



20 Point Printing Checklist

We help make sure your documents are print-ready and printed accurately by following these 20 steps.

Completing a thorough printing checklist is an important part of any project and ensures your final product is flawless and consistent from beginning to end. At ABG Print, we run your electronic files through a rigorous formatting and proofreading process that not only saves you from unnecessary headaches later on but can save you money too.

For many print jobs there are a number of basic questions we ask and simple fixes we make to ensure the integrity and quality of your media. Rather than an ad hoc analysis, a systematic, step-by-step printing checklist is the best bet when it comes to finalizing your projects.

FILE SETUP CHECKS

1. Image Size

Before we send your document to the printer, we confirm the size of the image and make sure we print it on appropriately sized paper. If the image is too large, parts of your text and graphics could be cut off and printed on a different page, making your final product appear awkward and less reader friendly. By ensuring the size of the paper matches the size of your image, we ensure the final product is crisp and clean.



2. Image File Resolution

Nothing can ruin the look and feel of a document like poor resolution. To guard against fuzzy text and images, we double check that your file has been saved at the highest possible resolution (at least 300 DPI for best results). While there is no maximum resolution, the higher the better.



3. Page Order

We confirm your document starts at page one if the pages are numbered. There are a variety of numbering styles too, so we make sure the style of your page numbers matches the style of your document. We also make sure the paginated content makes sense. For example, if your document has an image that is a spread from one page to the next, we make sure both halves are on consecutive pages. Page numbers aren't always trustworthy in electronic files because they can auto generate. A manual final check is the best way to make sure your page order is correct.



4. Does the File Bleed?

Bleed is part of an image that deliberately goes beyond the edge of where the sheet will be trimmed. In other words, the bleed is the area to be trimmed off. Bleed is important in documents that need printing to the edge as it gives the printer a small amount of space to account for movement of the paper as it moves throughout printing and finishing production equipment. Artwork and background colors often extend into the bleed area. After trimming, the bleed ensures that no unprinted edges occur in the final trimmed document. If your image needs a bleed area that is one color or simple, we can often add it to a document for you. When the background or edge of an image is non uniform, sometimes we'll ask you or your designer to correct the file to ensure it prints perfectly!

5. Content close to the edge

Another similar check we make is to see if any other content is too close to the edge and will be cut off or punched with holes when the document is being finished. If there isn't a wide enough margin around the entire document, we will make adjustments to it so that nothing is lost once it is printed and finished.



6. Color Profile

While the RGB color mode works best for screen view, CMYK is standard for printed products. Before we send your document to the printer, we double-check which color mode the document is using. If necessary, we convert or switch the color mode to CMYK to ensure the integrity and vibrancy of your printed images. Note: we recommend proof checking the hard copy versus on a computer or phone.



DESIGN FILE CHECKS

7. Missing File Links

In rare occasions where we work with a design file in lieu of a print ready PDF (which all printers prefer), we double check your file to ensure the information in your document is accurate and consistent.



8. Fonts

Embedding your fonts protects the fidelity of your text and makes sure it will look the same on screen as it does on a printed page. By embedding your fonts, we also make sure they won't change when shared or printed.



9. Unused or Invisible Layers

Unused or invisible layers can potentially alter the look of your images when printed as that data is still in the data file. To make sure nothing is lost in translation from computer screen to printer, we remove or delete all unused, invisible, or hidden layers.



10. File Preview

It might sound so simple that its hardly worth mentioning, but many printing mistakes can be attributed to forgetting to look at the print preview. We take this step seriously and know it can save you from a printing headache.



11. Mailing Address Data and Variable Data

If your document includes mailing addresses or other specific, complex data sets, we go through and double-check the accuracy of each. Example: Some zip codes in Connecticut and New Jersey start with 0 but MS Excel can cut them off. Yikes!



12. Image Copy Rights

If you have pulled images from the internet, we make sure you have the right to use it. If you do, we will also suggest including an attribution so you can give credit where credit is due.



PROOFING CHECKS

13. Registration

If you intend to print your document on both sides of a page (duplex printing) we will make sure your document and the printer are aligned accordingly and crop marks are added to ensure accurate trimming.



14. Missing or Altered Images

Starting from the cover and continuing through the end of the document, we scan manually to make sure no images went missing or were altered while formatting and finalizing your file. We complete this step each time any aspect of your document is altered as a change on one page could affect formatting on another.



15. Proof vs Computer Screen

We confirm all images and text match the original file by printing a proof copy and checking it against the digital file. A proof copy, printed and examined before hundreds or thousands of copies of your document are printed, is a great and necessary way we keep your project from formatting flaws and grammatical errors.



16. Pixilation

If an image looks fuzzier than anticipated, we double-check that there hasn't been an unexpected drop in pixilation. If there has, we will try printing the document a different way to correct the issue.



17. Typeface Checks

Typeface changes can occur during the printing process and mar the look and feel of your document. Consistency in a font's typeface and size is crucial to making sure your document appears professional. We double-check your proof copy against the screen one more time to make sure the typeface is consistent throughout



18. Transparency

At ABG Print we are always on the lookout for issues with the transparency of text and images. Sometimes vector images with low opacity can be missed on the screen but show up when the document is printed. We go through one final time to make sure the settings on each page are set correctly and nothing will be lost (or unexpectedly added) in translation from screen to printer.



19. Quality Check

Throughout the printing process, our professional production staff checks proofs and production runs for roller marks or toner dropout. We also have our printers regularly serviced and use best in class professional grade equipment to make sure they are running smoothly when you need it most.



PRODUCTION CHECK



20. Sampling Check

At ABG Print we check more than the proof. Throughout a large production run, we'll sample random sheets and compare them with the approved proof to ensure the final output is consistent.

A quick note about color:

Please note the color on your computer monitor or phone may not be representative of the printed piece. A desktop monitor and phone screen uses a resolution of 72 dpi and is RGB based, while printing uses 300 dpi and is CMYK based. The colors on the monitor are brighter than they will appear when they print.