Designing with Production in Mind

When designing artwork, it's good practice to keep in mind the production aspects of producing a beautifully finished product. We've listed out below some important things to consider when creating print files for any print company.

Allowable Production Shift

An important thing to know about printing is that the commercial print industry has an allowable shift range or "cutting allowance" in production. A shift can occur during the printing process or the cutting of the final product. PrintsWell has a shift allowance of up to 1/16" shift. This minute shift does not happen on every order, but it can happen. ***These shifts are not noticeable on most designs. There are a few things that can help prevent any issues that we've listed out below.***

INTENDED OUTCOME



POTENTIAL OUTCOME EXAMPLES WITH ALLOWABLE SHIFT

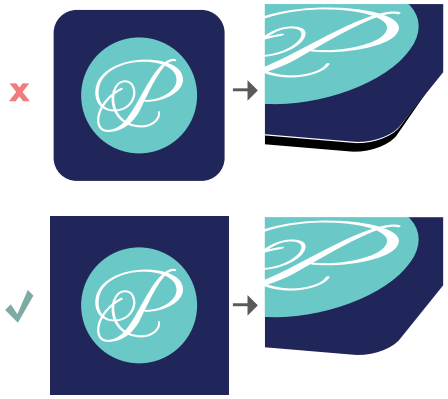






Bleeds

A bleed on a print file is the additional area of the product that is trimmed off during production. All files must have a 0.125 inch bleed on each side of the file. Bleeds are necessary for all printed products except envelopes. They are crucial if you intend to have artwork or color "bleeding" to the edge of the final product. Without it, a thin white edge can be visible on one or multiple edges of the product.





Safe Area

The safe area of a product is 0.125 inches away from the trim line or 0.25" away from the edge of the file. Anything outside of the safe area is at risk of being trimmed off of the final product. All important artwork and text must be within the safe margin line.



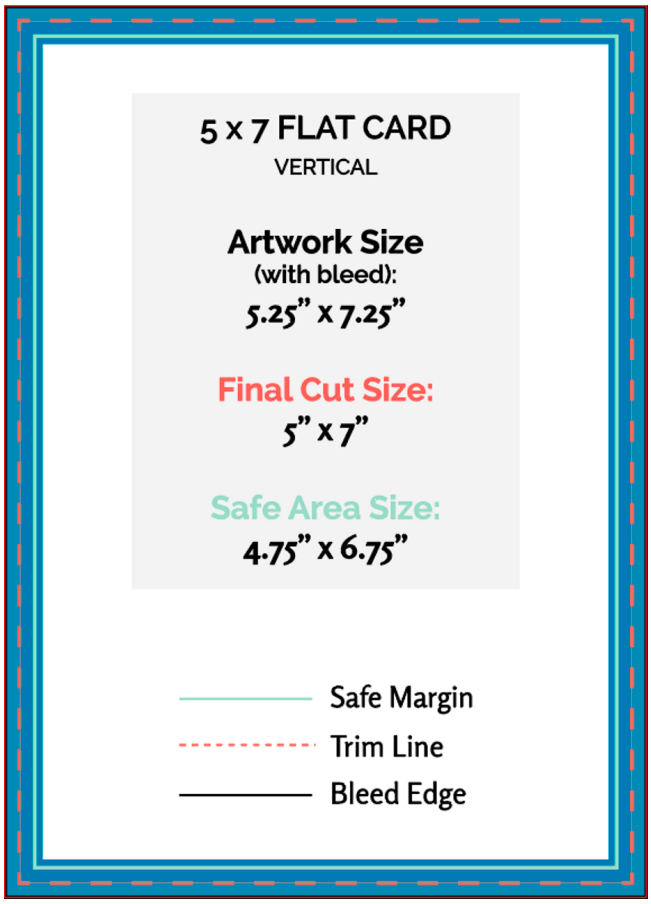


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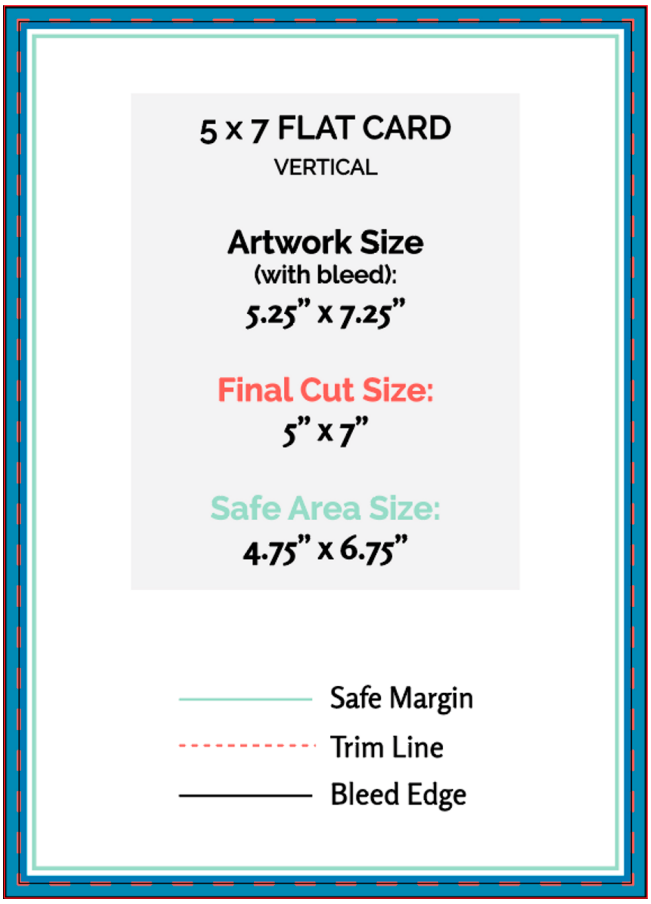
Borders

The thinner the outermost border, the more noticeable any slight shift during production will be. With this in mind, thicker borders will produce a better more reliant result. We recommend a border that extends into the safe area by 0.0625 inches *or* at least 0.1875 inches from the trim line. ***We strongly discourage printing front and back borders on any item. Borders printed on both sides on our double thick stock are almost guaranteed to experience a shift due to the many variables involved in producing these items.***

Minimum recommended border extends 0.3125 inches from the bleed edge



Border is barely past the trim line that may shift during production and is likely to produce a less than desirable result.



Color

For print-ready files in the correct color format, we'll reproduce the color as close as possible. Due to the nature of digital printing, an exact match cannot be guaranteed. We routinely complete rigorous color testing and calibration to ensure that files created in the recommended color mode print beautifully and as expected!

In the printing world, color space is crucial. Depending on the type of project and if it'll be seen on digital screens or in physical form, the right color space can make all the difference.

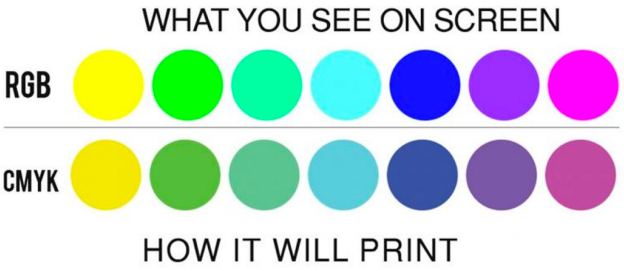
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Color (continued)

PrintsWell uses a four color printing process, known as CMYK, which means our presses print a wide range of hues using ***C**yan, **M**agenta, **Y**ellow and **K**ey (Key is a printer's name for black, since black is often used to outline an image as a guide.) The four color printing process is used almost universally in the commercial printing industry.*



Should I convert my color profile before submitting my order?



Yes, this will provide a more accurate representation on screen. Some colors in the colors RGB (a color space intended for digital images on a backlit screen), Pantone or Spot color gamuts are not produceable in the CMYK color spectrum. If your files are not converted before submission, the press will convert them for you. Converting your files before printing will provide a better expectation of the printed product.

(Note: Printed products cannot match the digital image on a backlit screen exactly, due to the nature of the two different medias.)

- We recommend testing your color palette on the paper stocks and envelopes you choose to carry. Design By Laney, A Wedding Stationer and Stationery Design Educator, offers a printable palette for stationers in need of a color palette. You can use code PRINTSWELL to receive 10% the cost of the print file. You can order the Printable Color Swatch Chart here:



To avoid or decrease the chances of color discrepancies on your project, consider these design tips:

- Design in a CMYK color space

- When choosing paper stocks, the whiter the better for color accuracy. Printing on our warmer toned papers can affect the color.

- Calibrate your computer monitor or digital screen as much as you can with monitor calibration tools.

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File Orientation

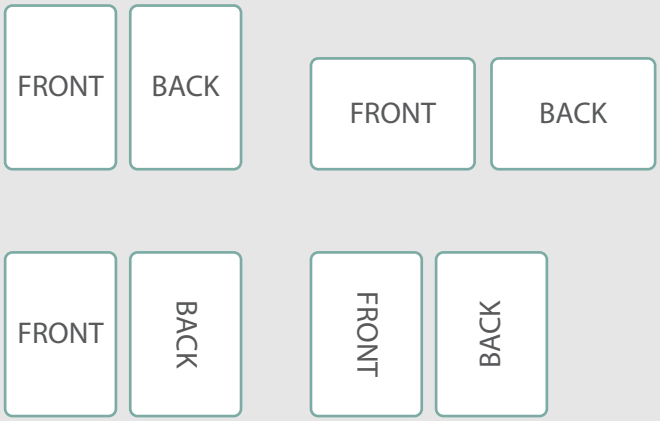
PrintsWell prints with the industry standard of printing Head-to-Head. In the print industry, the top of a document is referred to as the Head and the bottom of a document is referred to as the Foot. These terms help clarify the direction in which the two sides "back up" to one another. Head-to-Head and Head-to-Foot are terms used to describe the relative orientation of the printing on the front and back of two-sided documents. A document printed Head-to-Head will have the top of the front side placed at the same end of the sheet as the top of the back side.

Orientation

Find the correct vs the incorrect orientation setups below. Please reach out to our customer support team with any questions.

✓ CORRECT

FLAT CARD

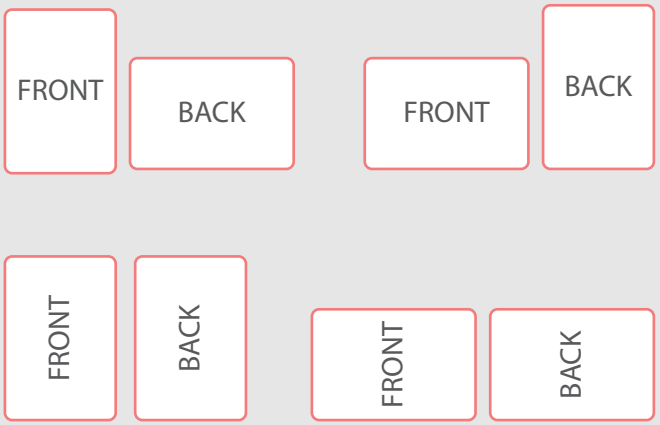


FOLDED CARD



X INCORRECT

FLAT CARD



FOLDED CARD

