CANVA
FILE
INSTRUCTIONS

Canva is an online application dedicated for graphic design. It is used by both amateurs and professionals in the graphic industry to create online and print content.

Creating print-ready PDF files requires expertise and right tools to ensure technically functional originals are produced. As a tool, Canva provides basic functionalities, allowing users to create print-ready originals for basic print products.

This guide will walk you through important procedures and settings, guaranteeing Canva's creation of a print-ready PDF.

- BRAND KIT - Creating CMYK colors and importing graphic elements.
- PROJECTS - Importing material in file formats NOT supported by Brand Kit.
- DOCUMENT CREATION - Bleed, CMYK colors and incorporating graphic elements.
- GENERATING PRINT-READY PDF ORIGINALS.

BRAND KIT

In Canva, brand materials such as logos and brand colors can be stored and further utilized when creating documents.

BRAND KIT

CREATE A NEW BRAND KIT.
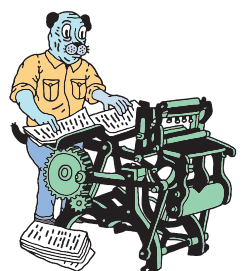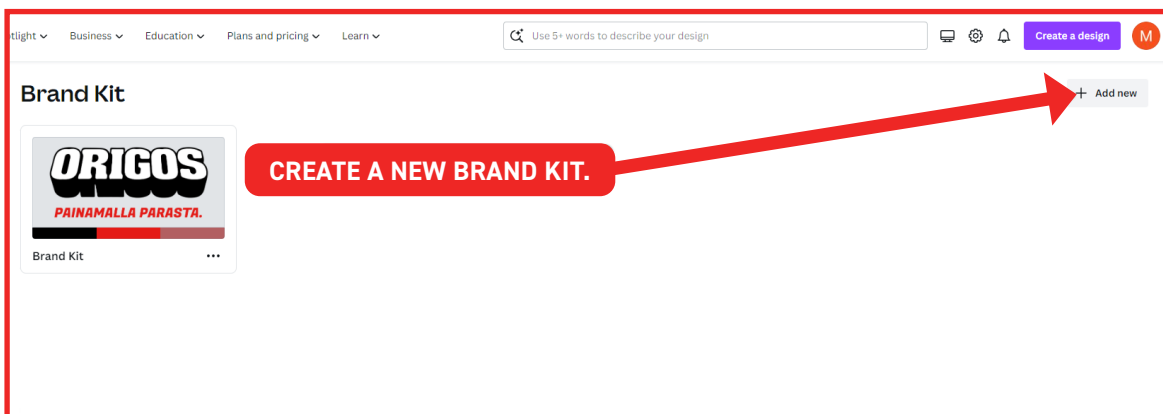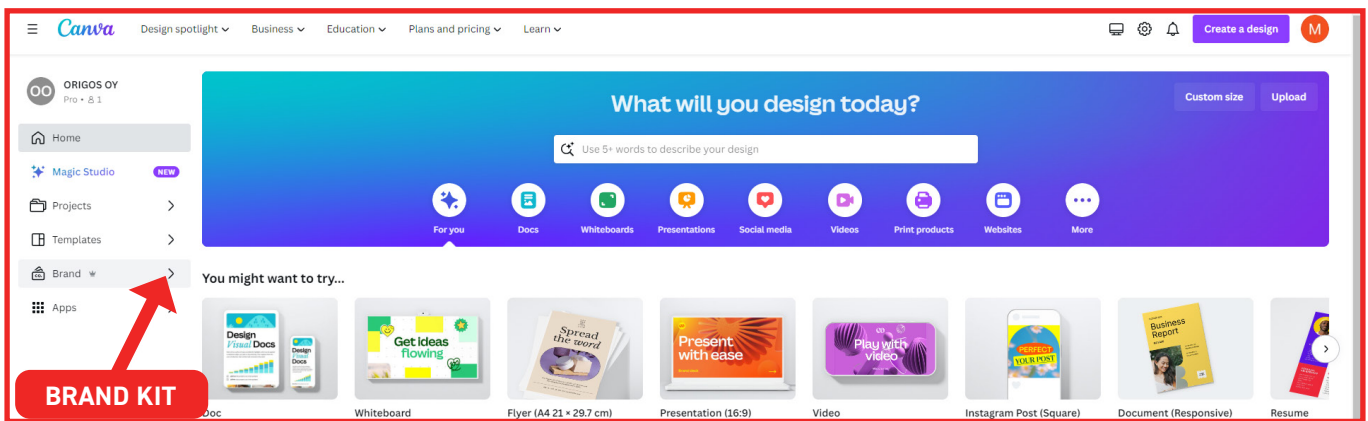
Brand Kit - Logos

In print originals, vector elements should always be used in simple graphics, such as logos, color bars, and backgrounds, to maximize print quality. Complex subjects and images, on the other hand, are added as hi-res image files.

Canva's Brand Kit exclusively supports the import of vector assets in .SVG format, whereas common .EPS and .PDF files are restricted. We'll later guide you through on incorporating PDF files seamlessly into the documents you create in Canva.

Vector assets should be first converted to .SVG format—use Adobe Illustrator or ask the designer for .SVG files. Now you can upload these assets into Canva's Brand Kit to incorporate them into your document content.

Brand Kit - Brand colors

In the creation of print originals, precise color management is crucial for generating accurate CMYK color shades in print-ready PDFs. Canva's document editor palette doesn't support the creation of CMYK shades; instead, shades are created in RGB as HEX values for display purposes. Even if the initial HEX value is derived from the correct CMYK shade, the color won't maintain accuracy when Canva generates the PDF.

However, when creating colors in Brand Kit, CMYK values can be specified, allowing Canva to produce a PDF where CMYK shades retain their intended values. To generate the HEX value for a brand color from the CMYK value, online 'CMYK to HEX' converters can be used. Canva uses the HEX shade of the brand color for on-screen display during document creation, but in a correctly configured PDF, the colors are realized in the specified CMYK shades.
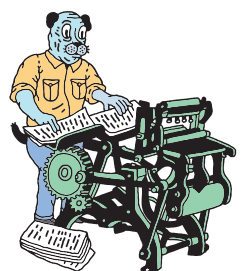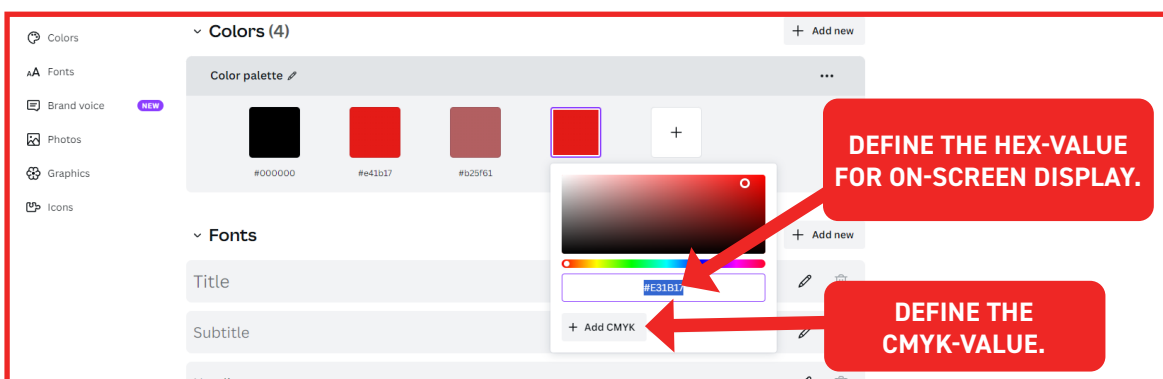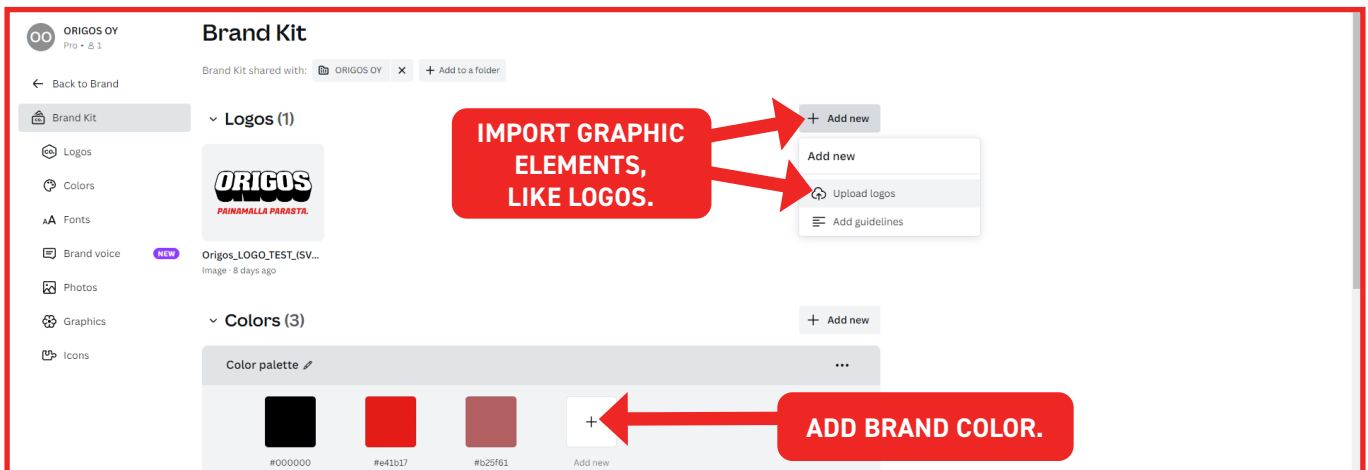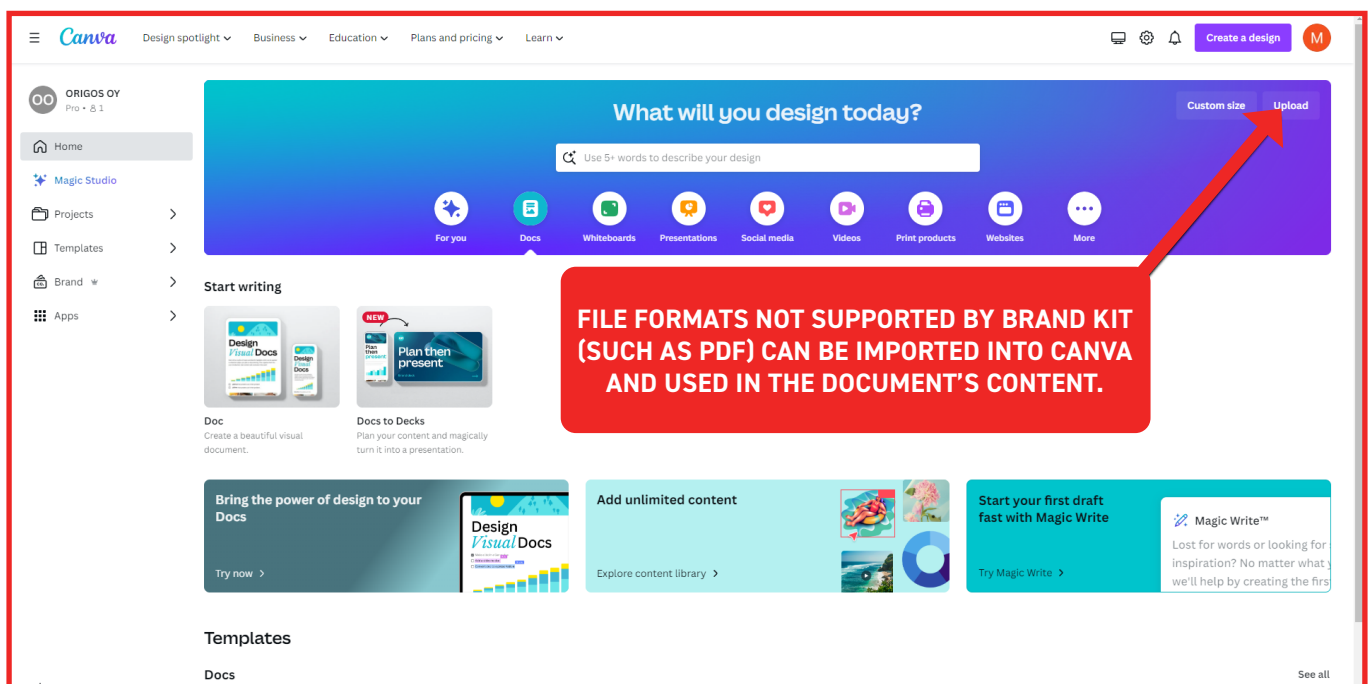
MATERIALS TO BE IMPORTED AS AN PROJECT

When creating a document, it is often necessary to utilize elements from existing PDF files as part of the new document's content. Although Brand Kit doesn't allow the import of PDF files, PDFs can still be used in Canva as projects.
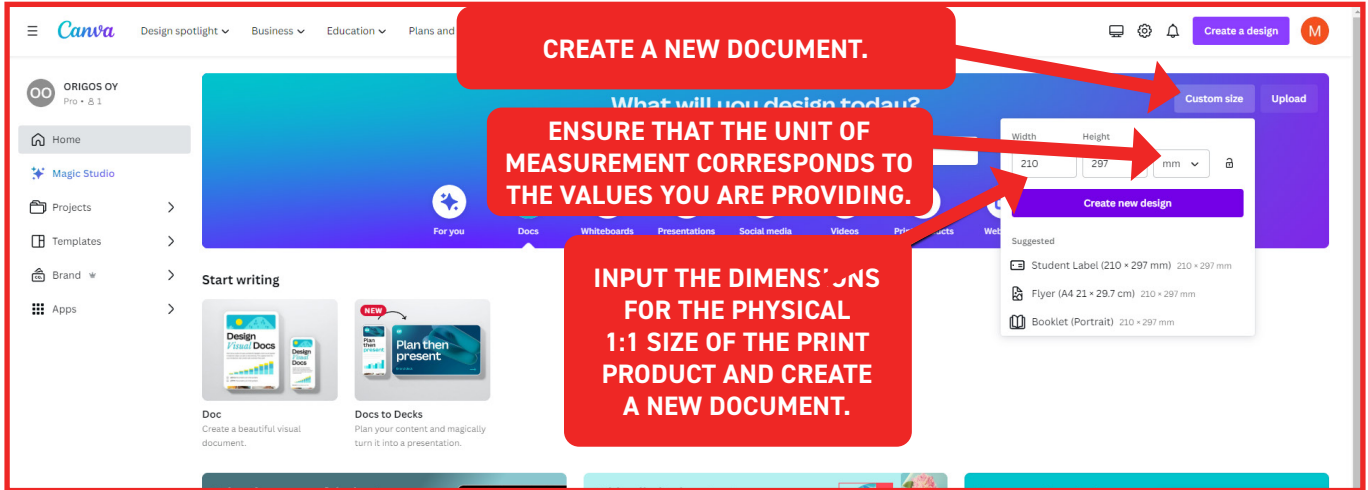
When using PDF files, it is important to note that the preservation of the PDF's original CMYK color values is not guaranteed as it goes through Canva's processes. Ensuring that the imported PDF file has the "Coated Fogra39" color profile embedded helps maintain the PDF's CMYK values approximately correct. However, one crucial shade, 100% black (100K), undergoes a change during Canva's processing.

When using PDF documents as part of the content in a created document, it is advisable to accept a certain degree of flexibility regarding colors.

FILE FORMATS NOT SUPPORTED BY BRAND KIT (SUCH AS PDF) CAN BE IMPORTED INTO CANVA AND USED IN THE DOCUMENT'S CONTENT.

DOCUMENT CREATION

A new document is seamlessly created through the main page.

CREATE A NEW DOCUMENT.

ENSURE THAT THE UNIT OF MEASUREMENT CORRESPONDS TO THE VALUES YOU ARE PROVIDING.

INPUT THE DIMENSIONS FOR THE PHYSICAL 1:1 SIZE OF THE PRINT PRODUCT AND CREATE A NEW DOCUMENT.
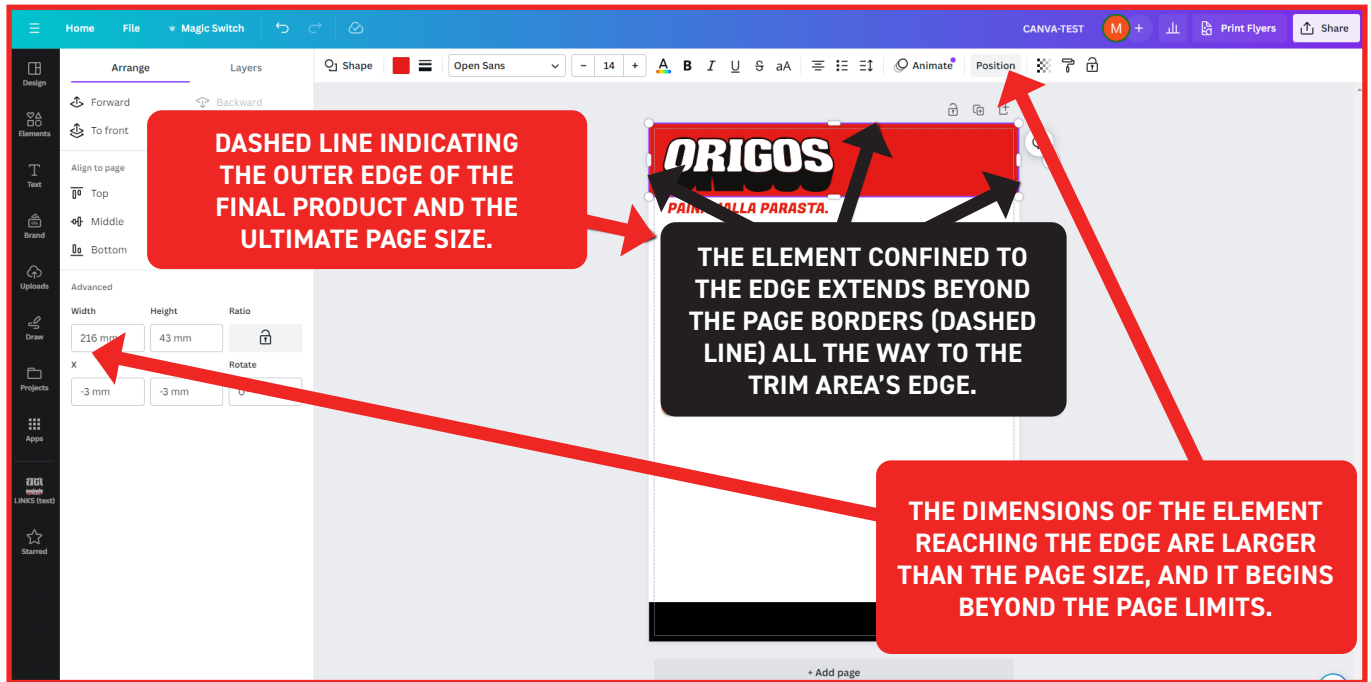
Bleed area

When creating print original, it is crucial to set up the bleed correctly. Properly created bleed consists of three steps:
- Activating the bleed area outside the document page.
- Considering the bleed when creating content.
- Activating the correct settings when generating PDF material.

ACTIVATE THE DOCUMENT'S BLEED AREA.
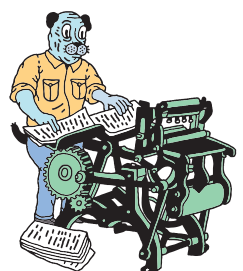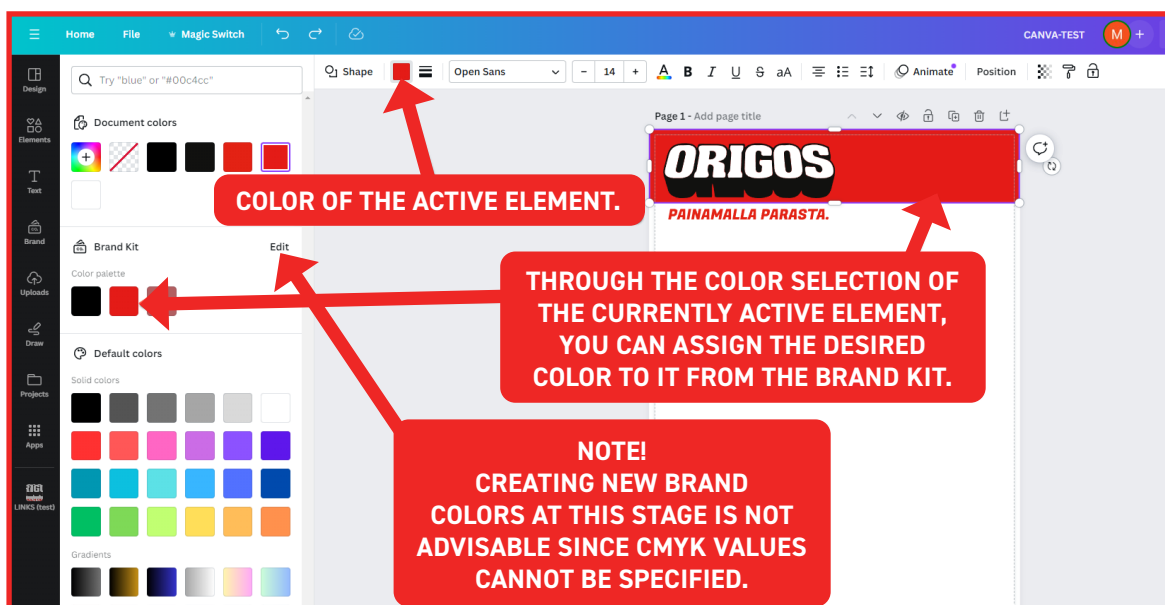
Taking bleed into account within the content.

Elements and images that extend to the edges of the final product's page are extended beyond the page borders, reaching the edges of the bleed area. It's also essential to note that elements not extending to the edge of the page should be kept at least 3 mm away from the page's edge to account for cutting tolerances..

DASHED LINE INDICATING THE OUTER EDGE OF THE FINAL PRODUCT AND THE ULTIMATE PAGE SIZE.

THE ELEMENT CONFINED TO THE EDGE EXTENDS BEYOND THE PAGE BORDERS (DASHED LINE) ALL THE WAY TO THE TRIM AREA'S EDGE.

THE DIMENSIONS OF THE ELEMENT REACHING THE EDGE ARE LARGER THAN THE PAGE SIZE, AND IT BEGINS BEYOND THE PAGE LIMITS.
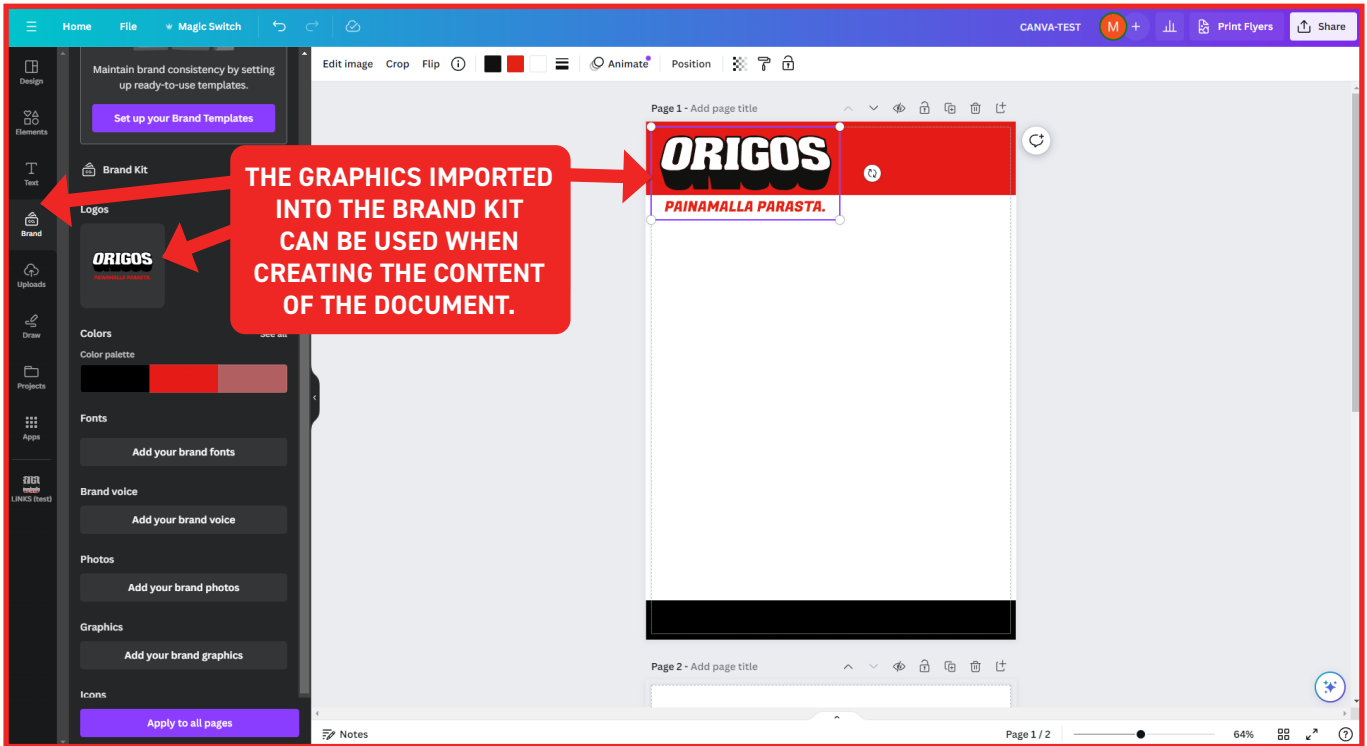
CMYK shades in the document

Pre-established brand colors with assigned CMYK values are available when defining colors for document elements.

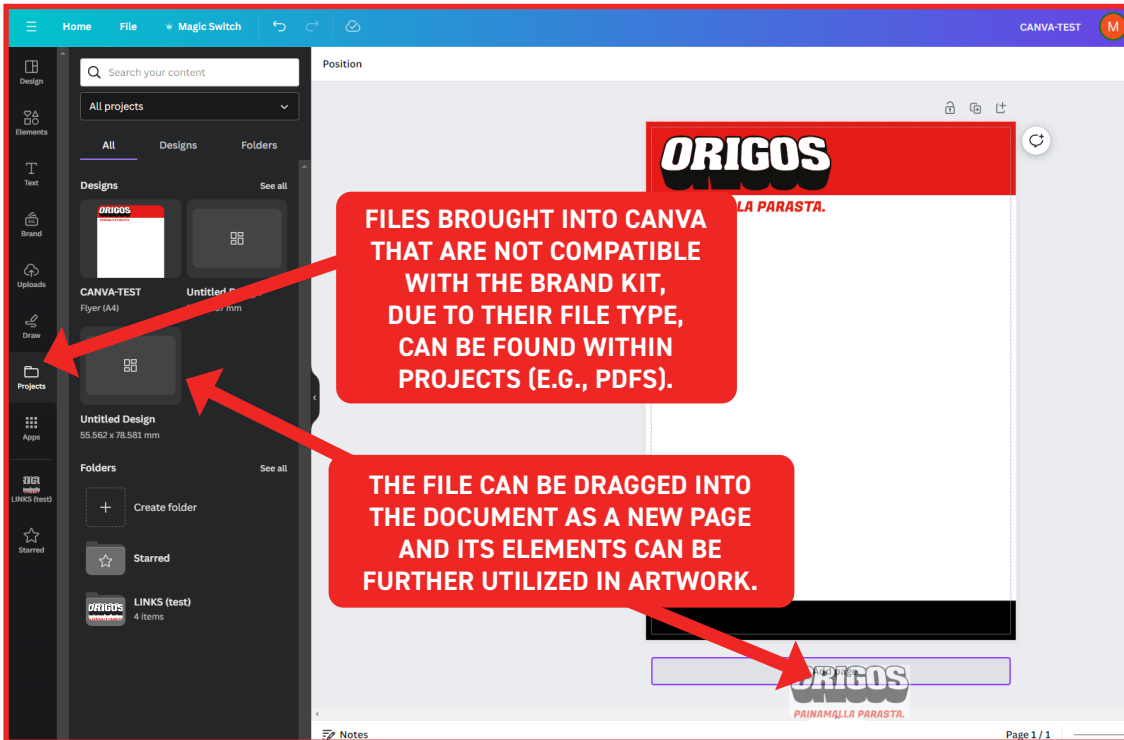Colors can also be roughly created within the document's color palette, but specific CMYK values cannot be used in that case, leaving the color formation at the mercy of Canva.

COLOR OF THE ACTIVE ELEMENT.

THROUGH THE COLOR SELECTION OF THE CURRENTLY ACTIVE ELEMENT, YOU CAN ASSIGN THE DESIRED COLOR TO IT FROM THE BRAND KIT.

NOTE!
CREATING NEW BRAND COLORS AT THIS STAGE IS NOT ADVISABLE SINCE CMYK VALUES CANNOT BE SPECIFIED.

Using imported graphics in Canva document - Brand Kit

THE GRAPHICS IMPORTED INTO THE BRAND KIT CAN BE USED WHEN CREATING THE CONTENT OF THE DOCUMENT.

Using imported files in Canva document - Projects

FILES BROUGHT INTO CANVA THAT ARE NOT COMPATIBLE WITH THE BRAND KIT, DUE TO THEIR FILE TYPE, CAN BE FOUND WITHIN PROJECTS (E.G., PDFS).

THE FILE CAN BE DRAGGED INTO THE DOCUMENT AS A NEW PAGE AND ITS ELEMENTS CAN BE FURTHER UTILIZED IN ARTWORK.
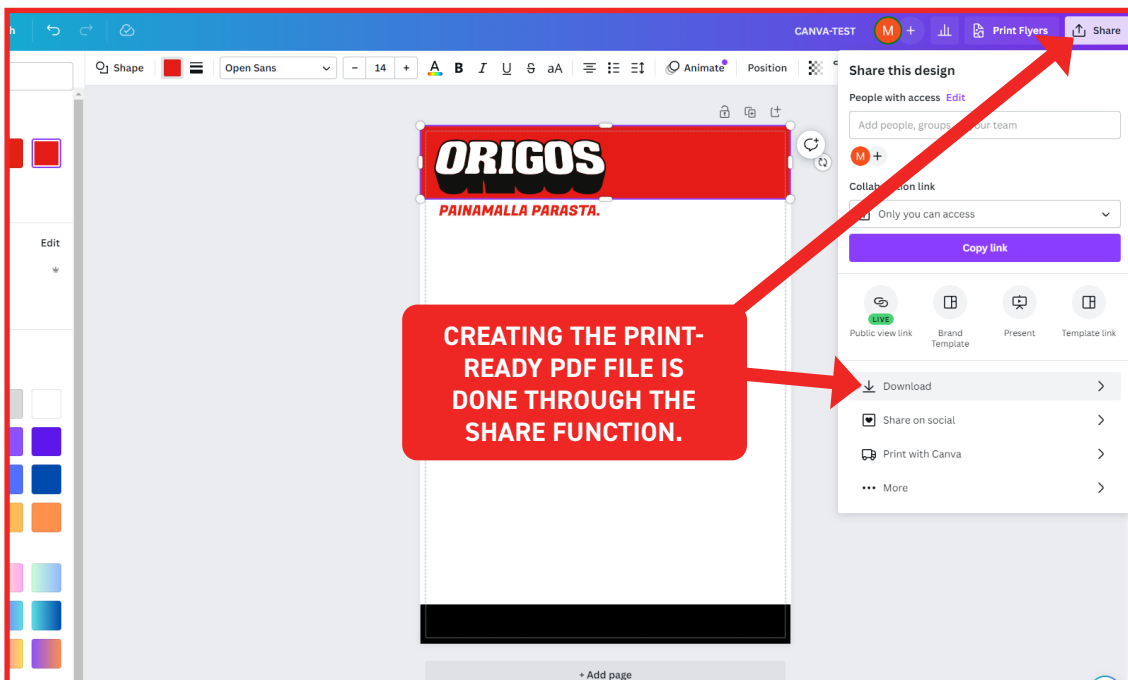
Colors of imported graphics in the document

The color shades present in a vector element imported into Canva can be replaced with the shades created in Canva's Brand Kit. This becomes necessary, for example, when dealing with PDF files imported into Canva as a project, as Canva may not be able to preserve the original CMYK colors. In .SVG files brought in through Brand Kit, CMYK colors are retained, eliminating the need for redefining shades.
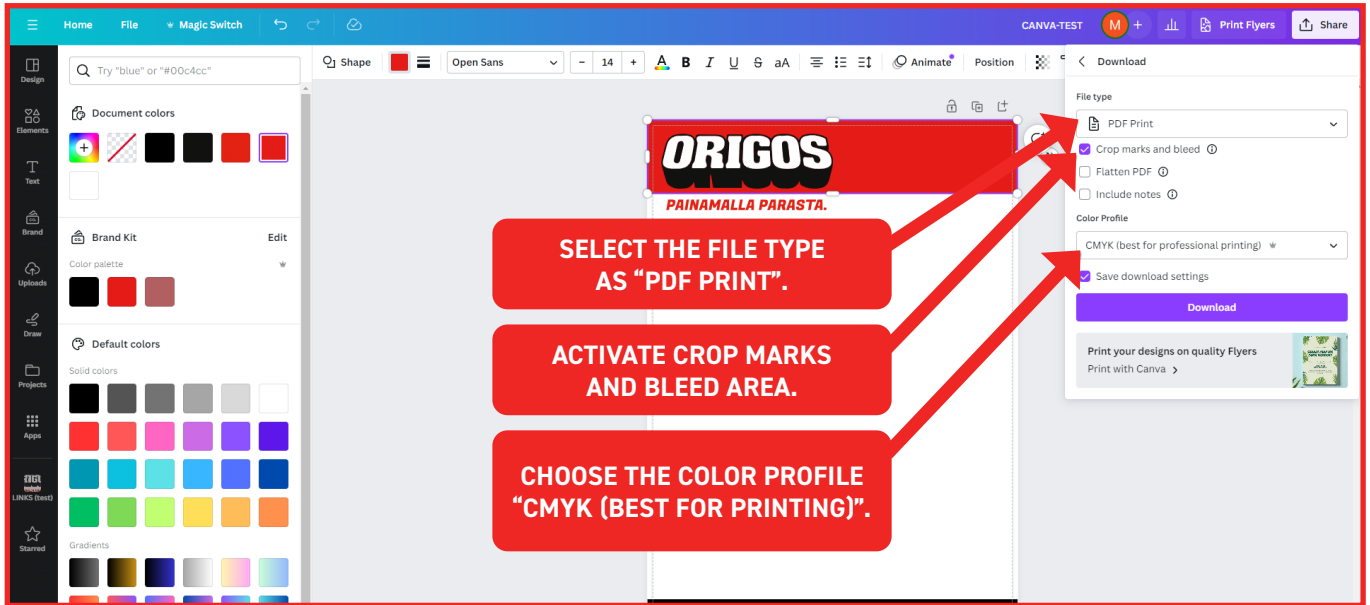

COLORS OF THE SELECTED VECTOR ELEMENT CAN BE CHANGED THROUGH COLOR SELECTIONS BY REPLACING THEM WITH BRAND KIT COLORS.

DOWNLOADING THE PRINT-READY PDF FILE.

CREATING THE PRINT-READY PDF FILE IS DONE THROUGH THE SHARE FUNCTION.
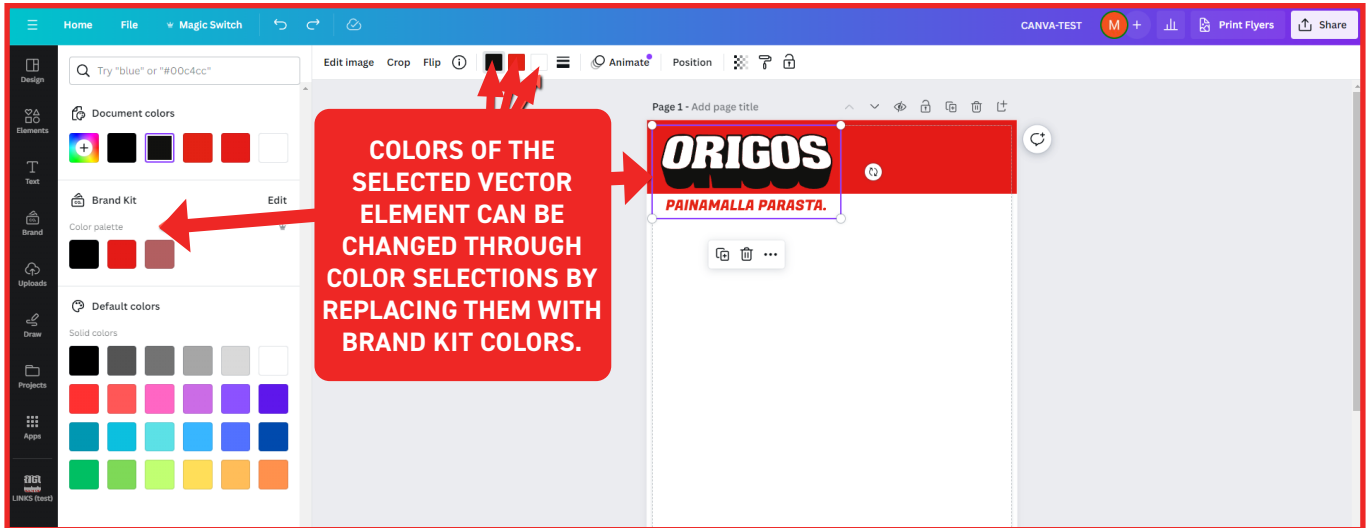
Downloading the print-ready PDF file - Settings

PDF settings play a crucial role in creating printable PDF original. Together with correctly defined colors in the document and properly constructed bleed areas, the settings ultimately determine the proper generation of the PDF file.

SELECT THE FILE TYPE AS "PDF PRINT".

ACTIVATE CROP MARKS AND BLEED AREA.

CHOOSE THE COLOR PROFILE "CMYK (BEST FOR PRINTING)".

GENERAL FILE REQUIREMENTS

Carefully review our general file requirements available on our website. With properly prepared material and a correctly configured PDF, you can directly place an order for your print product, saving time and costs.
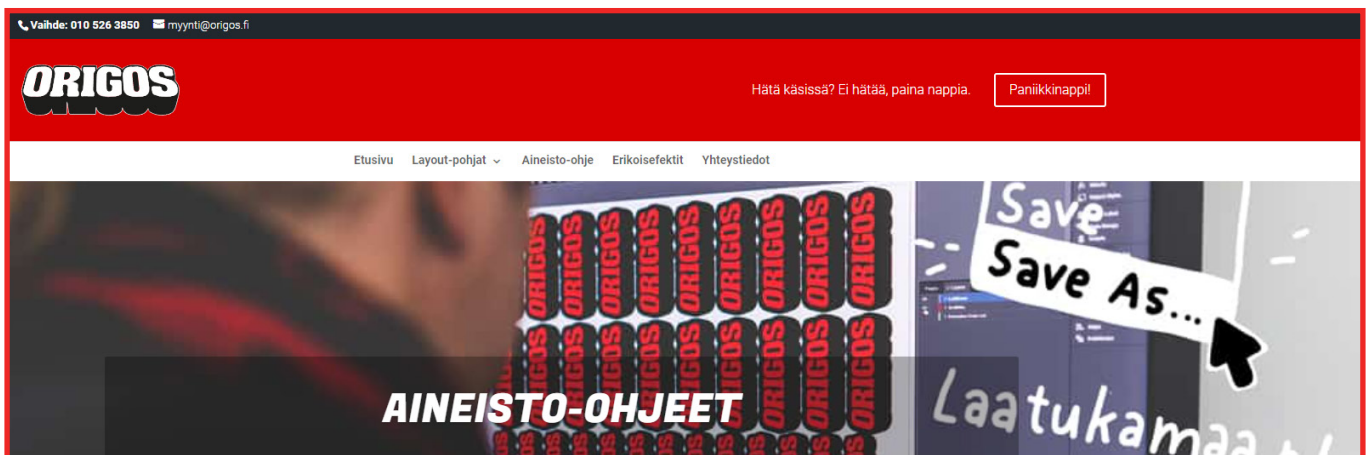
DISCLAIMER

In November 2023, Origos Oy, in collaboration with Canva experts, examined the functionality of Canva's processes from the perspective of creating print materials. The information presented in this guide is based on Canva's functionality at the time of the study and the examples used. If Canva alters the application's functionality or different source materials are used, the results may vary.