

OVERVIEW

A spot matte varnish is used to achieve a unique effect on the final printed piece and add a new dimension to your product. Its use is generally aesthetic and can be utilized to highlight a certain graphic element such as text or images. It can also “flood” the page coating it entirely as to produce a softer finish while maintaining the brilliant color profile of a coated stock. In many ways, a spot varnish is very much like adding a spot color to your design, except that it adds a finishing effect instead of actual color. It also requires the output of a fifth lithographic plate just as a spot color would.

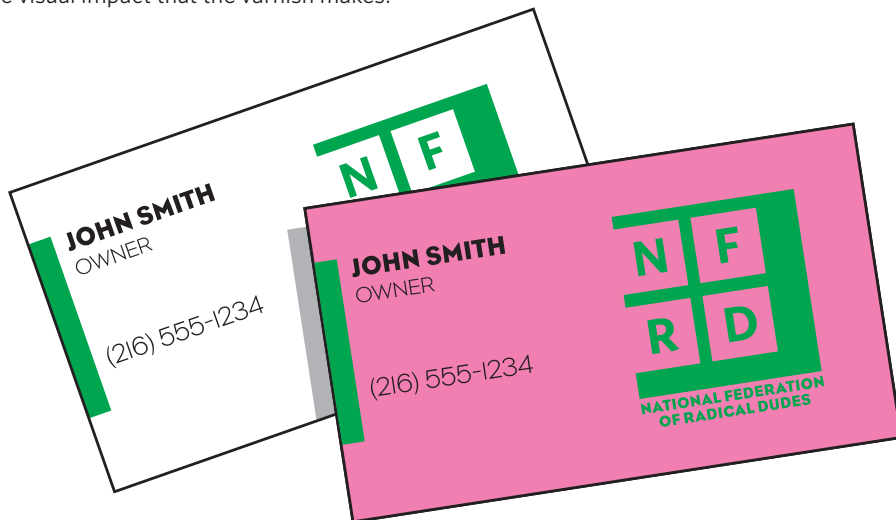
The applied varnish is completely transparent and overprints on top of all other inks, which can be done without any shift in color. You will see the most dramatic results by applying this varnish to a coated gloss stock. The contrast between the matte and gloss areas will be quite apparent, therefore intensifying the visual impact that the varnish makes.

When building a file with a matte varnish, you will need to pick a place-holder color. Because the varnish itself is transparent, there is no way to depict the varnish on your computer monitor. This is why we need a place-holder. It is recommended to make the place-holder color stand out from the rest of your document. For example, if you have designed a business card that has a primarily green color palette, a good choice for your matte varnish place-holder would be solid magenta. Generally, bright and bold colors work the best. This way, there is no confusion as to where the varnish will go.

Finally, remember that the varnish goes onto the area to be *matte*, not glossy. This mistake is made quite often because of the general familiarity with spot UV coating or gloss varnish. Matte varnish will produce a similar result, but must applied in opposite fashion from these other gloss treatments.

A standard business card layout.
No varnish has been applied.

The same layout with a spot matte varnish applied. Magenta was used as the place-holder color. In this instance, the entire white of the card will appear matte on the final product, while all graphics and text will appear glossy.

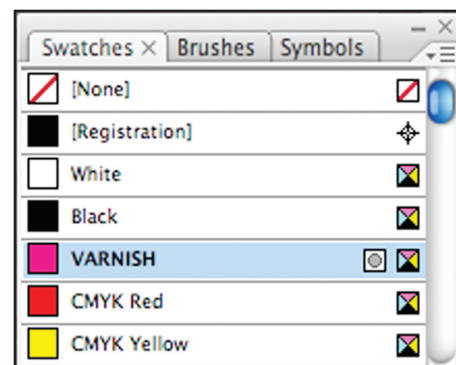


SETUP

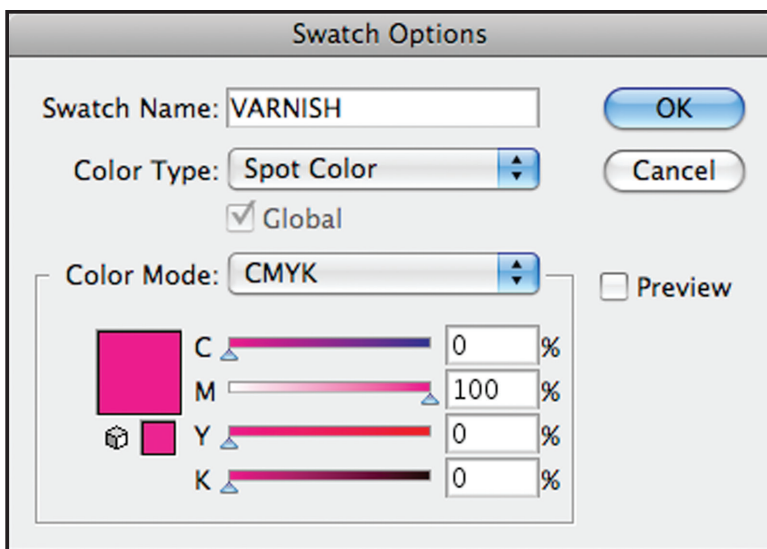
Now that you understand what the varnish does and how it is used, we can go over the steps needed to add one to your files. You will first need to establish separate layers for both your artwork and your varnish. Do this in the layers palette. You can also name these layers accordingly to avoid any confusion. This is not necessary to do before you begin designing your project because you can add and adjust layers at any time. The next step will be to create a special color swatch that will represent the varnish.

To create your swatch, go to your Swatch palette. If the palette is not open, you can find it under Window > Swatches. Enter the palette submenu and select New Swatch. This will bring up a small window in which you can specify the color and swatch type. Name the swatch "VARNISH" and adjust

the color type to spot. Next, you will need to choose the place-holder color. This will be the color in which the spot varnish is depicted on the computer monitor. Remember, this color will be swapped out with the clear varnish when your files are printed.



▲ The Swatches palette showing a spot varnish swatch and several process color swatches.

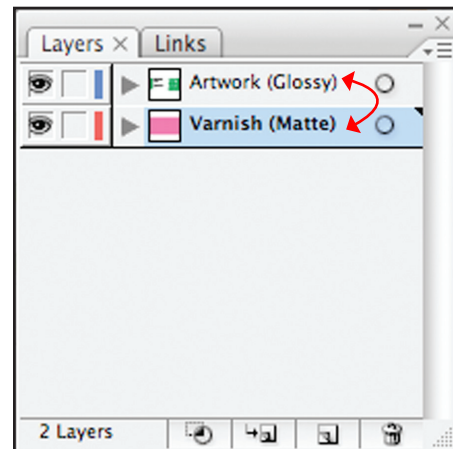


▲ The Swatch Options window. This is where the attributes of a color swatch are set. For the varnish swatch in this project, magenta is used as the place-holder color.

ADDING VARNISH

Once you have created your varnish layer and swatch, you can then add the varnish to your project. The way you implement the varnish depends on what areas you want to appear glossy and which you want to appear matte. You will notice the best results if objects that are meant to stand out are kept glossy while the negative space is applied with varnish. This will allow the graphics to “pop” off the page and subdue the areas which are less important. A very simple way to achieve this effect is by drawing a shape that will encompass the entire area of the art board, including bleed.

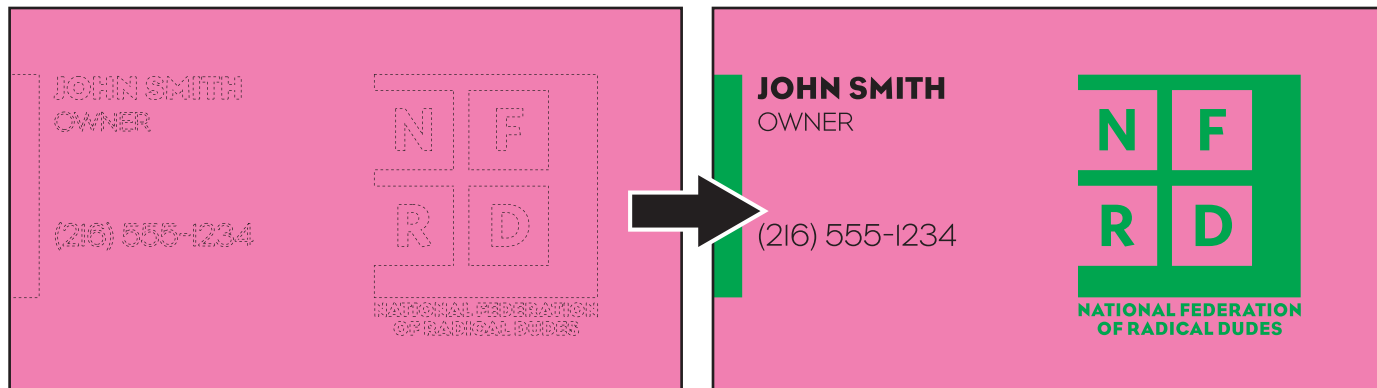
You will notice that doing this covers up all of your artwork, but you can remove varnish coverage on all graphic elements by rearranging your layers. You can place your varnish layer behind the artwork layer by clicking and dragging it to the desired location on the Layers palette. This layer order will keep the artwork uncovered while having the varnish on the white of the paper.



Switch the varnish layer to be below the artwork in the stacking order.

All artwork is covered by the varnish layer. Bringing this layer below the artwork will expose the artwork and remove application of the varnish.

(artwork outline added to show placement under varnish)



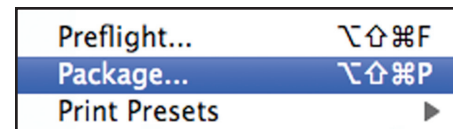
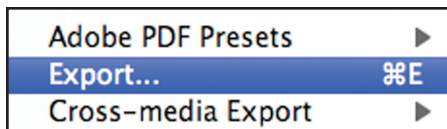
ADDING VARNISH, CONT.

After your file is completely designed and you are ready to save your files for print, you can save one of two ways: export a PDF or package a project folder. To export as a PDF, you will need to choose Export... from the File menu at the top menu bar. A window will prompt asking you to name your file. Select your name and choose Adobe PDF from the Format drop-down menu. Hit Save and you will enter the PDF options window. Under the general tab, make sure you have the Press Quality preset selected and you have enabled all pages to export. In the Compression tab, do not downsample or compress any images to ensure the best quality. Finally, under Marks and Bleeds, ensure that the bleed settings are set to at least .125" on all sides. You can now export your pdf.

To package your catalog, use the Package feature under the File menu. This will allow you to package your complete project into a folder, including all linked images and fonts used in your document. After you have saved the package, we recommend you compress it in a zip file in order to send it to us through our website.

Your catalog project is now ready to be sent to print! If we do happen to encounter any issues with your files, you will be notified so that the issue can be addressed and resolved as quickly as possible.

The Export and Package features under the File menu.



The Adobe PDF Export options window. The different sections can be accessed through the list on the left.

