



bleeds



WHAT IS A BLEED?

In printing, a “bleed” is when part of the design is printed right to the edge of the paper. See the examples of bleed designs directly below. In these cases, the artwork needs to be adjusted to extend beyond the finished page size. If your job has a white margin on all edges, then a bleed is not required. See the examples of non-bleed designs below and to the right.

WHY DO WE NEED BLEEDS?

Printing presses and digital copiers can't print right to the edge of a sheet of paper. So, if an image on your job runs to the end of the paper, it must be printed on oversized paper and then trimmed down to the finished size. Printing on larger paper and extending the artwork past the final trim size makes allowance for the small variations that occur in printing and cutting.

THESE NEED BLEEDS



THESE DON'T NEED BLEEDS



HOW MUCH BLEED?

Typically use a 1/8 inch (0.125) bleed allowance on each side of the job. This means that any element of the page which is intended to print to the edge must continue beyond the final trim size by 1/8 inch. This additional information will be trimmed off after the job has been printed.

In addition to the bleed area beyond the edge of a page, it is good to allow a “safety zone” inside the page boundary. Any important elements, such as text or graphics not bleeding off the page, should be kept within this “safety zone”. Allow margins of 1/4 inch (0.25) in from the trim edge on all four sides. This also gives your project a better visual appearance.



HOW DO I MAKE BLEEDS?

The software you use to create your project will determine how you can allow for bleeds. When using software like Adobe InDesign, Adobe Illustrator, and Microsoft Publisher, just set the document size to the desired size of the finished job and simply extend the elements that need to bleed over the edge of the page. When exporting/saving as a PDF, make sure to include crop marks and bleed information when the PDF dialog creation box pops up.

When creating artwork in programs that don't handle bleeds automatically, like Adobe Photoshop or Microsoft Word, set the image size initially to be large enough to include the bleeds. For example, when creating a postcard that is 4x6", make your image size 4 1/4 x 6 1/4" (4.25x6.25). This gives you an 1/8 inch (0.125) bleed on all four sides. But remember, that the extra amount will be trimmed off.

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