

Creating a digital dummy

By Anne-Marie Perks

(excerpts that I agree with have been taken from article by Bonnie Adamson- shown in italics)

Please note: For the Dummy Makeover workshop, we have created a digital dropbox which you will be invited to load up your dummies to in July. It is a straightforward process with one very important proviso! **Dropbox does not make a copy of your file, so please remember to save a copy of your dummy to the dropbox so you do not lose your original file!**

Creating the files

Essential to producing your digital dummy are:

- 1) a way to scan sketches and final art (if you work traditionally), to create digital files;*
- 2) a way to add text to image files; and*
- 3) a way to combine the resulting files into a multi-page pdf.*

When scanning or having your images scanned, specify a file format other than jpeg, which compresses the information in the scan and re-compresses with every editing session, resulting in a progressive loss of quality. Bitmap or tiff formats are safer choices. A suggestion: scan and process at print resolution (300 pixels per inch) if possible. It's a good idea to think of this as a print project from the start so that you retain as much information as possible in your native files—including converting color images to CMYK. That way you can use your digital dummy to produce a more polished print dummy if asked.

The easiest way to combine images and text into a multi-page pdf is with layout software such as Adobe InDesign or Adobe Illustrator. (There is also a way with Photoshop which I will cover below.) Set up your document to the dimensions of the finished page size, "Place" scanned images, create text, and save. Once saved, you can export the document as a pdf. Be sure to check "Spreads" in the Export dialog window under Pages so that each panel of the pdf is a spread rather than a single page.

With Adobe Illustrator you will need to use the 'SAVE AS' operation to create a pdf document.

Please note: Both Adobe InDesign and Illustrator 'link' files that you 'Place' into your multipage document. You will need to be sure that you set up a folder first for the name of your book with a folder inside labeled Images. If you keep it all together you won't have any problems later on and it's easier to edit when you need to. InDesign will work with pages and Illustrator with multiple artboards if you have CS 5 and above.

The next easiest method is to set up a spread-sized template in Photoshop and proceed as above, dropping in art and adding text. There are two ways to tackle this:

1. You create a new document for each spread and save as a separate file. (Tedious!) Name each pdf file to reflect the order in which you want the files seen: Dummy 1 for the cover image, Dummy 2 for the title page spread, etc. (There are excellent resources online that explore the many permutations of the standard 32-page picture book format. For dummy purposes, I generally disregard endpapers: page one is the title page, page two is designated for copyright information, and the story spans pages 3-32.) Be sure to have a guide noting where the gutter is! That's the line between two pages that make up the spread. Once you have your spread files saved, you can use a pdf converter such as Adobe Acrobat Pro or one of its less costly clones (google "pdf converter software") to combine the individual pdfs into one multi-page file. Next:

2. (This way really is easier if you can get your head around creating **layer comps!**) A website to help on this - <http://twosixcode.com/notes/view/how-to-use-photoshop->

layer-comps . Or if you prefer to watch a video - go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EQ7l>