

Printing Films From Photoshop CS5+ Using Illustrator

Actually, this should be named "Exporting Files From Photoshop CS5 & Higher" as its no longer possible to apply halftone settings directly within CS5 and most likely all Photoshop versions going forward.



The direct printing of Index, Hard Spot Color (No Tints), Single Channel QuikDraw Images and all Halftone Separations generated using the "No RIP" functions of the program can still be printed directly using CS5+ as these files do not require applying halftone variables to each channel.

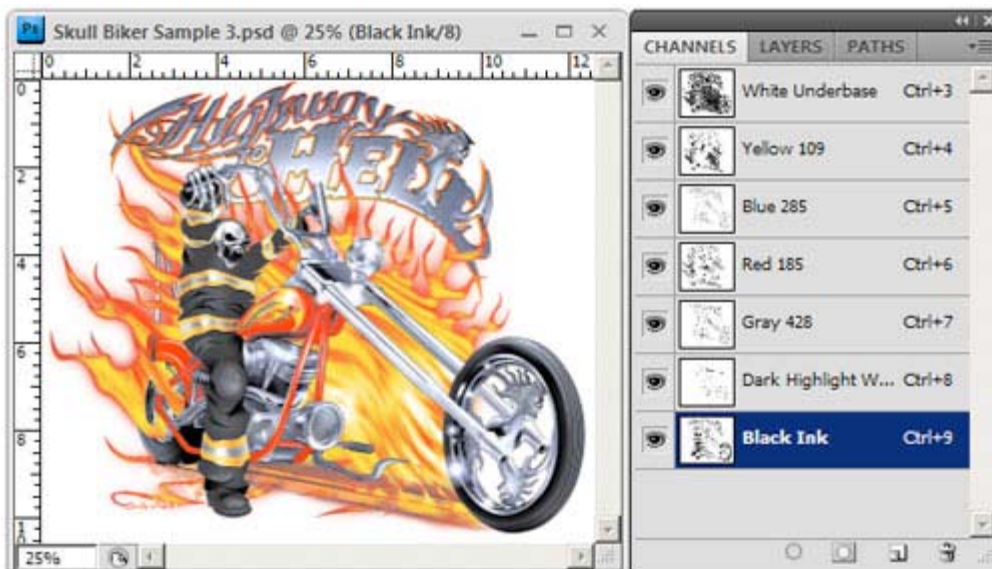
The first matter to address is the most important, which is saving a color separation such as a simulated process, true process, or any file needing specific halftone attributes as a DCS 2.0 file from Photoshop. DCS stands for Desktop Color Separation and is a format based on the EPS file format developed by Quark back in the early 90's. In a nutshell, a DCS 2.0 file "is" an EPS file that also contains spot color channels, such as separations generated within Photoshop.

Much of the information on the internet regarding the saving, placing, importing and printing of DCS 2.0 files I've found to be somewhat inaccurate or confusing. So be careful what you read! We'll try to get it right.

The sample shown is exactly how the file needs to look prior to saving as a DCS 2.0. The RGB channels have been deleted along with the Shirt Background channel.

We also changed the name of the Black Channel to "Black Ink". Doing so will avoid confusion later once imported into the Illustration or Page Layout program for output. Just select the "Black Ink" and completely disregard "Process Black" when choosing colors to print.

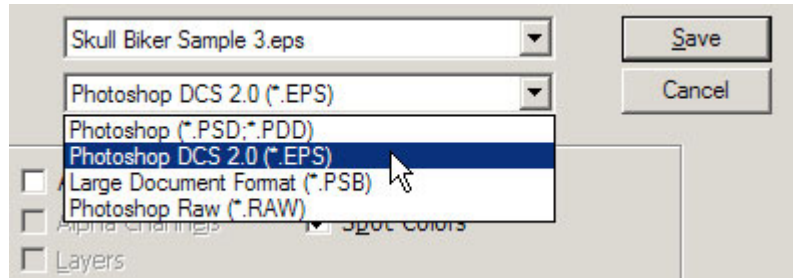
File Ready To Be Saved In DCS 2.0 Format



From the File Menu
choose **"Save As"**

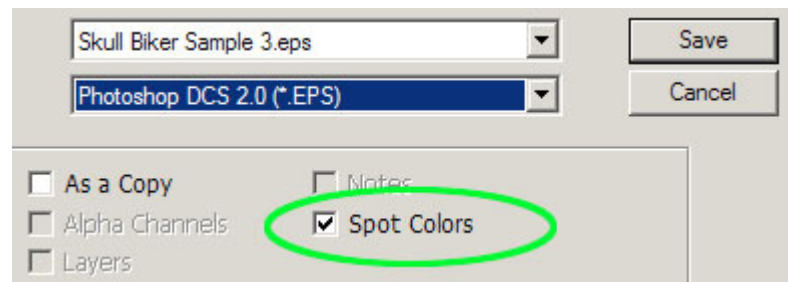


When the Save As dialog
box appears select
Photoshop DCS 2.0 (*.EPS)



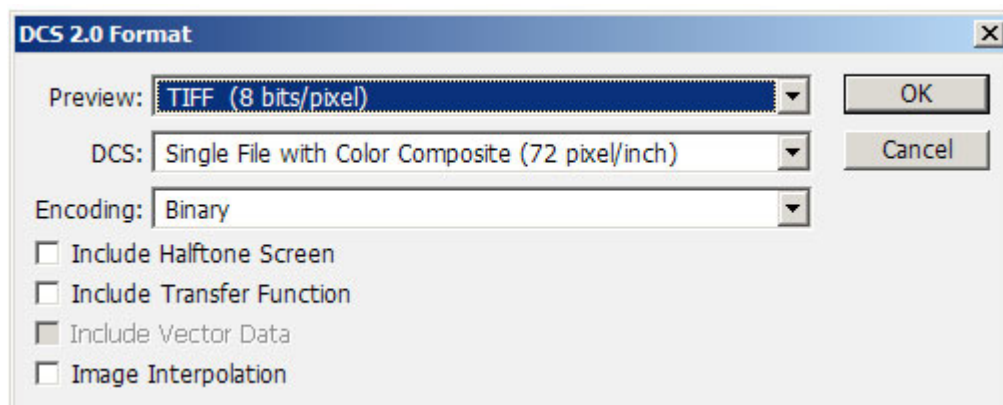
Make sure Spot Colors
is checked.

Click Save.



When the DCS 2.0 Format Box opens, enter the following settings and click OK:

Preview: TIFF (8 bits/pixel)
DCS: Single File With Color Composite (72 pixel/inch)
Encoding: Binary



The file is now saved as a DCS 2.0. It will appear as
an .EPS file since that what a DCS file basically is.



Printing A DCS 2.0 File With Adobe Illustrator

DCS 2.0 files are not “Opened” within Illustrator, they are “Placed” into an existing document.

Launch Adobe Illustrator and create a New Document, color mode RGB with an appropriate page size to contain the file.

Next select “Place” from the File Menu.

When the Place dialog box opens, locate the DCS file and click “Place”.

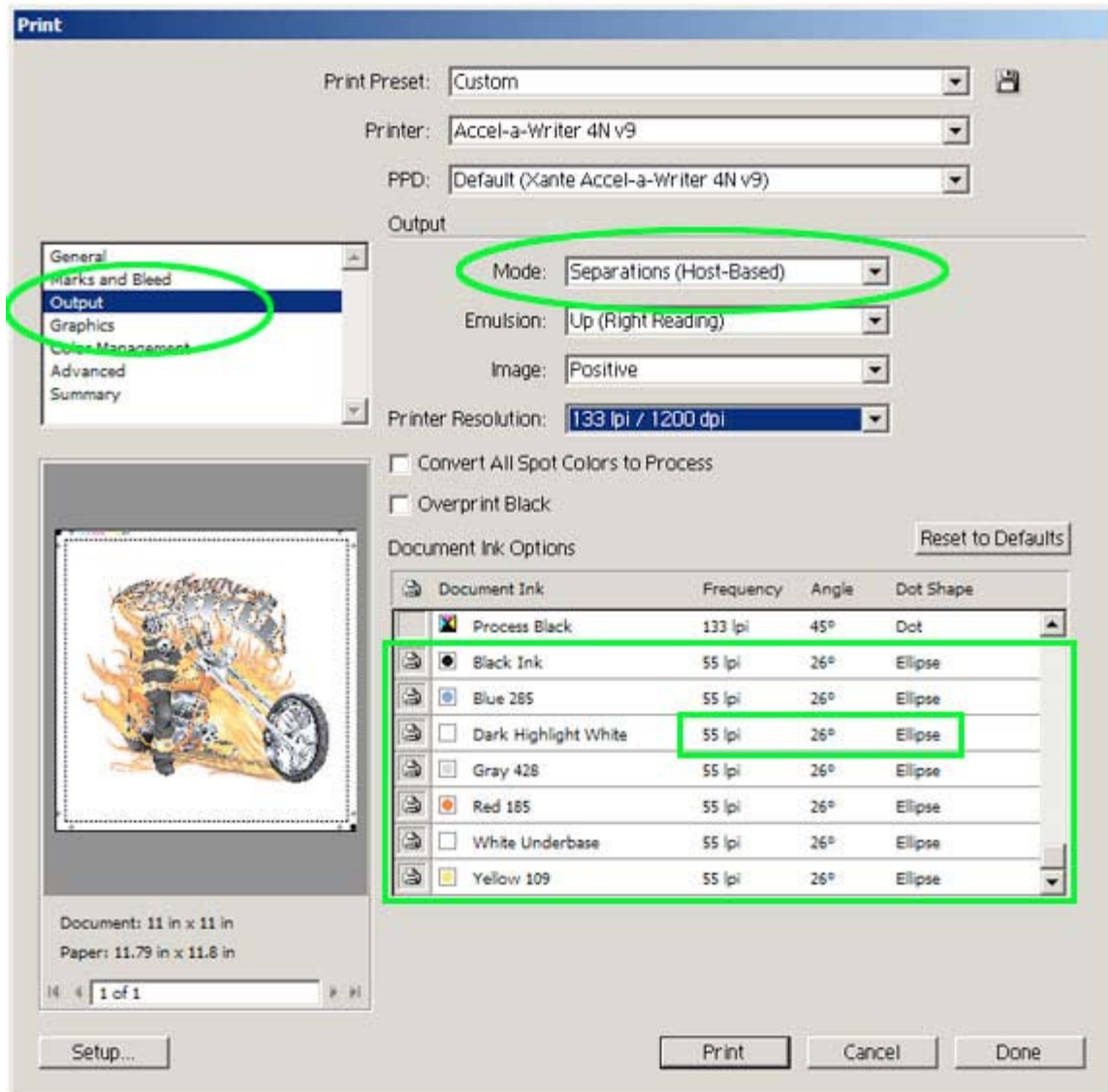


The DCS file has now been placed in the Illustrator document.

Don't be alarmed by its appearance! The image might look washed out when compared to the preview within Photoshop. This is Normal and is only a low quality screen preview. The separations will print as expected.



Go to Print and choose your Printer, set the correct page size then select "Output". Within "Mode" select "Separations (Host Based)". All the spot channel colors should now be selected below. Change the Frequency, Angle and Dot Shape of each channel to be output to film. The file is now ready to send to the printer.



Register marks can be added by using Illustrator's standard marks, adding marks to the file using the Actions prior to saving the DCS or create your own custom vector register mark which is a great idea.

Just design a register mark with Illustrator using the color "Registration". The mark can then be duplicated and placed exactly where you'd like them and they'll print on each channel. Save the register mark created for use on all files printed from Illustrator.