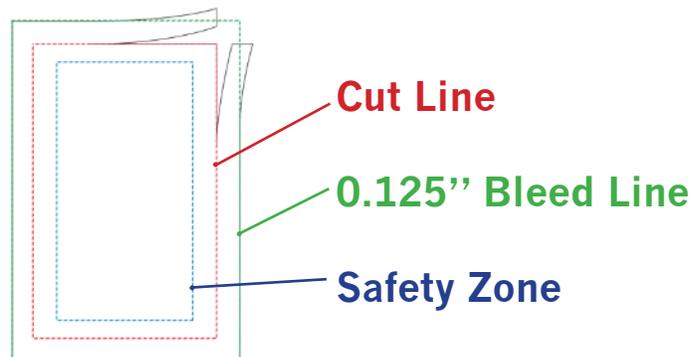


BLEED FAQs

What is a bleed?

If you want any image, colors, and/or design to reach the edge of the printed page (no white margin), the computer file you provide must be specifically designed to have a bleed. A bleed is basically colors or image stretched or “bleeding” outside of the cut line, so that the colors could be printed to the edge of the paper without showing white margins. If your final print piece has a white border, it does not need a bleed.

The bleed area is simply excess image that is printed and then later trimmed off so that it won't end up on your final print product. After the bleed or excess image is cut off, your final print product will be the size you ordered.



Why do I need a bleed? What happens if I don't add a bleed?

Printing presses and digital copiers can't print right to the edge of a sheet of paper because they have a gripper to hold the paper to run it through. To make sure that the colors or image does reach the edge of the paper, we have to print the file, including the bleed, on a larger-sized paper, and then cut it down to the finished size (or “cut size”), which is the size you ordered.

How do I make a bleed? How big should a bleed be?

To create a bleed, you must stretch or extend your design beyond the cut line (size of the printed product), including any background colors, photos, or other items that you want on the edge of your paper.

Your design (colors or graphics touching the edge) must be extended by 0.125” on all 4 sides, and after it is printed, it will be cut down to the final size, the size you ordered. Because the bleed is 0.125” on all 4 sides, your page size will be 0.25” larger than the final cut size on both the width and the height.

Example: If you order a 4”x6” postcard, the PDF file you submit for print should be 4.25”x6.25.” It will be printed 4.25”x6.25” and then the bleed, or excess image, will be cut off so that the final size delivered to you is 4”x6” with the colors going to the edge of the paper.

BLEED FAQs

What is a cut line?

The cut line is the final flat size of the printed product. To print all the way to the edge (known as “bleed” because the colors bleed off the paper) we start from a bigger piece of paper and cut down to create the final size, known as the “cut size” or “finish size”.

What is a safety zone?

In addition to the bleed area beyond the edge of a page, it is good to allow a “safety zone” inside the page boundary. Any important elements, such as text or graphics not bleeding off the page, should be kept within this “safety zone,” which is a buffer zone of 0.25” in from the cut size on all four sides. This will make your printed piece look nicer and also help prevent any text or images too close to the cut line from being cut off because paper may shift when cutting many sheets at one time by machine.

Common Print Size and File Size Dimensions:

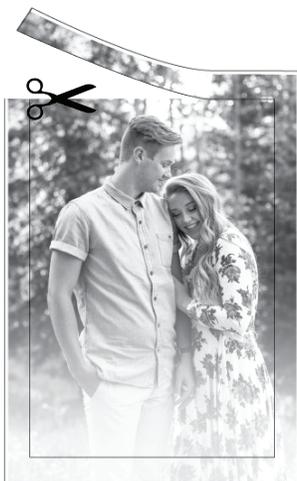
Final Cut Size

3.5”x2”
4”x6”
5”x7”
5.5”x8.5”
8.5”x11”
5.5” x 4.25”

Size with bleed 7.25x5.25”

File Size Including Bleed

3.75”x2.25”
4.25”x6.25”
5.25”x7.25”
5.75”x8.75”
8.75”x11.25”
8.75”x4.5”



Finish size 7x5”



The figure to the left shows a file size with a bleed at 7.25x5.25”. This file will be trimmed down to get a finish size of 5x7”.