How to supply print files?

etivoet

info@etivoet.be
+32 (0)9 386 14 44

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At Etivoet, we strive for the highest quality in every label we produce. That quality begins with the receipt of your print files. A correctly prepared file ensures smoother processing, faster production, and a flawless final result.

To avoid errors, delays, and unnecessary adjustments, we kindly ask you to follow the submission guidelines below carefully. Our prepress department thoroughly checks every file, but errors that can be avoided at the submission stage will save both time and costs.

Please note: As part of our service, we do not charge for the creation of print proofs, provided that the files are supplied according to the specifications in this document. If additional corrections are required by our prepress department due to deviations, extra costs may be charged.

General submission rules – at a glance

- **Colour mode**
  CMYK, profile: ISO Coated v2 (39L)
  (no RGB or indexed colours)
- **File format**
  High-resolution PDF or AI
- **Bleed**
  3 mm on each side beyond the finished size
- **Safety margin (live area)**
  1.5 mm inside the finished size
- **Cutting/die line**
  100% magenta (spot colour), line weight 0.2 mm
- **Minimum resolution**
  300 dpi for images / 1200 dpi for line art
- **White underprint**
  required for metallic and transparent substrates
- **Black text**
  100% black (C0 M0 Y0 K100), set to overprint
- **Fonts**
  embedded or converted to outlines
- **Barcodes**
  single colour (no red), preferably black on white background
- **Transparencies**
  always flatten, set to high resolution
- **One separate file per label with clear and logical naming**
- **Minimum colour values in objects and/or images**
  Offset/Typo: minimum 3%
  Flexo: minimum 1%
  Digital: not applicable (higher tolerance)

Explanation per submission criterion

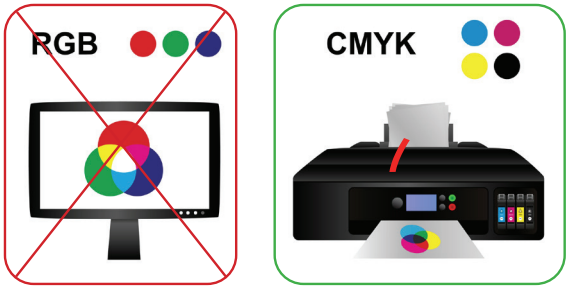
Colour mode: CMYK (no RGB)

RGB is intended for screen use and builds colours from light (red, green, blue).

CMYK is suitable for printing and uses ink (cyan, magenta, yellow, black), resulting in a different colour gamut.

For correct print results, files must be supplied in CMYK mode. We recommend converting RGB or indexed colour profiles to CMYK before submission. If this is not done, our system will perform the conversion automatically, which may lead to colour shifts.

By converting the file yourself, you keep control over colour rendering and can correct potential differences in advance.



File format: High-resolution PDF or AI

Submit your files as a high-resolution vector PDF or as an AI file. Files such as Word, PowerPoint, EPS, JPG, etc. are not suitable.

Bleed: 3 mm on each side

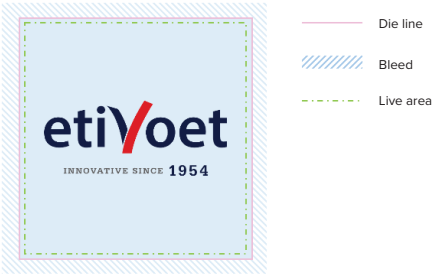
The bleed is the part of a design that extends beyond the final cutting line. It ensures that background colours or images continue beyond the trim size, preventing unwanted white edges caused by slight shifts in the cutting process.

This means your artwork should always be supplied slightly larger than the final size, with 3 mm added on each side. Example: a 50x50 mm label should be delivered as 56x56 mm.

Note: Never place text or important elements in the bleed area. These must remain within the safety margin.

Safety margin (live area): 1.5 mm

Do not place text or essential elements within 1.5 mm of the cutting line. This ensures nothing is too close to the edge or accidentally trimmed off.



Cutting/die line: 100% magenta, 0.2 mm, spot colour

The cutting contour must be indicated with a thin line (0.2 mm) in 100% magenta, defined as a spot colour. **This line will not be printed.**

Resolution:

Minimum 300 dpi (image)
While we can technically produce labels from lower-resolution files, we strongly recommend using a minimum resolution of 300 dpi (at actual size). This ensures sharp and professional results.

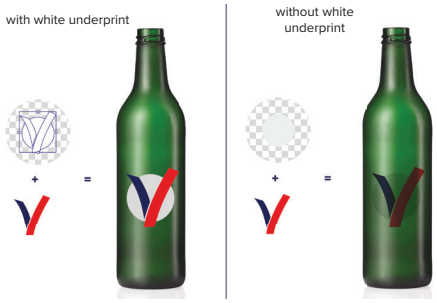
Files with lower resolution may appear blurry or pixelated, significantly reducing print quality. Images and photos must therefore be supplied at a minimum of 300 dpi for optimal clarity.

White underprint for transparent or metallic substrates

Labels on non-white substrates
When printing on white stock, white elements in the artwork appear automatically, as no ink is applied in those areas. The white background creates the intended effect.

When printing on non-white substrates (e.g. transparent or metallic materials such as silver or gold), white underprint must be added to prevent white areas from remaining transparent.

White underprint on transparent labels
For transparent labels, white underprint is also essential to maintain opacity and brightness of other colours. Since inks are semi-transparent, background material can influence colours. Adding a layer of white beneath ensures colours remain vivid and legible.



Supplying white underprint
Objects requiring white underprint must always be supplied as **vector objects**, created in an extra **spot colour**, and set to **overprint**. This guarantees accurate and consistent processing during printing.

Black text in overprint

Always set black text to **overprint**. This prevents registration issues and ensures clean, sharp printing, especially at small font sizes.

Overprint is a setting in graphic design software that determines how colours behave when overlapping. Instead of knocking out the underlying colours, the black text is printed on top.

Why is this important?
For black text – particularly in small point sizes – overprint eliminates the risk of white outlines and results in a sharper finish. Always use **100% black (C0 M0 Y0 K100)** with overprint enabled.

Fonts:

Embedded or converted to outlines

To ensure correct font rendering, all fonts must be either **embedded in the PDF** or **converted to outlines (vectors).**

Barcodes:

Single colour, preferably black on white, with quiet zones respected

Barcodes must be supplied in a single solid colour – preferably **100% black** or another full printing colour with sufficient contrast (never red). Ideally, barcodes should be placed on a **white background** to guarantee scanner readability.

Why single colour and white background?
Barcodes are not judged by visual appearance but by technical readability in scanners. To ensure flawless performance, the following rules apply:

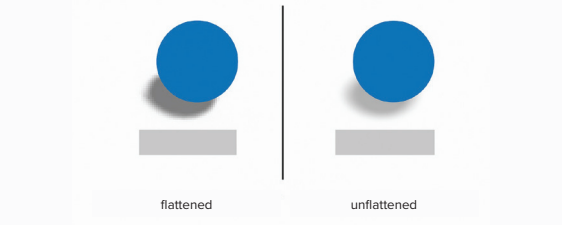
- Single high-contrast colour
  Barcodes must be created in one solid colour – preferably **100% black** or another solid spot colour with strong contrast. Red, orange, light or metallic shades are unsuitable, since most scanners use red light and interpret red areas as “blank”, making the barcode unreadable.

- White background
  Barcodes should ideally be placed on a **pure white background.** This ensures maximum contrast for fast and accurate scanning. Printing on coloured or transparent backgrounds increases the risk of errors or slow scanning.

Unreadable barcodes can cause logistics errors, delays, or even product rejection. **Correctly supplied barcodes are therefore essential for a smooth supply chain.**

Flattening transparencies at high resolution

Graphic files (PDF, Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop) may contain transparencies such as shadows, overlapping objects, or gradients. While these display correctly on screen, they can cause printing issues if not properly flattened.



Flattening means converting transparency effects into a fixed form – usually a mix of vectors and pixels – ensuring the printer knows exactly how the final result should appear. Without this step, unexpected issues may occur during imaging or printing, such as missing objects, strange outlines, or colour shifts.

One separate PDF per label

To guarantee a smooth and error-free production process, each label must be supplied in its own PDF file with clear and logical naming.

Advantages:

- Clarity and organisation
  Each label has its own size, die line, and technical requirements. A separate PDF avoids confusion.

- Faster processing and checking
  Our prepress department can inspect each file individually (resolution, bleed, colour mode, etc.), reducing the risk of errors.

Minimum colour values

Dot dropout in light image areas: why minimum values matter

When printing images with soft tones or gradients (e.g. skin tones, shadows, backgrounds), the lightest parts are built up from tiny halftone dots.If these dots fall below a certain colour value, they may disappear during printing. This phenomenon is known as dot dropout.

Why is this a problem?

If the lightest halftone dots vanish, smooth gradients are lost. The result: abrupt transitions, visible blotches, or harsh edges in the image. On labels – often small and highly detailed – this issue becomes very noticeable, leading to colour shifts or a “washed-out” effect in light zones.

What can you do?

Respect the minimum colour values per printing technique:

- **Offset/Typo :** minimum **3%**
- **Flexo :** minimum **1%**
- **Digital : not applicable** (higher tolerance)

Conclusion: By respecting minimum screen values, you prevent technical flaws and ensure smooth, professional printing results, even in the lightest image areas.