

The Photo Book

MOTIVE

- First up, you need to work out why you'd like to put together a photo book, as this will affect how you progress with the project and layout of the book.
- Is it going to accompany a body of work that is to be exhibited? Are you planning on selling it? Might you want to send it to potential publishers or galleries? Or are you simply just looking to share it with friends and family?
- Next, it's important to decide on a software program with which to put together your book. There are many online sites that enable you to download photobook layout software, such as Blurb, but it's worth having a look around, trying a few out and working out which one works best for you.

WHAT TYPE OF BOOK

- Hard cover or soft cover
- Size- pocket size or large coffee table book
- Edition or single print

CONTENT

- Best photo books have cohesive theme and not just the best of collection.
- A body of work taken with a specific motive or subject matter will work well, or you could work with shots taken within a specific time frame, for example, a shot a day for a year. It's important that the photography included has this restriction upon it in order to give it structure and coherence. It will force you to work more carefully and will create a more considered finished product.

IMAGE SELECTION

- Careful image selection
- Not always necessary to include “Best” work- think if flow and rhythm of book
- Build context with the photographs not just quantity.
- Use contact sheets to help sort out what is include and excluded

IMAGE ORDER

- Telling the story- flow of a narrative that the photos offer
- Method of sequencing
 - Chronological sequencing- is time important to project
 - Geographical sequencing – is location important to project
 - Dramatic/Thematic sequencing- broad and loose to interpretation
 - Place a story structure- like a film- beginning middle and end.
 - Begin by choosing the beginning and end first!! Middle will fall into place.
- Balance both horizontal and vertical order

LAYOUT

- Have the photos ready in order, but how do they fit on the page
- Experiment with different layouts before settling on a final selection.
- One of anything is bad- one horizontal in an all vertical book is not okay- one color in an all black and white book is not okay.
- Full bleed photos
- Borders around photos
 - Thick margin- weighted- off from gutter
 - Classic, traditional, quiet
 - Thin equal- even white all around edges
 - Contemporary style- bold but contained, loud
 - Full bleed- running of edge of page
 - Bold, dynamic

LAYOUT

- Work in two page spreads
 - Traditionally, the image will be on the right hand page, leaving the left hand page blank with space for a small caption if required. By no means do you have to adhere to this, you may well want to have images on every page, but whatever you decide, keep it simple and be consistent.
- Basic rules for spreads
 - Typically, actions look into the gutter
 - Match graphics or composition or color pallet
 - Wide shots usually better large
 - Tight shots (macro / details) usually better small
 - Be aware of ratio of image to page size
 - Bleed- gutter split
 - Don't put focal point in the gutter
- If more than two on a page must be clear reason for why
 - Establish rules and stick with it- keep layout consistent and repeat throughout

TEXT

- Text on page
 - Page number – typically .5" from bottom and over from side margin
 - Outside corners- traditional
 - Outside center- modern
 - No number on a full bleed
- Captions for photos? Do they add something that the photo does not already offer
 - Locations? Names? Date? Details of an event?
 - Don't repeat what is obvious from the photo.
 - Incorporate captions into the layout- don't just place where there is room
- Use a font that suites the book as a whole

COVER

- The image you choose for the cover is the first point of focus for the reader
- Captivating & Strong- call attention to the book
- Comfortably incorporate text
- High quality
- Fully representational
- Typically has three/four elements
 - Image
 - Author name
 - Title of book
 - Publisher name
 - Spine has the same info
- Material- Fabric, image, dust jacket, slip cover?

TERMINOLOGY

- **DPI**-The amount of information contained within an image file is expressed as *dots per inch*. Screen images are usually displayed at 72 DPI on monitors
- **PPI**- Pixels per inch- printers typically require images of 300 DPI to produce acceptable results
- **CMYK, RGB**—Different ways of representing color, CMYK is used in printing and creates colors through a combination of cyan, magenta, yellow and black inks. RGB is used for screen displays and creates colors through a combination of red, green and blue pixels. Materials prepared for printing usually need to be in the CMYK color space.
- **Full bleed**- simply means that the image fills the page. If you select this option, be sure when constructing the book to extend the image and overlap the edge of the page to ensure that when it gets cut, a thin white line doesn't get left along the edge
- **Spread**- or two facing pages as you see them when a book is opened flat
- **Gutter- Margin**- Margins are the blank spaces around the type area on a book page, but the inside margin has the special name *gutter* and it is always the margin on the bound edge of the book page. When you're looking at a book page *spread* you'll have two *gutters* together, doubling the apparent space. Keep that in mind when laying out your book page.
- **Spine**- The vertical edge of a book as it normally stands on a bookshelf. It is customary for it to have printed text on it.

TERMINOLOGY

- **Adobe InDesign:** The industry standard software used for page layout
- **Serif** – curved foot – grounded, easy to read, classic, regal- Popular serif fonts include Garamond, Baskerville, Minion Pro, and Times New Roman
- **San Serif** – no foot – sharper, modern, bold, energy, by hand- Popular sans-serif fonts include Helvetica, Arial, and Avenir.
- **Dust Jacket- (book jacket, dust wrapper, dust cover):** s the detachable outer cover, usually made of paper and printed with text and illustrations. This outer cover has folded flaps that hold it to the front and back covers. It is itself relatively fragile. Can be found on both hardcover and softcover
- **Slip Case-** is a four or five-sided box, usually made of high-quality board stock, into which binders, books or book sets are *slipped* for protection, leaving the spine exposed. Special editions of books are often slipcased.

BINDING

- Perfect Binding – used for softcover books, the pages are glued to the cover

Saddle Stitched – pages are folded and stapled to the cover down the center of the book

Spiral Bound – typically used for casual more affordable type books – can be held together using a plastic comb, plastic spiral or wire loops. Pages will lay flat

Case binding – most common type of binding for hardcover books, it involves wrapping a hard case around either an adhesive-bound or sewn book.

Lay Flat – hinged binding that allows the pages to lie completely flat, so you don't lose the image in the gutter/spine. Some may feature two separate pages hinged at the middle, others may be a single sheet folded in the middle.

Post Bound - an album that has 2 to 3 metal posts with flat head screws down the center that can be removed to add, remove or rearrange pages.