Examples of Required Cropping to Fit Specific Print Sizes

Full Frame Prints

2” x 3”
4” x 6”
8” x 12”
12” x 18”
16” x 24”
20” x 30”

Print Ratio: 1(h) to **1.5** (w)
Image Ratio: 1(h) to **1.5** (w)
No cropping required

Non-Full Frame Prints

5” x 7”

Print Ratio: 1(h) to **1.4** (w)
Image Ratio: 1(h) to **1.5** (w)

Slight cropping will be required

Non-Full Frame Prints

11” x 14”

Print Ratio: 1(h) to **1.27** (w)
Image Ratio: 1(h) to **1.5** (w)

Slight cropping will be required

Non-Full Frame Prints

8” x 10”
16” x 20”

Print Ratio: 1(h) to **1.2** (w)
Image Ratio: 1(h) to **1.5** (w)

Moderate cropping will be required

Non-Full Frame Prints

5” x 5”
10” x 10”

Print Ratio: 1(h) to **1** (w)
Image Ratio: 1(h) to **1.5** (w)

Extensive cropping will be required

Cropping: Where Did My Picture Go?

Cropping simply refers to removing a portion of the image before the final print. This document will only discuss the required cropping necessary to fit the format of the desired print.

Most people think that an 8x10 print should be exactly the same as a 4x6 print (just larger) but it actually is not. The 8x10 will need to be cropped resulting in a portion of the image not showing up on the print.

To better understand this concept you must first know the ***ratio*** of your digital image. Don't confuse image ratio to resolution. Resolution refers to the number of pixels in the image and that is not a factor here.

Ratio refers to the height of the image compared to the width. The ratio depends on the type of camera used. As an example, most high quality digital SLR cameras produce an image with a ratio of 1 (High) to 1.5 (Wide). That means to see the entire image your print must also have a height to width ratio of 1 (H) to 1.5 (W).

Prints that exactly match the image ratio are referred to as "Full Frame" prints because they do not require any cropping. Examples of full frame prints for an image with a ratio 1 (H) to 1.5 (W) would be 2x3, 4x6, 16x24, 20x30, etc. Note that the width of the print is 1.5 times larger than the height. Since the print ratio exactly matches the ratio of the image, no cropping is required.

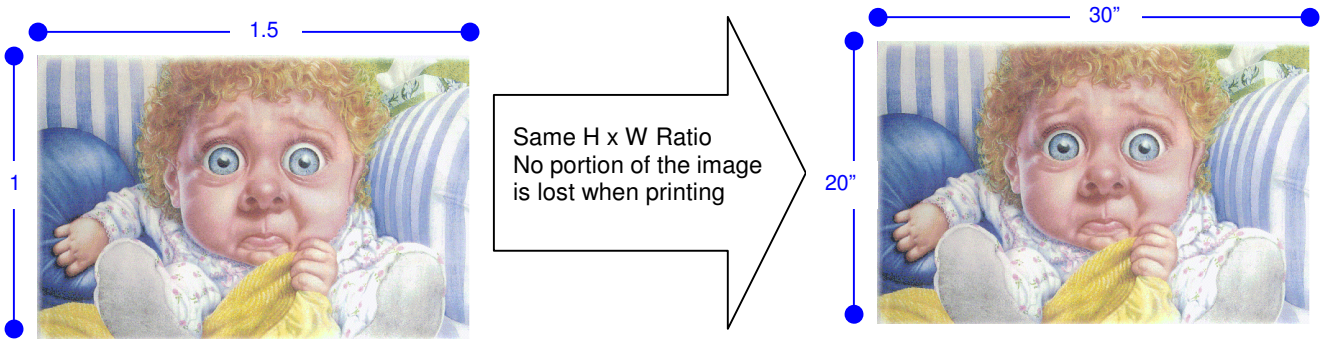

IMAGE Ratio 1 (H) x 1.5 (W) from the camera

PRINT Ratio 1 (H) x 1.5 (W)

As shown on the previous page, prints that would require cropping would be 5x7, 8x10, 11x14, etc.

As an example, in the case of the 8x10 the print width is now only 1.2 times larger than the height. That would require some of the image to be cropped off the sides to fit the format of an 8x10.

Tell the Photographer What You Need

It's important to talk with your photographer to discuss the types and sizes of prints that you'll be wanting. If, for example, you have an antique frame that requires a 10 x 10 print, the photographer can shoot the image allowing for additional space on both sides that will be cropped off when printed.

Landscape vs. Portrait Formats

Similarly, if your primary need is for prints in a portrait (tall) format rather than landscape (wide), the photographer can adjust his shooting style. Certainly it is possible to convert a landscape image into a portrait format print but it will require extensive cropping as shown below.

Landscape image cropped into
a portrait format for an 8x10 print

You must also keep in mind the ratio of the desired print since that will impact the amount of cropping that is required. The same landscape image, cropped into a 4x6 portrait will come extremely close to cutting off the subject's arm.

Landscape image cropped into
a portrait format for a 4x6 print