What is 4 Color Process Printing?

**Four color process printing** is a system where a color image is separated into 4 different color values (called a color separation) by the use of filters and screens. This used to be done with photographic film on a graphic arts camera, but is usually done digitally with software now. The result is a color separation of 4 images that when transferred to printing plates and sequentially printed on a printing press with the colored inks cyan (blue), magenta (red), yellow and black (the k in cmyk), reproduces the original color image. Most of the entire spectrum or gamut of colors are reproduced with just the four process ink colors. The four color printing process is universally used in the graphic arts and commercial printing industry for the reproduction of color images and text

### **CMYK Process Printing Features**

* It uses the same 4 standardized base colors all the time (cyan, magenta, yellow and black)
* Small dots of these colors are printed at different angles to create the printed image
* The most widely used and cost effective color system in commercial printing
* It's significantly cheaper than toner based or digital printing for larger quantity runs

**The use of color in print increases readership and information retention.**  
Studies in a major publication revealed that the use of color increased readership by 40% or more. A university study showed a 65% increase in the retention of material when full color was used instead of black and white. See more research about [why color matters](http://www.colorcom.com/research/why-color-matters) in marketing.

Also see **[Color in the Printing Process](https://www.printingforless.com/color.html)** for more information on the use of four color process in commercial printing.