

COVER GUIDE

PREPARING A PDF COVER

burble™

Version 1.6 { 21 May 2025 }

This guide is designed to walk you through the steps to correctly set up your book cover as a pdf in a way that it can be professionally printed.

Canva
See page 5 for creating a cover using Canva

1 SOFTWARE

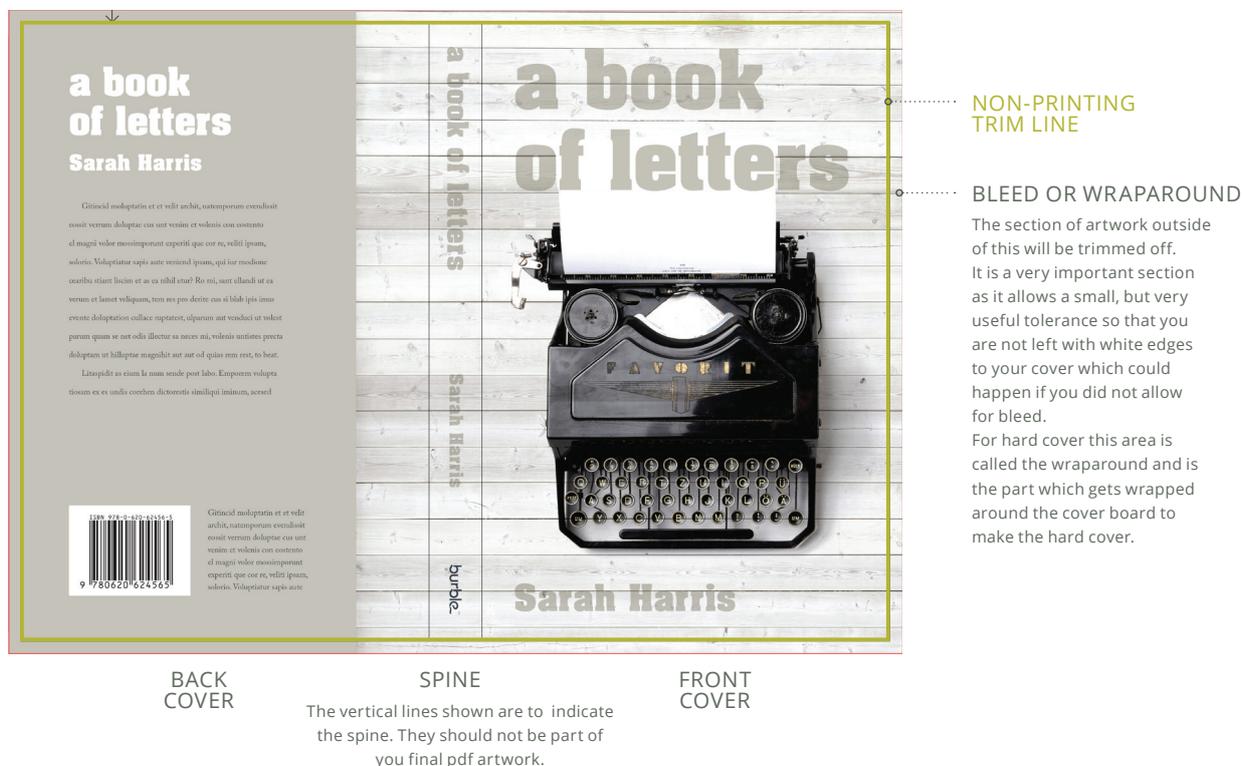
Covers can be designed in our online software – www.burbleonline.co.za

Or you could use Photoshop, Indesign or similar design software. Essentially anything you can create a pdf from. Your final cover PDF should be a single, one page document.

2 DON'T FINALISE COVER ARTWORK UNTIL YOU HAVE YOUR FINAL PAGE COUNT AND SPINE WIDTH.

Non-printing trim line: The area outside this will be cut off and is known as the bleed for soft cover or wraparound for hard cover books. Don't include the trim line in your artwork.

This is a visual to show you the cut lines.



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CALCULATING SPINE SIZE

Spine size increases or decreases depending on number of pages and paper type.

Use our spine calculator to work out your spine width at www.burble.co.za/sewn-books#spineCalc

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SOFT COVER SIZES

Below are measurements for soft cover artwork based on the book size you have chosen

Cover for book size 198 x 130 mm

Width: 5mm (bleed left) + 130mm (back cover) +
?mm (spine – use spine calc) +
130mm (front cover) + 5mm (bleed right)
Height: 5mm (bleed top) + 198mm (cover) + 5mm (bleed bottom)

Cover for book size 210 x 148 mm

Width: 5mm (bleed left) + 148mm (back cover) +
?mm (spine – use spine calc) +
148mm (front cover) + 5mm (bleed right)
Height: 5mm (bleed top) + 210mm (cover) + 5mm (bleed bottom)

Cover for book size 228 x 152 mm

Width: 5mm (bleed left) + 152mm (back cover) +
?mm (spine – use spine calc) +
152mm (front cover) + 5mm (bleed right)
Height: 5mm (bleed top) + 228mm (cover) + 5mm (bleed bottom)

Cover for book size 240 x 170 mm

Width: 5mm (bleed left) + 170mm (back cover) +
?mm (spine – use spine calc) +
170mm (front cover) + 5mm (bleed right)
Height: 5mm (bleed top) + 240mm (cover) + 5mm (bleed bottom)

Cover for book size 250 x 190mm

Width: 5mm (bleed left) + 190mm (back cover) +
?mm (spine – use spine calc) +
190mm (front cover) + 5mm (bleed right)
Height: 5mm (bleed top) + 250mm (cover) + 5mm (bleed bottom)

Cover for book size 297 x 210 mm

Width: 5mm (bleed left) + 210mm (back cover) +
?mm (spine – use spine calc) +
210mm (front cover) + 5mm (bleed right)
Height: 5mm (bleed top) + 297mm (cover) + 5mm (bleed bottom)

Cover for book size 216 x 216 mm

Width: 5mm (bleed left) + 216mm (back cover) +

?mm (spine – use spine calc) +

216mm (front cover) + 5mm (bleed right)

Height: 5mm (bleed top) + 216mm (cover) + 5mm (bleed bottom)

HARD COVER SIZES

Below are measurements for hard cover artwork based on the book size you have chosen

Cover for book size 198 x 130 mm

Width: 19mm (wraparound left) + 136mm (back cover) +

?mm (spine – use spine calc) +

136mm (front cover) + 19mm (wraparound right)

Height: 19mm (wraparound top) + 204mm (cover) + 19mm (wraparound bottom)

Cover for book size 210 x 148 mm

Width: 19mm (wraparound left) + 154mm (back cover) +

?mm (spine – use spine calc) +

154mm (front cover) + 19mm (wraparound right)

Height: 19mm (wraparound top) + 216mm (cover) + 19mm (wraparound bottom)

Cover for book size 228 x 152 mm

Width: 19mm (wraparound left) + 158mm (back cover) +

?mm (spine – use spine calc) +

158mm (front cover) + 19mm (wraparound right)

Height: 19mm (wraparound top) + 234mm (cover) + 19mm (wraparound bottom)

Cover for book size 240 x 170 mm

Width: 19mm (wraparound left) + 176mm (back cover) +

?mm (spine – use spine calc) +

176mm (front cover) + 19mm (wraparound right)

Height: 19mm (wraparound top) + 246mm (cover) + 19mm (wraparound bottom)

Cover for book size 250 x 190mm

Width: 19mm (wraparound left) + 196mm (back cover) +

?mm (spine – use spine calc) +

196mm (front cover) + 19mm (wraparound right)

Height: 19mm (wraparound top) + 256mm (cover) + 19mm (wraparound bottom)

Cover for book size 297 x 210 mm

Width: 19mm (wraparound left) + 216mm (back cover) +

?mm (spine – use spine calc) +

216mm (front cover) + 19mm (wraparound right)

Height: 19mm (wraparound top) + 303mm (cover) + 19mm (wraparound bottom)

Cover for book size 216 x 216 mm

Width: 19mm (wraparound left) + 222mm (back cover) +

?mm (spine – use spine calc) +

222mm (front cover) + 19mm (wraparound right)

Height: 19mm (wraparound top) + 222mm (cover) + 19mm (wraparound bottom)

BURBLE GUIDES PREPARING A PDF COVER

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ISBN**International Standard Book Number**

This is a number that uniquely identifies any published book. We can provide you with an ISBN number or you can use your own ISBN if you already have one.

If you intend selling your book it should include an ISBN number on the back cover and on the copyright page. There is an additional charge for this service of R300 incl VAT if you choose it.

Included in the ISBN fee we will also print and deliver an extra copy of your book to the National Library for their records.

To take advantage of this service you will need to pay for the ISBN number in advance so you can include it in your artwork before you submit it through to us.

Once you have ordered and paid for your ISBN number we will issue you with the ISBN number to include in the book and also the scannable ISBN barcode for the back cover.

6

IMAGE QUALITY AND RESOLUTION

Picture resolution is important, always use high resolution, good quality images. Look out for resolution warnings from our software when uploading your cover artwork.

7

UPLOADING YOUR PRINT READY COVER

We cannot stress the importance of a final proof read before submitting your PDF. Any niggles in the PDF will be niggles in the print.

Once are happy with your book cover pdf it can be uploaded directly to us at

Self publishing - www.burpleonline.co.za/c/180/self-publish

Sewn books - www.burpleonline.co.za/c/657/sewn-books

CANVA COVER GUIDE

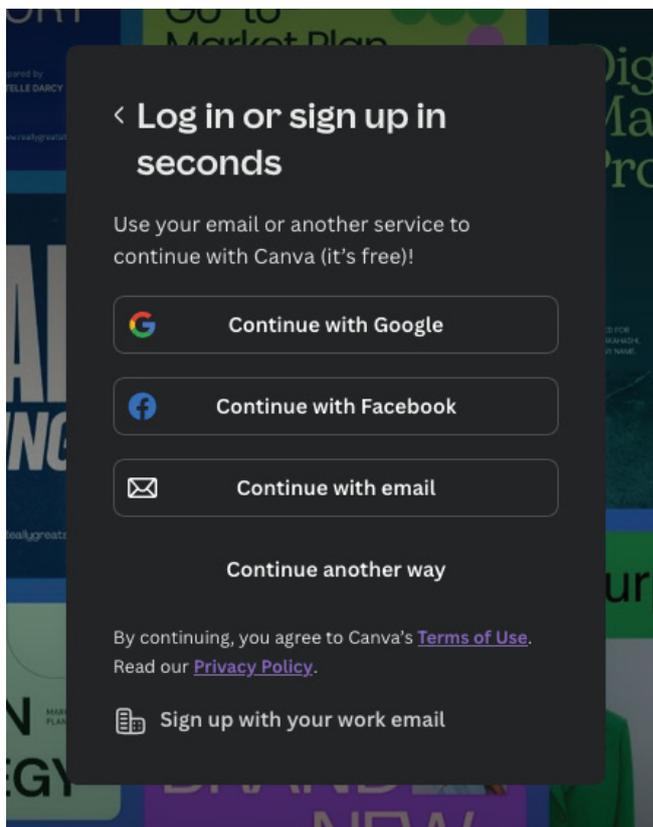
SUMMARY GUIDE.

This guide will walk you through the process of using Canva to design your own full book cover ([Using their free content](#)), making it easy and approachable for anyone to create a professional-looking result.

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CREATE/LOG INTO YOUR ACCOUNT

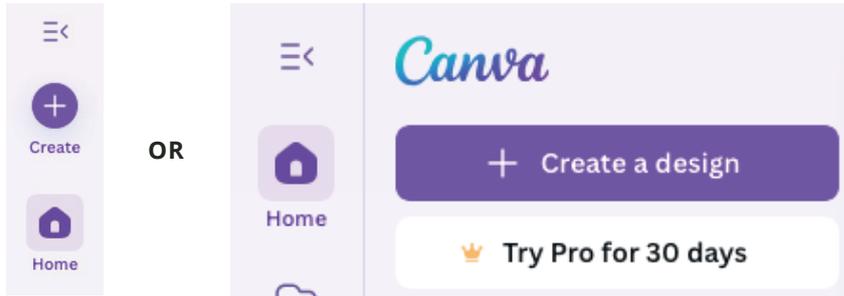
Go to Canva and log in or create a free account.



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CREATE A DESIGN

Click "Create a design" or the "Create" symbol and choose "Custom size".



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CREATE CUSTOM SIZE (SOFT COVER)

Enter your full cover dimensions (millimeters), including front cover, spine, and back cover.
e.g. For a 130 x 198 book with a 6mm spine, use 276 width and 208mm height.

This calculates as follows:

$135\text{mm} (130\text{mm} + 5\text{mm bleed}) \times 2 (\text{Front \& Back Cover}) + 6\text{mm spine} = 276\text{mm} (\text{Width})$

$198\text{mm} + 10\text{mm bleed} (5\text{mm top \& 5mm bottom}) = 208\text{mm} (\text{Height})$

Create a design

For you

Sheets

New

Docs

Whiteboards

Presentations

Social media

Photo editor

New

Videos

Websites

Custom size

◀ Custom size

Upload

More

Custom size

Width

276

Height

208

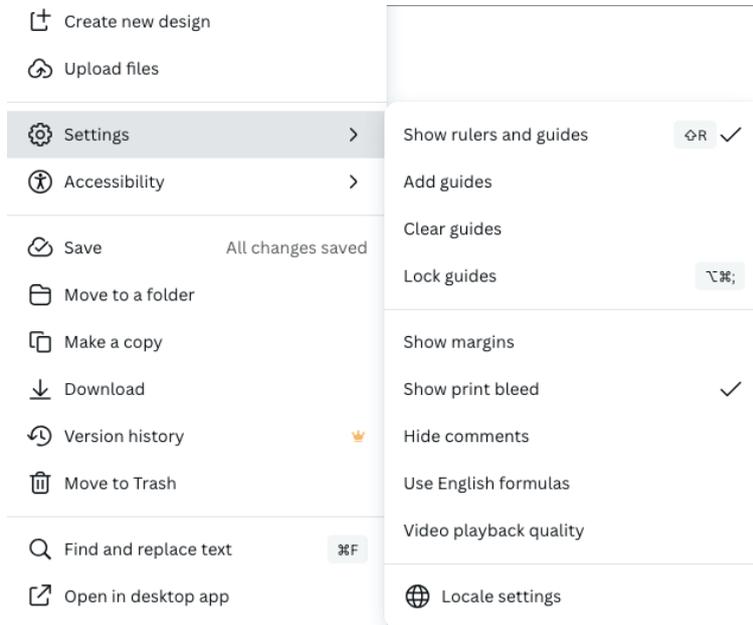
Units

mm



11 ADD GUIDES FOR LAYOUT

Use rulers and guidelines. (under "File" and "Show rulers & guides")
 Also click on show print bleed.



Drag vertical lines to separate the back cover, spine, and front cover.

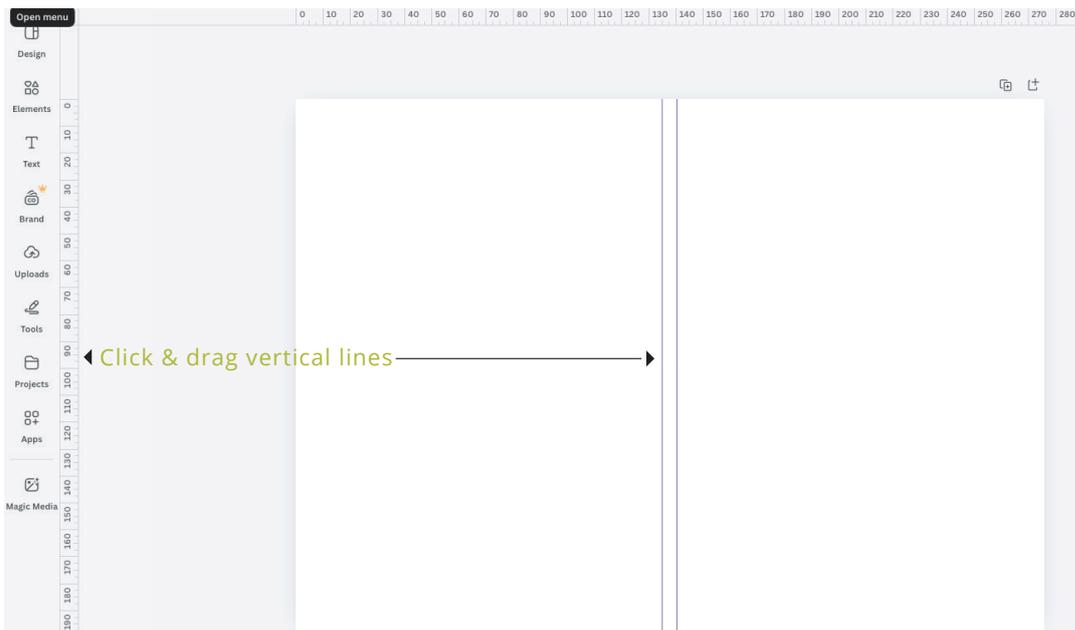
(click and drag the vertical ruler guides to do this. See example of this in the image below)

Example for a 130 x198 book with 6mm spine:

0 mm to 135 mm = Back cover

135 mm to 141 mm = Spine (6 mm in this example)

141 mm to 276 mm = Front cover



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CREATE YOUR COVER DESIGN

Once your canvas is sized correctly, you're working with one large image space that includes all three parts of your cover.

IMAGES/ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Go to the left-hand menu, click "Elements."
2. Still in the Elements tab, scroll down to "Photos" or type a keyword like "mountains," "fantasy background," "cityscape," etc.
3. Click on a photo to add it to your canvas.
4. Right-click it and select "Set image as background" — this makes it fit the full cover space. Or resize it manually to cover the whole canvas.
5. Use Transparency (checkerboard icon on top toolbar) to adjust how strong it appears, or apply filters for a stylized look.

INSERT TEXT

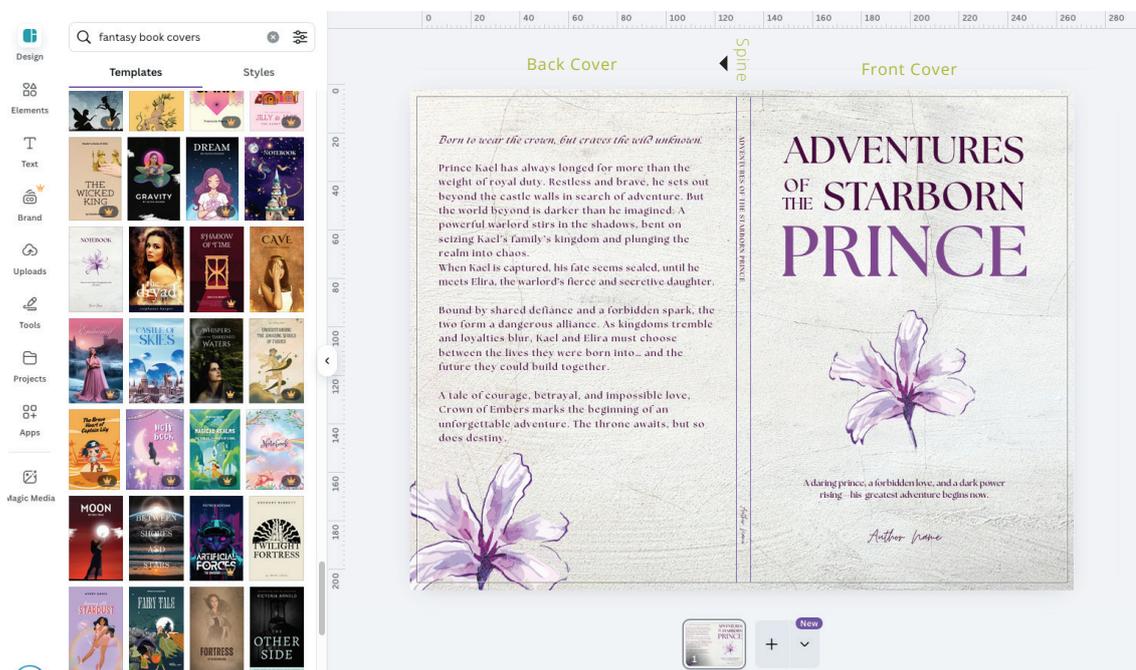
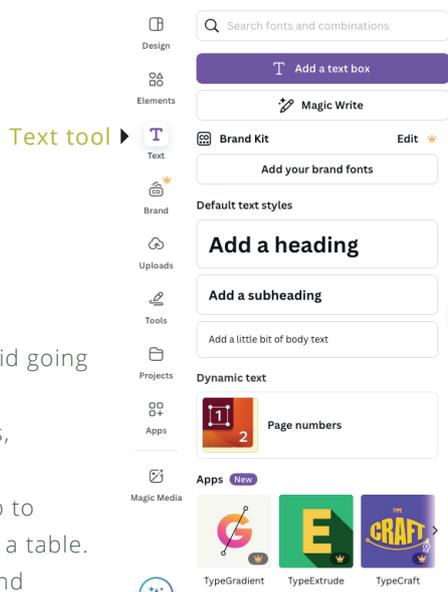
Use the Text tool to add:

- Front: Book Title and Author
- Spine: Title and Author (rotate text vertically)
- Back: Blurb or summary

Choose from free fonts (avoid ones marked "Pro").

DESIGN TIPS

1. Keep text and important elements within safe margins (avoid going too close to edges).
2. Feel free to add extra touches like an author photo, awards, reviews, or your ISBN Number.
3. Spine should be rotated vertically but should read from top to bottom so it does not appear upside down when closed on a table.
4. There is always some variance when it comes to printing, and trimming is not always exact each time. For this reason you should avoid designing a cover with a different colour just on the spine.



13 DOWNLOAD

Once your canvas is sized correctly, you're working with one large image space that includes all three parts of your cover.

1. Click the 'Share' button.
2. Click the Download symbol under 'Copy link'.
3. Click on 'File type'.
4. Choose 'PDF Print' for high-quality file type.
5. Lastly click on the 'Download' button.

You now have a professional looking cover that you can upload to the burble software for print.

1. Share

2. Download

3. File type

4. PDF Print

5. Download