
A PLAIN-ENGLISH GLOSSARY FOR BUSINESS OWNERS!

Your Logo files, explained.

Which Logo file to send your signwriter, printer or web designer, and what the jargon on the quote means.



Which file do I send?

Find who is asking for your logo, and send the file in the middle column.

WHO IS ASKING	SEND THIS	WHY
Signwriter Building signs, vehicle graphics, wraps	Vector PDF or EPS AI or SVG also work	Signs are made large and are often cut by machine. Only vector artwork stays sharp at any size.
Printer Business cards, brochures, flyers, packaging	Vector PDF or EPS In CMYK or Pantone colours	Printers work in ink colours, not screen colours. Finished artwork goes to them as a print-ready PDF.
Uniforms and embroidery Shirts, caps, workwear	Vector PDF or EPS A simple one-colour version helps	The supplier converts your logo into a stitch file. Fine detail and small text do not stitch well.
Promotional products Pens, mugs, flags, banners	Vector PDF or EPS Often a one-colour version	Most items are printed in one or two solid colours, matched to a Pantone number.
Web designer Website, online store, app	SVG, plus PNG or WebP	SVG stays crisp on every screen. PNG and WebP cover the places an SVG cannot be used.
Social media Profile pictures and posts	PNG Use the square or icon version	Sharp edges and reliable colour on screen. Profile pictures are cropped to a circle or square.
Everyday office use Email signature, Word, PowerPoint	PNG	Opens on any computer and keeps a transparent background, so it sits cleanly on any colour.
Advertising Newspaper, magazine, directory	Ask for their spec sheet Usually a print-ready PDF	Every publication has its own sizes, colour settings and deadlines.
Another designer or agency	Your full logo suite Plus your brand guidelines	They need every version of the logo and the rules for using it.

The rule of thumb

If it is being made (printed, cut, stitched or painted), send a vector file. If it is being viewed on a screen, send a PNG.

No vector file?

A logo copied from your website, a screenshot or a photo of a business card will go blurry when it is enlarged. It needs to be redrawn as vector artwork first. See the back page.

Colour and image terms

The words that decide whether your logo looks right once it is produced.

COLOUR

RGB

RGB (Red, Green, Blue) is the colour system for anything viewed on a screen: websites, email, social media, digital ads and apps. If it is made to be seen on a device, it will usually be RGB.

CMYK

CMYK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Black) is the colour system for print. Business cards, brochures, packaging and most printed signage are produced in CMYK. Artwork for professional print should be supplied in CMYK so the colours print as expected.

HEX

A HEX code is a screen colour written as a six-character code starting with #, for example #D92876. Web designers use HEX codes to keep your colours identical across your website, emails and digital branding.

Pantone® / PMS / spot colour

Pantone is a colour matching system used by printers, signwriters and paint suppliers around the world. Every Pantone colour has its own number, so a supplier can match it exactly. A spot colour is a single pre-mixed ink used when colour accuracy really matters, such as a logo colour.

Colour variation

The same colour looks different on a screen, on paper, on vinyl and in paint, because light and ink behave differently. A Pantone reference and a physical proof are the reliable ways to keep your colour consistent.

IMAGES

Vector

A vector file is drawn with shapes and lines, not pixels. It can be made any size, from a pen to a building, with no loss of quality. Logos should always exist as vector artwork. Common vector formats are AI, EPS, SVG and PDF.

Raster (bitmap)

A raster image is made of pixels, the way a photo is. It has a fixed size and goes soft or blocky when it is enlarged too far. Common raster formats are JPEG, PNG, WebP and TIFF.

Resolution (DPI / PPI)

Resolution is the amount of detail in a raster image. Print needs about 300 dots per inch at the finished size. Screens need far less, which is why an image taken from a website usually prints badly.

Transparency

A transparent background lets the logo sit on any colour or photo with no white box around it. PNG, SVG, WebP and vector files support transparency. JPEG does not.

Lossless and Lossy

These describe how a file is made smaller. Lossless compression keeps every detail (PNG). Lossy compression throws some detail away to save space, and the damage builds up each time the file is edited and saved again (JPEG).

File types

What each file ending means, and what it is good for.

VECTOR FILES: FOR PRINT, SIGNAGE AND PRODUCTION

PDF

PDF (Portable Document Format) keeps a design looking the same on every device. It can hold vector artwork, images, fonts, exact colours and the trim marks a printer needs. It is the preferred format for supplying finished artwork. A PDF is only as good as what is inside it: a JPEG saved as a PDF is still a JPEG.

EPS

EPS (Encapsulated PostScript) is a long-standing vector format. Signwriters, printers and promotional suppliers ask for it often. You may not be able to open it yourself, and that is normal. Forward it on as it is.

AI

AI is the working file from Adobe Illustrator, where most logos are drawn. It is the master artwork. Designers and signwriters can open it. Most other people cannot.

SVG

SVG (Scalable Vector Graphics) is the vector format for websites. It stays crisp on every screen size and the files are very small. Ideal for logos and icons online.

RASTER FILES: FOR SCREENS AND PHOTOS

PNG

PNG (Portable Network Graphics) is the everyday logo file for screens. It keeps sharp edges, supports a transparent background and loses no quality when saved. It is RGB only and has a fixed size, so it is not suited to professional print or signage.

JPEG / JPG

JPEG is made for photographs. It produces small files by discarding some detail. It has no transparent background, so a logo always sits in a white or coloured box. Fine for photos, a poor choice for logos.

WebP

WebP is a newer web format that gives good quality at much smaller file sizes, so pages load faster. It supports transparency. It is for websites only. Never send WebP to a printer or signwriter.

TIFF

TIFF is a high-quality image format used for professional photography and print. Files are large. Useful for photos going to print, not for web use.

PDF, PNG AND JPEG AT A GLANCE

	PDF	PNG	JPEG
MADE OF	Vector, pixels or both	Pixels	Pixels
ENLARGES CLEANLY	Yes, if the logo is vector	No	No
COLOUR	CMYK, Pantone or RGB	RGB only	Mostly RGB
TRANSPARENCY	Yes	Yes	No
COMPRESSION	Flexible	Lossless	Lossy
BEST FOR	Print and signage	Web, email, Office, social	Photographs

Print and signage terms

What your printer or signwriter means when they ask for these.

PRINT PRODUCTION

Print-ready PDF

A PDF set up to the printer's requirements: correct size, CMYK or Pantone colours, images at print resolution, fonts embedded or outlined, with bleed and crop marks.

Bleed

Extra artwork that runs past the edge of the page, usually 3 to 5mm. It is trimmed off after printing so colour runs right to the edge with no white slivers.

Trim / finished size

The final size of the printed piece after it has been cut.

Crop marks

Small lines in the corners of a print file that show where the sheet will be cut.

Safe area

The space inside the trim edge where text and logos should stay, so nothing important is cut off.

Outlined fonts

Text that has been converted into shapes, so it prints correctly even when the supplier does not have your font installed.

Proof

A preview supplied for your approval before production. Check spelling, phone numbers, sizes and colour carefully. Once you sign off, any errors are yours.

SIGNAGE

Cast vinyl

A thin, premium self-adhesive film that shapes around curves and lasts longest outdoors. The standard for vehicle wraps and long-term signage.

Cut vinyl

Solid-coloured film cut to shape by machine, used for lettering and simple logos. It comes in stock colours, so your brand colour is matched to the closest available shade. It needs vector artwork.

Printed vinyl

White film that is digitally printed with your artwork. It gives the closest match to brand colours and can carry photos and gradients.

Laminate

A clear protective film applied over printed vinyl. It guards against UV fading, scratches and cleaning chemicals.

Wrap film

Coloured cast vinyl made to cover whole panels or vehicles. Stock wrap colours only approximate a brand colour.

Gloss / matt

The surface finish. Gloss is shiny and reflective, matt is flat. The same colour looks different in each, so confirm the finish before production.

Brand terms

What a complete set of logo files and guidelines includes.

YOUR LOGO

Logo suite

The full set of your logo files: every version, in every colour, in each file format you are likely to need. With a proper suite you always have the right file to send.

Primary logo

The main version of your logo, used wherever space allows.

Stacked and horizontal versions

Alternative layouts of the same logo, so it fits a tall space (a pull-up banner) as well as a wide one (a website header).

Icon or mark

The symbol from your logo, used alone where space is tight: social media profile pictures, favicons and app icons.

Reversed (white) logo

A white version made for dark or coloured backgrounds. It is drawn for that purpose, not simply the original with the colours swapped.

Mono (one-colour) logo

A single-colour version for embroidery, engraving, stamps, promotional products and anywhere full colour is not possible.

YOUR BRAND

Brand guidelines

A document that records how your brand is put together and how to use it: logo versions, colours, fonts and the rules that keep everything consistent. Also called a brand guide or style guide. Hand it to any supplier and they can produce your work correctly the first time.

Brand colours

The approved colours for your business, recorded as Pantone, CMYK, RGB and HEX values so they can be matched in print, on screen, in vinyl and in paint.

Typeface / font

The lettering style used in your logo and your marketing. Using the same fonts everywhere is one of the simplest ways to look established.

Clear space

The minimum empty space to keep around your logo so it is never crowded by text, images or the edge of the page.

Minimum size

The smallest size your logo can be used before it becomes hard to read.

Favicon

The small icon shown in the browser tab beside your website name.

Lost your logo files? Never had brand guidelines?

It is more common than you would think. **Pocket Rocket Design** can get your brand back in order, so every sign, print job and web page looks like it comes from the same business.

Logo redraw

Only have a blurry JPEG or a logo saved from your website? Your existing logo is redrawn as clean vector artwork and supplied as a full logo suite.

Logo refresh

Keep what people recognise and fix what is not working. A careful tidy-up or update of your existing logo.

Brand guidelines for an existing business

Your logo, colours and fonts recorded properly, often for the first time. Ideal when a business has grown without guidelines, or was bought and the files were lost along the way.

A new brand from scratch

Logo, colour palette, fonts, a complete logo suite and brand guidelines, ready to hand to any supplier.

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