

Why a Picture Isn't Always Worth a Thousand Words

Illustrations in Ashgate books

An appropriate illustration can be extremely helpful. Illustrations can explain concepts, highlight comparative statistics and they reflect the fact that reading and understanding information is more than a matter of words. On top of that, they can help break up the text and improve the readability and appearance of a book. However, you can have too much of a good thing, particularly now that the technology seems to make it easier to copy or create illustrations, in a way that was not conceivable in the past.

How do you know whether an illustration is appropriate for the book you are writing? There are no hard and fast rules, but if you answer yes to all of the following questions, then an illustration is probably appropriate:

Question	Answer	Action
<i>Is the illustration easy to understand?</i>	Yes/No	Try checking it with an objective third party
<i>Does it add to the text, rather than simply repeat what you have said?</i>	Yes/No	Check how much explanatory information you need to provide with the picture.
<i>Will it reproduce (in black and white)?</i>	Yes/No	Remember the limitations of the page size in a book and bear in mind that what looks good in colour may not work in black and white at all.
<i>Do I own the copyright?</i>	Yes/No	Pictures are the biggest source of problems when it comes to unattributed copyright. Remember, if you do not specifically own the copyright, someone else will do!
<i>Do I know the copyright owner?</i>	Yes/No	Identify the copyright owner and use the Permissions document (available from Ashgate) to approach them for permission to use the picture. Remember, you will be responsible for any charge associated with using the picture.
<i>Have I obtained a permission from the owner?</i>	Yes/No	If you do not own the copyright yourself and have not obtained a permission, then the picture will be unuseable.
<i>Is there no other way to illustrate the point?</i>	Yes/No	Sometimes a simple table or bulleted list will work better than an illustration. Think about the reader and the information you are trying to convey to them.
<i>Do I need another illustration?</i>	Yes/No	Illustrations generally increase the cost and complexity of publishing a book. We are happy to include appropriate illustrations as they do add to the appearance and nature of the text but please use them sparingly; it is easy to have too much of a good thing.

Finally, ask yourself: what effect would there be if the illustration were not there at all. If the answer is very little, none or an improvement, then maybe an illustration, in this instance, is not appropriate. If you would like further advice on illustrations talk to your Commissioning Editor (UK telephone: +44 1252 331551 or US telephone: +1 802-865-7641). *We may require a subsidy to cover the extra costs involved in handling illustrations.*

Providing illustrations with your manuscript

It is important that you provide copies of all illustrations in your book with the final manuscript. Ideally, we would like you to supply electronic artwork, as well as a clean hard copy for our reference, which the copyeditor can work with. All artwork should be separated from the text, labelled clearly and have a corresponding mention in the text (e.g. Figure 1.1 shows...). Please do not insert electronic artwork into the text document of the manuscript, it will only be stripped out by the typesetter and is likely to be unusable.

We can accept artwork in the following ways:

1. Electronic artwork

The most suitable file formats for typesetting are TIFF (tagged image file format) and EPS (encapsulated post script). There are many graphics programs which can create these file formats, but amongst the most popular are Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop (if you have access to IT support, please see if you or they have these programs).

Please remember the following if you can provide these types of electronic artwork formats:

- Use a sans serif typeface (e.g., Arial) no larger than 9pt.
- Embed all fonts.
- If using lines, please ensure that the weight is no greater than 0.5pt and no less than 0.25pt.
- Avoid using colour, think about using dots or hash lines rather than colour.
- If possible, create the illustration at page width size (usually 134mm, but check with your Commissioning Editor).
- Decide whether the illustration is of a suitable size to be shown portrait or landscape.

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- Save at high resolution: 300 dpi (dots per inch) for images (photographs, scanned illustrations), 800–1200 dpi for line drawings (graphs, flow charts, etc.)
- Send a matching, clean hard copy.

We are always happy to provide feedback and assistance, so please send sample illustrations with your sample text for evaluation.

The following file formats should be avoided if possible: jpeg, .gif, wmf. Furthermore, creating images in Word, Excel, PowerPoint or Paint will not produce illustrations of a suitable electronic quality for publication. If you only have access to the above types of program, please read Section 2.

2. **Hard-copy artwork**

If you do not have access to, or experience of, computer graphics programs, there is still an easy and simple way to produce professional-looking artwork for your book on your PC. The typesetters we use have excellent, high-resolution scanners which can produce far more defined images than home-user scanners. They will also scan it into a format suitable for their typesetting programs, which means that you can use whichever program you feel happiest with to create your artwork.

To produce the best results when it is scanned, please remember the following if you are creating hard copy artwork:

- Draw the illustration at actual size (portrait or landscape). For guidance ask your Commissioning Editor for the page dimensions of your book.
- Use a sans serif font (e.g., Arial or Helvetica) with a point size not greater than 9pt and use this *consistently* for all of the figures you create.
- Use bold and underlining sparingly.
- Use a line weight no less than 0.25pt and no greater than 0.5pt, unless for emphasis (then no greater than 1pt).
- Make sure that any spelling/capitalisation conventions used in your manuscript are continued in the illustrations. (Check the house-style notes in the Author Guidelines if in any doubt.)
- Produce only one illustration per page, noting the figure number lightly *in pencil on the back*. Do not include figure numbers or captions on the illustration, only the figure.

The most important thing to remember about hard-copy artwork is that neither we in-house, nor the typesetter, will be able to edit these files once they are scanned. The illustrations need to be as final as you can make them. Please keep copies of your original files so that you can make the changes and resupply a revised hard copy illustration if revisions are required for any reason.

3. **Professional drawing**

If you are not confident about your abilities, or do not have the software, to supply artwork of sufficient quality to be used in your book, there is always the option of having your illustrations professionally drawn. Our Production department has many good contacts with graphic illustrators who will take your ideas and produce excellent results in both hard copy and electronic formats. This can be paid for from your royalties and you will own the final images for later use if required. The results will be editable files, which will be compatible with the typesetter's programs, giving a highly professional finish. If you would like to investigate this option further, or get a quote, please discuss this with your Commissioning Editor.