



A2 Boutique Greeting Card Challenge Template Guide

General Details and Reminder:

We've created two types of templates for this challenge. One for designs that will use a standard shape for the card and one for designs that would use a die-cut shape. Each template contains three artboards:

- **A2 Card Full Open (8.5" x 5.5")** - this artboard is sized to the actual card dimensions and shows the full spread (front and back) of the card when opened.
- **A2 Envelope** - this artboard is sized to the actual width and height of the envelope with the flap opened. A guide on how the envelope will be cut is also available to help you ensure important parts of your design are within those areas.
- **A2 Submission** - this is the artboard you'll need to export for your challenge submission.

Note: Ensure to export the "A2 Submission" artboard as a hi-res .jpeg by going to File > Export > Save for Web. The width should be set at 1100 px.

Once you've determined which template you'll be using, open up illustrator and set your CMYK colorspace to U.S. Web Uncoated v2 (Edit > Color Settings) to ensure that your file will more closely match what is previewed on-site and to the actual print itself.

Step-by-step

- **Step 1: Read the Guidelines**
 - Make sure you've read the brief and the [tips and tricks](#) section before starting your design. (This can also be found on the Illustrator template).
 - Review the layer guide on the templates provided.
- **Step 2: Designing Your Card and Envelope**
 - Start creating your designs using the first two artboards.
 - Ensure each element (text, tip-ons, foil, glitter, etc.) is placed on its respective layer. While this is not required for submission templates, we highly encourage keeping your files organized this way as it will make it easier for you to prepare your files during the file request process for winning designs.

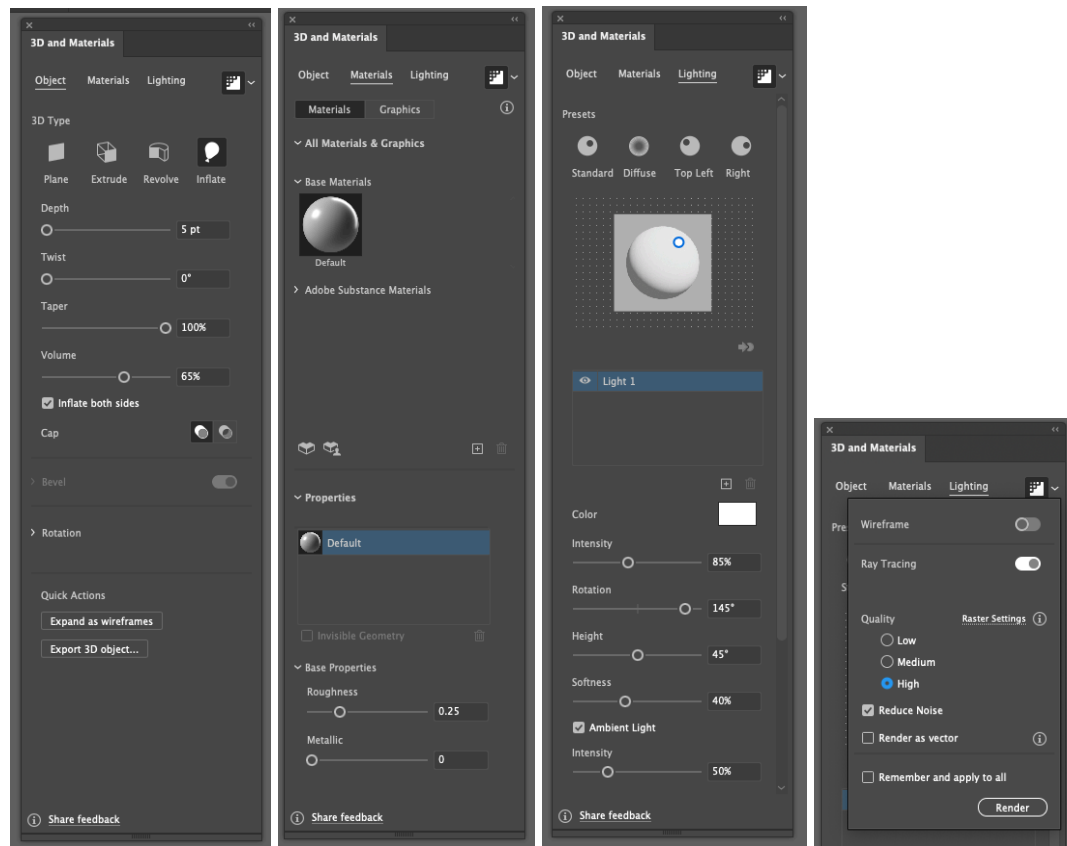
- **Backer Info and Logo**
 - **For Standard Shaped Card:** You're not allowed to alter the elements and placement of the provided logo. Background colors may bleed through here.
 - **For Non-standard Shaped Card:** You're not allowed to alter the elements of the logo but you may move around the elements to fit the shape of the card. Background colors may bleed through here.

For Non-standard Shaped Card:

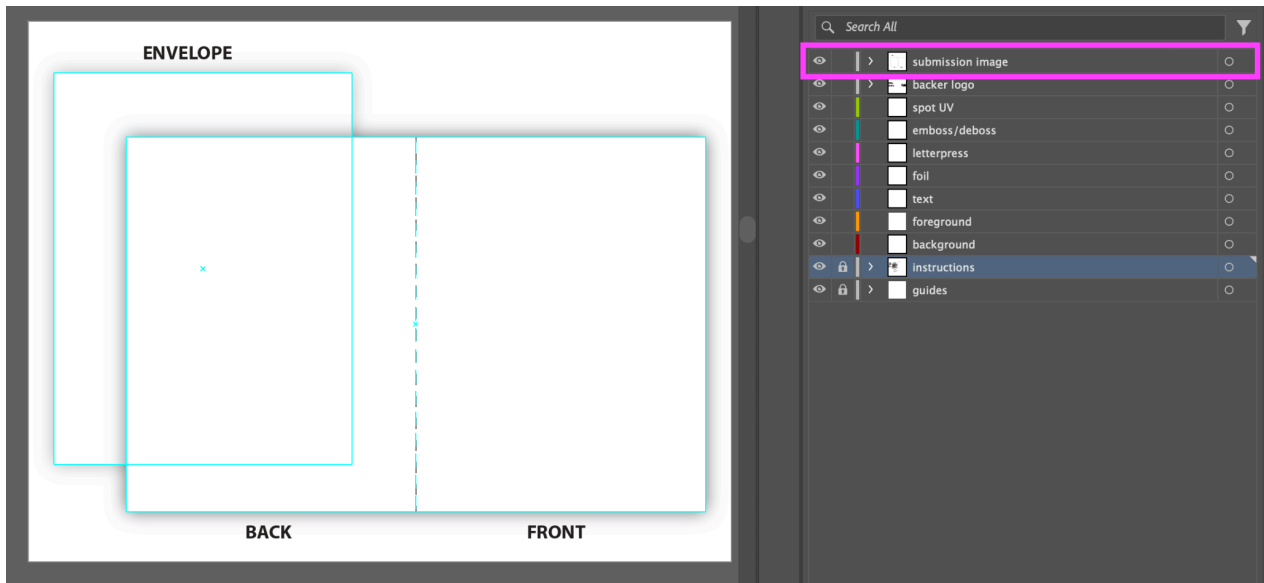
- **Die-cut shapes:** We've provided a separate illustrator file containing the A2 die-cut shapes that's currently offered at Minted. Feel free to make use of these shapes but we highly encourage you to create your own.
- **Minimum of 2" folded area:** please keep this requirement in mind- *"All die-cut shapes must include a minimum of a 2" folded edge between the front and back of the card in order to open and close the folded Greeting Card"*
 - **The 2" fold requirement refers to the height of the folded area.** The fold can be placed anywhere in the design, as long as there is at least 2" of connected fold between the front and back of the card.
 - Die-cut designs can have cutouts near or through the fold area, as long as there is still at least 2" of connected fold holding the front and back together.

New! Mocking up Spot UV

- **Spot UV** is a finishing technique that adds a clear, glossy coating to specific areas of a printed design; it's a great way to selectively highlight elements of the artwork. Adding contrast, shine, and a subtle sense of dimension without changing the underlying color or design.
- **Since this is new for this challenge, our team would encourage you to mock this up however you'd like!** There are no specific rules to keep in mind, and there are multiple ways to achieve a glossy look.
 - We have included an example of one possible way to set this up using the 3D and Materials panel. If you work from the CC version of these templates, you can see these attributes directly in Illustrator. This panel is also available in CS6, but the effect will be flattened into an embedded image when you save and close your file, so be sure to save often and ensure you're happy with the result before closing.

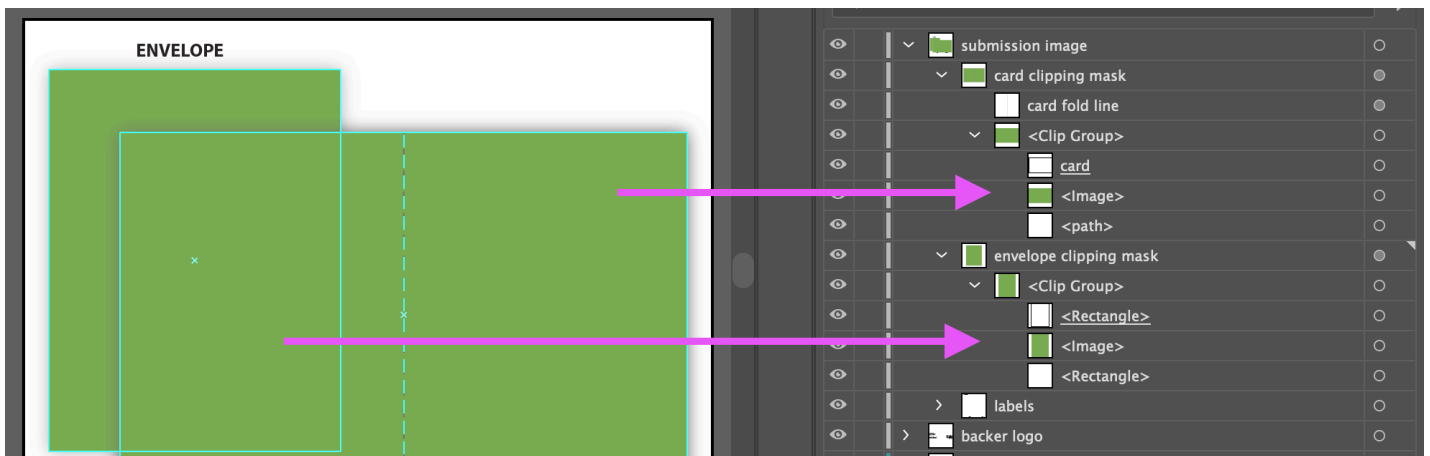


- Important callouts for the 3D and Materials panel:
 - Materials > Roughness: the lower you make this value, the shinier the object will appear
 - In the  panel: make sure that ray tracing is turned on. Only click “render” when you’re happy with the effect, as it will flatten the object and you won’t be able to edit the look of your Spot UV any further without undoing that action.
- **Step 3: Rasterize the Artwork on the Card and Envelope Artboards**
 - After finishing the designs for the envelope and the front and back of the card, rasterize the designs separately. This will make it easier to place into the clipping masks on the submission artboard.
- **Step 4: Setting Up the ‘A2 submission’ Artboard**
 - You’ll only use the “**submission image**” layer for this artboard. It contains the clipping masks with the drop shadows and text labels.



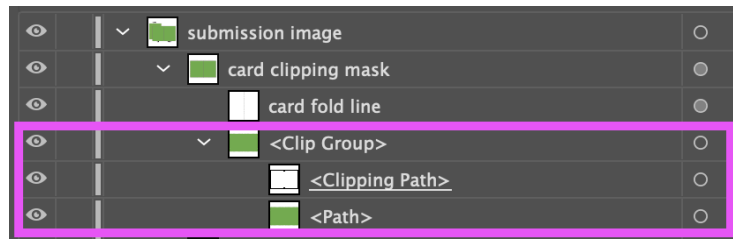
For Standard Shaped Card:

- Open up the “submission image” layer > “card clipping mask” > “Clip group” > place the rasterized card design under “card” layer
- Follow the same step for your envelope design

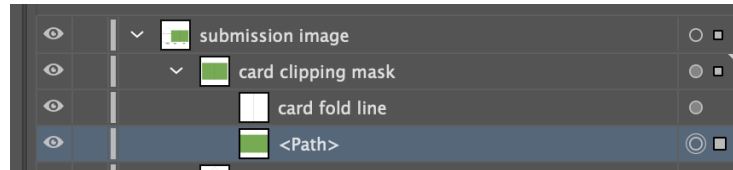


For Non-standard Shaped Card:

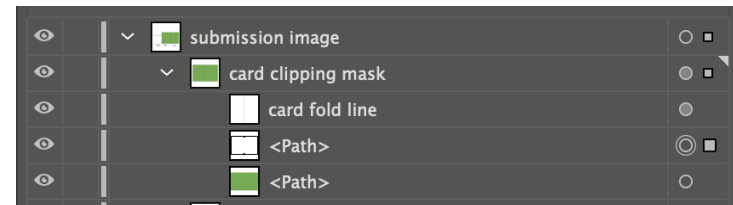
- You can follow the same steps for your envelope design as the standard card
- For the card, you’ll need to create your own clipping mask. The template will have a placeholder as a placeholder example.
- To create the card clipping mask for your die-cut shape, you’d need to delete the “<Clip Group>”



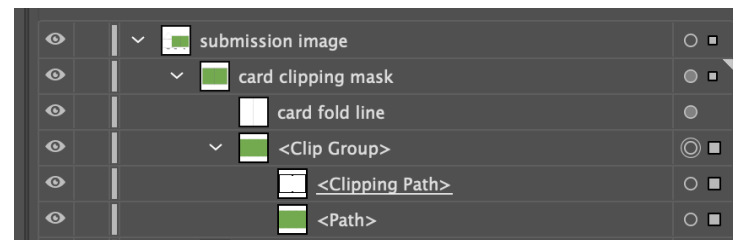
- Place your die-cut shape under the “card fold line” layer



- Make a copy of the shape (cmd+C > cmd+shift+V to paste in place) and make sure they're stacked on top of each other with the top shape having no fill.



- Select both layers and press cmd + 7 to make a clip group and place your rasterized card below the clipping mask and adjust the placement accordingly.



- **Step 5: Export the 'A2 submission' Artboard**

- Once you're done placing all your artwork on their respective clipping mask, export the artboard as a hi-res .jpeg by going to File > Export > Save for Web. Ensure the width is set at 1100 px.

Greeting Card Tips and Tricks:

DO'S

- Place the all elements with specific printing type on their respective layers.
- For embossed/ debossed section, make sure elements are placed in a layer group with proper labels (example, if your design is embossed, those elements should have their own layer group with an “embossed” layer name).
- You are allowed to choose from Minted standard foil colors or submit any custom shades as we are able to source any foil color for wholesale. You can use up to 2 foil colors per design.
- You are allowed to create your own die-cut shape for the card.
- Die-cuts should have a soft drop shadow (to create an effect of it elevated above the card and help voters visualize your design).
- The 2” fold requirement refers to the height of the folded area. The fold can be placed anywhere in the design, as long as there is at least 2” of connected fold between the front and back of the card.
- Die-cut designs can have cutouts near or through the fold area, as long as there is still at least 2” of connected fold holding the front and back together.
- UV Gloss elements should have a soft drop shadow, and a highlight to indicate which areas are shiny. You are free to set this up however you’d like! Our team has included an example below using the 3D and Materials panel to show one way this effect could be set up.
- Ensure all linked images are embedded using the Links Panel.
- Reference Minted Font List for minimum font sizes and stroke requirements (<http://www.minted.com/designer-font-list>).
- Rasterize all raster images/artwork, customizable photos, and foil textures down to 300 ppi to reduce file size (Object > Rasterize).
- Use ‘text on a path’ for all curvilinear text.
- Place all images and foil textures in single clipping masks.
- Remove unnecessary elements off the artboard to reduce file size.
- For any outlined text in your design (including foil elements), please also include an editable version off the artboard.
- If your design includes a border, make sure it is at least 0.3” from the bleed.

DONT'S

- DO NOT use any special printing type on designs on your envelopes. Artwork for envelopes will only be available for standard printing.

Printing Type Guide

Technique	Placement	Color Limit	Can Be Paired With	Key Rules
Foil	Front & back (not envelope)	Up to 2 foil colors	Non Foil Letterpress 1 color (max 2 foil color) · Embossing/Debossing (max 2 foil colors) · Spot UV	Each foil color on its own layer; no overlapping foil areas
Letterpress	Front only (not envelope)	Up to 3 ink colors total (incl. black)	Non Foil Foil (max 2 foil color) - only with 1 Letterpress color	White paper only; no gradients (solid colors, clean lines); no light ink over dark ink
Embossing/Debossing	Front only (not envelope)	Blind (no color) or paired with foil	Non Foil Foil (max 2 foil colors) · Spot UV	Avoid ultra-fine lines/tiny text; won't push through evenly
Spot UV	Front & back (not envelope)	Unlimited (it's a clear coat)	Non Foil Foil · Embossing/Debossing	Applied over the printed design; no overlapping print areas with other techniques