How to Setup Map Files for Printing

Instruction Manual

by Michael K. Tumey of Gamer Printshop

Printing your CC2/3 Map Files
Printing your Dundjinni Map Files
Printing Heavy Metal Pro Map Files
Printing Dungeoncrafter 3 Map Files
Printing 3rd Party Battlemap Designs
Printing your custom CAD/Graphics files
How to use gamer-printshop.com site

GAMER-PRINTSHOP
Printing Resource for Game Masters & Dungeon Masters and More...

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Introduction

Gamer Printshop is the game master's best resource for map printing, laminating and gaming accessories online - its the very first of its kind. No other digital print company focuses all of its efforts towards the RPG gaming community like we do!

Gamer Printshop specializes in the large format commercial printing of color and B/W fantasy gaming maps. We also laminate map prints and mount to foamboard.

The purpose of this instructional manual is to insure that your digital map files are optimized for printing for the best quality and proper dimension settings. How you initially setup your map files in the application you created them will determine at what size and quality resolution you can achieve with large format printing.

Who Can Use our Map Printing Services?

Although Gamer-Printshop targets all game masters, dungeon masters, miniatures game players for every type of RPG gaming system, we believe there are three basic types of clients we work best with:

1.   Users of map-making applications like Profantasy Campaign Cartographer, or Dundjinni software, and other fantasy CAD and graphics based map-makers, who are seeking quality commercial printing in large format or cardstock.

2.   Users of CAD and graphics applications like AutoCAD, Photoshop, Corel, Xara, and many others for the printing of large format full color map designs.

3.   Purchasers of downloadable PDF battlemaps from online companies like Necromancer Games, whose files are intended for the user to print. We can print these files for you in better quality and to 80# cardstock, laminated.

Policies

Gamer Printshop is a professional company and will never archive, sell, or provide access to your custom map designs or map downloads to print. These maps are your property and we respect that.

We will never print or reproduce copyright material maps, even from out-of-print maps and companies nolonger in business. All maps require a "Permissions" Email or link to a Forums page that acknowledges your right to print any document.

Downloaded products all come with a 30 day money back guarantee. Printed maps do not have a guarantee, except for ommissions, misshipments and printing errors.

Users of ProFantasy Campaign Cartographer versions 2 and 3

Gamer Printshop is fully capable of printing large format color and b/w maps from map files created in ProFantasy Campaign Cartographer 2/3. We have a close association with ProFantasy in getting this needed service perfect for your needs.

The most important factor in determining dimensional correctness with the highest quality printing possible for your CC2/3 maps are how you select the settings in the New Drawing Wizard. You must select "Decide my own Settngs"

In the third menu of the New Drawing Wizard the default settings for dimensions are 1000 x 800. This default setting is optimized for maps printed a 8 inches x 10 inches only. You cannot send us a 1000 x 800 dimension map and expect us to print it at anything larger than 8" x 10".

Also our printers require a "deletion area" on the outside edge, about a half inch of unprinted area. This means you cannot send us a full 3600 x 2400 maps size if you're looking for a 24 inch x 36 inch map print. You would set it at 3550 x 2350 to achieve a 24" x 36" print.

Even though CC3 will allow you to export to BMP format, the issues on getting the correct resolution settings makes it difficult for CC3 users to accomplish easily.

We highly recommend that you submit only CC2/3 native FCW map file format. We open it directly in CC3 and prepare the map for large format printing.

Remember, set the proper dimensions in the New Drawing Wizard and you should have no problems with improperly printed maps.

For your large format prints select the color maps or b/w maps web pages on the gamer-printshop.com website for the available sizes and prices. Because we can't give a price or "buy" button for every possible map dimension, select the size that matches closest: 18" x 24", 24" x 36" or 36" x 48".

Once you make your purchase, you will be sent a "Thank You" email from support@gamer-printshop.com. **PLEASE REPLY TO THIS EMAIL and ATTACH YOUR MAP FILE FOR PRINTING!** This way we can guarantee your file matches your paid for invoice and we can lessen the possibility of any misshipments.

Users of Dundjinni Map Making Software

Gamer Printshop is fully capable of printing large format color and b/w maps from map files created in Dundjinni map making software.

Although we can certainly accept and open your Dundjinni DJA files, we prefer you use Dundjinni's export formats for map printing.

Unless you plan to limit your map sizes to 1600 x 2000 pixels, do not use the provided PNG and JPG formats. Dundjinni limits these formats to dimension above.

You should export your files to "Raw BMP" format with "user settings provided"

Even though we can certainly print to high resolution, which is required for the printing of large format photographic jobs, map printing only requires 72 dpi to print in high quality.

If you desire a 22 inch by 34 inch Dundjinni printed map, for example, at 72 dpi, you would set the dimensions in pixels (72 dpi times inches in height and width) There for you would set the width to 1584 pixels and height to 2448 pixels.

Use the same formula for any print size up to 36 inches by 48 inches.

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Users of Heavy Metal Map - Map Making for Battletech

Gamer Printshop is fully capable of printing large format color and b/w maps from map files created in Heavy Metal Map software.

Use Standard CBT size, encoded as a JPG in default 171 dpi resolution. Print up to four map design into a single large format color printed map. Just furnish us with the JPG produced by the program.

Users of Dungeoncrafter 3 Map Making Software

The first version of Dungeoncrafter 3 has similar printing capabilities as DC1 & 2, but will soon improve with more options and an elaborate print dialog.

The new feature about DC3 is the 72x72 pixel tiles, which produce much cleaner, and better detailed printing at 1' tile map.

Although you can save to standard DC3 format, please export your files to PNG or JPG at the same size as your created map.

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Users of CAD and Graphics Applications for Map Creation

Gamer Printshop is not limited to printing only fantasy map-making formats. We are a fully capable graphics service bureau able to print from native file formats for many proprietary graphics applications, as well as standard graphics formats.

For users of professional CAD programs like AutoCAD and Microstation in the creation of fantasy RPG maps, setting map size dimensions is inherent in the creation of your CAD map drawing. Set the scale for appropriate sized printing to architectural C, D, or E sizes.

We can print AutoCAD native DWG format as well as standard DXF format. In the case of unique toolsets or SHX files in your AutoCAD files, you should print to plot file, instead of saving as a DWG/DXF. This means you will use the Print Menu, and select "Plot to File" in the lower righthand dropdown of the menu screen. This will create a PLT file.

Microstation users must print to plot file in PLT format. We cannot print native Microstation files.

Users of graphics software including Photoshop, Paintshop Pro, Painter X, Freehand, Illustrator, InDesign, Xara Xtreme, and many others can save in PSD, AI or XAR native formats, otherwise should export to standard BMP, TIF, JPG, or PNG formats.

Set the size for your graphic at 72 dpi, at your choice of final print size: 5" x 8", letter, 11" x 17", 18" x 24", 24" x 36" or 36" x 48". Do not submit high resolution files (300 dpi+) or files larger than a few Megabytes.

Because map printing is not photographic, the color fidelity and detail quality is fine at 72 dpi, but only if your image is already at the final print dimensions.

Don't expect to send us an 8" x 10" at 72 dpi and expect a 24" x 36" print of your file with any level of quality. This will not work.

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Purchasers of PDF Downloaded Battle Maps for Printing

Gamer Printshop will print your "permission" based downloadable PDF battle maps available from many online battlemap design companies, like Necromancer Games.

We hope to create a new page on the website that lists those companies that have given us permission to print your purchased PDF battle map designs.

When you purchased these downloaded maps, you received a PDF file ready for you to print on your home desktop printer. Because its you who is normally expected to print these maps, you are in your right to submit these files so we can print them for you.

Not only can we print large format color and b/w maps, but standard letter size and 11" x 17" is printed in full laser color onto 80# cardstock - something most laser or inkjet printers cannot do. We can!

Although PDF files can be resized easily enough, in their original creation they've been optimized for the size they were saved. These file are print-ready in their native format. We can print in their predetermined sizes in b/w up to 36" x 48", or to color in 5" x 8" up to 11" x 44".

Note we do have a problem printing PDF files for large format color files, our printer server can only read certain "flavors" of PDF and not the most recent versions. Large format color files should be saved in standard BMP, JPG, PNG, TIF or EPS formats. Certain "flavors" of EPS have problems too.

What we mean by "flavors" is that both PDF and EPS can be created by more than one software, especially 3rd party companies. Sometimes they create proprietary versions of these socalled standard formats and our printers can't accomodate them.

Visit the Battlemap Printing page on the Gamer-Printshop.com website to select your prices and available sizes for your battlemap printing.

Once you make your purchase, you will be sent a "Thank You" email from support@gamer-printshop.com. **PLEASE REPLY TO THIS EMAIL and ATTACH YOUR MAP FILE FOR PRINTING!** This way we can guarantee your file matches your paid for invoice and we can lessen the possibility of any misshipments.

The Great Game Master Lamination Campaign!

Gamer Printshop is offering a special project for those game masters who have closets full of RPG gaming maps that need the kind of protection so they'll last for years and years of gaming use. Its the Great Game Master Lamination Campaign. We want you to gather up your maps and send them to us so we can laminate them all!

Think about it, lamination film is a petroleum based product - and oil prices are not coming down, so the price per barrel affects the price of lamination film. There is no better time than the present to getting your maps laminated, the prices will only go up.

Gamer Printshop offers lamination at a lower cost than the national average, so you can almost guarantee we offer the best prices possible. As mentioned earlier, we only use heavy duty 5 mil laminating film on both sides, so that's 10 mils of film over the weight of the media being laminated. 5 mil offers tremendous protection, as well as allowing you to use grease pencil and highlighter markers, then erase for years of use. Not so with cheaper thinner lamination.

Because our laminating film comes in 36" wide rolls of 500 feet, we really don't charge per square foot. Rather we charge per linear inch. For every inch of 36" wide film, we charge $ .15

This is alittle difficult to calculate, but preset size of 24" x 36" is $9.00, thus 18" x 24" is half that, and 36" x 48 is twice that.

Simply submit an email to support@gamer-printshop.com with the total number of maps you need laminated, plus the exact dimensions for every map. We will respond within 24 hours with an Emailed Quote. If the price is doable for you, REPLY TO THIS EMAIL WITH A DATE WHEN YOU ARE SENDING YOUR MAPS.

You will be shipping them to:

    Gamer Printshop
    1532 E. US Hwy 6
    Ottawa, IL 61350

Once we receive your maps, will laminate them and ship them back to you in a mailing tube via UPS. Your quote will include shipping and handling.

Gamer Printshop Custom Battle Map Designs

Gamer Printshop will be offering our own new custom battle map designs for you to download or order as printed and laminated products.

Unlike Steelsquire Battlemaps, where there's this building in the middle of the forest terrain that seems to distract players everytime they walk that battlemap. "Is this building in this encounter again or not?" ask your players every time. Our map designs will tend to be more generic, being more adaptable to any use of the terrain or structural battle maps for every gaming system.

We will be creating standard 8.5" x 11" and 11" x 17" tabloid sizes onto 80# cardstock, then laminated on both sides with 5 mil heavy duty laminating film.

Our battlemaps will be printed on color on both sides with useable terrain as well.

Our battlemaps will include standard 1 inch square grid that equals 5 feet using a "dashed line", and a heavy solid line at 2 inch by 2 inch selection of 4 squares equalling 10 feet. Many WotC and D20 games use 10' grid system, rather than the common battlemap 5 foot, 1 inch grid system.

Finally we plan to include a unique feature not found with most multi-set battle maps. This new feature is **edge to edge graphics matching** from map to map within a given battle map set. This means our sets of 5 each, 11" x 17" battle maps will be able to line up perfectly front or back or rotated 180 degrees. You won't have mismatched half tree graphics not lining up to the next map.

Despite this **edge matching capability**, each map side will have its own unique terrain feature design. They are not simply 5 copies of the same design. You won't find this battle map feature from anyone other than Gamer Printshop, at least for the time being.

You can also expect use of 3D software in the creation of structures, indoor and dungeon environments to give a uniquely realistic rendering of battle maps.

We will be creating new custom battlemap designs every month, and will first be published in our free monthly Gamer Resource Newsletter. Prices offered for these battle map designs will be at introductory lower prices in the month of creation, then raised before final publication for purchase on website.

You can expect these battle map terrains to become available over the next year: Heavy Forest, Light Forest, Snowy Forest, Desert, Ocean Floor and many more designs. We plan to get really creative with our Battle Map designs!

Gamer Printshop Offers Many Ways to Keep in Contact

Gamer Printshop wants to keep you apprised of the "goings on" in our digital print studio. We offer several ways to keep in contact with you.

The best way is for you to sign up to our Free Monthly newsletter Gamer Resource. This is a monthly emailed publication with links to content kept on our website, with access given only through links on the email sent to you.

Gamer Resource will feature: a Game Masters Article, a Gaming Business Article, periodic special features like "miniatures painting tips" and interviews with gaming industry leaders.

Each month we will release the next 5 sheet set of a custom Battle Map design with every issue. We will even offer one of the 5 sheets of the current design, as a FREE downloadable PDF file that you can print yourself. Or you can order straight from the newsletter for a lower introductory price. Once published to the website ready for purchase these map sets will be higher priced.

Every issue will also include a single FREE CC3 tool and a FREE Dundjinni Object for download and use for your respective map-making software. Each CC3 tool and Dundjinni object will be part of set of tools/objects ready for purchase and download. Just like the custom battlemaps, you can expect complete toolsets and object sets with every newsletter.

We also plan to offer Free downloadable fonts and clipart with every issue too.

Another way to keep in contact and a way for you to ask questions in case I haven't responded to your emailed question is to post it on the Gamer Printshop website forums page. Just join as a member a post your question. You can also visit to see other questions and comments as well as my personal responses for these forum postings.

Conclusion

Gamer Printshop exists solely to serve Game Masters of RPG campaign worlds. We want to be your exclusive game master service provider - from map printing, lamination and quality battle maps. Over time we plan to introduce new products and services to make the most of your gaming requirements.

Thank you for reading this Instruction Manual, we hope it makes ordering services from our website much easier for you. We looking forward to serving you.

Michael K. Tumey, Gamer Printshop