

Label design
& print guide

01. Getting the best out of your branding

Great looking packaging is important in ensuring your brand and product connects with consumers in a crowded market.

Many brands are designed with a multitude of factors considered as part of the development process, from colours and type faces to it's final print.

When you're presented with the template, it's important to consider the use of space very carefully and ask yourself the following questions:

- Do you want your logo to be front and centre?
- Do you want your contact details included? Is there room for both?
- Is it a case of 'less is more'?
- Is there a need for a full colour photo and a paragraph of text?

So, what should you keep in mind if you want the perfect print?



02. Setting up bleed & crop marks

Adding bleed and crop marks to your artwork will help ensure that we can trim your job neatly and perfectly, leaving a pristine end result.

Crop marks allow us to see the exact size of your document and show us where to cut it, and bleed prevents white edges caused by slight paper movement during trimming.

Setting up bleed on your document

You'll notice an area within your document size dialogue box called 'Bleed and Slug' (InDesign users need to click the 'down arrow' to the left of the Bleed and Slug option). Set the bleed to 3mm and then click the 'link constrain' next to it and click 'CREATE' (Fig.1)

Your page/art board will now have a black edge to show the document size and a red edge to show the bleed area. Ensure all your artwork touches this red edge. When it's done, the document will be cut along the black edge (Fig.2)

Fig.2

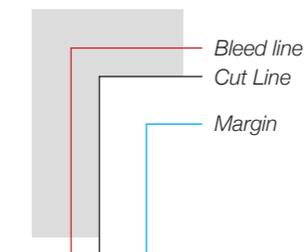
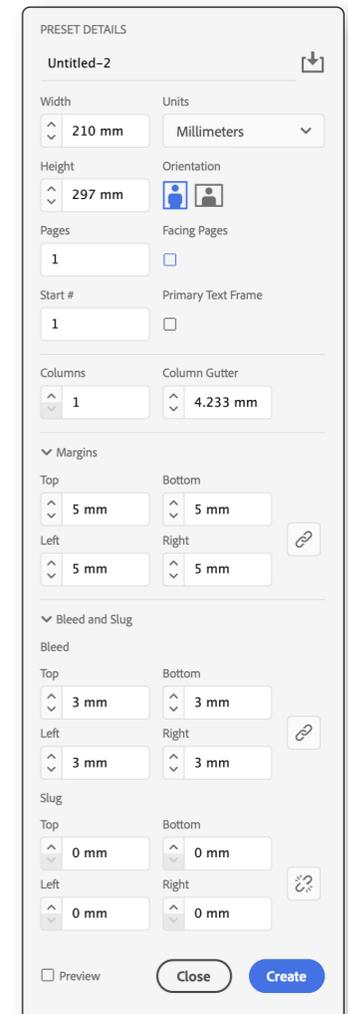


Fig.1



Id Task demonstrated using Adobe InDesign



03. What can happen if you don't add bleed?

Uploading artwork that hasn't been supplied with bleed means you risk white edges ruining the finish of your print.

By providing an extra 3mm of bleed, any slight paper movements that occur during the trimming process will go unnoticed (compare the differences below).



Id Task demonstrated using
Adobe InDesign



04. How to create a cutter guide

You'll need an artwork cutter guide if you want to order bespoke shaped labels or bespoke label sheets.

What is a cutter guide?

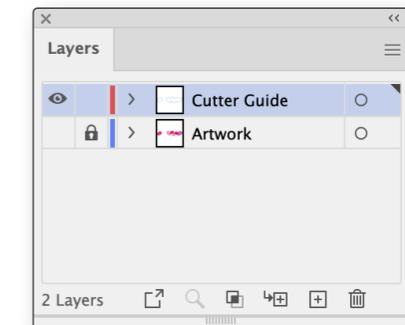
A cutter guide is a path around your artwork which shows us exactly where you want your bespoke shapes to be cut. To create these, you'll need to use Adobe Illustrator (or any similar vector based program).

How to create your cutter guide?

Open your file in Adobe Illustrator and setup your document size to the final size of your artwork and set the bleed to 3mm on each edge. Once opened, fit your artwork file to the artwork/bleed boxes. Once it's the correct size, we recommend outlining any text. You can do this by selecting each text box, then right clicking and selecting 'Create Outline' (We do this to make sure text displays correctly across all programs/formats)

Once outlined, name your layer 'Artwork' and duplicate the layer. You will now have two layers in your document. Lock the original 'Artwork' layer and rename your new layer 'Cutter Guide'. You can hide the artwork layer by clicking the 'eye' icon, so that you only see your cutter guide layer (Fig.3).

Fig.3



(Make sure you don't move anything in your document, or you'll have misaligned artwork and cutter lines. This process works best when using vector images.)

Ai Task demonstrated using
Adobe Illustrator



05. Creating a cutter guide

Select all items in the cutter layer, then make sure your design is selected

Menu: Object > Path > Offset path.

Click the 'Preview' tick box to get an idea of how far your cutter line is away from the edge of your artwork. Adjust the offset to your desired effect (we recommend a minimum of 1.5mm border). Once made, make sure the new path and the original line are ungrouped, then delete the original line, leaving only the new line.

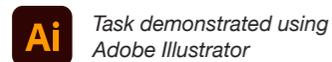
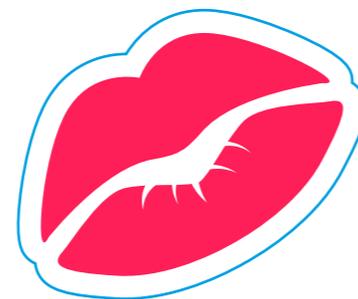
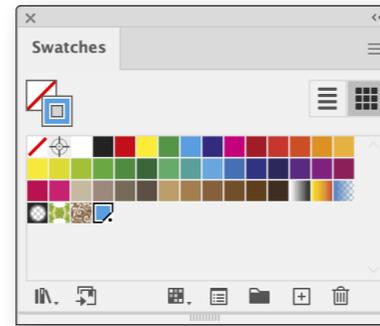
Now you need to convert your cutter line to a 'Spot Colour'. Select the cutter line, make sure you have selected the 'stroke' rather than 'fill', click 'New Swatch' in the swatches panel and rename it 'Cutter' (Fig.4).

Set the colour type to 'Spot Colour' and colour mode to 'CMYK' and choose a colour for your cutter line. You can now click the 'eye' on the artwork layer to show the cutter layer over the artwork layer, to check your cutter line fits as you expect. Make sure to turn the line into an overprint stroke,

Menu: Window > Attributes > Overprint Stroke

Check the tick box!

Fig.4



06. Using multiple shapes in your artwork

Make sure your cutter line includes all objects within the boundary of the cutter line.

Select all the objects and then use the unite tool to group them together.

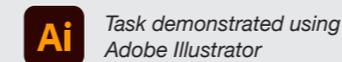
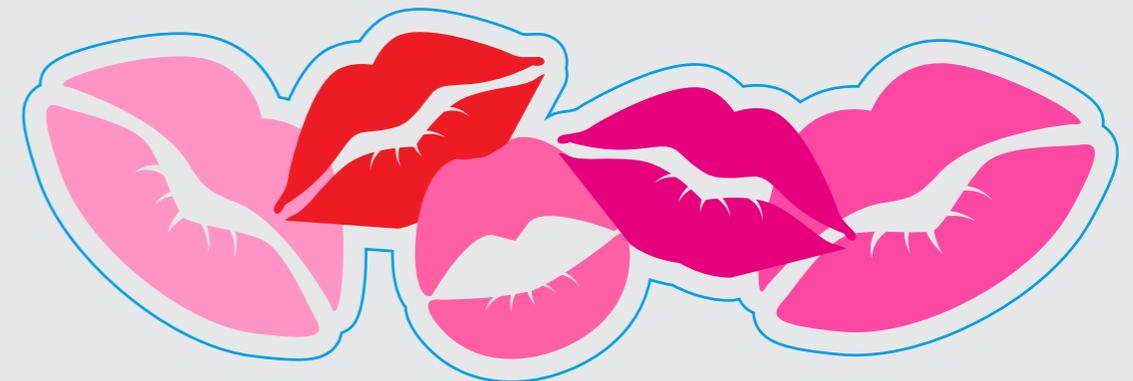
Menu: Window > Align > Pathfinder > Unite

Once united, using the 'Offset Path' function, increase the offset until all objects are touching, then hit okay. Unite the objects again, and you will have your cutter line.

Make sure your line is smooth, it'll make your labels & stickers easier to peel off later. Rounded corners also make it easier to peel. Don't forget to overprint stroke if you have a background!

Menu: Window > Attributes > Overprint Stroke

We recommend you experiment with this to get an idea of how the process works and how you can develop creative solutions to make the best cutter guides for your graphics. It could be that you make the guides from this process but draw your own version over the top once you've seen a shape you can work with!



Our team is always on hand to help!

Whatever your labelling or customisation needs, our experienced team are just a phone call or email away, ensuring you get the perfect result every time.



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