

# Artwork Guide

Let's start creating  
the perfect design  
for your pouches!



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## Your packaging deserves to stand out

With over 15 years of experience, we'll help you bring your ideas to life, fine-tune the details, and overcome any challenges along the way.

Whether you already have a complete design or just the first spark of an idea, you decide the direction. You choose the style, the message, and the impact you want to make. We're here to make sure everything fits perfectly with your product and brand.

You'll know exactly what works best for your clients. From the first sketch to the final print, you stay in control. We simply make sure the result turns heads and leaves a lasting impression. In the end, it's your vision - we just make it look its absolute best.



## Requirements to check before submitting your artwork

### Supported and required file formats

- *Supported:* Illustrator (.AI) and EPS file formats are **preferred**. PDF is acceptable, but avoid using compression to preserve quality. Photoshop (.PSD) is workable if needed
- *Required:* include a PDF file for quick view
- All invisible / non-used layers should be removed to avoid any mistakes.

### Colour use

- *Rotogravure:* use **pantone colours** from the 'Formula Guide Coated and Uncoated'
- *Digital:* make sure you use **CMYK colours**.

### Image use

- The resolution of image files must be on scale 1:1 and no less than **300 dpi**
- Do not use scanned pictures as your images
- Make sure images are saved at high resolution (at least 300 dpi) in **CMYK colour** mode.

### Text / Font use

- **Always outline** all of the text / fonts in your design
- Double check the spelling, contents and layout.

### Barcodes

- All barcodes (UPC codes) should be **scaled at 100%**
- Reduce to 85% as a minimum scale
- We recommend using a **contrasting colour** between background and barcode.

*Note: PouchDirect is not responsible for any mistakes caused by not following these criteria.*

### Unsupported file formats

- Microsoft Word (.DOC/.DOCX)
- Microsoft Publisher (.PUB)
- PowerPoint (.PPT)
- InDesign (.INDD).

### Most common file issues causing problems

- Fonts/text **not being outlined**
  - Use of low-resolution images
  - Using the wrong die lines.
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## Printing techniques

Printing your pouches can be done with 3 different kinds of printing techniques. Based on your order, we will choose the best suitable and cost effective printing technique for your pouch. Below, you can find some information about the printing techniques.

### Rotogravure

Gravure printing – also known as rotogravure printing – is primarily a long-run, high-speed, high-quality printing method. Like engraving, gravure is a form of intaglio printing that produces fine, detailed images. It works well for **Pantone colours** where each colour of ink is applied by its own cylinder.

- Pantone colours
- MOQ 5.000 pieces (per size / per design)
- Extra finishing: matt varnish, SPOT UV, hot stamp
- Reverse printing (max. 8 colours)
- Surface printing (max. 4 spot colours, **not CMYK**), only on kraft paper
- One cylinder needed per colour.

### Digital printing

Digital printing takes a different approach and assembles the images ready for print from a complex set of numbers and formulas. These images are captured from pixels and the digitalised image is used to control the deposition of ink, toner and exposure, to replicate the image you would like to print.

- HP indigo 20.000
- **CMYK+** (we can cover up to 95% of Pantone colors)
- From 5.000 pieces (multiple designs possible within the 5.000 pieces)
- No cylinder costs.

### Silk printing

Silk printing is the process of transferring a stencilled design onto a flat surface using a mesh screen, ink and a squeegee. Paper is the only possible screen-printed surface. The basic method involves creating a stencil on a fine mesh screen and then pushing ink through to create an imprint of your design on the surface beneath.

- **Pantone colours only**
  - From 5.000 pieces (only possible with small artworks (logo's / text etc.))
  - Not 100% ink coverage
  - No cylinder costs.
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Finishing	Digital printing	Silk printing	Rotogravure printing
All materials	Yes	No	Yes
Combination shiny & matt finish	Yes	No	Yes
Kraft paper with more difficult artwork	Yes	No	No
Kraft paper with simple design	Yes	Yes	Yes
Colour Options	CMYK	Pantone colours	CMYK, Pantone colours
Screen printing (less than 100% colour)	Yes	No	Yes
Printing to the edges / all over printing	Yes	No	Yes
Hot stamp	Yes	Yes	Yes
Spot UV	Yes	No	Yes
Good for Short Runs	Yes	Yes	No
More artworks divided for 10.000 pieces	Yes	Yes	No
Per Unit costs	Higher	Medium	Lowest

### Colour output / colour matching

- Coated Pantone colours (if printing is on a coated surface)
- Uncoated Pantone colours (if printing is on an uncoated surface / kraft paper)
- CMYK (digital printing or images)
- Colour reference? We can try to match the needed colours, **if you accept that the colours can deviate** when used on different kind of materials
- Printed colours **can differ** from the Pantone colours, depending on the material used  
For instance, brown kraft paper, a middle MET-PET (silver) layer and the transparency of the material will all **influence the appearance** of colours on the end result
- Due to the transparency of 100% recyclable material, colours may appear lighter. If in doubt, choose a shade darker.

### Printing on kraft paper

- The colour of the paper can differ between pouches, because it's a 100% natural product
- Not all designs are suitable for direct printing on kraft paper. Detailed designs with mixed colours may require an extra layer on the outside, depending on the printing technique
- Kraft paper has a natural, authentic look. Depending on the printing technique, the ink can be absorbed into the paper, which gives it a softer and more organic result.

### Overlap (only applicable with rotogravure and silk screen printing techniques)

- When multiple colours are printed next to each other, some **colour overlap** can occur. We try to avoid this, but there is a chance of max. 3 mm overlap between colours
- If there is a layer of white printed underneath the printing, there can be a small overlap of the white printing colour
- By **outlining text or images**, this overlap can be prevented.

### Cutting marge

- As a cutting margin, we use a standard of **5 mm on each side** of the pouch
- To prevent images getting cut off, we recommend **leaving 3 mm** of space between the image and the edge of the die line.

### Printing area

- Depending on the printing technique, we can also print on the bottom and seals of the pouch. Mind, with digital printing, the printing on the seal of a kraft paper pouch (with surface printing) can have a **colour difference**. This is caused by the heat that is needed to make the seal. The ink can burn and change colour. With rotogravure, we use heat-resistant ink
- We can print below, on top of or above the zipper. There is a sealing tolerance of the zipper (3 mm) which can cause a slightly different result
- **Flat Bottom pouches** have a bottom and sides that can be printed. Note that your design elements may be lost in the folds when the packaging is (partially) empty
- The lower part of **Side Gusset pouches** will fold and form a bottom once the packaging is filled. Avoid placing important design elements too close to the cutoff or they may end up on the bottom.

### Valve position

- You can check the standard valve position on our die lines. If you want the valve in a different position, please contact us so we can discuss the possibilities
  - We can place the valve on the front or the back of the pouch
  - The material underneath the valve can be printed, but keep in mind that there is a small sealing tolerance around the valve.
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### Window in a pouch

- The total width of the window must not exceed the maximum width of the pouch. For example: if the stand-up pouch is 160 mm wide, the maximum width of the window is 80 mm. **This does not apply to a full-width window**  
A mold must be made for a pre-formed window in a **kraft paper pouch** (not applicable to plastic packaging). The cost depends on the shape and size
- Indicate the window area with a separate spot color.

### QR codes

Test these with your mobile phone to see if they are scannable.

### Sharing your files

You can attach your files to an email and send it to [info@pouchdirect.nl](mailto:info@pouchdirect.nl). Alternatively, you can use WeTransfer if file sizes are too large.

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### PDF for approval

Once we have received your artwork, we will send a PDF file for approval. After approval, you will receive our proforma invoice and after payment, we will start the mass production of your pouches!

### Production of the pouches includes the following steps:

- making the cylinders (depending on the printing technique)
- printing the foil
- laminating the foil
- drying of laminate
- cutting the foil
- production of bags
- quality control
- packaging
- preparing for shipping

### Production times vary between printing techniques

**Digital:** 2 – 3 weeks

**Rotogravure:** 5 – 6 weeks

**Silk screen:** on request

### Is your artwork ready? Use the checklist!

All my text has been outlined

My images are no less than 300 dpi

I've double checked all my text

I'm using a supported file format

I'm using the correct colour type

I have a 5 mm bleed around my design

I'm using the right die line

There's no hidden layers in my file

If you have any questions, we're  
happy to think along with you!

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