

This guide collects the file and structure decisions that make a corrugated run print clean the first time. Keep it open next to your dieline while you build the art.

Choosing a flute

- E-flute: finest print surface and tightest folds; the default for retail mailers and cartons
- B-flute: crush resistance and stacking strength for shippers and trays
- Doublewall (such as EB or BC): heavy products, long freight legs, export packs
- Working rule: the finest flute that survives your supply chain
- Fine graphics on a coarse flute: specify a printed top sheet mounted to corrugate

Mailer dieline anatomy

- Roll-end tuck-front (RETF) is the standard retail mailer: base, side walls, dust flaps, tuck lid
- Exterior and interior are separate print surfaces on the same dieline
- Locking tabs and cherry locks close the box without tape; keep art clear of them
- The lid interior is the first panel a customer reads; design it like a cover
- Request our dieline template before building art; never redraw one from a sample

Print surfaces & panels

- Mark each printing surface (outside, inside, or both) in the file name and a notes layer
- Wrap-around art must run continuous across scores; expect each crease to swallow 1 to 2 mm
- Pattern matching at folded corners will drift a little; design corners that forgive
- Keep critical type and logos at least 6 mm from scores and cut edges
- Panels read in different orientations once folded; proof on a folded sample, not a flat screen

Bleed, crush & registration allowances

- Extend bleed at least 3 mm (1/8 in) past every cut line
- Avoid hairline rules and borders at panel edges; registration on board is looser than on labels
- Heavy solids can show flute shadow (washboarding) on direct-to-board work; consider a top sheet
- Knockout type inside solids: 8 pt minimum on direct-to-board corrugated
- Kraft board: add a white underlay layer beneath any color that must hold accurately

Prepress checklist

- PDF/X preferred; fonts outlined or embedded
- CMYK plus a named spot layer for white underlay; no RGB elements
- Dieline on its own spot color layer set to overprint, never CMYK black
- Raster images 300 ppi at final size
- No trim marks or registration targets inside the dieline area

Send us the file

- Upload the dieline and art through the quote form for a file and structure review
- No dieline yet? Send product dimensions, weight, and pack count; our structural team drafts one
- Ask for a cut, printed sample on the production board before approving the run