

Printing at the Resource Centre: Artwork

This page provides general tips for setting up your artwork to print at the Resource Centre.

For more specific advice about common types of document, have a look at our website, or ask us:

- ◆ Posters
- ◆ Leaflets and flyers
- ◆ Booklets and newsletters
- ◆ Mailings
- ◆ Badges
- ◆ Stickers

General tips for designing your artwork

Which printer?

Design your artwork so that it is appropriate for the type of printing you are going to do. For example, there's no point in using complex, colourful graphics if you are going to be printing in black & white, on a low resolution machine. If you are planning to print at the Resource Centre, and not sure about what printer to use and what design is appropriate, contact us.

Use the right program

Designing things like posters, flyers and newsletters is much easier if you use a desktop publishing program, rather than a word processing program. You have much more control over where things appear on the page in programs like Microsoft Publisher or Adobe Indesign than you do in Microsoft Word or Open Office Write. However, it's no good trying to design your artwork in a program you don't know how to use!

Our staff are happy to provide tips here and there, but we do not offer training and support with design work, so you do need to make sure that you design your printing in a program that you understand.

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Community groups in Sussex are welcome to come and design their artwork in the Centre.

Computer use is free but if you would like to use a computer for a number of hours, it is advisable to book one. Contact us to do this. Have a look at our list of computer programs before you come, so that you know what you will want to use.

Save it as a PDF or JPEG and bring the original as well!

If you design your artwork at home, bring it to the Resource Centre as a JPEG or PDF file in case we don't have the program or fonts that you have used. It is also a good idea to bring a version in the file type you designed it in (e.g. a Publisher, Photoshop or Word file) so that you can make changes to it here if you want to (and if we have the right program for you). There's a list of the main software we have available on our computers and internet page.

Always leave a margin

All of our machines leave at least 6mm blank at the edges of the page. Bear this in mind when designing your artwork – if it doesn't have a margin, the edges could end up getting chopped off when you print it! You should leave a margin of at least 6mm on everything.

If your original is on paper

Printing quality will always be better if you print directly from an electronic file. If you do need to bring your artwork on paper:

- ♦ Make sure it is not folded or creased.
- ♦ Make sure it is on white paper, even if you are planning to copy it onto coloured paper.
- ♦ If you can, bring copies that are single sided, even if you are going to produce double sided copies.
- ♦ If it contains lots of detailed images, you may get better quality by doing a high resolution scan to create an electronic file, and then printing from the scanned file. We can show you how to do this.
- ♦ Remember that the quality of the original determines the quality of the reproduction.

Designing artwork for copyprinter printing

General tips

- ♦ Leave a margin of at least 1cm around all the outside edges of your image.
- ♦ Don't have huge areas of black or very dense images. These will come out grey rather than solid black, and tend to jam the machines.

- ♦ You will lose some contrast and resolution when you print. A complicated graphic with lots of photo images and overwriting can end up looking messy. Clear, fairly simple artwork reproduces best.
- ♦ Make sure your original artwork is on a white background.
- ♦ Finalise your artwork before cutting a stencil on the copyprinter. If you want to print out a copy to see how it looks on paper, use the laser printer or the inkjet printer.

Spot colour printing

Our copyprinters work by cutting a stencil which wraps round an ink drum. Wet ink then comes through this stencil onto the paper. One of our machines holds two drums at a time. One holds only one.

Spot colour printing on the two drum printer

You can use this machine if you want to print using red or green ink.

This machine has two drums in it, so it can put two different colours of ink on the paper at the same time. It is also able to understand which colour is which in your artwork, so you can bring one piece of artwork with, for example, black and red in it, and it will be able to work out which bits to print using black ink and which bits to print using red ink.

You can also bring your artwork as a paper original, with two colours in it.

Spot colour printing on the one drum printer

You will need to use this machine if you want to print using maroon ink.

To print in two colours on this machine, you need to put the paper through the machine twice. For example if you are printing in maroon and black, you will print the black bits first, then put the paper back through to print the maroon bits.

To use this machine, your artwork must be 'colour separated'. One sheet of original artwork will contain everything to print in black, and another will have everything to print in maroon. A lot of desktop publishing and illustration programs will do this for you automatically. However, Microsoft Word and Publisher do not. To create colour-separated files in Word or Publisher, follow this process:

- ♦ Create a complete version, then save it (e.g. Poster Complete).
- ♦ Change all the non-black bits of your document to white. You can change pictures to white by increasing their brightness setting to 100%. Then click Save As. Save a second file, now with just the black bits, with a different name (e.g. Poster black). Make sure you don't save this over your complete version!
- ♦ Re-open the original complete document. Change all the black bits to white and all the maroon bits to black (yes, you need to change the bits you want in colour to black at this stage). Click Save As. Save a third copy – Poster Maroon.

When you are printing spot colour, remember that the machine will always print whatever colour ink is in the drum in the machine! To change the colour you need to change the drum – changing the colour of your original artwork won't make any difference.

If you are printing from a paper original, all the pieces of original artwork should be in black, even if you are going to copy them in coloured ink.

For example, to print this:



you would need to supply two separate sheets of artwork like this:



Not too close!

Our machines are not accurate enough to deal with colours that are right next to each other – for example, a red square with a black line around it. The machine jigs things around slightly, so the black line or red box moves a couple of millimetres. The end result is messy – a red square with a black line that doesn't fit snugly, but sometimes overlaps and sometimes leaves a slight margin.

To avoid this, only use colour for distinct headings, boxes or pictures. Make sure there are a few millimetres of space around them, so a small amount of jiggling won't spoil the overall effect.

Additional work and cost

It will cost you slightly more to print in two colours, as there are two stencils and everything goes through the machine twice. This is true for each additional colour you use. For the same reasons it will take you longer to run the print job if you are using two or more colours.

Designing artwork for printing on the laser printer or inkjet printer

- ♦ ALWAYS leave a margin of at least 6mm around the edge of your artwork.

- ♦ If you want to print a multi-page document, make sure all the pages are in the same file.
- ♦ The laser printer and inkjet printers can collate and print double sided automatically, but only for pages in the same file.
- ♦ Additionally, the laser printer can staple your documents.