

SoftMats™

Artwork Guidelines

The SoftMat™ was developed primarily to make an effective, low-cost mouse mat. It also makes a good desk mat in larger sizes and the material itself has a wide range of applications, from puzzles to bed mats (to protect beds from feet in furniture stores).

SoftMat™ materials

The specially formulated 'cling' base of the SoftMat™ gives superb lay-flat and non-slip qualities. The heat bonded top surface provides trouble free mousing.

SoftMat™ material is 2mm thick as standard, and comes in the following colours:

Very light marbled grey, dark blue (PMS 282), black, red (PMS 485), royal blue (PMS 293) and pure white.

Other thicknesses and colours can be made - minimum quantity 12,000 mats. Some pigments cost extra. We can supply a printed proof for approval prior to production. There is a charge for this.

Screen printing onto SoftMat™ materials

Simple designs are usually the most effective. For a full colour print consider ColourSoft™ or Armadillo mats.

As the material is quite elastic, it can be difficult to maintain good register between two or more colours. Designs with borders or very tight registration (e.g. concentric circles or drop shadows) should be avoided.

Mats may vary slightly in size. This is a natural characteristic of the material.

Large areas of solid print (especially blues) do not always work well, and they slightly alter the feel of the top surface, which is one of the most attractive features of the mat.

Some colours do not print well onto dark material. Reds and yellows can look pasty. White and silver print well, as do most greens and blues. Please ask for advice.

Submitting your artwork

It can sometimes be difficult to determine the suitability of a design for screen printing. We can usually advise if you fax or post a copy of the design.

Unlike offset litho, screen printed tints are coarse. If you must have tints, output them at 50dpi, between 30% and 70% and with an **angle of 82.5°**. This is essential for good results. Large areas of tint or very fine detail (particularly if reversed out) do not screen print well; these are common causes of disappointment and should be avoided. Some tints may need to be printed as a solid PMS equivalent.

Difficult butt registers of colours of similar intensity should be avoided. Designs with very tight registration, e.g. concentric circles or drop shadows, may require printing on our ColourSoft™ Mat at extra cost. Allow 2.5mm bleed all around the mat.

Standard shapes & sizes

The standard SoftMat™ is 200 x 235mm. We also have cutting tools for:

150mm x 200mm	200mm diameter circle
200mm x 260mm	210mm x 297mm (A4)
420mm x 297mm (A3)	

Other shapes can be made without difficulty but may incur additional tooling costs.

Supply artwork on disk or by ISDN

You should supply the completed design in a format that we can accept, ready for output. High-resolution scans must be in place and spot colour separated. (Low-resolution scans give poor results.)

All design components must be supplied and clearly identified. This includes editable Tiff and EPS files and all screen and printer fonts used in the main file and in imported graphics. If there is any difficulty supplying fonts, then text must be saved as curves. PMS references should be used throughout.

A laser printout must accompany disks, clearly marked with Pantone spot colour references and cut marks. Printouts must be supplied from the latest file on disk, not earlier versions. Always label disks with job title, order number and return address.

If you cannot supply artwork on disk or by ISDN then films, bromides or black and white laser printouts should be supplied as clean and unincreased **colour separated** images to the correct size. Film positives, clearly referenced, right reading, emulsion up. This will incur additional charges though. A charge will be made for time spent bringing unsuitable artwork up to specification. Tints should be as above. Colour printouts cannot be used as artwork but provide a useful reference.

Accepted disk and program formats

Disks: CDs, 1.44Mb floppy disks, and 100Mb zip disks, up to 200Mb SyQuest disks.

ISDN line: See separate sheet: Sending Artwork by ISDN.

Programs: (all versions accepted)

Mac: QuarkXpress, Illustrator, PhotoShop, Freehand, PageMaker.

PC: CorelDraw, Adobe PhotoShop or Microsoft word for very simple designs (e.g. text only)

FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES MAY RESULT IN DELAYS AND INCUR EXTRA COSTS