



WHAT IS A DIELINE?

HOW TO CREATE ONE, EVEN WITH A CUSTOM SHAPE.

A dieline is a critical element in the finished label's design file. It states the exact size and shape of your final label when printed. It can be any shape or size for a custom label.

In its simplest form, a dieline is a shape with at least a 0.5 pt stroke in a spot color that is not used anywhere else in your file and on its own layer.

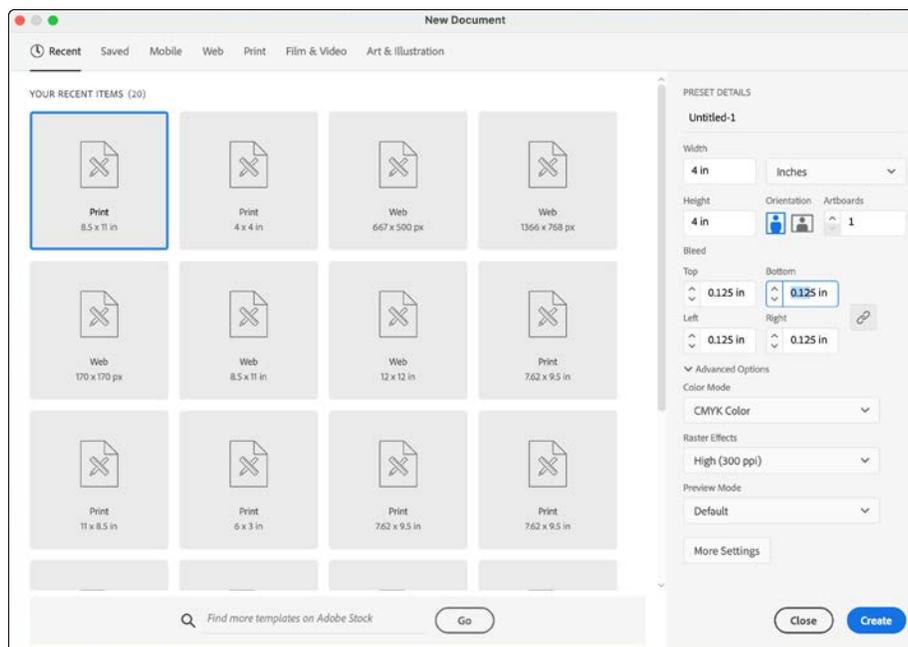
Even the most straightforward label shape (rectangle, square, etc.) needs a dieline to be produced correctly.

Therefore, before creating your label art, you must ensure your document, including a dieline, is set up correctly.

For example, if the label's finished (or trim) size is 4" x 4", this is how to set up your file.

For this example, we are using Adobe Illustrator, the preferred program.

- 1. Create a new **Document**.
- 2. Set **Artboard** Width to 4 in and Height to 4 in.
- 3. Set **Bleed** to .125 in. on all sides, **Top, Bottom, Left, and Right**.
- 4. Under **Advanced Options**, set **Color Mode** to **CMYK Color** - this is VERY important.
 - ❖ Any other color profile will result in unexpected color shifts when converted to CMYK and printed.

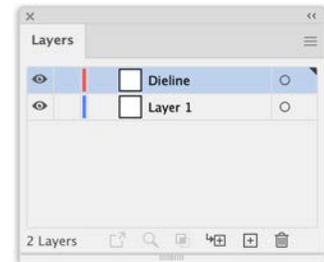


CREATING THE DIELINE

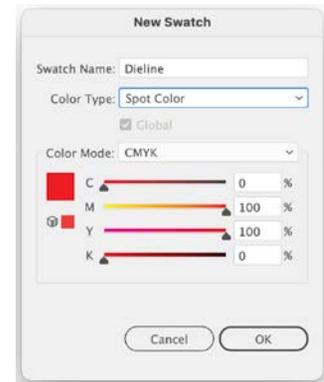
Now that you have the file size (artboard) and bleed set up, you can create the dieline. There are a few steps you need to do before creating the shape and using the same 4" x 4" trim size (also the same size as your artboard as assigned above).

- ❑ 1. Create a new **Layer**.
 - For more information on how to create, use and edit layers visit <https://helpx.adobe.com/illustrator/how-to/ai-layers-basics.html>

- ❑ 2. Name your new layer **Dieline**
 - ❖ It should always be the top layer, especially if you have an unusual shape.
 - ❖ There shouldn't be any other art or text on this layer.



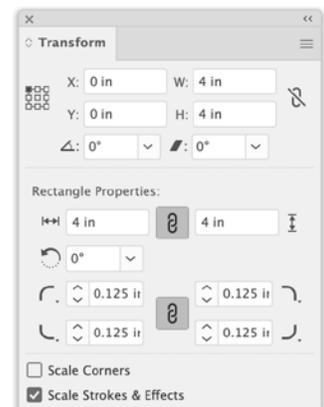
- ❑ 3. Create a new spot color named **Dieline**:
 - Cyan - 0
 - Magenta - 100
 - Yellow - 100
 - Black - 0
 - ❖ Do not convert to CMYK
 - ❖ Do not use this color in any other part of your file. It is only for the dieline.



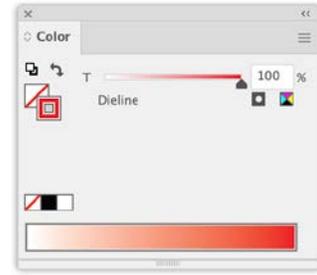
- For more information on how to create a new color, visit <https://helpx.adobe.com/illustrator/using/using-creating-swatches.html>

- ❑ 4. Using the **Rectangle Tool**, create a 4" x 4" square.
- ❑ 5. In the **Transform Panel**, make sure your new 4" x 4" square fits exactly centered in the artboard.

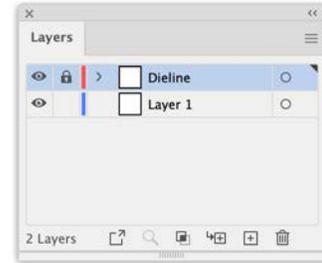
- ❑ 6. In the **Transform Panel**, you can set your corner radius measurement. This is another crucial step.
 - ❖ For existing dies, our standard die corner radius is .125", if you need a different radius a new die will be ordered.



- ❑ 7. With your new dieline shape still selected.
 - ❑ In the **Color Panel**
 - ❑ **Fill** is specified to **None**
 - ❑ **Stroke** is specified to **Dieline**
 - ❖ Again, make sure you don't use this color in the rest of your file.



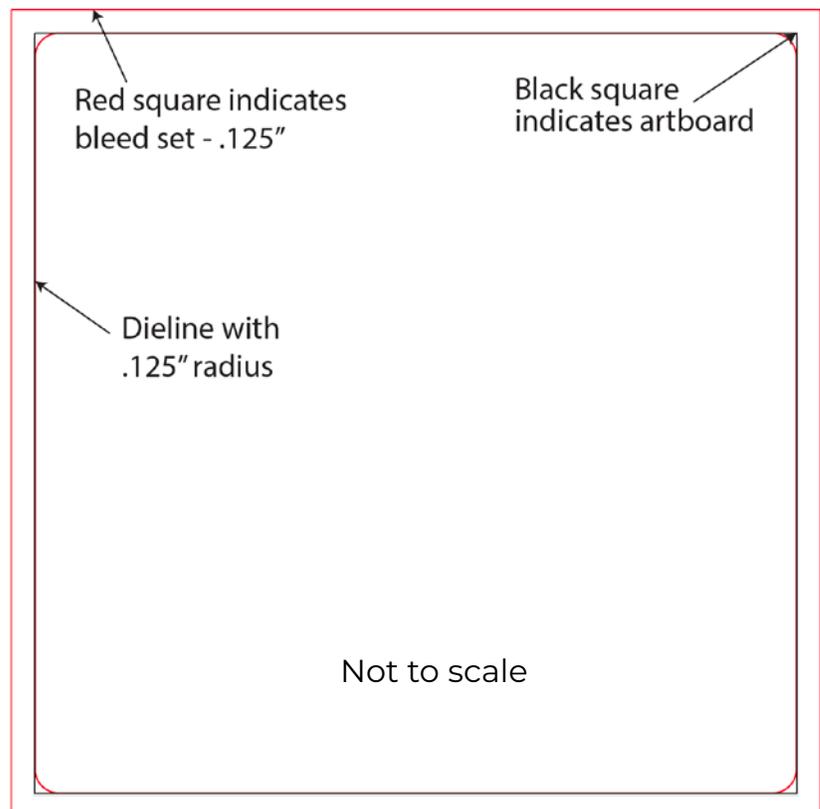
- ❑ 8. Lock the **Dieline** Layer.
 - ❖ Locking the layer avoids creating art on the wrong layer when you start designing.
 - ❖ Again, you don't want any other art on this layer.



This is what your new file should look like with a dieline and bleed when your guides are showing.

Now you can begin the design process.

- ❖ Keep any text, important content, or anything not intended to bleed .125" inside the final trim size.

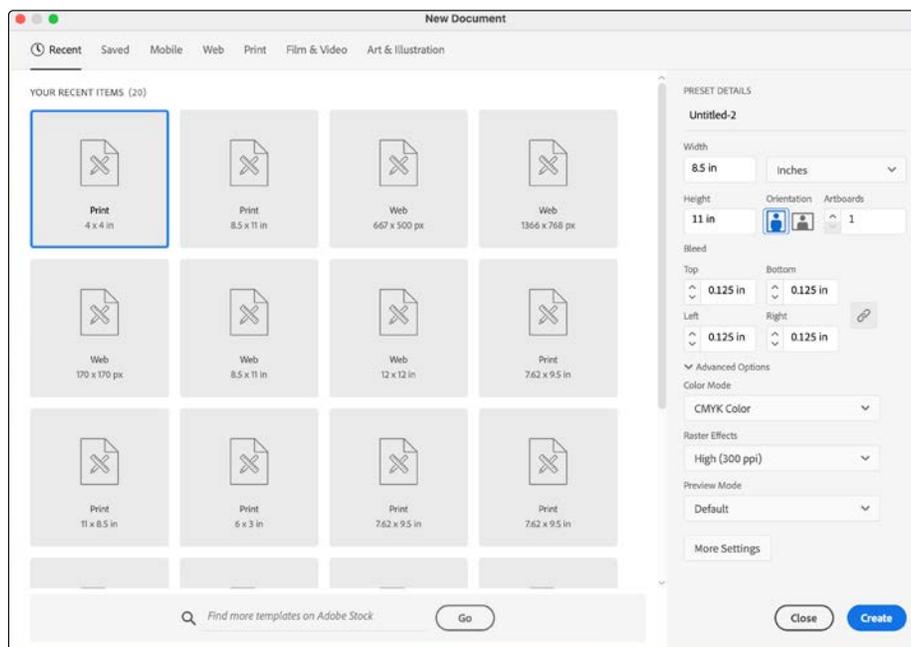


CREATING A CUSTOM SHAPED DIELINE

If your label needs to be die cut in a custom shape, the process is similar, with a few exceptions.

For this example, we are using Adobe Illustrator, the preferred program.

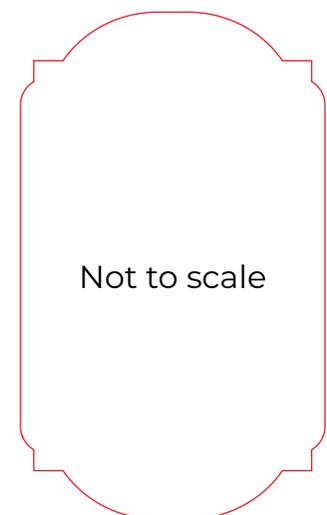
- ❑ 1. Create a new **Document**.
- ❑ 2. Set **Artboard** Width to 8.5 in and Height to 11 in., unless you know the size of your custom shape. If you know the size, set it to that. We will change the size of the artboard later.
- ❑ 3. Set **Bleed** to .125 in. on all sides, **Top**, **Bottom**, **Left**, and **Right**.
- ❑ 4. Under **Advanced Options**, set **Color Mode** to **CMYK Color** - this is VERY important.
 - ❖ Any other color profile will result in unexpected color shifts when converted to CMYK and printed.



THE CUSTOM SHAPE DIELINE

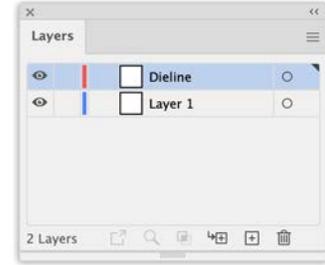
Now that you have a new document created, you will need to create your shape or dieline. The size and shape are up to you and your needs for the label.

In this example, we will use this shape that we created.

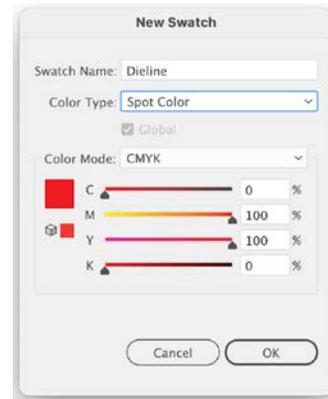


- ❑ 1. Create a new **Layer**.
 - For more information on how to create, use and edit layers visit <https://helpx.adobe.com/illustrator/how-to/ai-layers-basics.html>

- ❑ 2. Name your new layer **Dieline**
 - ❖ It should always be the top layer, especially if you have an unusual shape.
 - ❖ There shouldn't be any other art or text on this layer.



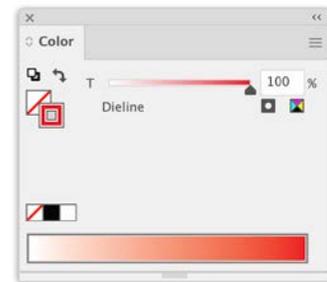
- ❑ 3. Create a new spot color named **Dieline**:
 - Cyan - 0
 - Magenta - 100
 - Yellow - 100
 - Black - 0
 - ❖ Do not convert to CMYK
 - ❖ Do not use this color in any other part of your file. It is only for the dieline.



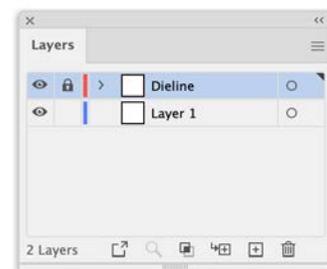
- For more information on how to create a new color, visit <https://helpx.adobe.com/illustrator/using/using-creating-swatches.html>

- ❑ 4. Using your **Pen Tool**, create your dieline shape.
 - For more information on drawing shapes visit <https://helpx.adobe.com/illustrator/how-to/design-draw-shapes.html>

- ❑ 5. With your new dieline shape still selected.
 - ❑ In the **Color Panel**
 - ❑ **Fill** is specified to **None**
 - ❑ **Stroke** is specified to **Dieline**
 - ❖ Again, make sure you don't use this color in the rest of your file.

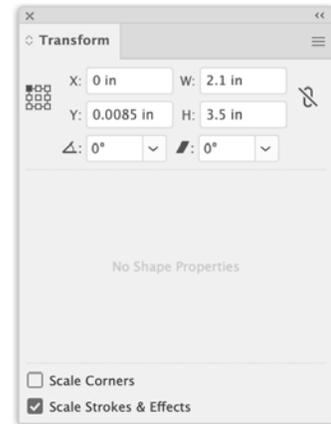


- ❑ 6. Lock the **Dieline** Layer.
 - ❖ Locking the layer avoids creating art on the wrong layer when you start designing.
 - ❖ Again, you don't want any other art on this layer.



Once your dieline is created, you will need to know the shape or finished dieline size.

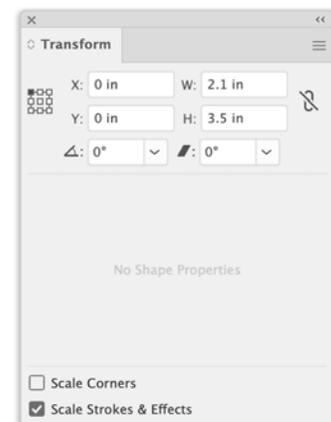
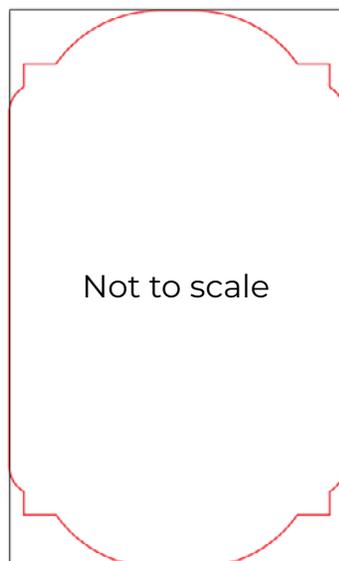
- ❑ 1. Selecting the whole shape - the dieline size is 2.1 in x 3.5 in.



- ❑ 2. Change the artboard to reflect that size.
 - ❑ Open the **Artboard Options** dialog box.
 - ❑ Double-click the **Artboard** tool.
 - ❑ Change the size of the artboard to 2.1 in x 3.5 in.



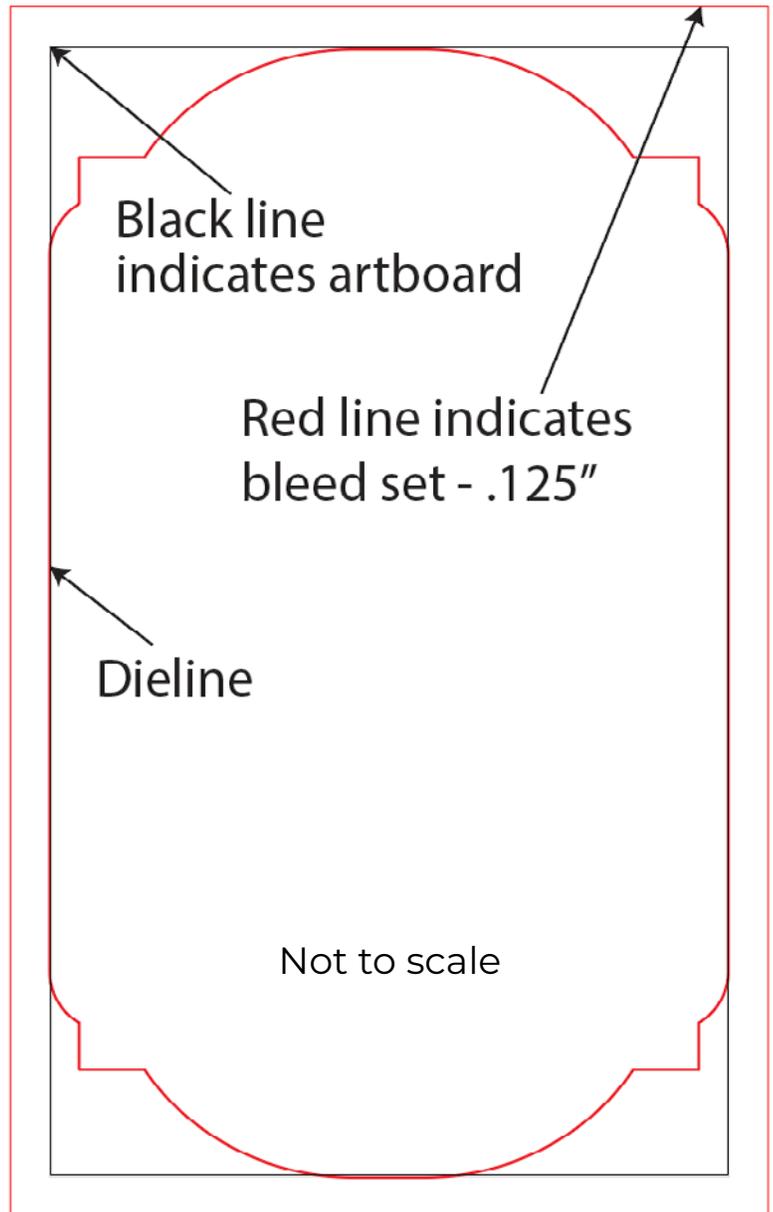
- ❑ 3. In the **Transform Panel**, make sure your dieline shape fits exactly centered in the artboard.



This is what your new file should look like with a dieline and bleed when your guides are showing.

Now you can begin the design process.

- ❖ Keep any text, important content, or anything not intended to bleed .125" inside the final trim size.



If you have any questions or need further information, email prepress@rppsplash.com or visit rppsplash.com