

Art Advice for Authors

Production staff members at W. W. Norton are frequently asked about our requirements for print production of author-supplied art. While each book is different, and each author researching his or her book will come across a variety of sources for artwork, a few guidelines can be helpful.

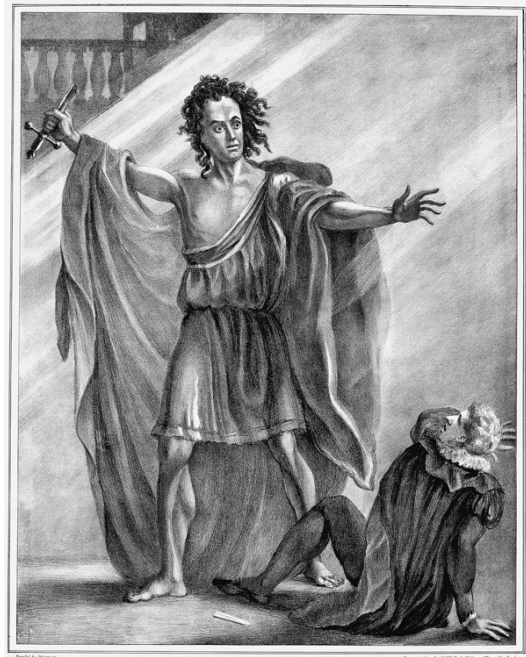
For both production and authors the easiest form in which to receive artwork is usually a high-quality photographic print. We can have those prints scanned to meet our printing specifications. Should you scan your artwork yourself? Home scanners are fine if you're getting pictures ready to send out to friends and family. However, they don't do such a good job generating the high-resolution images needed for print production.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND LINE ART

Generally, digital art purchased from traditional stock houses or photographic sources such as Corbis is supplied in a high-resolution format suitable for print production. We require a 300 dpi (dots per inch) .tif file in either CMYK color or grayscale. CMYK (an abbreviation for the four printing ink colors: cyan, magenta, yellow, and black) is needed only if your book is going to be printed in full color. If the stock house supplies a full-color image and your book is being printed in black and white, we can make the conversion from color to black and white here.



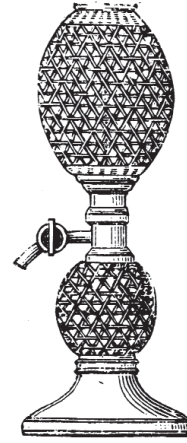
CMYK .tif at 300 dpi



Grayscale .tif at 300 dpi



Week Commencing Saturday, July 6, 1889.
Every Afternoon at 3.30. Every Evening at 8.



GAZOGENE.

3 pint	each	12/6
5 "	"	18/0

Lineart .tif files at 1200 dpi

If the artwork is a line drawing, there are different requirements for resolution. The files will need to be in line art or bitmap format at a resolution of 800–1200 dpi. We prefer to have 1200 as this gives us more detail in the final printed image.

Artwork should always be provided as close to its final size as possible. If you give us an electronic file that is 300 dpi but one inch in width, the resolution will drop precipitously when we scale the photograph up to a larger size. Your production manager will know the final trim size of the book. A good rule of thumb is to provide the scan at the text width of your book. We can easily scale the image down if it is too large—with no loss of quality. Unfortunately scaling up can sometimes lead to very poor image reproduction.

Deciding whether art should be supplied as line art or grayscale can sometimes be problematic. One example we frequently encounter are old woodcuts. Sometimes they will reproduce better as grayscale even though they are essentially all lines. In this case it is better to supply us with hard copy if available so that we can work with our printers to determine what will give the best result. If the art is only available digitally, please speak with us as early in the production process as possible so that we can troubleshoot any potential problems.

CHARTS, GRAPHS, AND TABLES

Charts, graphs, and tables can be built in many types of software. Microsoft Word, Excel, DeltaGraph, Word Perfect, and many others provide this function. However, for print production we will need to have an .eps file. Sometimes it is possible for us to use a file created in one of these programs, but usually we need to redraw the figure so that we can adjust the labels or artwork and save .eps files. If you have worked in Microsoft Word or Excel we can use these files as text to create charts and graphs in Adobe Illustrator or Macromedia Freehand. Always supply a hardcopy. Since this type of artwork is not pixel-based but is made up of vector information, resolution is not an issue. We can scale up or down with no loss of quality. If you have worked in a program that you think will be able to save as an .eps file, speak to your editor, or have your editor contact production to arrange for a test file to see if the file is usable.

MAPS

Maps are better done by mapmakers who use specialized software to generate them and can provide us with an editable Illustrator .eps file at the end of the process. If you are experienced in this and can provide us with a sample, we will be happy to try and work with your map.

A WORD ABOUT .JPGS

With the advent of the Internet, images became available globally on a scale never seen before. As tempting as it is to obtain images from the Web, we caution you strongly before proceeding. The key problem for production (we won't address the copyright issue here) is again one of resolution. Your computer screen only needs 72 dots per inch (dpi) in order to render a decent-looking image on your monitor. Download that image at 72 dpi for print production and you have an image that will look like square pixel dots on the printed page. Perhaps you've thumbed through a magazine recently and seen images that looked a little funny, almost crumbly around the edges. This is what happens when Web images are used for print production. Color is also an issue. Computer screens render images in computer safe colors (some variation of red, green and blue). Printed images use the four ink colors CMYK. Your screen image may not match the color of your printed image.

Some problems also occur when saving high-quality images to .jpg format. The .jpg format was designed to compress files to a small size so that they would be easier to send and receive. Unfortunately, the same compression that makes files smaller also throws away data. In print production we need to keep all the data in order to maintain as much detail in the image as possible.

There are stock houses that provide high-quality images in .jpg format. These are saved at a tremendous physical size (sometimes two feet wide!) and at low resolution. The plan here is to download them, and provide them to us so that we can resample them in Photoshop to maximize their resolution and make them the appropriate size for the book.

SUMMARY

- Grayscale or color tifs at 300 dpi and as close to final size as possible
- Line art at 800 to 1200 dpi at final size
- Photographic art supplied as .tif files
- Charts, tables, and graphs editable and supplied as .eps files
- Maps editable and supplied as .eps
- Avoid .jpg images or saving in .jpg format
- Supply a hard copy printout (laser) for visual reference

We realize there is a lot to digest here and we don't expect any author to be a print-production specialist! However, with more and more images available from digital resources, some simple guidelines should make the whole process work more smoothly. We're always available to answer questions and to test sample files.

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