* Mask files are black and white files that show where to apply special finishes, like varnish and foil.
* They are separate from your colored artwork file, but art files and varnish/foil mask files work together to create your project.
* **Files matching the sheet size and number up of the printed sheet are necessary to obtain the best registration possible.**
* Foil and varnish jobs require mask files with your CMYK artwork.
* One mask file is required showing where varnish will be applied.
* A second mask file is required showing where foil will be applied.
* If multiple colors of foil will be used on the project, one mask file for each foil color is required.
* Any black areas on the varnish or foil mask file(s) should be set to 100% black (K) and the rest of the page should be white. This will ensure the best varnish coverage.
* Mask files should be created from your CMYK file.

1. Start with your art file which should contain all art being printed, varnished and/or foiled on one layer. This file should mimic the sheet size and number up of the printed sheet. Save this as a high resolution pdf file called “Art file”
2. Go back to your CMYK art later and create a duplicate later called “Print”. Remove everything from this layer except what will be printed and save it as a high resolution pdf file called “Print file”
3. Go back to your CMYK art layer and create a duplicate layer called “Varnish. Remove everything other than areas which will have varnish and save it as a high resolution pdf file called “Varnish file”.
4. Go back to your CMYK art layer and create a duplicate layer called “Foil”, then remove everything other than the areas which will have foil. Save this layer as a high resolution pdf file called “XXXXX Foil file with “XXXXX represent the color foil, i.e. “Green Foil file).
5. Repeat this last step if you have multiple foil colors, starting with the CMYK art later, create one duplicate layer for each foil color and delete everything other than what will have that color foil.

**EXAMPLE:** For a job with varnish and 2 foil colors (blue and green), you will have 4 files total.

* First file will contain only artwork that will be printed and this file will be named “Print file.pdf”.
* Second file will contain only areas to be varnished and these areas should be in 100% black. This file will be named “Varnish file.pdf”.
* The third file will contain only areas where blue foil will go and these areas should be in 100% black (K). This file will be named “Blue foil file.pdf”.
* The fourth file will contain only areas where green foil will go and these areas should be in 100% black (K). This file will be named “Green foil file.pdf”.