

White Ink

Set-up Guide

Incorporating white ink into your artwork is a great way to achieve enhanced colours, on kraft, metalized, coloured, or clear substrates. Alternatively, you may just want to print bright white on dark coloured stocks for a unique design effect. Either way you go, adding white to your artwork requires a few special steps for print success.

Which Stocks use white ink?

- Any non-white paper such as kraft, fluorescents, or coloured sheets.
- Clear vinyl, poly, or BOPP
- Silver Poly, BOPP or foil paper
- Reflective Vinyl
- Glitter / holographic Vinyl

On press, the white ink prints first. Meaning it prints underneath the CMYK colours or alone by itself. For special applications, such as face adhesive stickers, white ink can be printed on top of the CMYK artwork.

Ink and Stock Colour, how they interact.

Ink is translucent and will take on any colour that it is printed on. For instance, if you print blue on metallic silver paper, the metallic paper will show through the blue ink and make the ink appear metallic blue. This also applies to kraft and coloured paper. Clients are frequently surprised when they print bright colours on kraft paper. Their bright colours turn out “muddy”. This is because the brown kraft paper is showing through the ink.

- The image on the left shown a full colour image printed on kraft paper **without** a white ink underprint. Notice how the colours have taken on the colour of the kraft paper and are “washed out”. The image on the right shows the same image **with** a white underprint. The colours are vibrant. Neither is right or wrong. It is a matter of design preference.



How to prepare files for white ink.

You can only build your white ink files in Adobe Illustrator.

1. You will need to create a spot colour named “White”.
Tip: if you are working on a white art board you will not be able to see the white ink areas in your artwork. The white ink layer **does not** need to appear white in your file. As long as it is named correctly, it will print white. We recommend using 30% magenta as a visual colour for “White”. Now when viewing your PDF, anything showing white will be the stock, anything showing “pink” will be “White ink”, and everything else will be CMYK.
2. The remaining artwork in your file should be CMYK or K only. No RGB or spot colours (except for a Dieline if you are using one). If you are also using silver ink, see the “Silver ink Set-up Guide”.
3. All the “White” ink should be placed on its own layer. The name of this layer does not matter. The layer can be turned off while the file is worked on but must be turned back on when it is submitted to us.

Also, all “White” ink areas need all strokes and fills to be set to overprint. When putting white under an image or text, contract the white area by 2 pixels, otherwise overprint registration may be off.

4. If you would like “White” ink to print alone, not as a base colour under CMYK, all strokes and fills must be set to **knockout**.

Frequently asked questions

Does the white ink need to be in its own layer?

No, but we recommend keeping all white ink elements in its own layer. This makes the file easier to work on.

Should I supply the white ink as a separate file?

No. It must be supplied as one single file with your print artwork (5 colour file)

Can I supply artwork that contains only white ink?

Yes. In this case no other colours will print. Just the white ink.

Do Dielines need to be on their own layer?

*Yes. Dielines need to be on their own layer, separate from all other print elements and named **Dieline**. It must be a stroke and set to overprint.*

Should I supply the white ink as a separate file?

No. It must be supplied as one single file with your print artwork (5 colour file)

Can Impactica create a white ink file for me?

If the file is supplied in vector format, we may be able to create the white elements at an incurred cost.

Questions or concerns? Feel free to call us at 1 888 433-9794