Resolution and scanned images

Line art

Line art (Photoshop’s “Bitmap” mode) is defined as art with no tones. It is either black or white or a solid ink color. When line art is tinted (i.e. shaded to 10% gray or built as process tints), it will no longer print as line art.

![300 DPI line art circle](image1)

300 DPI line art circle

![300 DPI line art circle (magnified 500%)](image2)

300 DPI line art circle (magnified 500%)

In theory, line art should be scanned at the same resolution as the target printer. However, for practical purposes, most designers scan line art at 600 DPI.

Continuous tone art

Continuous tone art (grayscale or color) is defined as art with up to 256 levels of tones between black and white. Continuous tone art is represented as halftone dots when it is printed.

![Continuous tone art represented as pixels on screen](image3)

Continuous tone art represented as pixels on screen

![Continuous tone art represented as halftone dots on paper](image4)

Continuous tone art represented as halftone dots on paper

Continuous tone art should be scanned at approximately double (2x) the halftone dot frequency of the final printed piece. The smaller the dot, the better the image will look. Uncoated stock requires larger dots. Art intended to be photocopied reproduce better with coarser dots (i.e. 60 LPI).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Halftone Dots (LPI)</th>
<th>Target Scan (PPI)</th>
<th>Actual Scan (PPI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 (xerox)</td>
<td>2 x 60 = 120</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 (newspaper)</td>
<td>2 x 85 = 170</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 (color laser/kinko’s)</td>
<td>2 x 100 = 200</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133 (magazines)</td>
<td>2 x 133 = 266</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>175 (annual reports)</td>
<td>2 x 175 = 350</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes

- DPI = dots per inch; LPI = lines per inch; PPI = pixels per inch.
- Scale art in the scanner. Scanned art should not be resampled to a larger size (always rescan).
- Over estimate the size you need. You can always resample to a smaller size with no loss of quality.
- When importing scanned art, try to retain the size of the original file. In general, a 20% variance in size will produce acceptable results.
- Art for web pages or CD-ROMs should be scanned at screen resolution (72 PPI).