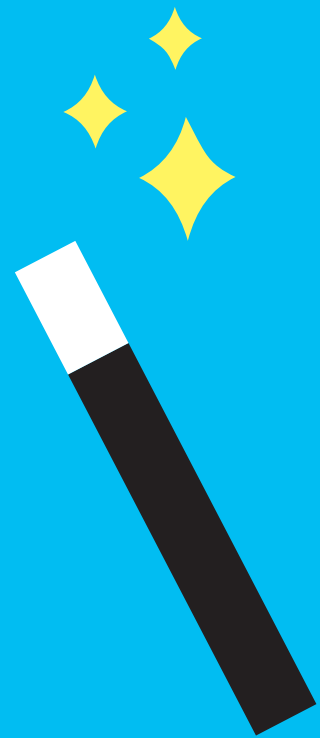
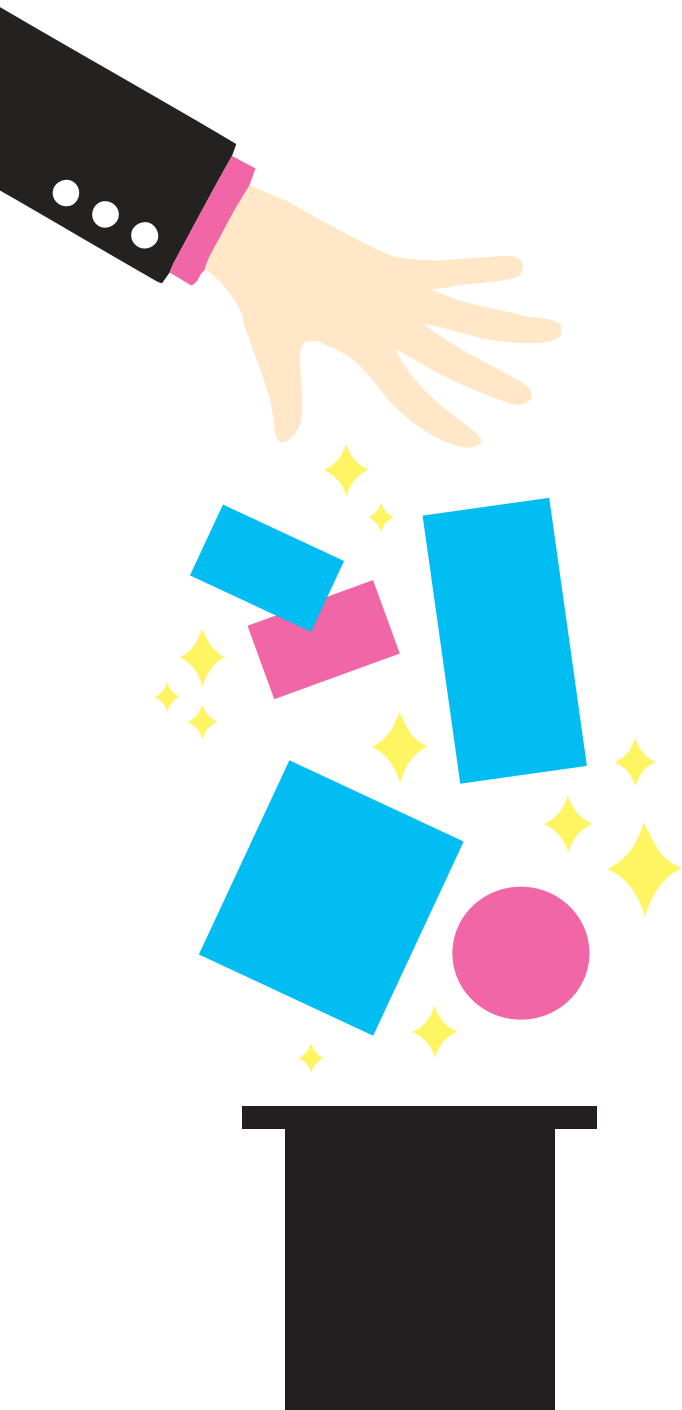


FILE SUPPLY GUIDE

*Everything you need to know for
a seamless printing process*



CONTENTS



3

remember the **bleed**

set up your file properly

4

make sure it **works**

tips on imposition and folding

5

fix pesky lil' **errors**

filechecks to look out for

7

a **booklet** you say?

prepare yourself for the challenge

8

big ole **posters**

all the need-to-know about large scale

9

time to talk **cmymk**

don't forget to convert your colors

10

all the **other** stuff

resolution, point sizes, & file formats

11

the **size guide**

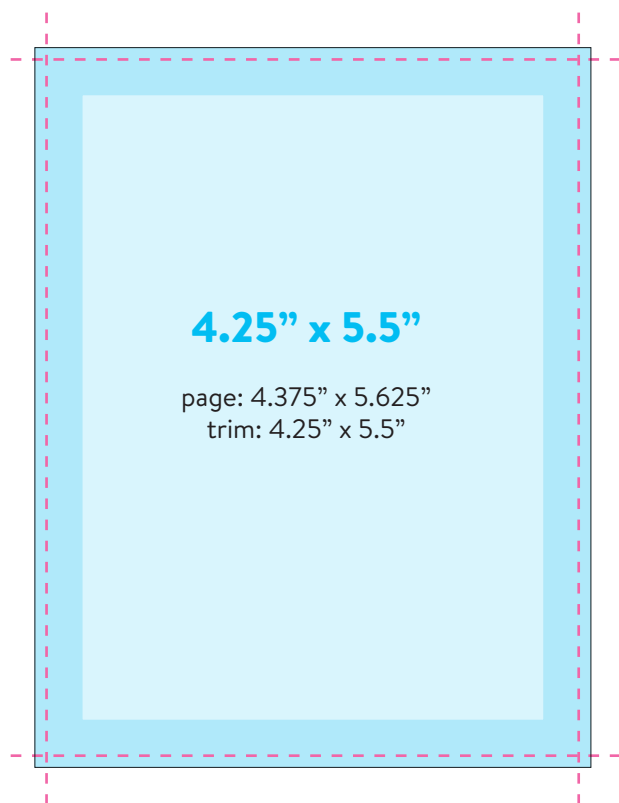
find the correct dimensions for print

REMEMBER THE BLEED

It's very important that you set your page size correctly. If you don't, parts of your design may be chopped off, look off-center, or have areas of undesired white space. Before you start designing any job with folds, creases, cut-outs, spot UV, or perforations, call or email us! These items need to be positioned precisely and supplied in a specific manner – we don't want to have to reject your file if it isn't right.

Here are some tips on setting up your file for print:

for example:



PAGE DIMENSIONS

Locate the product size you're interested in on page 11. Be sure that your design has the proper dimensions. We also have InDesign and PDF templates available for your convenience. Visit our website or email us for a template!

TRIM SIZE

Now look at the Trim Size. You'll see that this is 1/16" smaller on both dimensions. This difference is known as the 'bleed' – 1/16" on all four sides – that's approximately where our automated cutter will make its cuts. The bleed allows for any small variations in this cutting. All photos and backgrounds should continue to the edge of the page—don't stop at the trim line! You may end up with and unwanted (and uneven) white border.

QUIET ZONE

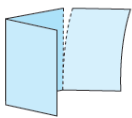
Finally, it's good practice to leave a quiet zone of 3/16" (.25" for Booklets and Posters) from the trim edge (that's .25" or .3125" from the page edge). The same goes for any folds or creases. Avoid placing any important objects such as text or logos within this quiet zone. This will make your job look more professional and ensure objects don't look like they're about to fall off the edge. Logos and text within the quiet zone may be trimmed off.

MAKE SURE IT WORKS

You'd be amazed at the number of great looking designs we see which simply don't work on a functional level. Things like tear-off slips that don't match up between front and back, or greeting cards where the inside is upside down. As well as your document looking good, consider the practicality of what it will be like when it has been printed, folded and cut down. Simple things set incorrectly can ruin your design.

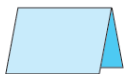
The following items are famous for mishaps:

Perforation



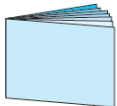
Check that both sides have the perforation in the same place – remember that the reverse is a mirror image of the front.

Landscape Greeting Card



Ensure that you flip the inside artwork in your document so that it's upside down. This way, when you open the final greeting card product, the inside is the correct way up.

Booklets



Check that all the pages are numbered in the right order. Save in one document as single pages – don't paste them up, or supply 'printer's pairs' – make sure you read pages 16-17 of this guide, as they're expensive jobs to go wrong!

Folded Brochures



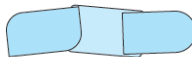
Check that all the pages are in the correct position – the front panel is where you want the front panel to be, and so on – please ask for exact sizes.

Roll Folded Brochures



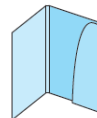
Check that you've allowed for the flap that folds in to be trimmed smaller, to prevent buckling. Ask for panel sizes or a template if you're unsure.

Punched Business Cards



Check that you've designed the reverse of your artwork to fit into a mirror image of the front – if unsure, make a mock up!

Presentation Folder



Check that when the pockets are folded, they don't obscure any text you want to be visible.

try this
PRO TIP!

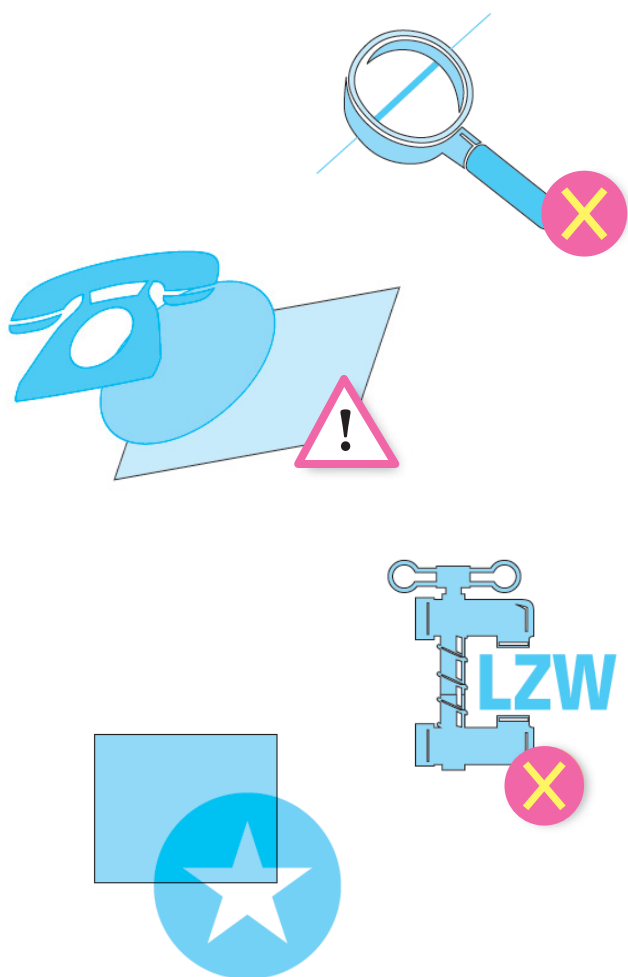


Print out a a mini version of your design and test it out! Making folds with a physical mockup ensures that every piece is exactly where it should be.

FIX PESKY LIL' ERRORS

Today's graphics applications are incredibly sophisticated. So much so, that many contain features not compatible with the latest developments in printing technology. Likewise, some things can look great on screen, but not when printed. Based on our extensive experience, we've prepared a list of items that we know can cause problems.

Check out the list below to avoid potential hiccups:



HAIRLINES

Hairlines are *device dependent*. This means they print at different resolutions on different machines. You should use .25pt or higher.

LAYER & TRANSPARENCY EFFECTS

These can be used providing that your transparency flattener preset is set on high resolution.

UNFLATTENED IMAGES

The safest file formats for images are flattened files saved as tiffs. Try to avoid layered tiff and layered photoshop eps files as these can cause problems.

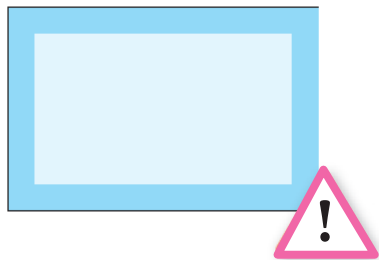
COMPRESSION

You can happily use WinZIP or StuffIT to compress your files, but never compress images using LZW compression. Doing so has been known to cause problems and may result in your file not printing at all.

OVERPRINT

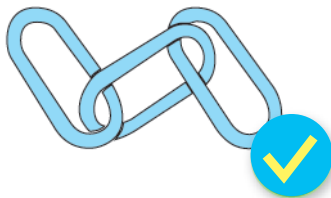
Be careful with overprint settings. If you set objects to overprint, they will not 'knock-out' the background, and will look very different from what you see on screen or proof. Black text generally defaults to overprint, (as does the 100% black swatch in some applications). This is usually OK. Please refer to your application manual for more details.

MORE PESKY LIL' ERRORS



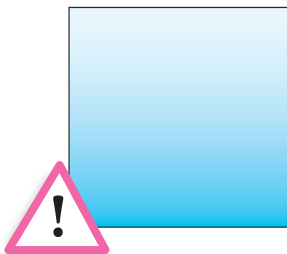
EPS WITHIN EPS

Not a good idea as this massively increases the risk of a Postscript error. Certain Illustrator EPSs also cause problems in Quark.



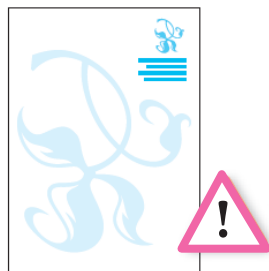
BORDERS

Avoid using borders where possible (especially on small items such as business cards), since even a slight movement when cutting could make your border look uneven and unprofessional.



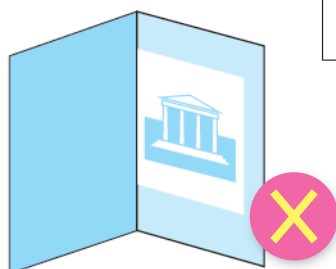
EMBEDDING IMAGES

Some of the graphics packages allow you to “embed” image files. Avoid doing this as we can’t check the images and it results in large file sizes. It’s better to supply the images as linked files.



GRADIENTS

Vignettes, or gradient fills are best avoided – these are difficult to print and they have a tendency to show ‘banding’ and look unprofessional.



WATERMARKS

Be careful with watermarks, if they’re too heavy it can make text or writing difficult to read. We recommend using a tint between 5%-7% for the best results. We cannot guarantee to print below 5%.

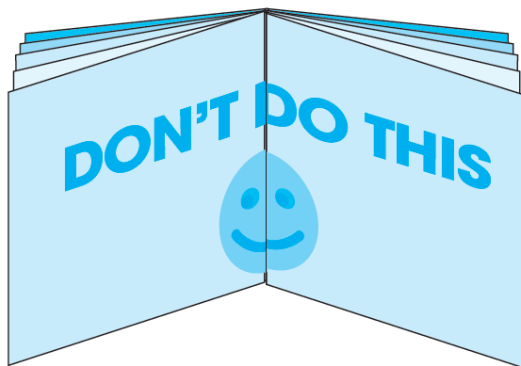
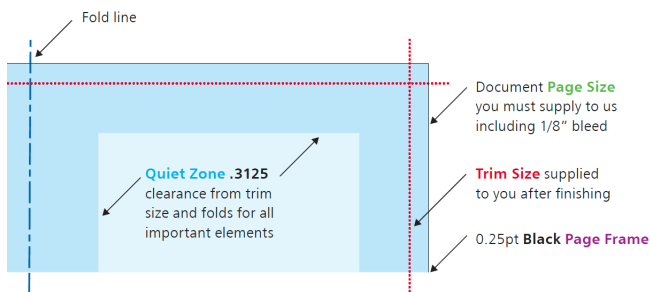
ALIGNING ELEMENTS TO FOLDS

Avoid trying to line up design elements with folds or creases. There’s a chance they may not land perfectly on the fold or crease which can look unprofessional.

A BOOKLET YOU SAY?

Before you start, are you sure you've got the skills to tackle a project of this size? Designing a booklet requires a lot more experience than business cards or brochures. If you're certain you want to design it yourself, take a minute to read through our handy little guide for important advice and file requirements. We highly recommend giving us a call to discuss the details of your project and the final piece.

Here are some things to consider on your endeavor...



DESIGN AS SINGLE PAGES

Create a separate page in your artwork for each page of your Booklet. You can supply as a multi-page document or as one document per page. Please don't supply as "printer's pairs" or spreads.

ADD 1/8 INCH BLEED TO EACH SIDE

Booklets need more bleed than other products. Look at the finished page size of the Booklet. Add 1/8" to all sides of your page – a total of 1/4" across each axis. You even need to add bleed to the edge which forms the spine. Our process chops this off and merges the spine together.

AVOID OBJECTS WHICH CROSS PAGES

It's unlikely that objects which cross pages will line up exactly. It's best to avoid them, or accept that there will be some vertical movement throughout your Booklet. You'll also need to allow for the bleed being trimmed off – ask us if you're not sure.

COLORS

Avoid trying to match colors throughout the booklet. Some color variation is inherent in the process and will be most noticeable where two pages of the same color meet.

BIG OLE POSTERS

Designing large format posters is slightly different than designing for litho print, partly because of their increased size but also because of the difference in technology. The basic principles are the same – you still need to prepare everything in CMYK and follow the rest of the instructions in this guide, but here are some extra tips...

Here are some things to consider on your endeavor...

RESPECT THE QUIET ZONE

You should position images and text at least 3/8" from the edge of the poster. For best results, make your background bleed fully to the edge of your artwork if it is within 3/8" of the edge.

WATCH THE RESOLUTION

Large Format Posters are designed to be viewed at a distance (usually of at least 3-5 ft.). This means that images don't need to be as high resolution as on litho printed items. We recommend that you provide images for Large Format Posters at a maximum of 150 dpi. Any higher won't make much difference to final print, but will take much longer to process, and may delay the processing of your job.

BE CAREFUL WITH COLOR

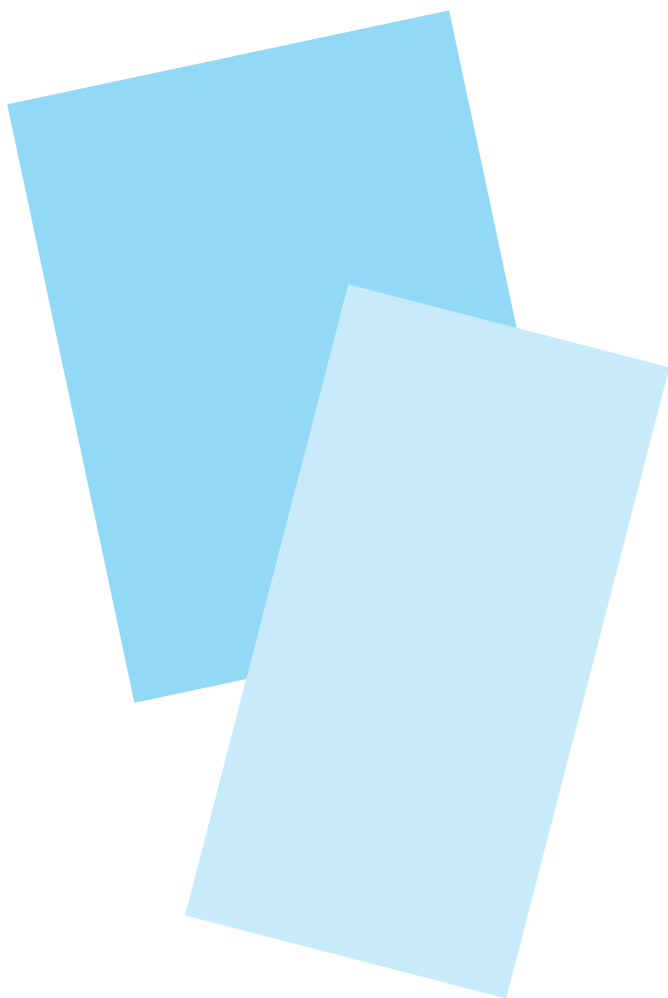
Keep all elements under 225% total ink limit. It's best to avoid solid colors (100%) of only one ink as these can be susceptible to slight "banding." Also, any greyscale images should be converted to CMYK prior to submission.

SMALL TEXT

We recommend that you keep your text at 14pt and up.

POP-UP DISPLAYS

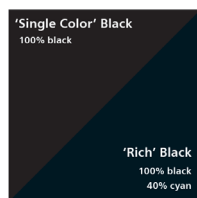
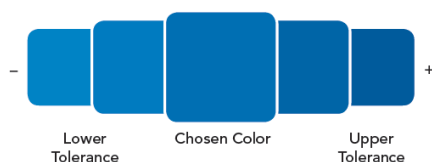
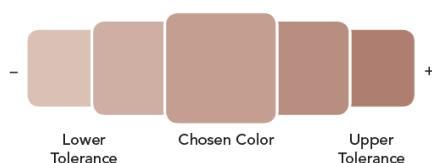
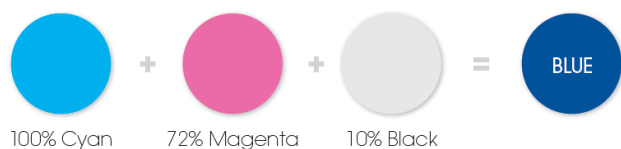
As with booklets, avoid elements and graphics crossing over the panel joints if possible, they can be hard to line up when the posters are printed.



TIME TO TALK CMYK

As you may already know, your digital devices all have screens that create images using combinations of just three colors, RGB – red, green, & blue. However, printing presses do color a little differently. They use a four color process know as CMYK – cyan, magenta, yellow, and black (much like First In Print’s logo!). At some stage of production, RGB files and colors must be converted to CMYK.

Here are some tips in ensuring your colors are properly converted:



OFFSET

You'll get best reproduction from colors that are made up from two or three inks. When using lighter shades, avoid tints that contain less than 5% of CMYK, as they usually print much lighter. For best results, use tints containing 5% to 30% where possible. We recommend ink coverage limit is 225%. This means that, wherever possible, the colors you use should contain a total of 225% or less.

COLOR TOLERANCES

Color variation is inherent in any print process and you shouldn't expect a perfect match to your chosen color. The examples to the left help give you an idea of how your chosen color may look when printed.

BLACK

The first method is single color black, made from 100% black ink. This is ideal for small areas less than 1 inch, such as text or logos. For larger areas, a rich black mix is ideal, which consists of 100% black and 40% cyan. This will ensure an even, dark coverage, as the second ink color (cyan) disguises any inconsistencies. However, rich black should never be used on small text as any tiny deviance in registration will lead to a blurred effect. Black text should **never have more than 140% ink coverage.**

don't
FORGET!



Please note all **Pantone® spot colors** must be changed to **process color** and converted to their CMYK equivalent, before your file is submitted.

ALL OF THE OTHER STUFF

Okay, you are finally on the home stretch! From photo resolution & sizing, text layout & point size, and formatting for submitting finalized artworks – here's the breakdown down of everything else you need to know when preparing your file for print.

Can we have a drumroll please!



WORKING WITH PHOTOS

Consider the final size your image will be used at. Photographs should be 300-350dpi at the size you are going to use them. There's no point taking a postage stamp at 300dpi and then blowing it up to a Letter size – for scans, use your scanning software to help you calculate the output resolution. Conversely, photographs at more than 300dpi will have little or no effect on the actual printed quality and will unnecessarily increase file size and processing time. Don't enlarge or reduce your images in your drawing/vector software. It's always best to use an image editing application for this task.

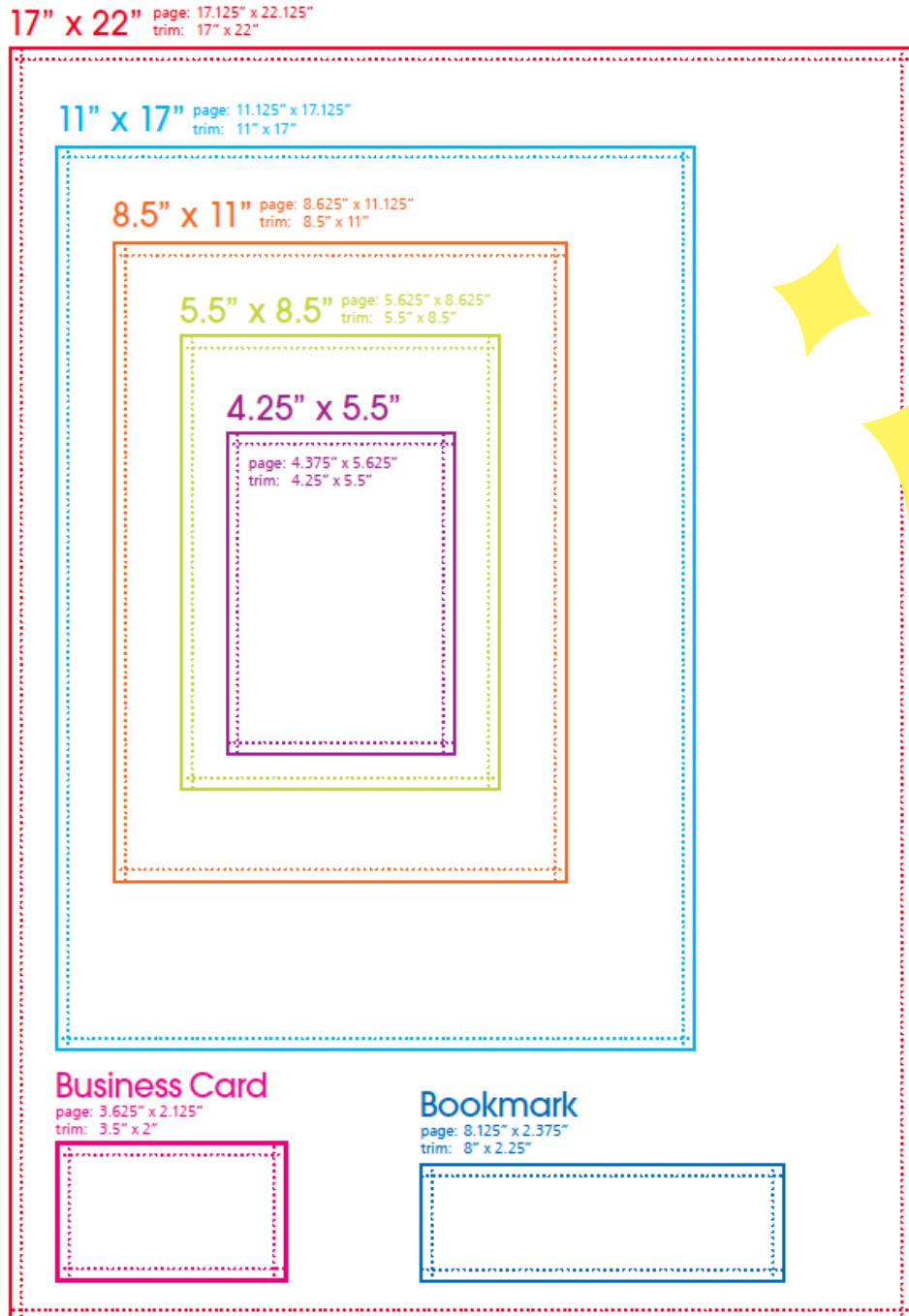
WORKING WITH TEXT

When working with small text it's best not to use colors which contain more than one ink. All printing presses have a tiny variation in the positioning of the different color printing plates. It's fine to use colored text in headlines or type above, say, 12 point, but below that the blurring may be noticeable and won't look too hot. The same thing happens when you knock white text out of a colored background made from more than one ink.

ACCEPTABLE FORMATS

We want your file to print the way you want it to print. More than anything else, we want you to be happy with the work that we produce for you. So, if there's anything at all that you don't understand – give us a call (preferably before you start designing). Chances are, if you've followed our advice, your file will print just fine!

SIZE GUIDE



— 'page' – supply your file at this size (see page 8)
..... 'trim' – this is the finished size of the product