

White Ink

A Canva Guide

We know that setting up your files for special finishes like white ink printing can feel a little daunting. The good news is that it's actually simpler than you might think.

To help you get it right, we've put together a quick guide on how to set up white ink artwork using Canva. Follow the steps below to make sure your artwork comes off the press looking sharp and exactly as intended.

What files do we need?

To print white ink only we just need one page:

- 1. White ink on its own** – For this method, we only need one file showing us your white ink design.
- 2. White ink + CMYK** – For this method, we need two pages: one 'print only' page containing all the elements printed in CMYK (no white ink areas), and one 'white ink' page containing only the white ink elements (no CMYK).

Here's how it works

There are two ways we can use white ink when printing:

1. White ink on its own

Everything on your design is printed in white ink with no other colour, creating a clean, bold look on your chosen paper stock.

2. White ink + CMYK

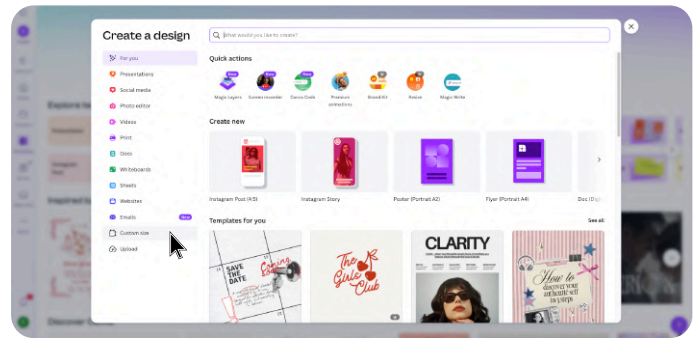
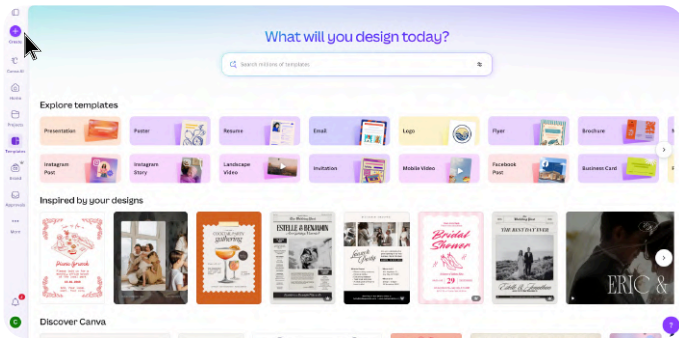
You can print a mix of white and other colours (CMYK) to create your desired design. Any CMYK colours need to be printed over a white ink base layer to make them visible against a dark paper.

In the example below, you'll notice both effects in action. The white ink is visible in some areas, while in others it sits underneath the colours to enhance their strength and vibrancy. To achieve this, we print a full layer of white first, followed by the colours on top – all in one seamless process.

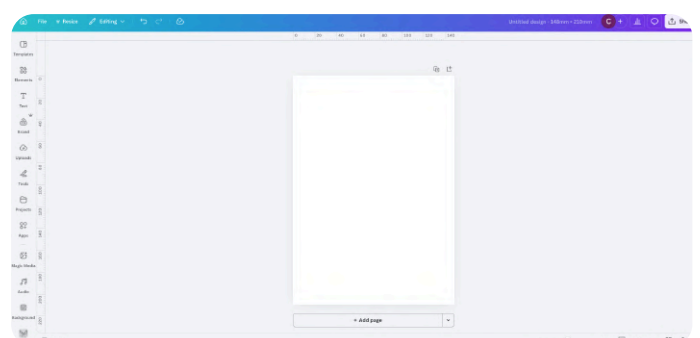
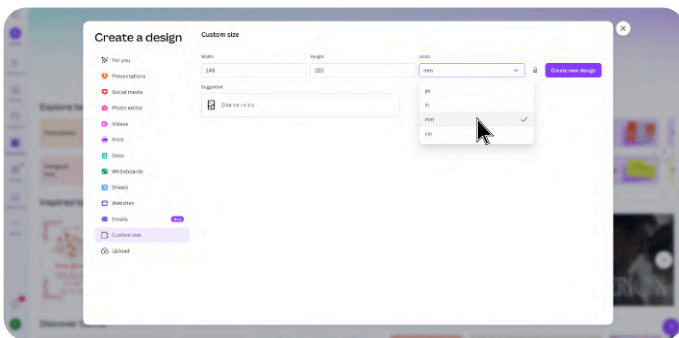


Step 1 Create a page

Click create and choose 'custom size' from the menu on the left



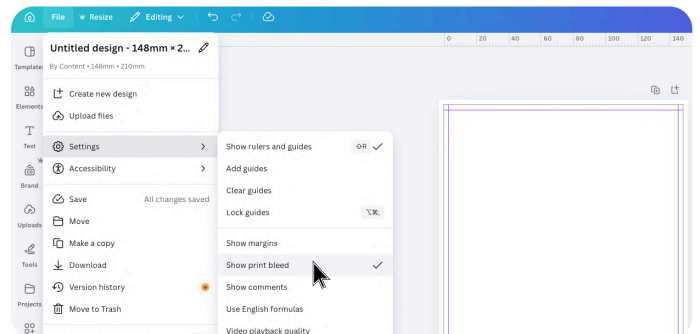
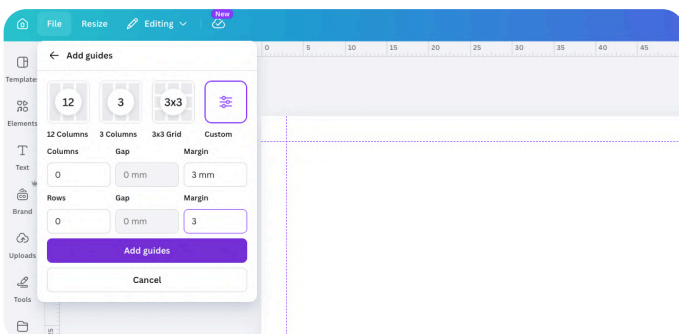
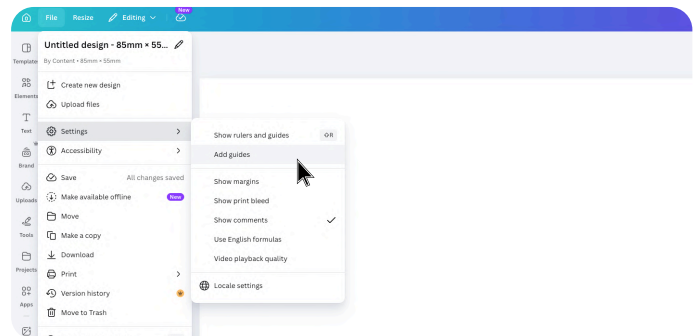
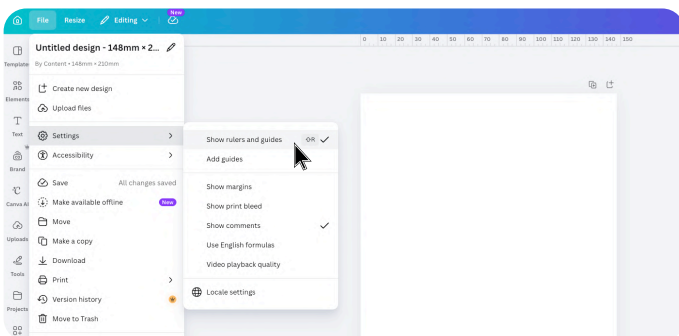
You can create any size you want from here. In this case, we're going to set up the page as A5 (148mm x 210mm). Change the units to mm and enter your dimensions in the width and height fields. In the example below, the width is 148mm and the height is 210mm - this will create A5 portrait. Swap them around if you want landscape.



Add safe zone and bleed to the page

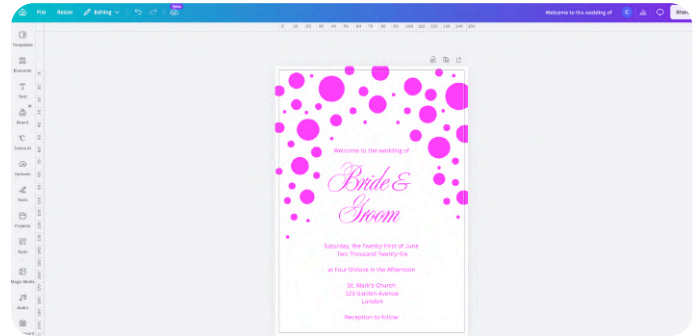
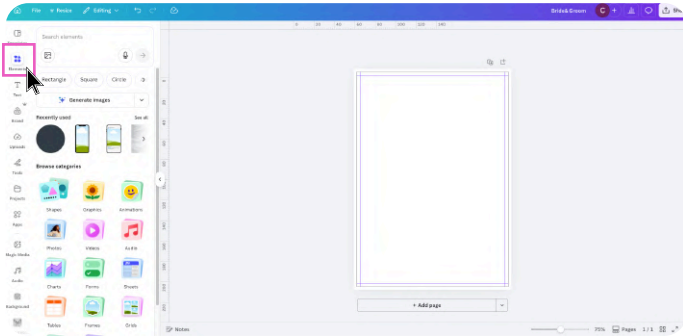
To show the safe area, we need to add margins 3mm in from the edge of the page. This helps keep important elements such as text and graphics a safe distance from the trim edge, reducing the risk of them being cropped during finishing. To do this, click File > Show rulers & guides. Then click File > Add guides > Custom > enter 3mm in both of the margin boxes and the rest 0.

Show the bleed by clicking File > Settings > Show print bleed. Bleed is required on all artwork created for print.



Step 2 Start designing - white ink elements

First, design the elements that will be printed in white ink. Create the design you want – you can do this in multiple ways. In the example below, we have created a simple design using Canva's shape library to make the spots and added text. Please ensure the parts you want printed in white ink are coloured magenta, the hex code for this in Canva is: #ff00ff.



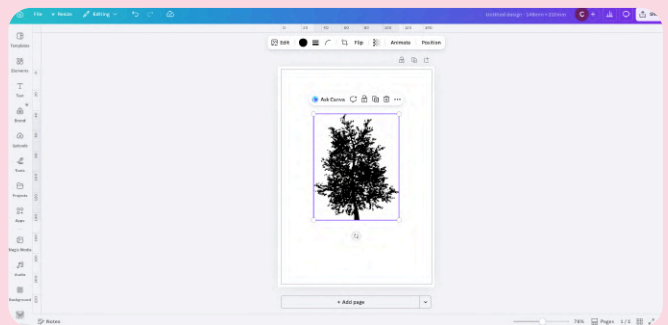
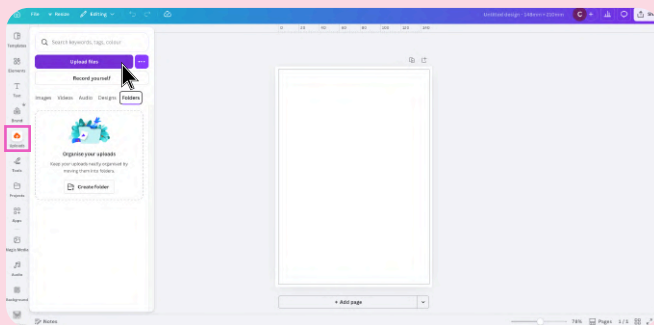
Notice how we have taken the spots into the bleed zone as well. This is essential if you want edge-to-edge print with no white gaps showing. The bleed will be trimmed off after printing.

Using custom shapes, graphics and illustrations

You're welcome to upload your own shapes, graphics, or illustrations into Canva if you have a specific design in mind.

If you'd like your design to be printed in white ink, please upload it to Canva as an SVG (vector) file. This ensures the artwork is recognised correctly during production.

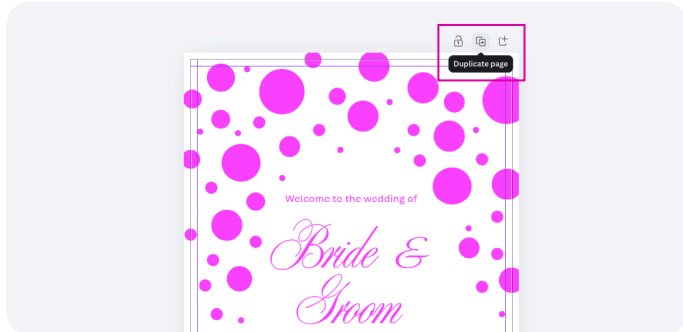
Other file types may be converted into standard images when saved from Canva, which means the white ink effect won't be detected by our printing process.



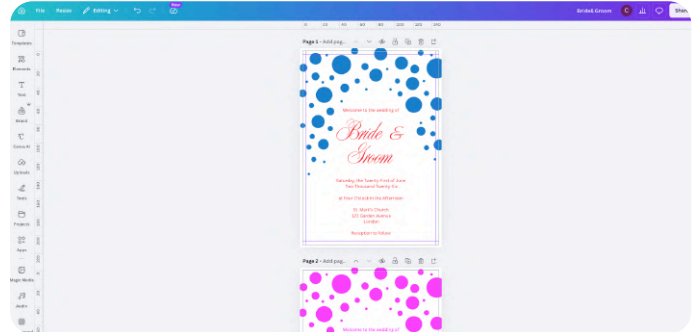
Adding CMYK elements

Follow this additional step if you're printing white ink + CMYK. If you're only printing with white ink you can skip this step and proceed straight to step 3

After creating the white ink page we can simply duplicate it so we have an exact copy.



On the first page, change any elements you want to be printed in CMYK to your desired colours. If you want any elements to be printed in white, you simply need to remove those elements from this page.

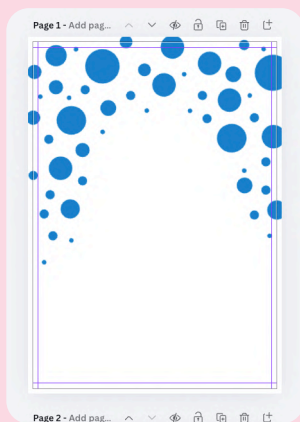


Double-check that any CMYK areas are also included in your white ink page so that they are printed with a base layer of white. This ensures that the CMYK elements remain visible against dark or coloured paper.

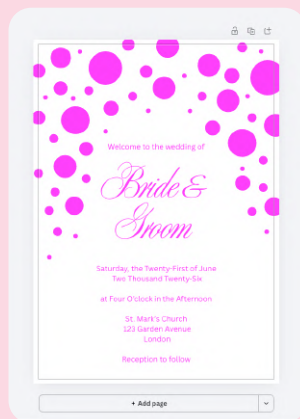
Any design elements intended to appear white should be included in your white ink page, but not on the CMYK page.

Here's an example of what these two files would look like when printed.

CMYK page



White page

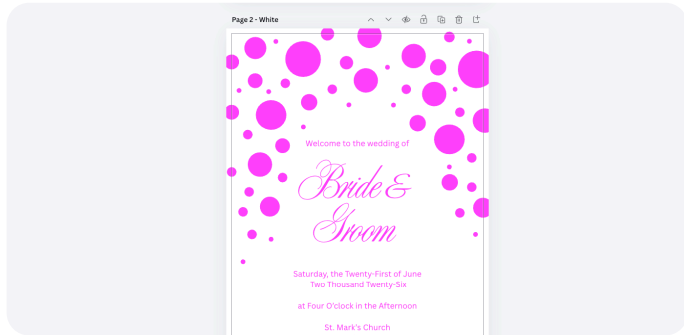


Step 3 Name your pages

This is an important step as we need the pages to be in the correct order and named correctly.

For white ink only

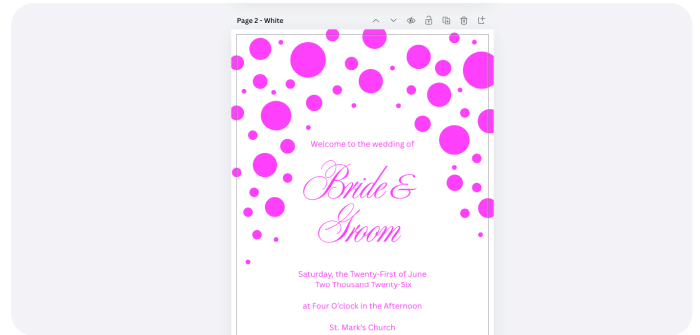
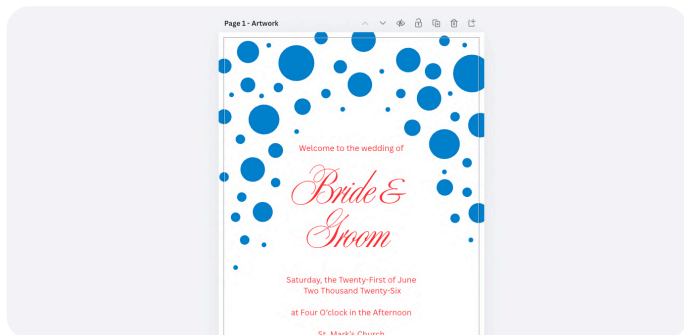
We'll need 1 page named "White"



For white + CMYK

We'll need 2 pages named as follows:

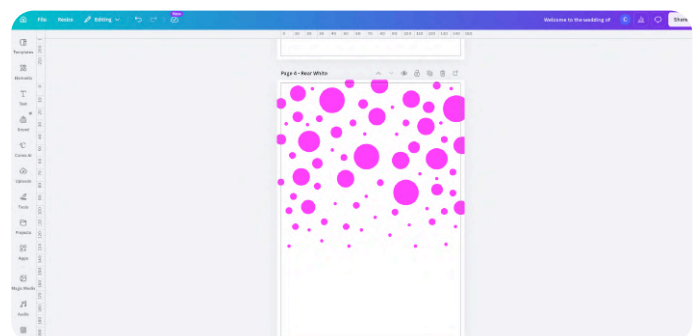
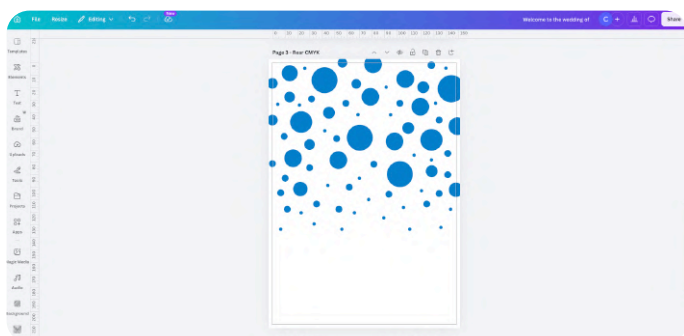
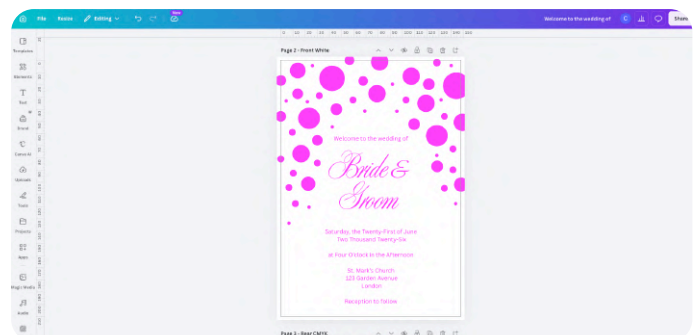
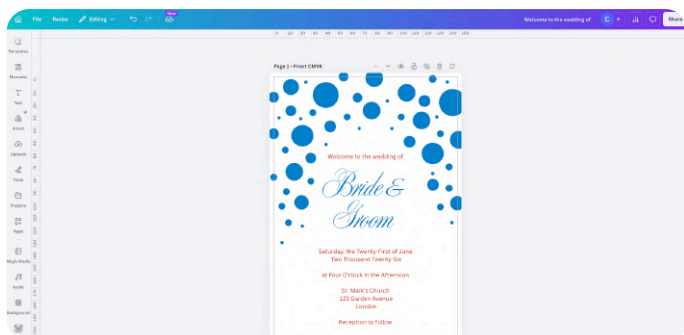
- Artwork
- White



For double-sided printing

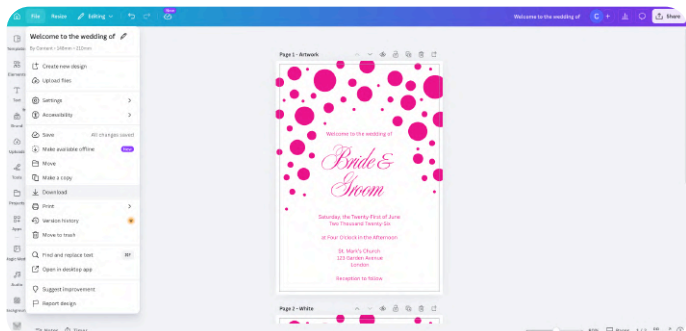
We'll need 4 pages named as follows:

- Front CMYK
- Front White
- Rear CMYK
- Rear White

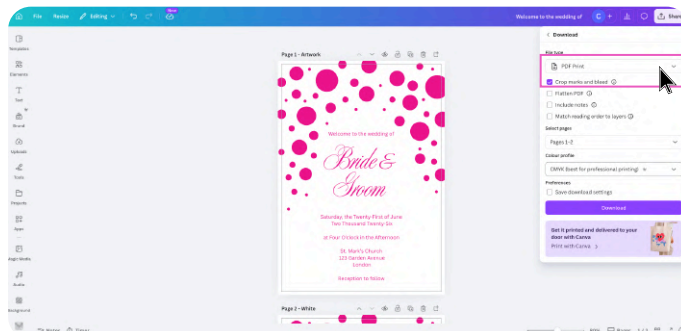


Step 5 Save your artwork

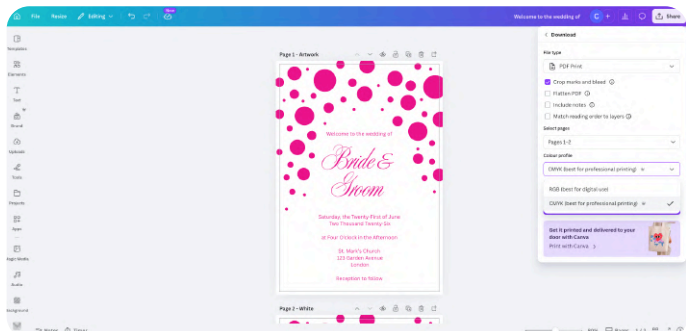
Save your artwork as a PDF by clicking File > Download.



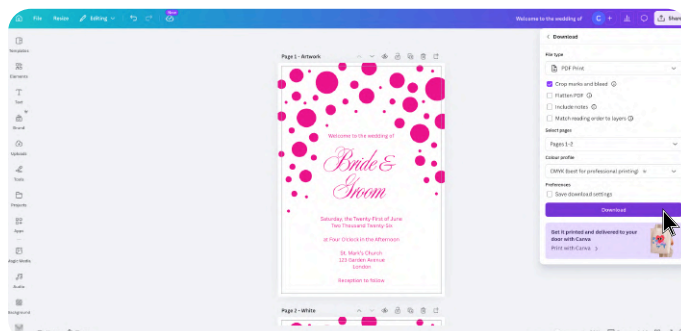
In 'File type', select PDF Print, tick the option for 'crop marks and bleed'.



In the 'colour profile', ensure CMYK (best for professional printing) is selected. This is a premium feature, so it's not available on the free plan.



Click 'download' and this will save the multi-page PDF to your downloads.



This will generate one PDF which contains all of the pages we created. You can view this PDF using the free Acrobat PDF viewer to ensure all pages look correct before you upload them to our website.

And that's it, you're all set to go!

Head over to <https://www.printed.com/support> for further help and support.