



By Linda Sattgast

Picture Perfect Gift Books—Printing with Adoramapix

Lesson 01: Prepare Your Book

AdoramaPix is great for high quality lay-flat book bindings and other kinds of prints. The pricing tends to be a little higher than some other book companies, but for a special book, it would be definitely be worth the extra cost.

I created a beautiful 12 x 12 inch heritage album for my mother using AdoramaPix. Their books have thick pages with excellent color, which also makes them highly suitable for children's picture books.

To create a book on AdoramaPix, you'll need an account. Your account is in the upper right corner. If you already have an account, click the Sign In button. If you don't have an account, click the Start Here link for a new customer.

- Once you're logged in, click on Photo Books and choose Photo Books from the menu.
- You'll see a simple schematic showing you the process.
- Hover over an image to get more information—mostly it's just marketing copy to get you excited about starting a book. Click the Get Started Now button to start.

Customize Your Book

- Choose a cover: hard cover, leather lux, genuine leather, fabric, or die-cut.
- Choose your book orientation: square, horizontal, vertical, and panoramic. I chose square.
- Choose your book size. Hover over a size to see an image that helps you visualize the finished size of the book. I chose the 6 x 6 inch book.
- Choose your paper: Luster finish is chosen by default, but you have some other options.
- Next you have a choice of template. "Use Our Design Options" is chosen by default. You may be tempted to choose "Build Your Own," since that's what many of us are doing—creating our own pages and covers—but that choice will be very frustrating, so don't do it! Stick with "Use Our Design Options."

At the bottom you'll see the cost of the book based on 10 pages. These are pages not spreads. For this price you'll get a front and back cover and 5 spreads for a total of 10 pages plus covers. You can add more pages if you wish.

- Click on Choose Your Template.
- Open the Theme Category menu in the upper left corner and choose General.
- Choose Pre-Constructed Pages or Pre-Constructed (Spreads) depending on your kind of book. This theme has empty full bleed image placeholders on the cover and all interior pages. That's what you want!
- Click the Choose This Template button.

Upload Your Images

- If you haven't used AdoramaPix before, you may get an Adobe Flash Player Settings request for storing information on your computer. Click Allow to continue.
- You'll need to either upload images from your computer or choose one of your AdoramaPix galleries, where you've already uploaded images.
- If you click on Upload from computer, you'll get a browse button to browse for your images or you can drag and drop photos into the Project photos section.

Remember that you need to save all your PSD files as JPEGs before you upload them. I put all my PSD files for each book in one folder. Then I create a new folder with the name of the book and add the word "JPEGs." This is where I save all my JPEG copies for the book, making it easy to select them all when it's time to upload them to AdoramaPix.

Be sure to number the images in the order you want them to appear in your book—especially if you want to take advantage of the auto fill function, which is very cool.

Lesson 02: Book Editor Tips

Assemble Your Book Online

Once you've uploaded your photos, AdoramaPix takes you to the next step which is to assemble your book.

- The images you uploaded will appear on the left. You can click the Import button to add more images at any time.
- Tools are above the book editor, but they're mostly useful for people who create their books online.
- The book editor portion is gray and says Drag Image Here. You can certainly do that, but if your images are numbered in the order they should appear, you can use the Auto-Fill function, which is quite fast and easy.
- First, make sure you have the number of pages you need for your book. The minimum number of pages is 10, or 5 spreads, plus the cover. If you need more pages, click on the plus sign on the menu in the lower right corner and add the number of pages you need.
- You'll want the auto-fill to start with the cover, so make sure the cover template is selected by clicking on the cover thumbnail in the row of thumbnails at the bottom.

Adjust The Cover Template

- Before you auto-fill your images, you'll need to adjust the cover template, because the gray area doesn't go all the way to the edge of the cover flaps. There's white around the edges.

If you place your cover image in the template before adjusting it, your image will only fit to the gray area, when it should go all the way to the edge. If you adjust the size before you add the image, it will fit beautifully. If you wait until after you add the image, it's much more of a hassle, and you run the risk of distorting your image.

- To adjust the template, click on the template to get a bounding box. Then click and drag from each side handle to bring the gray part of the template all the way to the edge of the flaps. When you're done, click outside the bounding box to hide it.
- Now click the Auto-Fill button and AdoramaPix will quickly fill the spreads for you.
- You can always change your mind and move pages around later.

Lesson 03: Centering Images

You can think you're centering your images correctly when you use the AdoramaPix PSD cover template to create your cover, but when your book is printed, the images may be off center. This could be due to forgetting to resize the cover, or it may be due to some other reason. Here's a method to check whether your image is centered correctly:

- With your cover selected, click on the Stickers category on the far left. You just need a simple sticker, so rather than searching through all the images, choose a sticker category.
- Click and drag a sticker onto your cover.
- Resize the sticker using a corner handle to maintain proportions. Make it fairly small.
- Click inside the outline and drag it around the middle of the back cover until you see two cross hairs. That will show you where the center is for the back cover. Now you can analyze whether your images are centered well or not.
- Do the same for the front cover.

NOTE: When creating your cover in the first place, make sure you have the correct template for the number of pages you plan to use. The cover is going to increase in size as you add more pages.

Also keep in mind, when you create the cover, that the spine is going to take up some of the space next to it to form the groove of the spine. It's going to take up at least a quarter inch, and maybe a bit more, so I move my images about a quarter to a half inch away from the spine on both the front and back cover before I save it as a JPEG.

This is only a concern to check when you have a spot image or type on a background. If you fill the cover with a photo, you don't really have to worry about that, but these tips will help you to also create books with well centered spot art.

Preview Your Book

- When your book is finished, click the Preview Button in the upper right corner. You'll see the cover and the spine in the image viewer.
- To view additional pages, click on the right or left side of the book to turn the page, or click on a specific thumbnail in the row of thumbnails below the preview images.
- You may notice a WARNING in the upper left corner saying that "you have placed objects within the trim area." All pre-constructed pages include the trim area, so you can ignore this warning—as long as you've been careful to place important information far enough away from the edge.
- When you're done previewing your book, click Return to Edit or click the Order Now button.

Danny Walks credits

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