Print Ready PDFs

hh global®

If you are supplying a PDF of your document for us to print, we will ask for a 'print ready' PDF. This guide explains what we need.

Print ready PDFs are PDFs created for the purpose of commercial printing. There are a number of terms used to describe the things that define a print ready PDF, which we've listed below.

You can read through this document, or click below to go to the section you are most interested in.

PDF

1. 'Crops and bleed'

Figure 1 is the cover in a PDF file of a document to be printed. It will be printed on larger sheets that are then cut to size.

Commercial printers need guides to show where to trim the document to. These guides are called **'crop' or 'trim' marks**.

There's also a coloured box at the bottom of the cover which should extend to the edge of the page. The crop marks need to be right, as if the page is cut even a *fraction of a millimetre* out, there'll be a white line along the edge of the finished document, because the coloured box ends in line with the crop marks.
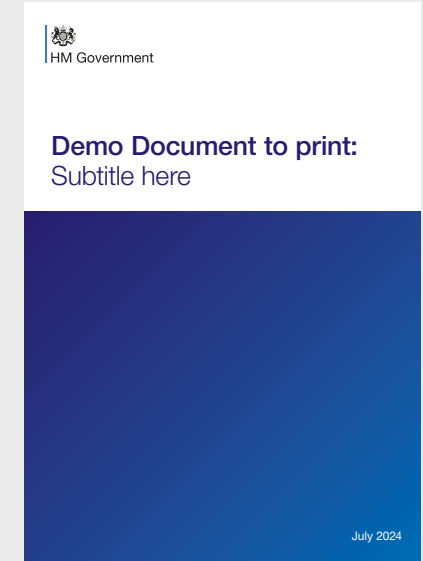
To allow for some tolerance when the page is cut and to guarantee the quality of the finished document, any elements that are designed to go to the edge of the page should extend *beyond* the crop marks by 3mm minimum – this is called **bleed**.

Figure 2 shows the same document, but with the right **crops** and **bleed** in place. This is what your print ready PDF needs to have, before its supplied to us.
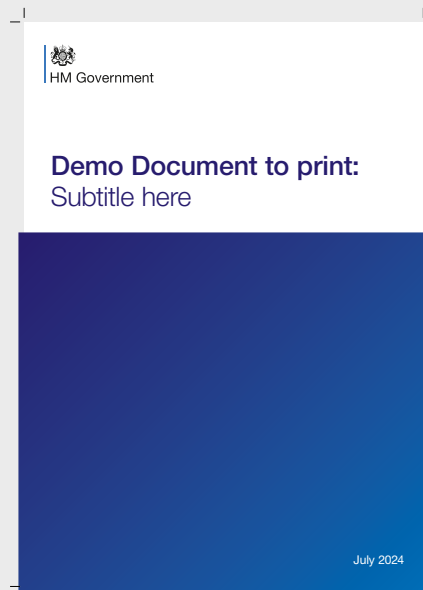
2. Fonts embedded

In order for the PDF to display and print exactly as it should, all the fonts used in the document need to be embedded within it.
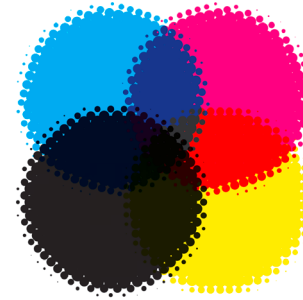
Figure 1

Demo Document to print:
Subtitle here

July 2024

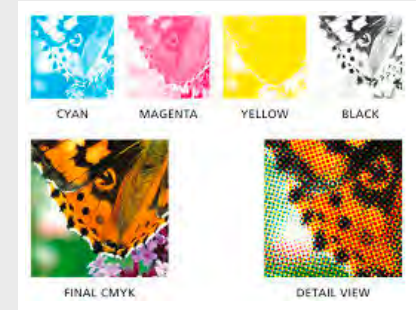**Figure 2**

Demo Document to print:
Subtitle here

July 2024

3. CMYK

Digitally printed, full-colour documents are usually printed in 'four colour': cyan, magenta, yellow and black, known in the industry as CMYK.

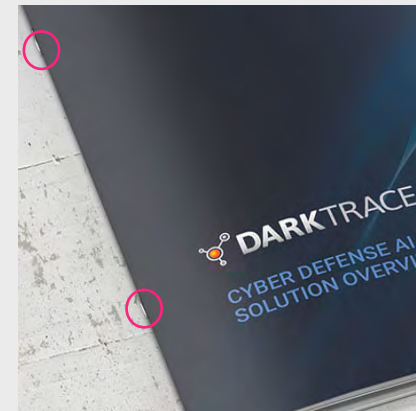**Figure 3** shows how a photograph might be broken down into these four base colours.

4. The right number of pages

There are different ways that a document can be bound. Most smaller documents are **saddle-stitched** and larger ones are **perfect bound**. It means the print ready PDF file needs to have the right number of pages for the most suitable binding method.

Figure 4 shows a document with fewer than 72 pages including the cover and any blank pages. This should be '**saddle-stitched**', which means the total number of pages need to be **divisible by 4**.

Figure 5 is a document with more than 72 pages in total. This should be **perfect bound**. For this binding method, the total page count must be **divisible by 2**, and the cover needs to be supplied as a **spread with a spine**.

Figure 3

CYAN   MAGENTA   YELLOW   BLACK
FINAL CMYK   DETAIL VIEW

Figure 4

Figure 5

5. What you need to do

The steps you need to take will depend on who you have briefed to create your document, and what software the PDF is exported from.

Supplying a PDF from a typeset document

If you have briefed **HH Global** to create the content for you, we will create print ready PDF's for you.

If you have asked **another studio** to create your document and it will have **fewer than 72 pages**, once you have approved the document for print, ask your studio to send HH Global a 'print ready PDF' – any professional artworker will know what this means.

If it has **more than 72 pages**, speak to your HH Global Account Manager. Give them the number of pages, excluding the cover plus material and weight. They'll calculate the right 'spine width' which you'll need to give to your studio and ask them to supply HH Global with a "print ready PDF with the cover supplied as a spread, with a spine width of X mm".

Accessible PDFs

If HH Global are artworking your document we'll also create your accessible PDF. If you're using a different studio, they should create the accessible PDF for you. This is because when attempting to produce an accessible PDF from a third party's documents, there may well be issues if their documents are not set up appropriately. More info for your chosen studio can be found **here**.

Supplying a PDF from a Word file

Settings

Not all Word plug-ins for PDF export options include the ability to include structure tags required for your accessible PDF. If in doubt, export your PDF from Word using 'File>Save As', changing the file type to 'PDF', click on 'Options'. in the PDF. Ensure your options are set out as in **Figure 6**. If your Word file features fonts that are not commonly found on PCs, then ensure you also select the 'PDF/A compliant' option.

Design/Layout considerations

If you can, you should avoid any elements in your Word file that "bleed" to the edge of the page. If your document does require bleed to be added, this can be created through the HH Global studio, but it will be at an extra cost. Extra time will also be required to complete the process.

Think about the number of pages and where blank pages might be needed, such as the inside of the front and back covers, or at the end of a section.

Figure 7 is an example of how the first pages of your Word document should be. It shows the cover, inside front cover which is blank, the title page, copyright page (which is on the back of the title page) and then the main text pages of your document.

Printing

Once we receive your print ready PDF we will check for print suitability and advise of any potential issues prior to production.
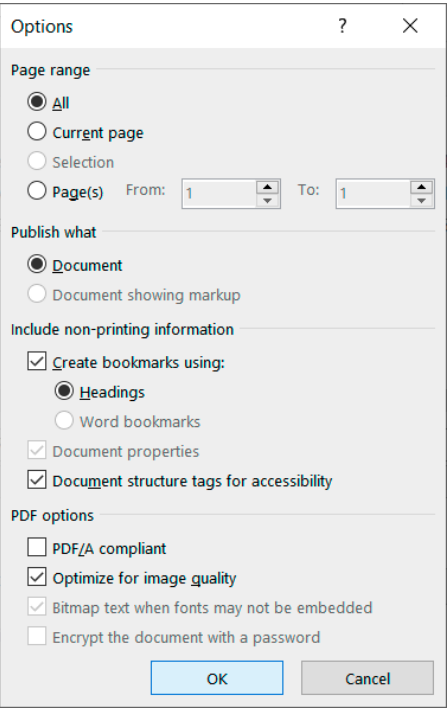
Figure 6

Figure 7