

When a book is to be perfect or spiral bound, the pages will be cut on all four sides. To avoid errors like white edges after the product is trimmed, design elements need to bleed into the spine without affecting the opposite page.

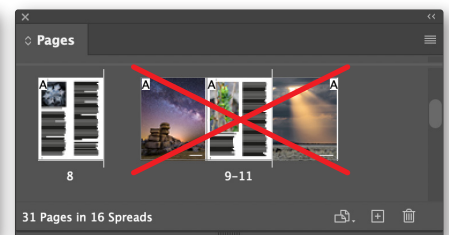
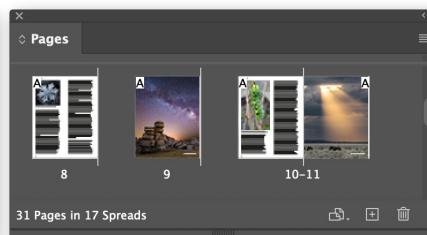
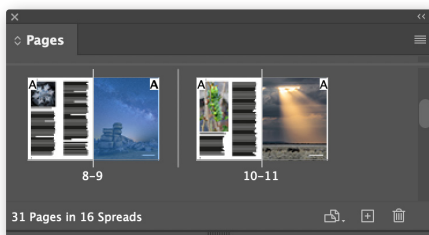
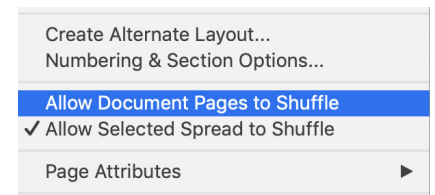
To make this possible, facing page spreads must be split up. This can be done either by dragging the pages apart, or by moving them slightly.

If you just need to change a few pages, it can be done manually, as described on page 1-2; otherwise, using a script will be advantageous. If you choose one of the script solutions described on pages 3-5, be aware that images across spreads will always require manual work.



Manuel method

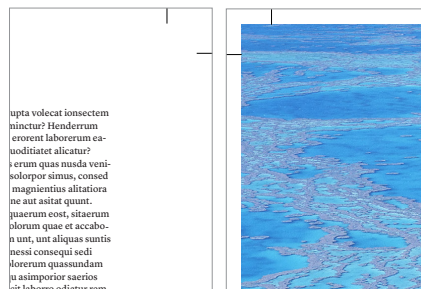
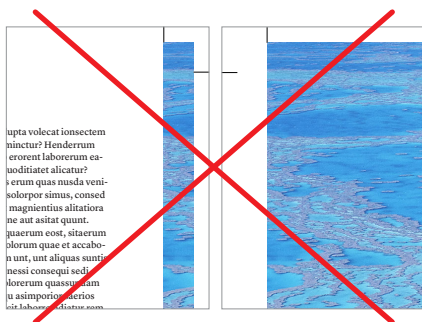
1. Define Document Setup ... ► Bleed as desired. An allowance of 3 mm is usually sufficient for perfect bound books; for spiral binding the value may need to be larger.
2. Open the Pages panel, select Panel Options ..., set the pages to display in medium or larger size and with Thumbnails, and deselect "Allow Document Pages To Shuffle". Then drag the pages apart where necessary, as shown below.



Select a right-hand page, drag the page to the right, and release when a thin vertical line appears.

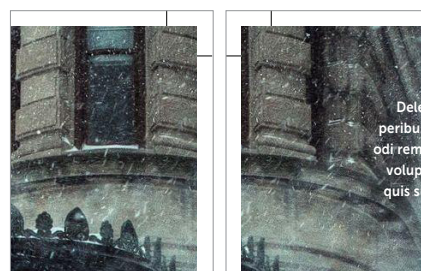
The spread changes to single pages, ready for adding extra bleed.

Be careful not to drag so far that the page merges with the following one.

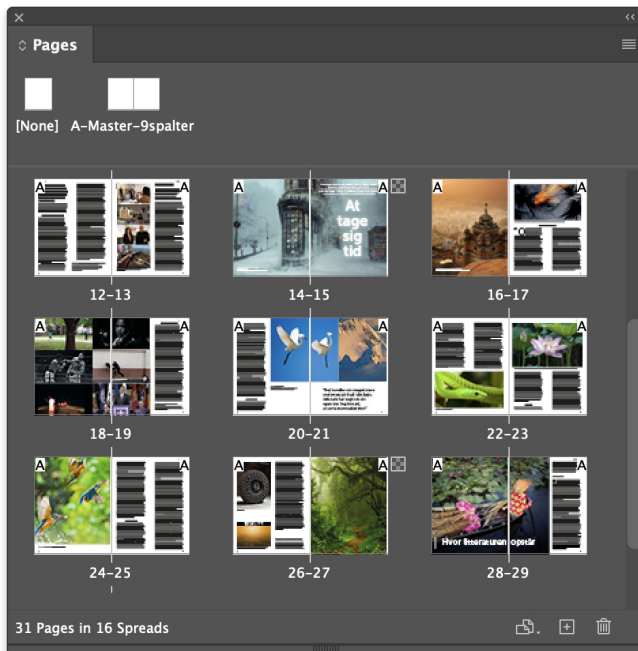


Pages where images touch the spine should always be moved apart and bleed added towards the spine.

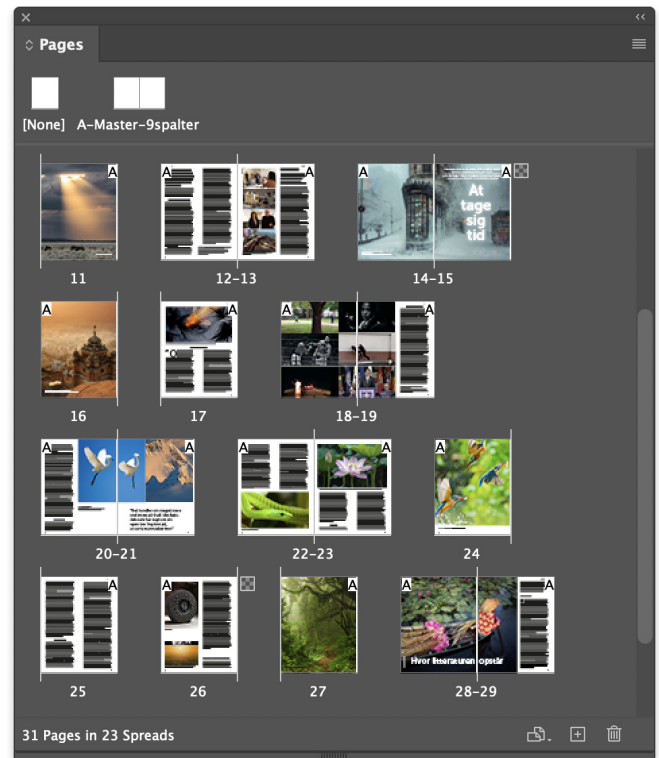
In print-ready PDFs like those on the left, elements (or lack thereof) from the opposite page may be visible after the product is trimmed. On the right is shown how the PDFs should look after the pages have been separated and the image extended.



Pages where images extend across a spread do not need any changes. When the PDF is exported, the necessary bleed will automatically come from the opposite page.



This is how the pages panel may look before and after splitting spreads manually.



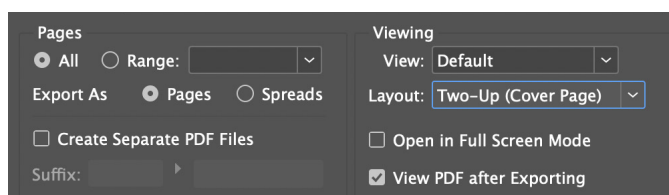
3. Extend the images to bleed into the spine. This can be done in various ways.

- enlarge the image frame
- scale the image a little horizontally
- use Generative Expand in Photoshop (do not do this in InDesign, however tempting, as colours will change and metadata get lost, etc.)
- mirror the images (but be careful not to get too close to the trim line)

Designs containing many elements, layers, or special effects should be grouped before scaling. This will ensure that all elements are scaled proportionally and retain their relative position in the stacking order.

4. Export PDF.

Please note that you cannot export a PDF as spreads when the pages are separated. Instead, use the view option *Layout: Two-Up (Cover Page)*. The pages will display as spreads, but the user can choose to view them as individual pages.



This is also a good way to check if everything looks as it should.

Automation via scripts

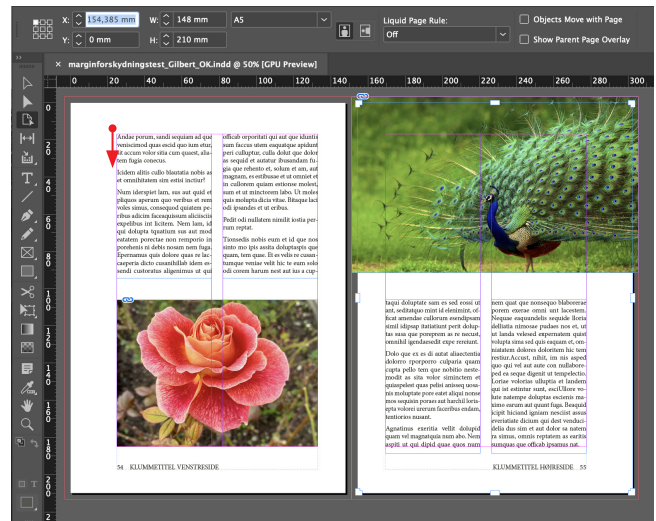
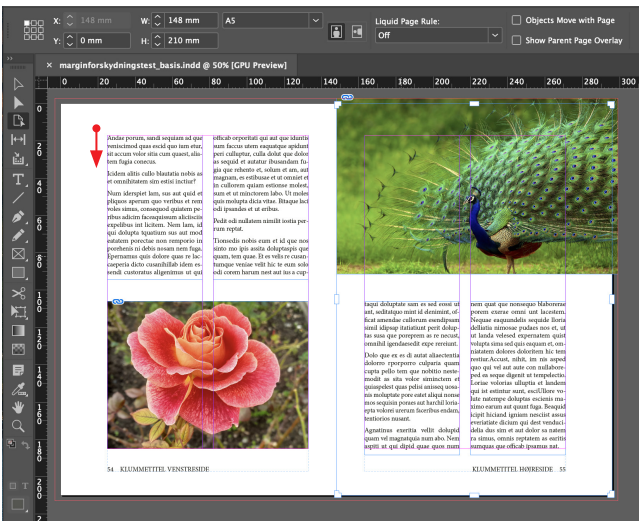
If many pages need to be changed, these two very simple free scripts may save a lot of time. Place them in InDesign's Scripts folder, which can be found by opening the Scripts panel, right-clicking on the User folder, and selecting "Reveal in Finder".

As always when using scripts, it is recommended to work in a copy of the document.

1. "Separate spreads" from <https://gilbertconsulting.com/scripts>

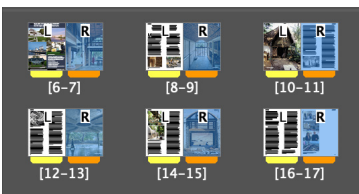
This script creates space for bleed by moving all uneven pages about 6 mm to the right, so you can still see which pages belong together. It also prevents most of the displacements that may occur if you do the same manually. Note that images across spreads will be misplaced on the right-hand pages, and need to be duplicated. If you have a lot of these, the "Separate Pages Script" (described on page 4) may be a better choice.

When the script is finished, extend the images as described on page 2.

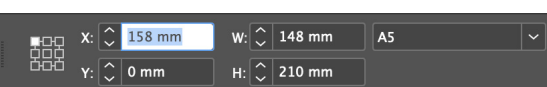


Example of a spread before and after using the script. If you select a right-hand page with the Page Tool, you will see how the x-value has increased by approx. 6 mm.

TIP If 3 mm bleed is not enough, you can move the pages further apart manually after using the script. If you do this before the script has finished, the position of the graphics may shift.



Select the Page Tool, select all right-hand pages in the Pages panel one by one (by clicking while holding down the Ctrl/ Cmd key), and change the x-value for the selected pages.



As an example, if you need 5 mm bleed, add 10 mm to the x value.

2. "Separate Pages Script" from <http://in-tools.com>

This script splits up facing page spreads using the method described on page 1.

Before running the script, you will need to make a few adjustments to keep text columns from shifting as in the example below.

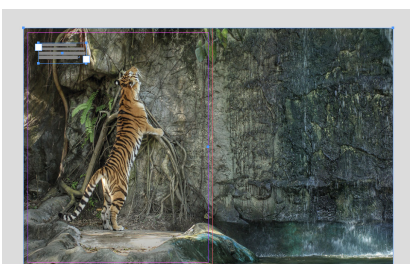


1. Make sure that all graphic elements extend to the bleed limit.
2. If the document contains pages with many design elements or effects or text across spreads, it is recommended to outline the text, or break the text threads, and group everything in order to retain the relative position and stacking order.



Example of a spread with various elements and effects.

Grouping everything before using the script will save you time trying to reconstruct the design and prevent problems from change of stacking order, such as text disappearing, hidden text popping up, or Multiply not being applied as expected.

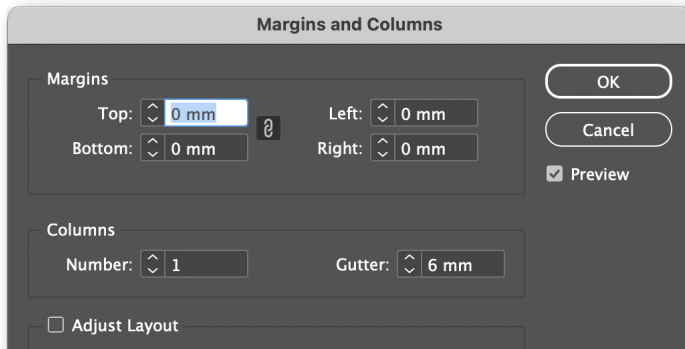


After using the script without prior grouping. There is no easy way to get these elements together again in the proper stacking order.

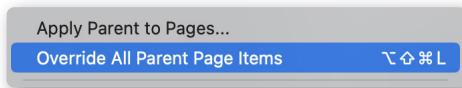
Here all elements have been grouped before using the script. Everything is correctly placed on the left page, and the empty right page makes it easy to see that something is missing.

Here the group on the first page has been copied to the next page, as described on page 5. It is not necessary to crop the excess elements, in fact it is safer not to.

3. Select all pages, choose “Layout ► Margins and Columns...”, and set all margins to 0. “Adjust Layout” should be turned off.

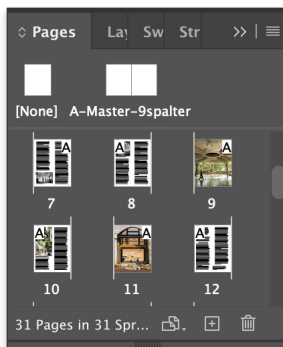


Right-click on the selected pages and choose “Override All Parent Page Items”.



This will break the connection to the parent pages and ensure that all text frames retain their position on the page.

4. Delete all design elements on all Master Pages (including any hidden or locked layers).
5. Double-click the script to start it. No messages will appear, but when it’s done the Pages panel will look like this:



6. Look through the document and extend design elements towards the spine where necessary.
7. After running the script, all grouped spreads will be placed on left pages. Look out for empty right pages, copy the group on the preceding page, select the empty page again, and choose Edit ► Paste in Place, as shown in the example on page 4.
8. Check that everything looks as it should by exporting a PDF with the view option *Layout: Two-Up (Cover Page)*.