Preparing your file for Digital Printing

The first step to the best digital prints possible is to prepare your files according to the following guidelines.

GUIDELINES
1. Preferred file types for print: JPEG or TIFF
2. Files should have an overall pixel-based width and height that allows for 150–300 dots per inch (dpi) print resolution at your selected print size
3. File should be 8-bit colour, Adobe RGB 1998 colourspace
4. File size should not exceed 1GB (~1000MB)
5. Digital files should be brought in on CD, DVD, USB key only – we do not accept files by email or on camera cards

1. FILE TYPES
The preferred file types for digital canvas printing are:
JPEG (.jpeg, .jpg)
TIFF (.tif, .tiff)

Most digital cameras will allow you to set the type and quality of your final output. If you know your image is destined for print, you should always use the highest possible quality available from your device. Many cameras will allow you to save right to JPEG or TIFF.

Q: **How do I know what kind of file my image is?**
A: On a Mac, CMD+click (or right-click) the image file and select "Get Info", then look for the "Dimensions" information. On a PC, right-click your image file and select "properties" and look for the width by height pixel display (e.g. 500×750)

Q: **How can I change the file type?**
A: Once your file has been written, scanned, saved, etc., the only way to change its type is through image editing software (do not try to change it by renaming the file extension).

If you are working primarily with camera generated images you should be able to specify the output type for your images in you camera's settings. Most will capture to JPEG or TIFF.

2. IMAGE DIMENSIONS
Digital images are measured in "pixels" (which derives from "picture elements"), also known simply as "dots." Acceptable quality prints generally require a resolution of 150 to 300 dpi (dots per inch). The best way to ensure this is to know the overall pixel dimensions of your file.
e.g. If you want a 300 dpi print and your digital image is 2400 pixels wide by 1600 pixels high (2400×1600), you must divide the width and height by the resolution to find the print dimensions in inches (2400÷300=8 inches wide, by 1600÷300=5⅓ inches high).

Please remember that you are responsible for determining that your print ratio of width to height is the same as your digital image (if not, some part of it will be cropped).

Q: **How do I know the pixel dimensions of my image?**
A: Exactly the same way you find the file type: right-click and select "Properties" on a PC, or CMD+click and select "Get Info" on a Mac. This will give the dimensions to you in width by height, e.g. "2400×1600" If you are primarily working with a camera, your image quality settings should tell you what overall pixel dimensions you are shooting at.

3. FILE COLOUR SETTINGS
Unfortunately, you may not be able to control this without access to an image editor. For the most part, if your camera is producing JPEG or TIFF images, you can be confident that they are being encoded in RGB. You should check your camera manufacturer's documentation if you want to be sure, or open up your image in an editor like Photoshop.

4. FILE SIZE
We cannot accept files that are over 1GB (gigabyte, or about 1000 MB) in size. This should not be a problem unless you are printing exceptionally large format prints. Please call us if you have any concerns about the size of your file.

5. MEDIA
We accept files on CD, DVD, USB Key, and Flash Drives only. We will not accept camera cards and cannot receive email with attachments.

FINAL THOUGHTS
If print quality is very important to you, consider learning how to use an image editor like Photoshop so you can have exact control over resolution and dimensions. Also, try to strive for 300 dpi in your file.

Please don't hesitate to call your preferred Opus Location if you have any questions. We're here to help!