

# Bleed And Safe Zone Guide.

If you're confused by the term 'bleed' when it comes to print, you're in the right place. This short guide will help you to understand what bleed is, why it's required, and how to add bleed to a document for print.

## Before We Start: Quick Glossary Tips

- Artwork**  
The design you want to have printed.
- Border**  
An intentional design of a color around the edge of a document or area. (This is different to a margin, which is blank space to allow for print processes without affecting the document).
- Design**  
The pictures and graphics you use to create your document.
- Document**  
The file you send to print (usually a JPEG or PDF).
- Margin**  
The area of blank space around the edge of a document.
- Trimming**  
The process of cutting a larger paper size to a standardised size (such as US Letter) after printing.

## What Is Bleed?

Bleed is the additional border around a document required for many printing processes. Print presses can't print to the very edge of paper, so larger sized paper is used and then trimmed to size. (Don't worry, we recycle all of our trimmings!).

It is technically impossible to cut exactly to the edge of your design in this process. That's why bleed is needed: it's a bit of extra design around the edges that is 'overprint'. It goes over the edge of the final document size, so that when your document is cut down your design goes all the way to the edge without any white borders.

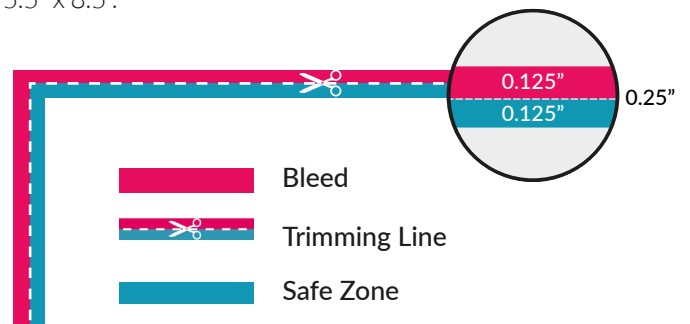


## What Is The Safe Zone?

The safe zone is the bit inside the bleed margins. This is an area where you should avoid putting any images or text, as they may be cut off during the trimming process. It also allows for folds in documents such as brochures: not including a bleed means your image or text could get lost in the crease!

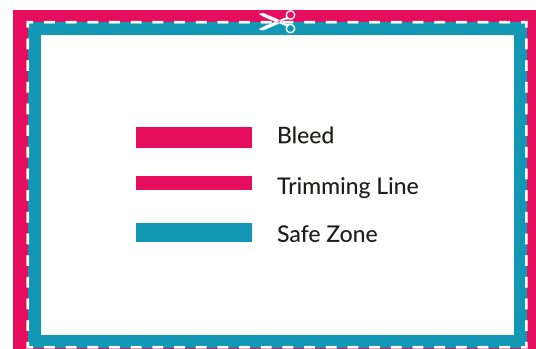
## How Much Space Do I Need For A Bleed And Safe Zone?

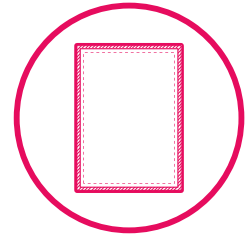
The industry standard is 0.125" bleed and a further 0.125" for the safe zone around the edge of the design. For example: a Half Page flyer document needs to measure 5.75" x 8.75", to allow for the additional 0.25" of the bleed and safe zone. This would then be trimmed after printing to the official standard Half Page size of 5.5" x 8.5".



## Diagram Of Bleed And Safe Zone

The image below will help to show you how to leave safe space around the edge of your document to avoid any of it being lost in the printing and trimming process.





## Common Problems When Using A Bleed

### ❑ No Bleed Area, Or A White Bleed Area

A document without a bleed area will be printed 'as is' – which means there is likely to be a white border around the edge of the document.

The solution? Extend the background or image into the bleed area to avoid white lines, or move any text inwards by 3mm to allow for a bleed area.

### ❑ Text Is In The Bleed Area And/Or Safe Zone

A bleed area and safe zone has been set on the document, but text is within these areas.

It's a simple fix: move the text inwards by 0.25" to allow for the bleed area and safe zone, to prevent any of the text being cut off.

If text is only in the safe zone and not the bleed area, move it inwards by 0.125".

### ❑ The Bleed Area Is A Different Color To The Edge Of The Design

If the document bleed isn't a continuation of the background design, this will result in uneven borders. For example: if the bleed is a yellow color, you'll find yellow lines around the edges of your finished document due to the trimming process.

To solve this, simply extend your background design into the bleed so that the colors are consistent.

### ❑ Object Touching The Cutting Line Does Not Extend To The Edge Of The Bleed

The cutting line is the bit marked on your design document to show the inside edge of the bleed area. This is where a trim COULD happen, from this line outwards. If your text is touching the cutting line, but doesn't extend to the edge of the bleed area, this could lead to random blue lines printed on the final product.

Fix it: either extend the terracotta text box to the edge of the bleed area, or move it so that the edge sits within the safe zone.

### ❑ Object Is Halfway Between Cutting And Safe Zone Lines

If the terracotta colored box extends past the cutting line and is within the safe zone, this may result in inconsistent edges when printed. Some may come out looking wider on some sides than others, because of the way the paper is cut.

To fix this, you can extend the box to the edge of the bleed area, or move it so the edge is within the safe zone.

### Not Enough Bleed

### ❑ If your design does not have enough bleed area (of 0.125") this will result in random white lines on the edges of the finished product when printed.

Solve the problem by extending the background image to fill the bleed area, or you could choose to move text and images inwards by 0.125" to create a bleed area.

## I'm Unable To Correct My Document

You may be unable to correct your document. This is often a problem when you have requested a designer to complete the artwork, and cannot get in touch or they cannot turn around the fix in time for you to send the design to print.

❑ You can always print with a border, instead. We can print your document with a 0.25" border around the edges. This can be white, or any other color you choose. We use 0.25" to make sure the borders are even on every page.

❑ Ask a designer to rebuild the artwork. This can be time-consuming and costly, but will allow you to make the full adjustments required for a top quality professional end result.

## Page Size Required Versus Artwork Size

The table below will help you to create the right size artwork for your project, including a bleed and safe zone area. For example, a Half Page is 5.5" x 8.5" but you'll need to create your artwork on a board of 5.75" x 8.75" to allow for the additional 0.25" on each edge.