POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN SENDING IN YOUR FILES FOR DIGITAL PRINTING

1) Ensure your colours are presented in CMYK

Colours that appear on your computer screen are displayed in RGB and are generated differently to the printing process which is carried out in CMYK (see below). Therefore, the printed product is not going to be an exact match of what is displayed on the computer screen. Printing on different types of stock may also alter the final colour results. Ensure that you have converted any colours from RGB to CMYK. The press uses four colours to produce the final printed card.

printing process

Cyan – cyan
Magenta – magenta
Yellow – yellow
Black – Key

screen display

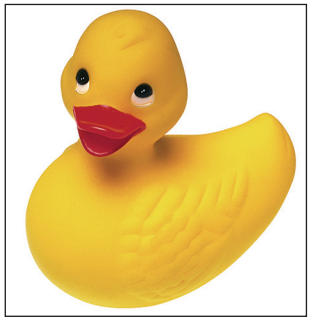
Red - red
Green - green
Blue - blue

If you supply any images in RGB then the software on the press will automatically convert the colours to CMYK and the colours will shift.

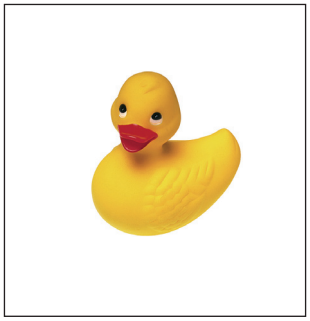
Digital printing means that you can easily print just one hard copy proof to check before going ahead with the final print run.

2) Ensure your images are high resolution images

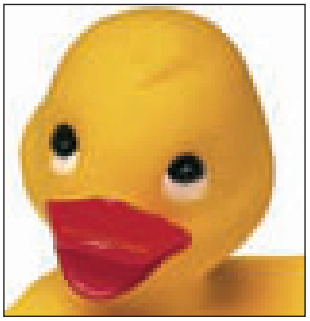
Please do not use any images at 72dpi, they may look good on your computer screen but will never look good when printed. So your images need to be at least 300dpi when used at 100%.



Original at 100% = 300dpi



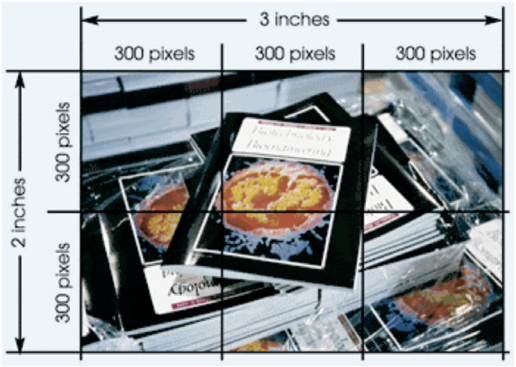
Original at 50% = 600dpi



Original at 200% = 150dpi

This means that if you reduce the scale of an image in the page layout you increase the effective resolution. As you increase the amount of scaling you will decrease the effective resolution.

3) Explaining pixels and resolution



By dividing the number of pixels in the height and width of an image its resolution will determine the physical size of the image. For example a 300ppi image that is 900 pixels wide and 600 pixels high is 3 inches by 2 inches in size:

900 pixels ÷ 300ppi = 3 inches wide
600 pixels ÷ 300ppi = 2 inches wide

4) Make sure that any fonts used are embedded

There is usually a box to tick for this option.

5) Flatten layered files

If you are using a layered files, in whichever program you are using to make up your cards, please ensure that you flatten the layers before sending your file.

6) Heavy ink coverage

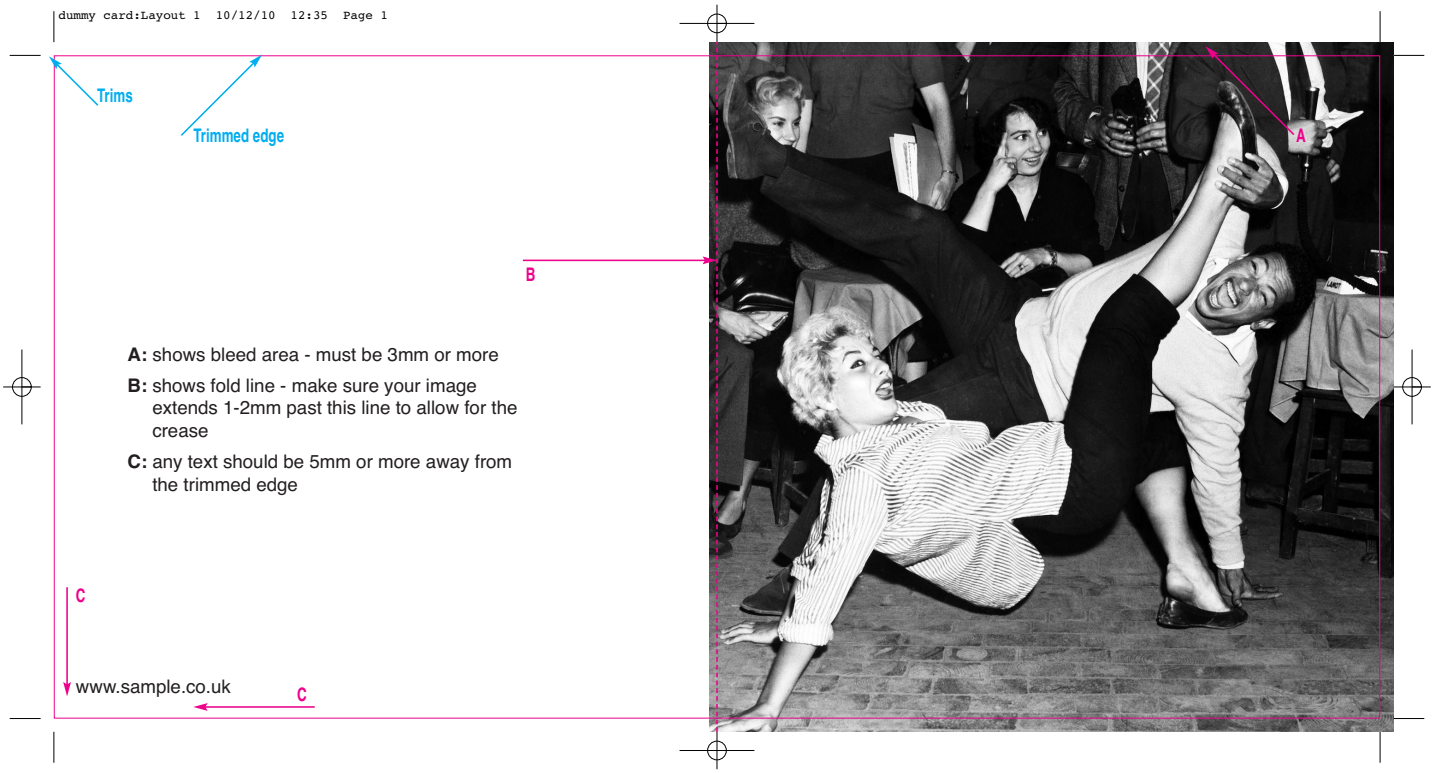
Designs with heavy ink coverage will take longer to dry and are liable to mark easily – especially dark colours or black. Make sure you think about this type of design carefully and maybe consider having a gloss varnish over the top to protect them from marking. You will also need to make sure you build in extra time for drying when ordering from the printer.

7) Send your files as press ready pdfs

The most stable software to use for transmitting files is the pdf format, please if at all possible save your file as a high resolution pdf when sending to the printer. A pdf file is an internationally recognised file type which is easily transferred across both PC and Macintosh platforms and also has the benefit of being "what you see is what you get". This ensures that the printer receives exactly what you intend – in other words the image position stays the same, and fonts are reproduced correctly. Many programs for making pdf files are available free or inexpensively on the Internet.

8) Explaining trim and bleed

All card designs whose image or background colour finish exactly at the edge of the card area should extend their image or colour an extra 3mm bleed out from the trim area to allow for the tolerance of the guillotine when finishing. Even though the guillotine can trim accurately there is still a margin of error in the trimming out process. In the same way if you have a design where the text runs to the very edge of the card then any cutting deviation will result in some of your text being cut off. So on the inside of the trim area there should be a margin of minimum 5mm. If less than 5mm is used then the finished job margins could look uneven.The sample below shows the layout for a square card. The same rules apply to landscape or portrait cards.



9) Why are cards the size they are?

The size of common cards is based on the the number of cards that could be fitted onto a traditional litho plate, and the availability of envelopes and cello protective wraps for displaying in shops. Bear this in mind when deciding what size card to produce.

Common sizes in popular use are (folded size):

100x150	140x140	145x145	120x170
125x125	127x177	150x150	150x210