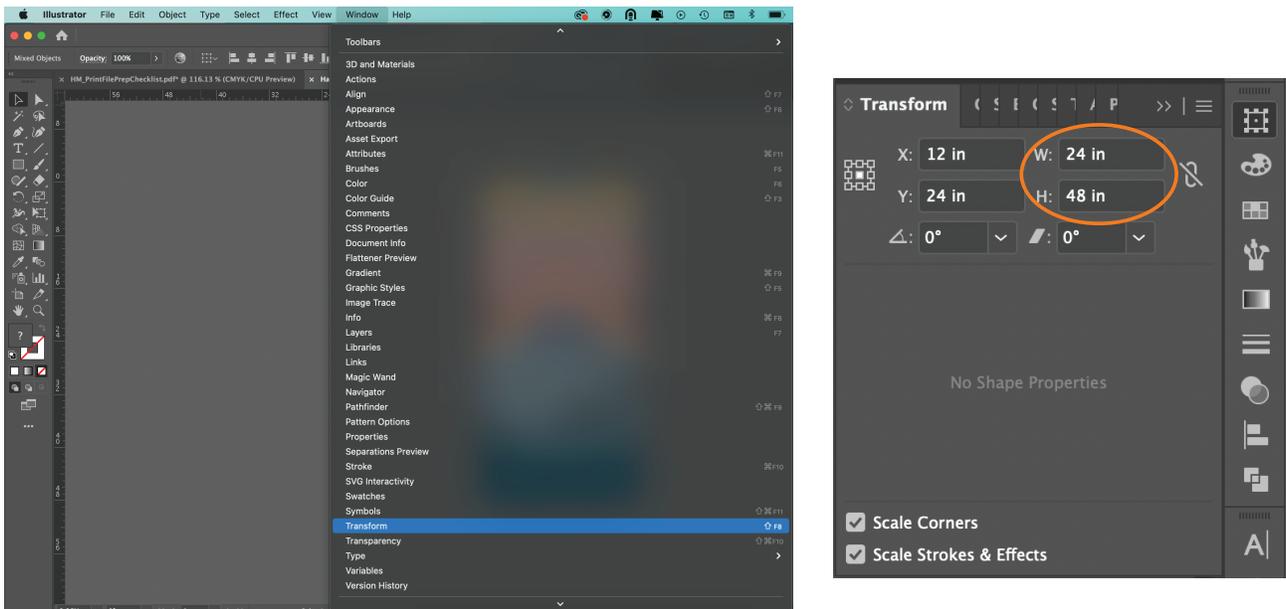
CORRECT SIZE

Before sending your file to us, please make sure your file is at the correct dimensions.

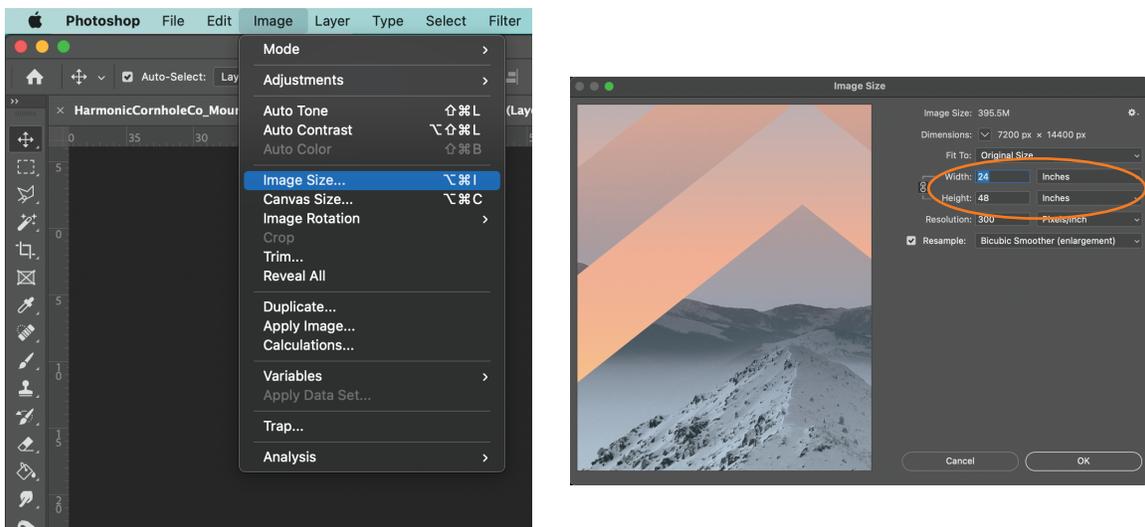
In Illustrator, you can check the size of your artwork simply by clicking and dragging your cursor over the entire design. This tool bar should appear at the top of your screen. The two boxes on the right will tell you your width and your height.



If you don't see this, you can go to Window → Transform, and a window will appear like the one on the right. This will also show you the height and width of your artwork.



To check the size of your art in **Photoshop**, go to Image → Image Size, or you can use the key command **OPTION + COMMAND + I**. This will bring up the window on the right, which will show you the width and height of your artwork.



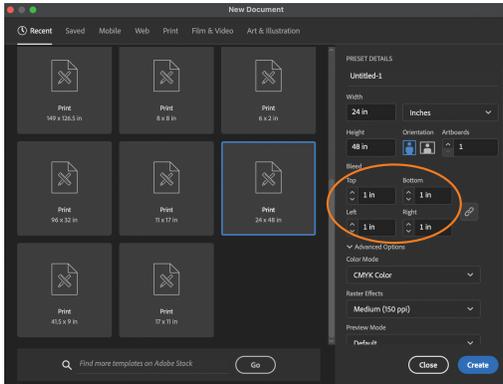
Please double check and make sure these measurements match the sizes you would like to print. If any of your artwork has been scaled down, please let us know, so we can scale it up accordingly before we send it to print!

BLEED

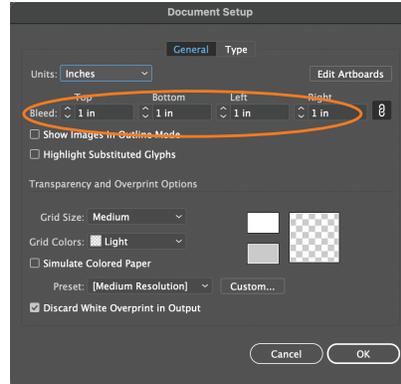
After you have sized your artwork correctly, the next step is to add bleed. Bleed is just a small extension of your artwork past the dimensions you would like it printed at. This ensures that when your product is cut down to size, the art goes right to the edge. We prefer a minimum of 1" bleed around the entire artwork.

In Illustrator, you can add bleed when you create a new file or while you're working on an existing file.

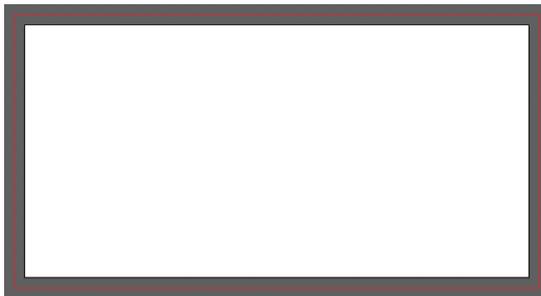
For a new file, find the line item titled "Bleed" in the new document window, and then adjust your bleed accordingly.



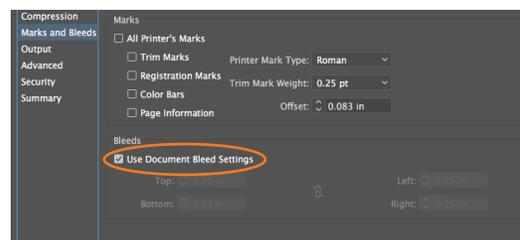
For an already existing file, go to File → Document Setup, which will bring up a new window. Find the line item titled "Bleed" and adjust accordingly.



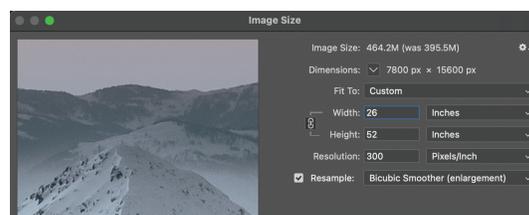
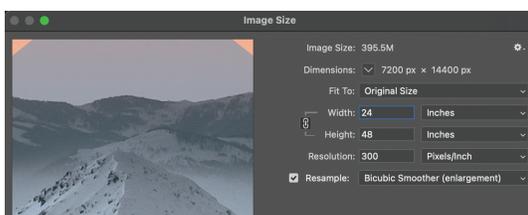
Once you have adjusted the bleed settings, your artboard will have a red box around the outside of it. Make sure your design extends past the edge of your artboard to that red box. Do not put anything important in the bleed area, or it will get cropped during production.



Saving your file as a .AI or a .EPS automatically includes the bleed, but if you are saving it as a PDF you will need to go to the "Marks and Bleeds" section of the save window and check "Use Document Bleed Settings". We do not need any printer's marks.



Photoshop does not have a bleed setting, so in order to add bleed in Photoshop, simply go back to Image Size (OPTION + COMMAND + I) and adjust the size of your art to be at least 2" (1" on all sides) larger. You may need to add more than 2" on one side to keep the image proportional.



OUTLINE FONTS

Outlining your fonts is very important in the printing process. If your fonts are not outlined, they will not show up in your file when it is sent to print. Here is how to tell if your fonts are outlined:

THIS FONT IS NOT OUTLINED

If there is a line underneath your text like this one, it has not been outlined, and can still be edited.

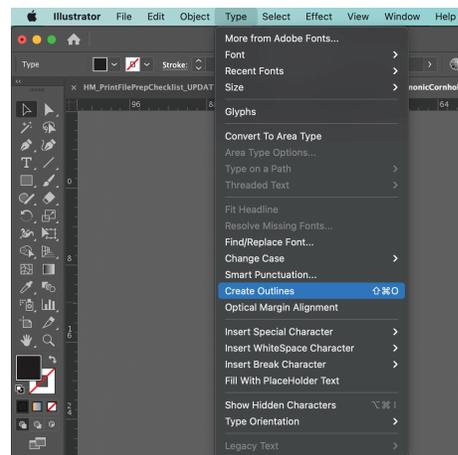
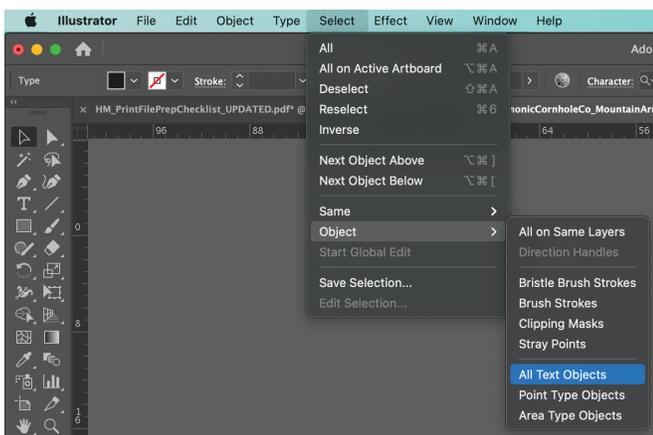
THIS FONT IS OUTLINED

Once you outline your font, it should look like this. There will be an outline and anchor points around every letter. After you outline your font, your text will not be editable anymore, so please check your spelling and make any necessary changes to the text before you outline it.

If you do not know how to outline your fonts, just follow these simple steps:

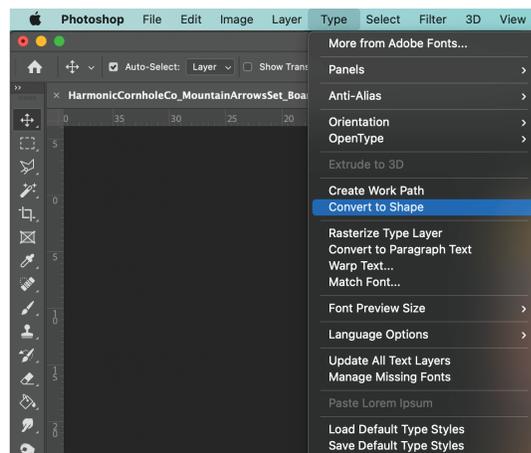
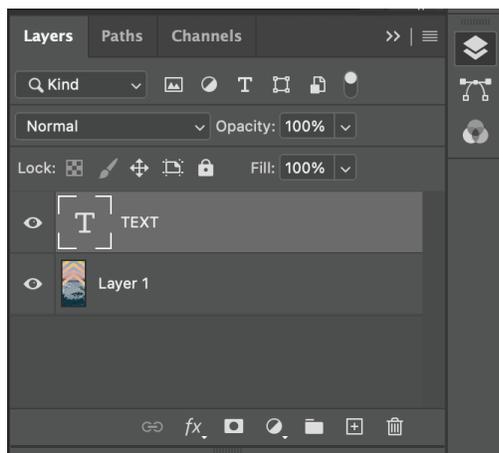
In Illustrator, go to **Select** → **Object** → **All Text Objects**.

Once all your text has been selected, go to **Type** → **Create Outlines**
* You can also use the key command **COMMAND + SHIFT + O**



In Photoshop, click on your text in the layers palette.

Go to **Type** → **Convert to Shape**.

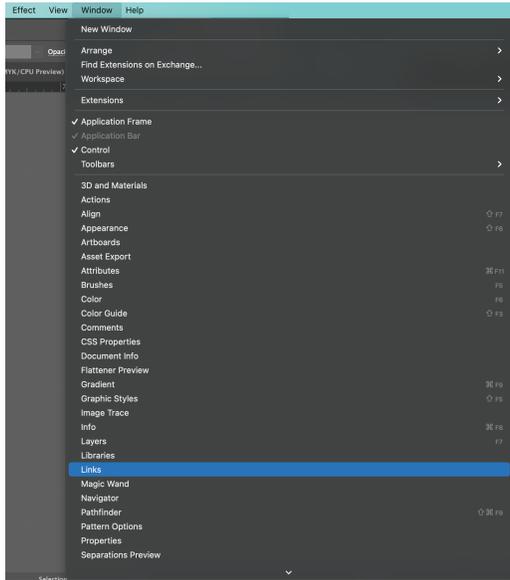


And now your fonts are outlined and ready for printing!

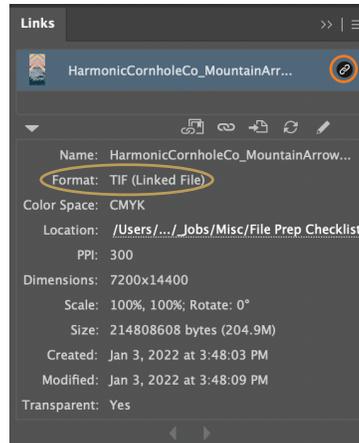
EMBED IMAGES

Similar to outlining your fonts, images need to be embedded or else they also will not show up in your file when it is sent to print.
How to tell if your images are embedded:

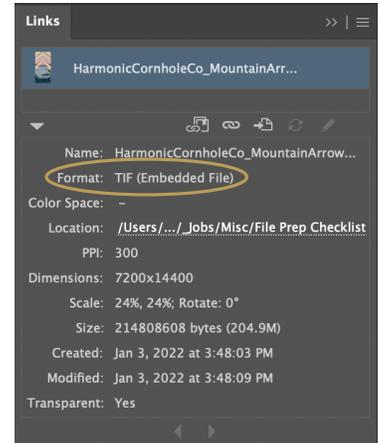
In **Illustrator**, go to **Window** → **Links**. This will open a window that looks like the ones on the right. Click on your image. If there is a symbol next to the file name that looks like the one circled in orange, that means your image **has not been embedded** and is still a linked file. If there is no symbol by your file name, that means your image **has been embedded** (you can also look at the format type, which will tell you if the image has been embedded or not).



Not Embedded

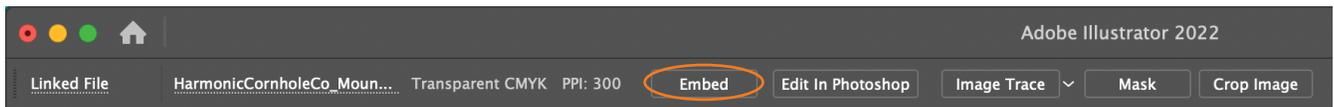


Embedded



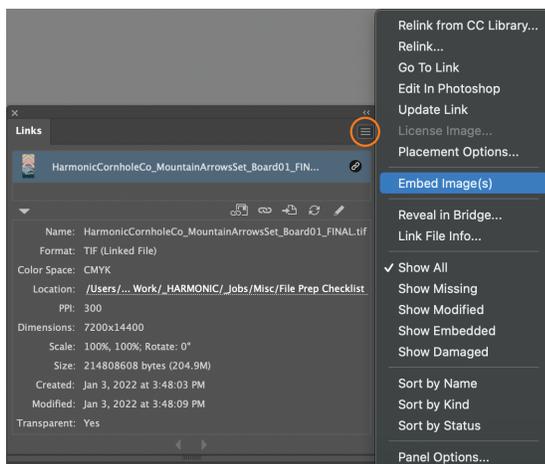
If your image is not embedded, that is another easy fix!

Click on your image. Near the top of your screen, these buttons should appear:



Now click "Embed" and you're done!

If those buttons do not appear, go back to your links panel, and click the lines in the right-hand corner.



Click "Embed Image(s)" and you're done!

*You don't need to worry about this if you are designing in Photoshop, as all images are automatically embedded in Photoshop.

PRINT RESOLUTION/DPI

Print resolution is the level of detail in a printed image. Higher resolution means higher detail and is typically measured in Dots Per Inch (DPI). When it comes to printing, resolution plays an extremely important role. It can be the difference between a crystal clear image and a fuzzy blur.

The ideal resolution to aim for in large format digital printing is 150 DPI.

However, this number may vary based upon the viewing distance and final application

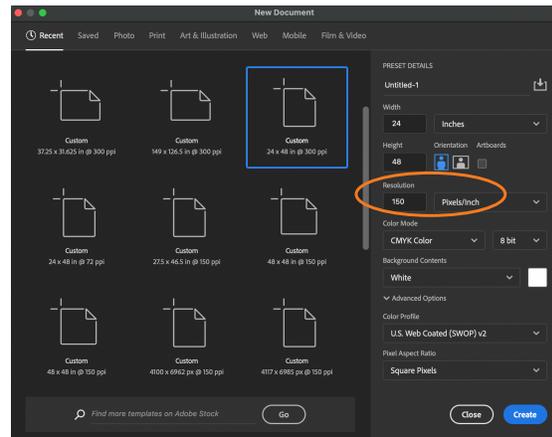
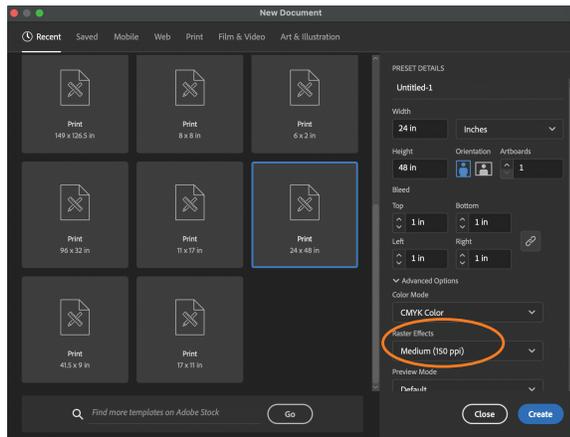
Different resolutions are needed depending on how large the printed image will be, and where it will be viewed from.

Something like a flier or brochure that will be held in someone's hand and viewed closely will need a significantly higher DPI than an image that will be used for a billboard, which will only be seen from far away.

*A few things other things to keep in mind:

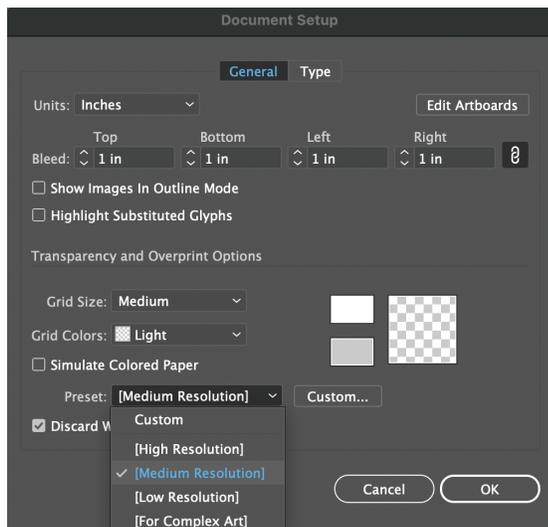
- Always search for the highest resolution and image dimensions you can get.
- You can scale down in size, but avoid scaling up as you'll lose quality.

The best way to ensure you are working with the proper DPI is to set it up when you create a new document.

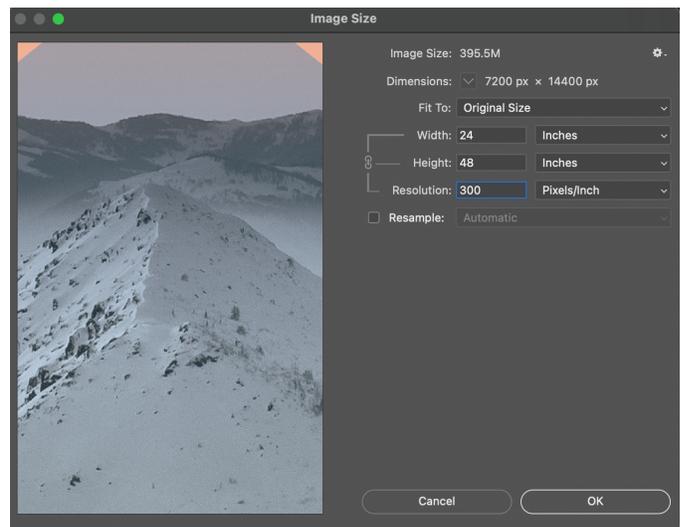


If you need to check or change the DPI for an already existing file, follow the directions below.

In Illustrator you can check the resolution of your file by going to **File → Document Setup**. Make sure **Medium Resolution** is selected - that will give you the proper DPI needed for printing.



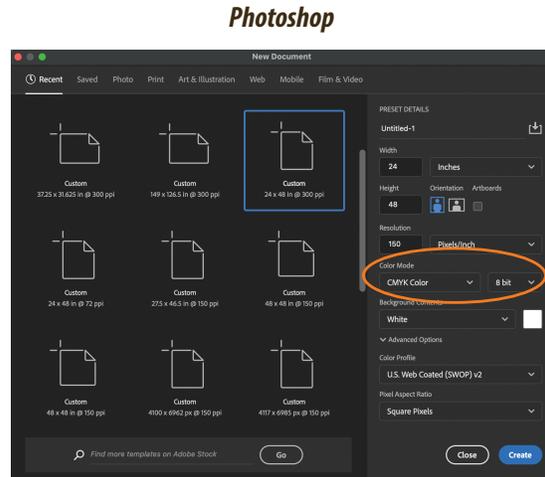
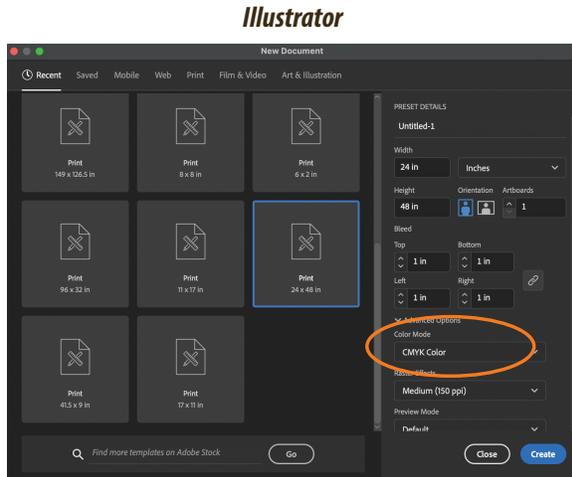
In Photoshop you can check the resolution of your file by going to **Image → Image Size**. You can change resolution here, but keep it mind that it will also change the size of the artwork.



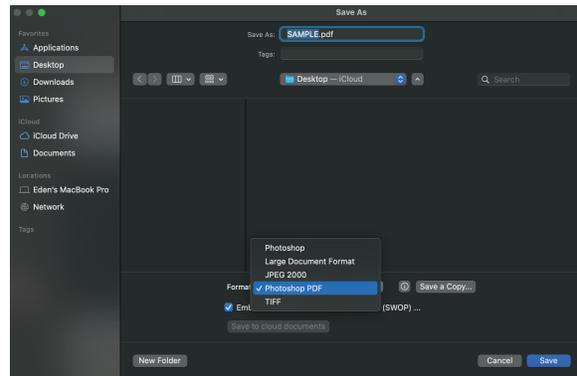
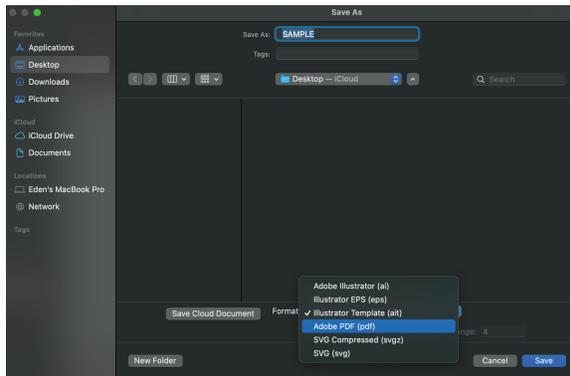
COLOR PROFILE

Using the correct color profile will ensure all your colors print correctly. A CMYK color profile is always used for printing purposes.

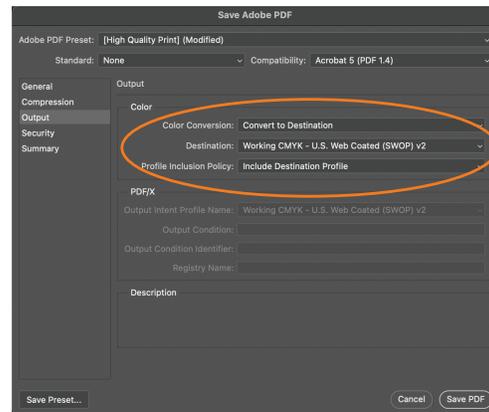
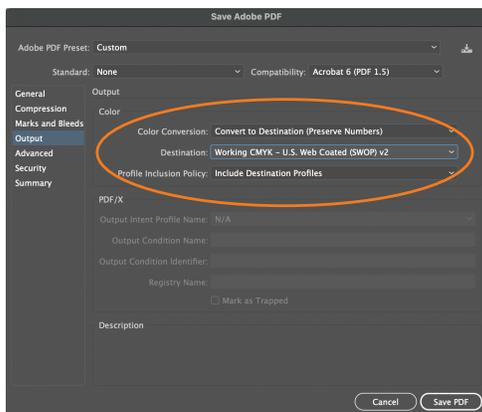
If you have not started designing yet, you can easily select the right color profile when you create a new document. When you create a new file, these windows will appear. All you need to do is make sure the box next to the words "Color Mode" says CMYK.



If you have an already existing design, that is not in CMYK, you will need to convert it to CMYK when you save the file for printing. Go to File → Save As, and then once this window appears, choose the PDF option in the drop down menu.



Once you click save, a window like the one below will appear. Click on "Output" in the left-hand menu, and then change the options to look like the ones below:

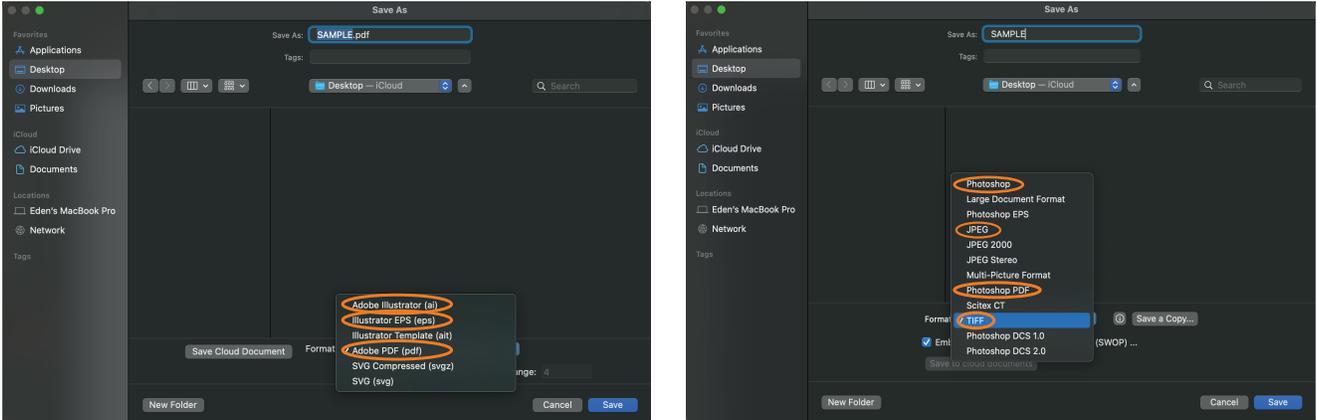


Click "Save PDF" and your design will be saved with the correct color profile.

FILE TYPE

The process of setting up your files for printing will go smoothly if we have the correct file type to work with. We work in Adobe Illustrator, and as such, we prefer to work with files that are compatible with Illustrator. .AI, .EPS, or .PDF files tend to be the best files to work with for printing (as long as you've followed all the other steps on this checklist). We can also work with Photoshop files, .TIFF, .JPEG or .PNG files.

You can change the file type simply by going to File → Save As... and chose the file type from the drop down menu in the window.

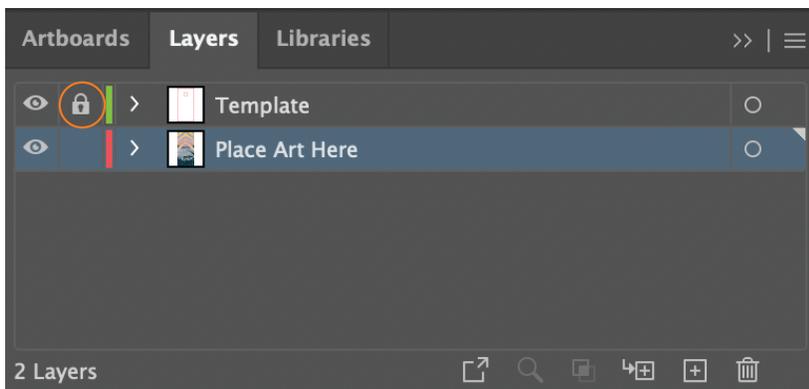


*** IF POSSIBLE, PLEASE DO NOT DESIGN YOUR FILES IN INDESIGN.**

When an InDesign file is imported into Illustrator, a large number of issues occur that make it very difficult for us to set your file up for printing. If you send us work that has been designed in InDesign, please be aware that you may be charged extra for file set-up time.

TEMPLATE

If we have supplied you with a template, you need to make sure you are designing within that template. **In Illustrator**, the template we send you should be set up like this:



Make sure the "TEMPLATE" layer is locked, (click on the space to the right of the eye icon if it is not) and design only on the "ARTWORK" or "PLACE ART HERE" layer. This ensures that when we go to print, everything will be the correct size, but the actual template will not be printed in your design.

When you send us your finished design, please send us a .AI, .EPS or a .PDF file, and make sure that the template layer is still included in the file.