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Keeping colors consistent

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About color management in Adobe applications

Adobe color management helps you maintain the appearance of colors as you bring images in from external sources, edit documents and transfer them between Adobe applications, and output your finished compositions. This system is based on conventions developed by the International Color Consortium, a group responsible for standardizing profile formats and procedures so that consistent and accurate color can be achieved throughout a workflow.

By default, color management is turned on in color-managed Adobe applications. If you purchased the Adobe Creative Suite, color settings are synchronized across applications to provide consistent display for RGB and CMYK colors. This means that colors look the same no matter which application you view them in.

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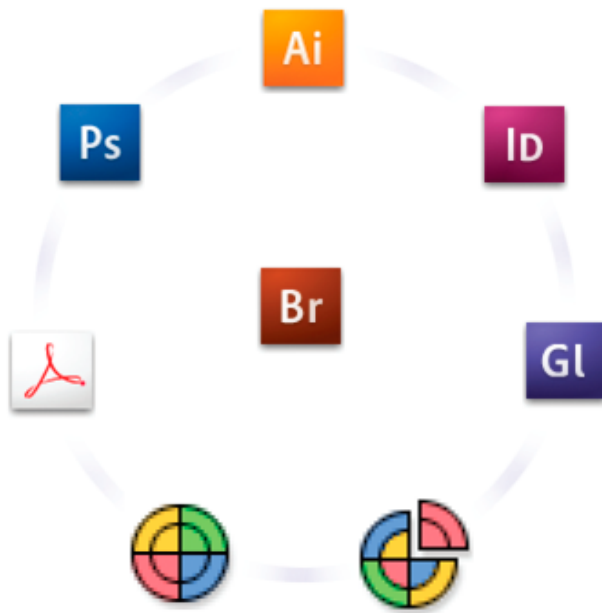
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Applies to: **Photoshop**

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Color settings for Adobe Creative Suite are synchronized in a central location through Adobe Bridge.

If you decide to change the default settings, easy-to-use presets let you configure Adobe color management to match common output conditions. You can also customize color settings to meet the demands of your particular color workflow.

Keep in mind that the kinds of images you work with and your output requirements influence how you use color management. For example, there are different color-consistency issues for an RGB photo printing workflow, a CMYK commercial printing workflow, a mixed RGB/CMYK digital printing workflow, and an Internet publishing workflow.

Basic steps for producing consistent color

1. Consult with your production partners (if you have any) to ensure that all aspects of your color management workflow integrate seamlessly with theirs.

Discuss how the color workflow will be integrated with your workgroups and service providers, how software and hardware will be configured for integration into the color management system, and at what level color management will be implemented. (See [Do you need color management?](#))

2. Calibrate and profile your monitor.

A monitor profile is the first profile you should create. Seeing accurate color is essential if you are making creative decisions involving the color you specify in your document. (See [Calibrate and profile your monitor.](#))

3. Add color profiles to your system for any input and output devices you plan to use, such as scanners and printers.

The color management system uses profiles to know how a device produces color and what the actual colors in a document are. Device profiles are often installed when a device is added to your system. You can also use third-party software and hardware to create more accurate profiles for specific devices and conditions. If your document will be commercially printed, contact your service provider to determine the profile for the printing device or press condition. (See [About color profiles](#) and [Install a color profile.](#))

4. Set up color management in Adobe applications.

The default color settings are sufficient for most users. However, you can change the color settings by doing one of the following:

- If you use multiple Adobe applications, use Adobe® Bridge to choose a standard color management

configuration and synchronize color settings across applications before working with documents. (See [Synchronize color settings across Adobe applications.](#))

- If you use only one Adobe application, or if you want to customize advanced color management options, you can change color settings for a specific application. (See [Set up color management.](#))

5. (Optional) Preview colors using a soft proof.

After you create a document, you can use a soft proof to preview how colors will look when printed or viewed on a specific device. (See [Soft-proof colors.](#))

Note:

A soft proof alone doesn't let you preview how overprinting will look when printed on an offset press. If you work with documents that contain overprinting, turn on Overprint Preview to accurately preview overprints in a soft proof. For Acrobat, the Overprint Preview option is automatically applied.

6. Use color management when printing and saving files.

Keeping the appearance of colors consistent across all of the devices in your workflow is the goal of color management. Leave color management options enabled when printing documents, saving files, and preparing files for online viewing. (See [Printing with color management](#) and [Color-managing documents for online viewing.](#))

Synchronize color settings across Adobe applications

If you use Adobe Creative Suite, you can use Adobe Bridge to

automatically synchronize color settings across applications. This synchronization ensures that colors look the same in all color-managed Adobe applications.

If color settings are not synchronized, a warning message appears at the top of the Color Settings dialog box in each application. Adobe recommends that you synchronize color settings before you work with new or existing documents.

1. Open Bridge.
To open Bridge from a Creative Suite application, choose File > Browse. To open Bridge directly, either choose Adobe Bridge from the Start menu (Windows) or double-click the Adobe Bridge icon (Mac OS).
2. Choose Edit > Creative SuiteColor Settings.
3. Select a color setting from the list, and click Apply.
If none of the default settings meet your requirements, select Show Expanded List Of Color Setting Files to view additional settings. To install a custom settings file, such as a file you received from a print service provider, click Show Saved Color Settings Files.

Set up color management

1. Do one of the following:
 - (Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop) Choose Edit > Color Settings.
 - (Acrobat) Select the Color Management category of the Preferences dialog box.
2. Select a color setting from the Settings menu, and click OK.

The setting you select determines which color working spaces are used by the application, what happens when you open and import files with embedded profiles, and how the color management system converts colors. To

view a description of a setting, select the setting and then position the pointer over the setting name. The description appears at the bottom of the dialog box.

Note:

Acrobat color settings are a subset of those used in InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop.

In certain situations, such as if your service provider supplies you with a custom output profile, you may need to customize specific options in the Color Settings dialog box. However, customizing is recommended for advanced users only.

Note:

If you work with more than one Adobe application, it is highly recommended that you synchronize your color settings across applications. (See Synchronize color settings across Adobe applications.)

Change the appearance of CMYK black (Illustrator, InDesign)

Pure CMYK black (K=100) appears jet black (or rich black) when viewed on-screen, printed to a non-PostScript desktop printer, or exported to an RGB file format. If you prefer to see the difference between pure black and rich black as it will appear when printed on a commercial press, you can change the Appearance Of Black preferences. These preferences do not change the color values in a document.

1. Choose Edit > Preferences > Appearance Of Black (Windows) or [application name] > Preferences > Appearance Of Black (Mac OS).
2. Choose an option for On Screen:
Display All Blacks Accurately Displays pure CMYK

black as dark gray. This setting allows you to see the difference between pure black and rich black.

Display All Blacks As Rich Black Displays pure CMYK black as jet black (RGB=000). This setting makes pure black and rich black appear the same on-screen.

3. Choose an option for Printing/Exporting:

Output All Blacks Accurately When printing to a non-PostScript desktop printer or exporting to an RGB file format, outputs pure CMYK black using the color numbers in the document. This setting allows you to see the difference between pure black and rich black.

Output All Blacks As Rich Black When printing to a non-PostScript desktop printer or exporting to an RGB file format, outputs pure CMYK black as jet black (RGB=000). This setting makes pure black and rich black appear the same.

Managing process and spot colors

When color management is on, any color you apply or create within a color-managed Adobe application automatically uses a color profile that corresponds to the document. If you switch color modes, the color management system uses the appropriate profiles to translate the color to the new color model you choose.

Keep in mind the following guidelines for working with process and spot colors:

- Choose a CMYK working space that matches your CMYK output conditions to ensure that you can accurately define and view process colors.
- Select colors from a color library. Adobe applications come with several standard color libraries, which you can load using the Swatches panel menu.
- (Illustrator, and InDesign) Turn on Overprint Preview to get an accurate and consistent preview of spot colors.

- (Acrobat, Illustrator, and InDesign) Use Lab values (the default) to display predefined spot colors (such as colors from the TOYO, PANTONE, DIC, and HKS libraries) and convert these colors to process colors. Using Lab values provides the greatest accuracy and guarantees the consistent display of colors across Creative Suite applications. If you want the display and output of these colors to match earlier versions of Illustrator or InDesign, use CMYK equivalent values instead. For instructions on switching between Lab values and CMYK values for spot colors, search Illustrator or InDesign Help.

Note:

Color-managing spot colors provides a close approximation of a spot color on your proofing device and monitor. However, it is difficult to exactly reproduce a spot color on a monitor or proofing device because many spot color inks exist outside the gamuts of many of those devices.



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