

## TIPS FOR MAKING PRINTED PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL WHEN YOU CAN'T/DON'T WANT TO/DON'T CARE TO USE INDESIGN

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*More comfortable with a soldering iron than the Adobe Creative Suite? Not a problem!*

Consider using a printer that allows you to design your materials on their site. Moo, for example, makes many great products, and has one of the friendliest websites around. A package of 50 postcards is \$42 when you select the standard cardstock. You might also want to consider Moo Minicards (start at \$20)—which remain very popular with creative types because they don't follow the staid format of the business card. Plus, you can put different images on different cards, making them somewhat collectible. Overnight Prints and Vistaprint also allow you to design on-site (though they have a lot of tacky typefaces: beware!). Better yet, it looks as if they are also cheaper than Moo.

### **TEXT**

If you are given the option to design materials on a printer's website, they will usually give you a few font options.

In the case of Moo, I recommend:

#### **Clarendon**

DIN Next\*

Didot

Frutiger\*

Helvetica Neue LT Pro Light

Meta\*

**Officina Serif ITC Pro**

\*this is not the actual font, sorry.

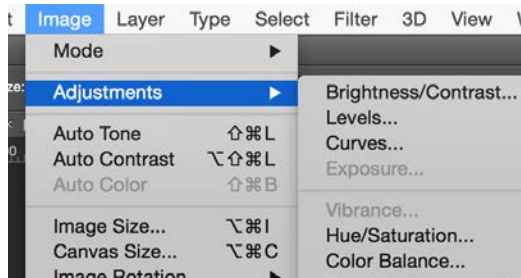
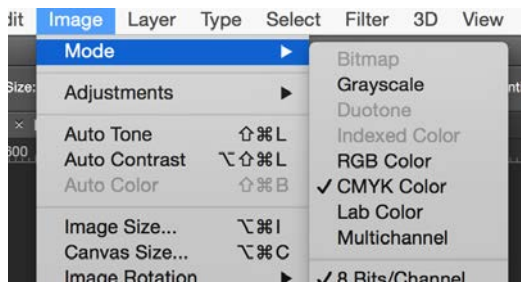
Font choice is really a personal matter, and it's important that you choose one that feels right for you and your work. But try to look professional. Don't use **Times New Roman** unless you want your materials to look like a Word document. Avoid script fonts unless you really know what you're doing. Don't even look at the "fun fonts" section of Vistaprint. Avoid **Papyrus**, **Comic Sans**, or **Chalkboard**. Also avoid **COPPERPLATE** and *Mistral*. And never, ever use Bleeding Cowboys. For anything. Ever.

Left-justified text is always a good choice. Centered text can resemble a tombstone. If you can, use weights (light, book, semibold, bold, etc.) within a typeface to establish hierarchy. Identify the most important thing (likely either your name or the name of your show) and make it bigger. But maybe not huge. Actually, it can sometimes look very nice if everything is the same size. Do yourself a favor and look at a ton of cards. Note what looks good to you and why.

Use spell check. And make sure all of the most pertinent information is on there. Your Grandma might not know what or where the Priebe Gallery is. Be very clear about dates and times. Put the year in there—you will thank yourself when you find the card twenty years from now.

If the output is print, avoid at all costs doing your type in Photoshop. If it cannot be avoided, make sure your resolution is set very, very high.

SEE REVERSE FOR IMAGE ADVICE >>>



Top: Converting from RGB to CMYK. Bottom: Other adjustments to try out. Be careful.

## IMAGE

My strongest suggestion is to keep the image side of the postcard free of text, unless there is a natural place to put it where it won't interfere with the image. Show us the work as cleanly as possible. We'll flip the card over for the details.

JPEGs are a universally-accepted format when it comes to photos. Most places will also accept PDFs.

Though nearly all digital cameras output images using RGB color, most professional printers prefer photographs in the CMYK color format, because the printed product should (in theory) be a closer match to what you see on screen. This is very easy to change in Photoshop:

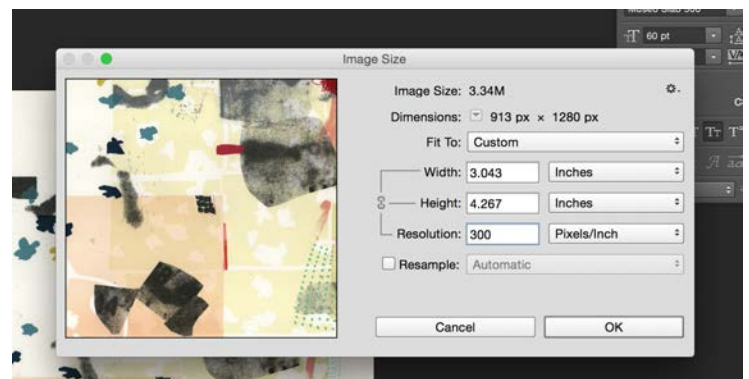
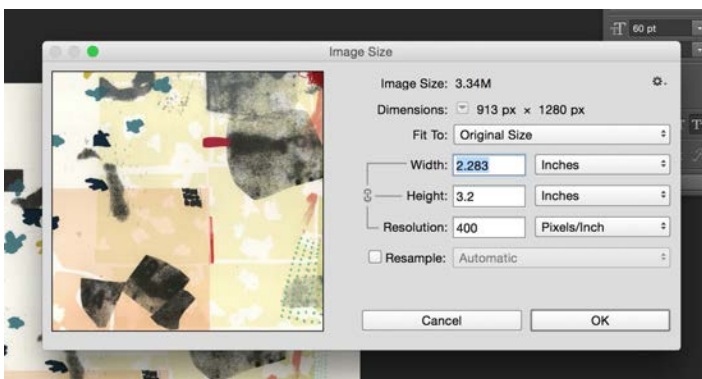
1. Open image in Photoshop (*File>Open*)
2. *IMAGE>MODE>CMYK COLOR*
3. Save

You can also make adjustments to the image using *IMAGE>ADJUSTMENTS*. But be sure that what appears still accurately represents your artwork!

300 dpi (dots per inch) is the industry standard for decent photo reproduction. While there can be some wiggle room, anything significantly less can look jagged and pixel-y—anything but professional. This is how you check your resolution and photo size in Photoshop:

1. Open image in Photoshop (*File>Open*)
2. *IMAGE>IMAGE SIZE*
3. Compare the size of the photo (convert to inches if needed) with the resolution.
4. If your resolution isn't high enough, and only if you've got size to spare, you can increase the resolution. See images below. Do do this, make sure the resample button is unchecked and adjust the numbers. If both your resolution and your image size are small, you need better quality images.

In general, remember to keep it simple, clean, and legible. In my opinion, layout design works best by quietly doing its job in the background. **After all, it's your work that should get the attention, right?**



2.283 inches wide at 400 dpi equals 3.043 inches wide at 300 dpi. Sadly, this is probably too small for a standard postcard.