

## File Prep Checklist

Before you upload your artwork, make sure everything is set up correctly to avoid delays and potential issues.

### 1. File Setup

- File is submitted as a print-ready PDF (unless otherwise specified)
- Artwork size matches the final trim size + bleed
- Includes [bleed](#) on all sides
  - Standard: 0.125" (1/8") recommended
  - Artwork should extend past the cut lines
- Safety margins (1/16" inside the cut lines) contain no critical content
- Only one artwork per PDF
- File is in the [correct orientation](#)
- All pages are the same size (if multi-page)

### 2. File Quality & Construction

- Vector is preferred where possible
- Images are 300 DPI or higher
- All fonts are outlined or embedded
- All images are embedded (not linked)
- No:
  - Hidden layers (remove any [template layers](#))
  - Comments or annotations
  - Form fields

### 3. Color Setup

- File is in CMYK color mode (no RGB or PMS unless required)
  - PMS should only be used to set up white ink files
- Black text is set to:
  - C0 M0 Y0 K100

- Large black areas are set to rich black:
  - C30 M20 Y20 K100
- If selecting Black Only, file uses K only (no CMYK mix)
- We do not recommend using transparency effects

## 4. Design Best Practices

- Avoid borders near trim edges (risk of shifting)
- Ensure:
  - Text is large enough to read (we recommend larger than 8pt)
  - Fine lines are not too thin
- Avoid heavy ink builds (can affect print quality)

## 5. Special Printing (If Applicable)

*In-depth PDF guides for setting up special printing are available in the [File Prep tab here](#).*

### Spot UV & Foil

- Must have 2 files:
  - Print file (CMYK): Contains all standard artwork
  - Effect file (Foil / Spot UV): Contains only the areas where the effect will be applied
- In the effect file:
  - All elements must be set to 100% black (K only)
  - No CMYK builds, gradients, or colors
  - Black areas indicate exactly where foil or Spot UV will be applied
- Ensure both files:
  - Match the exact same size and alignment
  - Match in page order
  - Include bleed
  - Are exported as print-ready PDFs
- Minimum text size: 8pt
- Avoid extremely thin lines or small elements

## Dielines (Custom Shapes)

- Spot color named exactly: "Dieline"
- Created as a stroke (no fill)
- On a separate layer (not separate file)
- Set to overprint

## White Ink

- Spot color named: "White\_Ink"
- Placed on top layer (not separate file)
- Set to overprint

## Variable Printing

- Must include 3 files:
  - PDF print file
  - Excel file containing a list of the numbers/text you need printed
  - Dummy version of artwork showing exactly where and how you need the numbers/text placed

## 6. Upload Requirements

- We highly recommend removing any special characters from your file name before uploading it
- Please keep files under 250 MB

## 7. Other Requirements

*This checklist covers most of our products. Some types of products (such as apparel, packaging, and promotional products) require special file setup that differs from what is listed here. We recommend always checking the "File Prep" tab on the product page to make sure your artwork is prepared correctly for that product.*