



Shiny Designs

ENCOURAGEMENT & INSPIRATION
FOR THE CREATIVE SOUL

TIPS FOR WORKING WITH DIGITAL COLLAGE SHEETS

Congratulations! You've just downloaded a digital collage sheet and are ready to start creating – now what? To get you going faster, here are a few tips.

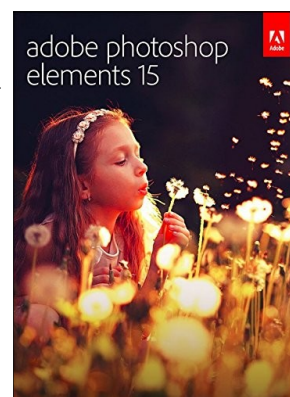
First, if you have a ZIP file, unzip it to access and work with the files. On most PC systems, you can right-click on the zipped file and choose "Extract All..." A dialog box will pop up asking you to choose a destination - choose somewhere easy to find. Then, click "Extract" at the bottom of the box. Once the files are unpacked you can work with them just like your other files.

There's always going to be a difference from your monitor to print. Each monitor is different and printers render colors differently from screens. Monitor screens use Red, Green and Blue (RGB) light and printers use Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black (CMYK) ink. But, the most important thing to the finished quality of your printed image is your printer and paper.

PDF and JPG Files

Your collage sheets and art prints are delivered as PDF and/or JPG files. To view and print PDF files, you'll need the [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) which is freely available for download.

You can resize and print JPG files with image editing software (Photoshop, [Photoshop Elements](#), [Gimp](#), or basic software on your computer). To protect your original image files, work with a copy and keep the original in a safe place. JPG files suffer from loss of quality from multiple re-saves.



[Adobe Photoshop Elements](#)

Choosing Paper

The paper you use makes a difference, but there's really no special paper required. You can use plain card stock and it'll be fine. You can use matte photo paper or other specialty or coated papers for richer colors and a different surface. It's your preference so make a few test prints .

For tags and artist trading cards on [cardstock](#) or uncoated paper, choose a heavier weight – from 65 to 80 lb cover stock – with a high brightness measure. This will give your finished prints a sturdy feel and good color as well as a surface that accepts further embellishments

For digital art prints and other items with a smooth surface and rich saturated color, choose photo paper, either [glossy](#) or [matte](#).

The Printer

Color inkjet photo printers do a wonderful job while most ink-jet printers designed for home office use may not make the best quality images. Make sure to use current drivers, use fresh ink and align the print head according to the instructions.

Test prints are your friends! Try out different papers and printer settings to get the results you want. Don't forget to make notes on what works best so you can reproduce it in the future.

Shiny Designs collage sheets are designed to print on standard size 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper at 300 dpi. Set your printer settings to print exact size and set print quality at the highest setting. Some printers (and software) scale the images to fit the page so check for that as well.



The printer I currently use:
[Canon MG6220 Photo Printer](#)

Printing Services

If you don't have a photo printer, don't give up hope. Inexpensive commercial color printing is another option. Check with your local office superstore or printing service for printing options. Most accept digital files on a drive, via email or online for in-store printing. If the paper they use isn't what you have in mind, ask if you can buy a package of the paper you want.

Online printing services are a good option for art prints, whole sheets and larger sizes, as long as you don't mind waiting for your order.

Finishing and Embellishing



After you've printed your collage sheets, carefully cut out the elements with [paper scissors](#). A smaller pair of scissors are much easier to handle. The best tip ever is to move the paper not the scissor when you're cutting.

After the elements are cut out, run the tip of a [marker](#) (not too dark) around the cut edge to tone it down - especially if you've printed on white card stock. Finally, add any other [embellishments](#) you'd like to finish your papercrafting project.

Visit [Shiny Designs](#) for more information and the latest news and products.

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