

# Art Specs For Designer

**(This will be the guide for the designer when designing brochures)**

The following is the information you need for designing a postcard. Please use the following checklist when submitting art. PostcardMania® cannot be responsible for art that does not follow our specs.

What does "Print Ready" mean?

Print Ready is a term used to describe a file that has all the specifications necessary to produce high-resolution printed output, without requiring any additional alteration or intervention. In other words, we can use the file "as submitted" to successfully create the desired print materials.

## Artwork Specifications & Requirements

### Size

Standard Card — 6" x 4.25"

Double Card — 8.5" x 6"

Rack Card — 9" x 4"

Custom-Sized Cards: Other sizes accepted but there may be an extra charge. Ask your sales rep for quote.

### Bleeds

For art that bleeds (color goes to the edges) - Add an extra 1/8 inch to each side that bleeds. For example, a standard card (6" x 4.25") that bleeds on each side, make your canvas size 6.25" x 4.5" (1/8 inch x 2 sides).

This extra 1/8 inch will be trimmed off so put type or critical art no closer than 1/4 inch from the bleed edge or 1/8 inch from the trim edge.

Blade shift when cutting the cards is unavoidable. We don't want your message to be cut off. We strongly suggest you do not use a border around your image, as we cannot guarantee "straightness" and "evenness" for the same reason. We are not responsible for designs that do not follow these guidelines.

### Colors

Front (glossy side): CMYK (No RGB or pantone colors)

Back: CMYK (No RGB or pantone colors)

## CMYK vs. RGB

CMYK, short for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black, are the four ink colors used in printing. Printers create images using dots of these colors. Adding more color in CMYK mode results in a darker image. This method is widely used in printing items like postcards & brochures due to its ability to produce accurate colors.

CMYK is known as a subtractive color model because it adds colors to a white surface, reducing other colors in the process and making the image darker.

In contrast, RGB is used for digital platforms like websites and TV. Here, adding more color lightens the image.

### How To Tell if Your File Is in RGB or CMYK

Here's how to check the color mode in some of the most popular design software.

**Photoshop:** The color mode in Photoshop is listed in parentheses after the Documents tab. You can also navigate to Image > Mode.

**Illustrator:** The Documents tab will also have the mode listed in parentheses in Illustrator. You can also find it by navigating to File > Document Color Mode.

**InDesign:** Navigate to Window > Color > Color, where you will see colors measured in either CMYK or RGB modes.

To solve this and create a very dark black on the colored side of your card, we recommend using a RICH BLACK. The CMYK settings for Rich Black are: C-40 M-0 Y-0 K-100. Be sure if you are placing an image with a black background on top of another black area, that the blacks have the same color breakdowns. If they are a different color black, it may not show up on your monitor but will be obvious when printed.

Keep TYPE on both front and back at 100% black.

## Images

All images must have a resolution of at least 300 dpi. If purchasing images from a stock photo house, make sure that you buy a high-resolution image (at least 300 dpi). The file should be approximately 9MB in size for a standard postcard.

Do not use images pulled from a website. They may look okay on your monitor and inkjet printer but they are low resolution and will print poorly on a four-color press. The better quality the original image the better quality the finished product.

## Mailing Area

[Click here](#) for a detailed guide about the mailing area.

## Acceptable File Types

There are eight file types we can accept and each has its own set of requirements

PDF (.PDF)

EPS (.EPS)

TIFF (.TIFF)

JPEG (.JPG)

BMP (.BMP)

InDesign(.INDD)

QuarkXPress (.QXD)

Photoshop (.PSD)

Illustrator (.AI)

## Tips & Troubleshooting

### Color Matching

Colors you see on your monitor or output from most inkjet printers will NOT accurately reflect the actual colors we print on our CMYK 4-color process printing. If you are concerned about color, purchase a color proof from us to review before we go to print.

We'll do all our best to match colors but because of variations inherent in the printing process we cannot guarantee an exact match.

The PDF proofs we provide are only an approximation of the colors and are not exact. PostcardMania will try to warn you about files that do not match your color printout but cannot be held responsible for color differences when a high-quality color proof has not been provided.

### Use of Black

When printing black that is made up of 100% black on the color side of the card, the black may appear slightly grey and may show lines when other images are layered underneath the black layer.

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## Digital Cameras

Take your pictures at the highest quality setting possible. We recommend 5 megapixel cameras or higher set to "fine".

## Image Resolution

Higher DPI means higher resolution. Resolution is not "size", but it's often confused with it because higher resolution images are often bigger, but that doesn't necessarily have to be the case.

Print: 300dpi is standard.