Guide to Creating Art Files with Bleed

What is Bleed?

Bleeds allow you to run artwork to the edge of a page. On a press, the artwork is printed on a large sheet of paper and then trimmed down to size. If you do not allow for a 1/8 of an inch bleed, any misalignment while cutting will result with the artwork not running to the edge of the paper. Bleeds ensure you get the results you need.

Build your files 1/8" larger than the final trim size. For example, if you have designed a standard 3.5" x 2" business card with a red background covering the whole area, you will need to enlarge that red background to 3.75" x 2.25". This will make the red background extend 1/8" on every side of the page. **(Please see visual examples on page 2.)**

Why is adding a Bleed necessary?

Small mechanical variations can end up leaving a hairline white edge where there should be no white edge at all, if the image is not extended beyond the final trim size. Extending images 1/8" beyond the final trim size guarantees that images truly will go all the way to the edge of the printed paper.

How do I add bleed to my design?

Adobe Photoshop

- Open Photoshop and click File > New...
- Enter the FULL BLEED dimensions. That is, 1/4" extra both vertically and horizontally.
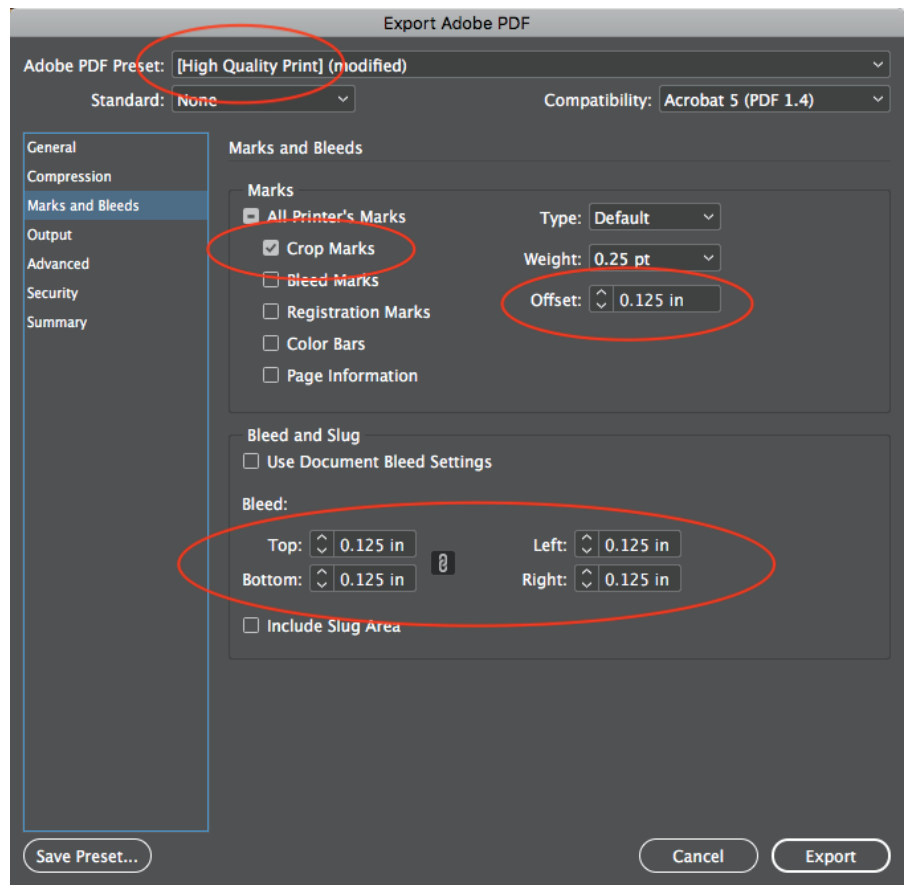- Set the Resolution at 300 pixels/inch
- Set the Color Mode to CMYK

Adobe Illustrator

- Open Illustrator and click File > New...
- Enter the TRIM dimensions in the Width and Height boxes (for example, the trim dimension on a standard business card would be 3.5" x 2")
- Enter 0.125 for the top, bottom, left and right bleed
- Set the the Color Mode to CMYK
- Set the Raster Effects at High (300ppi)

Adobe InDesign

- Open InDesign and click File > New > Document...
- Enter the TRIM dimensions under Page Size (for example, a standard business card would have trim dimensions of 3.5" x 2")
- If you do not see "Bleed and Slug" at the bottom of the window, click the "More Options" button.
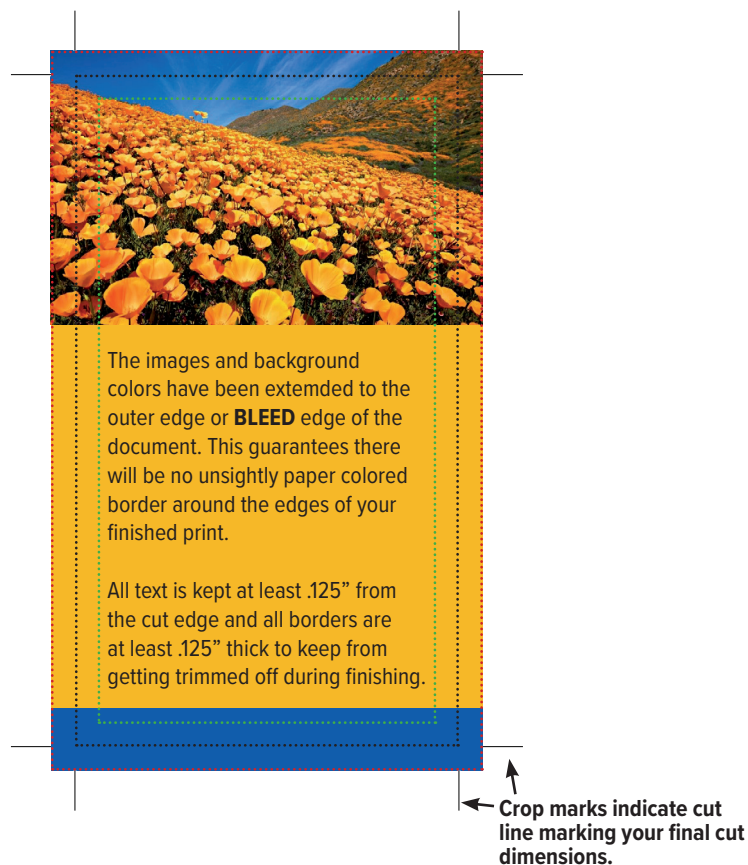- Enter 0.125 for the top, bottom, left and right bleed
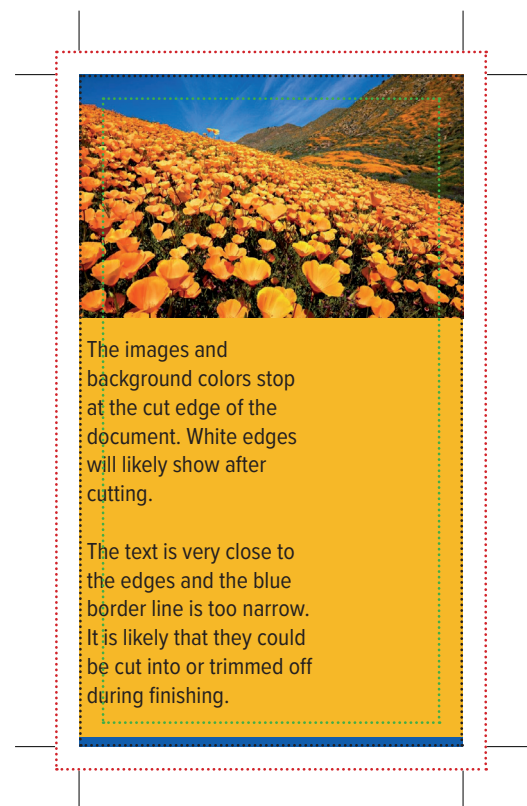
Pdf Export Settings

SEE PAGE 2 FOR EXAMPLES

Visual Examples of Bleed and Margins

Good

The images and background colors have been extemded to the outer edge or **BLEED** edge of the document. This guarantees there will be no unsightly paper colored border around the edges of your finished print.

All text is kept at least .125" from the cut edge and all borders are at least .125" thick to keep from getting trimmed off during finishing.

Bad

The images and background colors stop at the cut edge of the document. White edges will likely show after cutting.

The text is very close to the edges and the blue border line is too narrow. It is likely that they could be cut into or trimmed off during finishing.

← **Crop marks indicate cut line marking your final cut dimensions.**

.... **SAFE MARGIN** (.125" inside the final cut size)
.... **CUT** (final cut size)
.... **BLEED** (.125" outside the final cut size)