

Viewing Environment:

Your work environment influences how you see color on your monitor and on printed output. For best results, control the colors and light in your work environment.

1. Work in an environment that provides a consistent light level and color temperature. The color characteristics of sunlight change throughout the day and will alter the way you see colors on your screen. Working in a fluorescent lighting condition, eliminate the blue-green color cast by installing D50 (5000° Kelvin) lighting. Your monitor's light is not enough, you need to simulated daylight.
2. When working with your images, create a lighting environment conducive to reading a book – not too dark, or too light. If you have the ability to measure your light, the typical light level should be about 55-60 lux.
3. View your images in a room with neutral-colored walls and ceiling. A room's color can affect the perception of both monitor color and printed color. The best color for a viewing room is neutral gray. Keep in mind, the color of your clothing reflecting off the glass of the monitor may affect the appearance of colors on the screen.
4. Remove colorful background patterns on your monitor desktop. Busy or bright patterns surrounding an image interfere with accurate color perception. We recommend setting your desktop to display neutral grays only.
5. Finally, view printed proofs in the same real-world conditions that your client will view the final print(s). For example, you might want to preview a portrait under incandescent lighting (typical lighting in most homes).

Monitor Calibration – DataColor Spyder5 Elite:

When it comes to calibration, we recommend the DataColor Spyder5. The Spyder5 Elite device attaches to the front of your monitor and reads color patches displayed by the software. Using these readings, the software helps optimize the brightness/contrast/color output, removes any color cast from your screen, and creates a profile describing how your monitor displays color.

When calibrating your monitor, set your target white point and Gamma curve to 6500k and Gamma to 2.2. These are only recommendations; you may find that your viewing environment has warmer lights, in which case you could experiment with a white point of 5000K. After the monitor has been calibrated verify the calibration process by placing a small test print order. Compare the test prints with the monitor. Because of ongoing use, we strongly recommend calibrating your monitor every 3-4 weeks.

How to prepare your files:

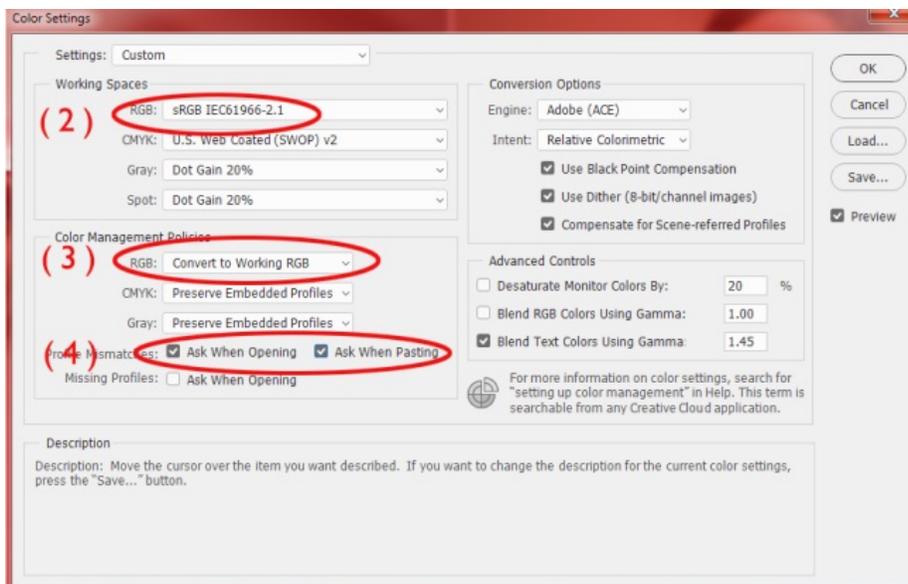
1. Make sure you are embedding an ICC profile into the files, an image without an embedded color space is worthless. We recommend that you use either sRGB or Adobe RGB (1998) as your working color space.
2. If you work in layers, be sure to flatten the file and remove any extra channels before sending.
3. We print from JPEG format files. Lossless or highest quality JPEG compressions are more than adequate for high quality printing.

4. We do not require a maximum resolution for the images you upload. The higher the resolution, the better the picture will be. It's that simple. The Azura printers output at 300 dpi.

Configuring Photoshop's Color Settings

Set your Photoshop's color settings setup correctly. This step is simple, and is well worth your time.

1. Open Photoshop
 - o **Mac OS X Users**
 - o Go to Photoshop in the Menu Bar > Color Settings
 - o **Windows Users**
 - o Go to Edit in the Menu Bar > Color Settings
2. Select a Working Space for RGB Files - sRGB IEC61966-2.1
3. Select "Convert to Working RGB" next to RGB under Color Management Policies.
4. Check "Ask When Opening and Ask When Pasting" next to Profile Mismatches.



These options, along with the 'Color Management Policies' will make sure all images are in the proper color space for you. They will alert you if not so action can be taken to correct the problem at the beginning of your workflow.

For Adobe Lightroom:

In Lightroom, there are no color spaces to choose until you export an image. In the Export screen, go down to the "File Settings" section. There is a pull-down menu for Color Space. We recommend selecting either Adobe RGB (1998) or sRGB