



What are the rules for marking up proofs?

THE ANSWER to this question depends to a large extent on how much technical knowledge the designer has. The following pages look specifically at checking size, crop, position etc., but it is the way the designer marks up colour corrections that is crucial to a successful finished result.

If the designer does not have in-depth technical

knowledge of reproduction, it is much better to state the result required, rather than tell the repro house how to achieve it. For example, if the proof has an area of green which is lighter than the green on the transparency, the instruction "Make this green darker – see original" is sufficient to tell the repro house what needs doing. Telling the repro house *how* to do the correction would involve saying "increase cyan", possibly even mentioning by what percentage the cyan should be increased. However, colour correction is an area where a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. In the example above, the designer may not know enough to realize that the cyan strength is correct, but it is the yellow that needs to be reduced.

For most designers then, the correction of colour consists in marking up the proofs where the colour is not sufficiently close to the original and saying in what way it differs. It is not enough to say "Reproof – see original"; you must indicate to the repro house in what way you think the proof differs.

The designer should not write a little essay about the proof, such as "The trees look a rather darker green than the transparency, but the blue in the river should not be any lighter and the sky is correct", but specify "Lighten green in trees". If a proof is nearly correct, it is best to accept it, as to request correction and a reproof may result in over-correction.

Where a reproof is required, this should be stated clearly. Knowing when to ask for reproofs is a matter of experience, but as a general rule, if the proof is so far away from the original that you are worried that it may still not be correct after correction, then a reproof is justified.

STANDARD COLOUR CORRECTION MARKS

The symbols in British Standard BS 4785 are not often used, but can be useful if the designer has the technical knowledge to mark up proofs in this way. It probably involves knowing how to use a densitometer, and how to read colour bars.

The instruction "improve detail and modelling" refers to the highlights and details that need enhancing. Hardness and softness are the terms used to describe whether the edges of a colour, shape or tone are either too sharp or too indistinct.

If an image is out of register, the films for one or more of the four colours have been misaligned. If the edges of the image are not in register, the film has been positioned incorrectly on the plate. "Slur" refers to a proofing defect which elongates the halftone dots.

Marginal mark

Instruction	Marginal mark
1 Passed for press	✓
2 Reproof	△
3 Reduce contrast	□
4 Increase contrast	■
5 Improve detail or modelling	◻
6 Too hard, make softer	U
7 Too soft, make sharper	Λ
8 Rectify uneven tint	●
9 Repair broken type, rule or tint	×
10 Improve register	⊞
11 Correct slur	⋈

Process colour	Increase	Reduce
Yellow	Y+	Y-
Magenta	M+	M-
Cyan	C+	C-
Black	B+	B-