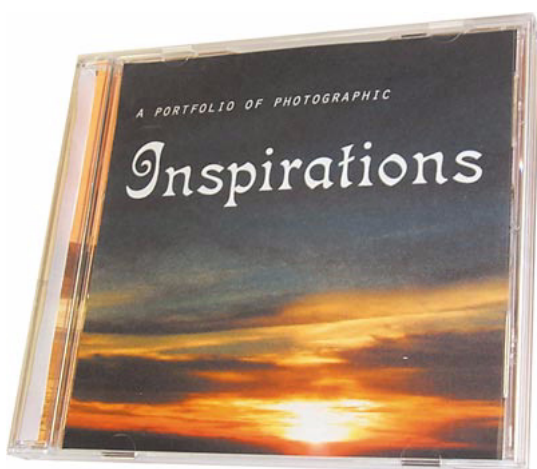


Adobe Studio on Adobe InDesign CS

Design a CD case and insert

Whether for personal or professional use, a compilation CD looks so much more impressive and professional when it's packaged in a custom-designed jewel case. And having a ready-made template you can use to create your own jewel case inserts can really come in handy. Setting up the basic layout in Adobe® InDesign® CS is easy. Where the creativity kicks in is with the overall design.



Just in case

In this article, we'll show you how to create the basic layout for a CD jewel case insert. The document setup we'll give you for the insert is intended for printing on a desktop printer, but we'll also note the necessary alterations you'll need to make if outputting your insert on a commercial press. Once your insert is set up in InDesign, we'll also show you how to save it as a template, which you'll be able to use over and over again. Then, we'll give you a few design pointers. And, finally, we'll explain how to output your insert on a desktop printer.

Sizing up the job

There are two parts to a CD jewel case insert—the front and the back, also called the tray card. Their dimensions differ slightly, but you're going to create both parts in one document by specifying a page size that accommodates the insert's maximum width and height.

Note: If you're sending the jewel case insert to a commercial printer, you'll need to create two separate InDesign documents—one for the front and one for the tray card—set up with the exact trim dimensions.

The trim size of the front part of the insert is 4.75" high x 4.75" wide; the trim size of the tray card is 4.625" x 5.906". The height is slightly less than the front to allow the front cover of the jewel case to fit inside the back cover. The tray card is wider than the front part of the insert to accommodate the spine of the jewel case, which is 1/4" wide on both sides.

To begin setting up your document, launch InDesign and choose File > New > Document to open the New Document dialog box. In this dialog box, enter 2 in the Number Of Pages text box and deselect the Facing Pages check box. Also make sure the Master Text Frame check box is deselected. In the Page Size area, enter 5.906" in the Width text box and 4.75" in the Height text box. To finish the document setup, shown below, enter 0.25" in the Top, Bottom, Left, and Right text boxes in Margins area, and leave the Number setting in the Columns area at 1. Then, click OK. Save your new document before continuing.

Outlining the front insert

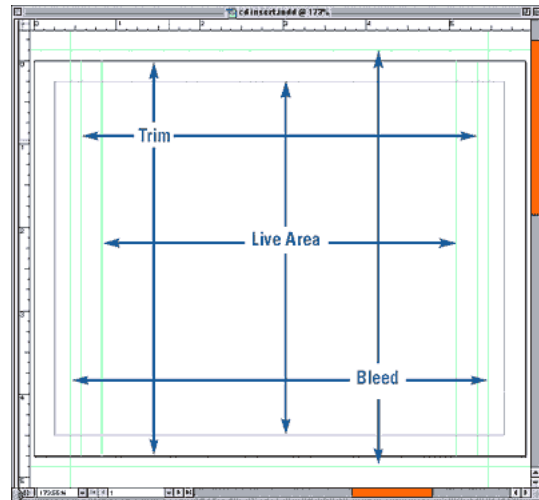
Now that your document is created and sized properly, you can add some guides that will help you design the insert and ensure it prints properly. In addition to the usual set of bleed guides, you'll need to indicate the true trim and live areas for both pieces, since neither is true to size (unless you set up your documents separately for commercial printing).

On the first page, which will be the front part of the jewel case insert, the height is right but the width is 1.156" too wide. Therefore, you need to add vertical guides, located at 0.5703" and 5.3333", to indicate the true trim area. We recommend using the Transform palette to place these guides precisely. To do so, drag the first guide from the vertical ruler and place it on the page. Next, type the first location (0.5703") in the X text box on the Transform palette. Then press [enter]. Repeat this process to add the second guide at the next location (5.3333") on the x-axis.

That takes care of the trim. Now we need to indicate the true live area—the area in which you should keep content you don't want trimmed off. The existing top and bottom margins are correct, but you need to place vertical guides on the x-axis at 0.8203" and 5.0833". Again, you'll find it much easier to use the Transform palette to position these guides.

Next, you need to indicate a bleed (if you intend to have one). To do so, place horizontal and vertical guides 1/8" outside the trim (edge) on the pasteboard, but remember that the trim area isn't the actual page size in this case. The exact placement for your bleed guides can be entered in the Transform palette as follows: X: 0.4453" (left), Y: -0.125" (top), X: 5.4583" (right), and Y: 4.875" (bottom).

The final setup for the first page in your document should look like the one shown below. If it doesn't, go back and check your document setup and guide locations.



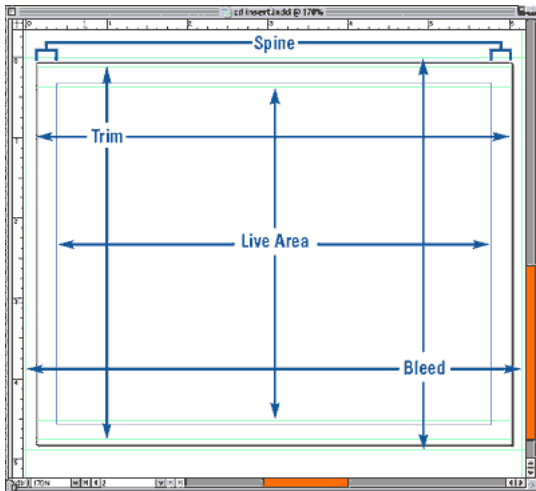
This is the page setup for the front of a jewel case insert, including trim, live area, and bleed guides.

Outlining the tray card

Moving on to the second page in your document, the width of the tray card is correct, as are the right and left margins, which you'll use to create the spine. The trim height, however, is currently 4.75" and you need it to be 4.625", so the next step is to add guides that will indicate the true trim and live area.

To indicate the correct trim, place horizontal guides at 0.05" and 4.6917". (Enter these locations in the Y field if using the Transform palette.) Next, you need to indicate the true live area. To do so, add a horizontal guide at 0.30" and 4.417" on the y-axis.

Finally, add bleed guides 1/8" from the true trim. The exact location of these guides is: X: -0.125" (left), Y: -0.075" (top), X: 6.031" (right), and Y: 4.8167". Your tray card should now look like the one shown below.



This is the page setup for the tray card, including the trim, live area, and bleed guides.

Create a template

Now is a good time to save your document as a template. First, make sure your current document is saved. Next, choose File > Save As to open the Save As dialog box. Select a destination to which to save the template file, name it, and then select InDesign CS Template from the Format pop-up menu. Finally, click Save. Close the template and reopen your saved InDesign document.

Design and conquer

The front and back of a jewel case insert don't supply a lot of room to make an impact on someone. Therefore, it's important that you carefully plan their design. Not only should you reflect your (or your client's) style, you should appropriately use what little space you have.

Use the front of your insert to attract attention to the product, demonstrate your artistic abilities, and communicate the contents of the CD. Use the tray card to further illustrate the contents of the CD with a table of contents and, perhaps, your business logo and contact information. Ultimately, your design depends on the contents of the CD and how it will be distributed.

You should also take advantage of the space on both sides of the jewel case, called the spine. Do this by typing the text you'd like to appear on either side of the jewel case. Format it with a small enough point size to fit in the allotted space in the left and right margins of your tray card. When the text is set, rotate it ± 90 degrees, and then place it on either side of the tray card keeping it in the left and right margins. If you place text on both sides, make sure they line up.

This completes the design and layout portion of creating an insert. Our finished tray card (prior to folding) is shown below.



Use what little space a tray card provides to communicate the contents of the CD.

Press time

You're almost ready to print your CD jewel case insert. But first, if your inserts bleed past the trim, use the Line tool to add crop marks on both pages to indicate the trim, since it isn't the actual page size. This will help you to see where to cut the pages once they're printed. (If you set up the front and tray card in two separate documents with page sizes set to the actual trim size, you can use the built-in Crop Mark feature in the Print dialog box to do this.)

Now, you should be ready to print and finish your insert. To do so, choose File > Print to open the Print dialog box. Choose a PostScript printer from the Printer pop-up menu. Choose Centered from the Page Position pop-up menu on the Setup panel. On the Marks & Bleeds panel, enter 0.125" in the Bleed area's Top, Bottom, Inside, and Outside text boxes. Choose Composite CMYK from the Color pop-up menu on the Output panel. Choose Medium Resolution (High Resolution for output on a commercial press) from the Style pop-up menu in the Transparency Flattener area of the Advanced panel for output on a desktop printer. The Preview box displays how the page will print. Finally, click Print.

If your front and tray card are one-sided, with the content facing out, no additional printing steps are required. After both parts of the insert are printed, trim them on a paper cutter, fold the left and right sides in π " to form the spines on the tray card, and then fit both pieces into the jewel case.

A perfect fit

Now that you've completed your first custom-designed jewel case insert, you're probably anxious to create many more! Just think how much easier it will be the next time around now that you have a template with which to work.

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