Canva

Setting up your document for printing using Canva

Whilst Canva is an awesome design tool, it doesn't quite offer all the capabilities that proper design tools offer to create print ready artwork, particularly preparing files for large format printing, such as outdoor banners, posters, flags & a wide range of other signage.

There are several reasons for this:

- **Resolution** – Resolution refers to the pixel quality of the design when scaled to a larger size. Canva has been designed for use on a screen and therefore, the design components aren't created as vectors resulting in a pixelated or 'fuzzy' finish.

- **Templates** – Often the various templates available on Canva for print items such as flyers, business cards, postcards and so on don't always comply with the print industry 'standard sizing'. This means a lot of the designs we receive don't fit correctly or are the wrong proportions.

- **Size Limitations** – If you are using Canva to design a large banner or sign, often you are unable to size the Canva design to the correct dimensions of your banner, as Canva has a size limit. This means you may need to half the dimensions of the banner and design it at 50%, which again, can create resolution issues.

- **Colours** – colour set-up in Canva is designed to suit screens, meaning it uses an RGB (Red, Blue, Green) colour format or Hex code, rather than the standard CMYK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black) used by most printers for their printing equipment. This often results in a colour change in the final print. Canva does not have the ability to create a spot colour or use pantone colour swatches, so files often need to be manipulated by our design team.

- **Design Components** – Canva files aren't always compatible with the design programs that are used to pre-press. We use the Adobe Suite. Often when we receive Canva artwork in a pdf and we open in our design program the fonts disappear. Additionally, the shapes or objects used are often created using lots of layers and masks, meaning it is challenging to separate the pieces in order to modify.

HERE ARE SOME WAYS WE SUGGEST USING CANVA FOR PRINT:

- **Mock-ups** - Often clients will mock-up their desired design in Canva and we are able to use this as a guide or 'design brief' for us to be able to create or re-create print-ready version(s). This is an excellent way to communicate your brief and makes our job a LOT easier!

- **Small Printing** - Smaller prints like business cards, flyers and documents can easily be printed from a Canva design… they simply require exporting to a PDF correctly with bleed and trims.

- **Bleed** – If you are exporting your design for print it is VERY important to include bleed. Luckily, Canva makes it nice and easy for you, but showing a 'print-ready pdf' dropdown option when you go to export. Under that, it also displays a 'bleed' tick box, it is important to select this.

- **Trim Marks** – If you are exporting your design for print and it is SMALLER than an A4 (210 x 297mm) it is important to include trim marks. Similar to bleed, Canva makes it nice and easy for you, but showing a 'print-ready pdf' dropdown option when you go to export. Under that, it also displays a 'trim-marks' tick box, it is important to select this.

- **PDF – ALL print files exported from Canva MUST be as a pdf. This is the standard file type for print.**

For help on how to prepare Canva files for print see overleaf or visit www.canva.com/help/margins-bleed-crop-marks

If this is WAY too overwhelming… don't stress!

We have an excellent design team who can comfortably transform your request and design brief and turn it into a fantastic piece, delivering your message the way you envisage!
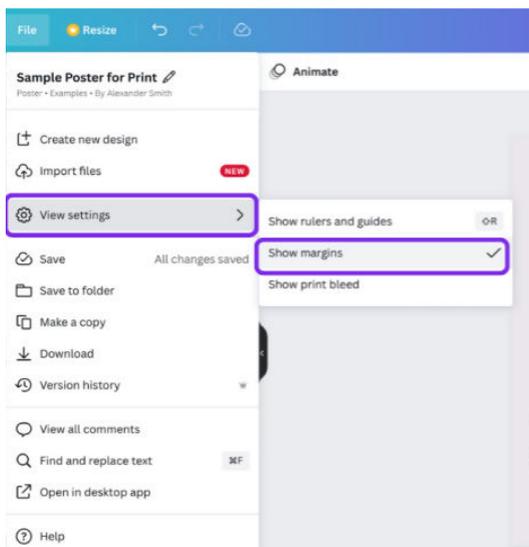
To add bleed in CANVA

Planning to print something? Turn on margins, bleed, rulers, and crop marks while designing to make sure everything prints as expected.

USING MARGINS

Turn on margins to make sure that important design elements aren't cut when printed.

- Create or open an existing design.
- From the menu bar, select **File** then **View settings**.
- Select **Show margins**. A border of broken lines will appear on your design pages.
- Edit your design, and keep important elements inside the margin.

USING BLEED

Avoid unintended white edges when printing to the edge of the paper.

- Create or open an existing design.
- From the menu bar, select **File** then **View settings**.
- Select **Show print bleed**. A border of dashed lines will appear close to the edges of your design. This bleed margin is fixed based on print production standards and cannot be adjusted.

- If you see white gaps around the design edges, resize or stretch your background to cover them. Stretch elements, that you don't mind being cut, around the edges as well.

ADDING CROP MARKS

Add crop marks when downloading your design to mark where to trim the paper. Note that the size for crop marks is fixed.

- On the menu bar, select **Share**.
- Select **Download**.
- On the **File type** dropdown, select **PDF Print**.
- Tick the **Crop marks and bleed** checkbox.
- Select **Download** or **Pay and Download**.