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1 Introduction

1.1 Welcome to AquaSoft YouDesign

AquaSoft YouDesign - for photo books with your most beautiful memories

We are glad that you have chosen **AquaSoft YouDesign Photo Book**. With **AquaSoft YouDesign** you can create attractively designed photo books from your photos and texts. Choose from the included design templates or create books and albums according to your own ideas. The result is a personalized gift and a great personal memento.

If you can't find the answer to a specific question in this guide, feel free to contact us personally by sending an email to support@aquasoft.de. We will be happy to help you!

1.2 System requirements

|	
Supported operating systems	Windows 11, 10
	32-bit- as well as 64-bit systems are supported.
	macOS from version 10.14 (Mojave)
RAM	4GB
CPU	2GHz, Multi-core processor advantageous

1.3 Installation and uninstallation

Installing the software

Directly after the purchase on www.aquasoft.net you will receive a download link and the license key. If you have already installed the demo version before, you can unlock it directly with the license key.

If you need the installation file again, you can download it from your [AquaSoft customer login](#) at any time. You can also view the license key there.

If you purchased the software through a reseller, register with your license key at [AquaSoft Product Registration](#) to receive regular updates.

Unlocking the software
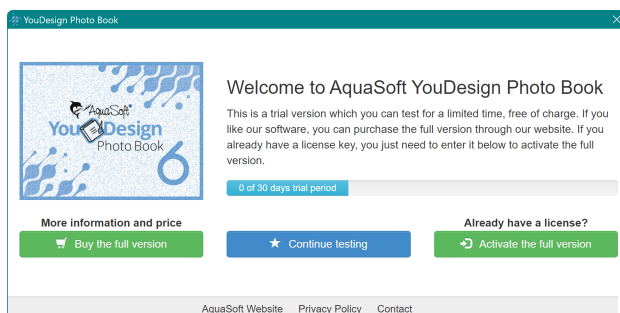
Start window with activation request

After starting the software, you will be prompted to activate it. To do this, click on the green button **"Activate the full version"**. Now you can enter your license key, which you received after the purchase. Alternatively, you can also use your login data (for the customer login) to activate the software.

Uninstalling the software

If you want to uninstall the software, you can do this via the Windows Settings in the *Programs* or *Apps* area.

In addition, we offer an uninstall file. You can use this if you cannot remove the program via the Windows Settings. You can find the corresponding file at [AquaSoft Wiki:](aquasoft.de/go/qg-wv) (Link addres: aquasoft.de/go/qg-wv).

Updates

As soon as an update for the software is available, the program will inform you about it. You can download and install the update from within the program. You can also find the latest version for download in your customer login at any time.

You can see which version you are using in the program under "Menu / About...".

1.4 Supported file types

The following file types are supported:

YouDesign Photo Book (Windows)

AquaSoft image container (*.asimage)
AquaSoft JPNG (*.asjpng)
BMP images (*.bmp, *.dib, *.rle)
Extended metafiles (*.emf)
Graphics Interchange Format (*.gif)
High Efficiency Image File Format (*.heic, *.heif)
Icons (*.ico)
JPEG (*.jpg, *.jpeg)
JPEG 2000 (*.jp2, *.j2k, *.jpc, *.j2c)
PCX (*.pcx, *.pcc, *.scr)
Photoshop images (*.psd)
Portable Network Graphic images (*.png)
Portable Pixelmap (*.pbm,*.pgm,*.ppm,*.pxm)
Scalable Vector Graphics (*.svg)
TGA (*.tga, *.targa, *.vda, *.icb, *.vst, *.pix)
Tiff (*.tiff, *.tif, *.g3n, *.g3f)
Windows Metafiles (*.wmf)

YouDesign Photo Book (Mac)

BMP images (*.bmp, *.dib, *.rle)
Open EXR by Industrial Light and Magic (*.exr)
Graphics Interchange Format (*.gif)
High Efficiency Image File Format (*.heic, *.heif)*
Icons (*.icns, *.ico)
JPEG (*.jpg, *.jpeg)
JPEG 2000 (*.jp2, *.j2k, *.jpc, *.j2c)
Photoshop images (*.psd)
Portable Document Format (*.pdf)
Portable Network Graphic images (*.png)
Scalable Vector Graphics (*.svg)
TGA (*.tga, *.targa, *.vda, *.icb, *.vst, *.pix)
imagesTiff (*.tiff, *.tif, *.g3n, *.g3f)

*from macOS version 10.14 (Mojave)

2 Program overview

2.1 Keyboard layout

In **AquaSoft YouDesign** you can also access some functions via the keyboard. Many keyboard shortcuts are displayed when you hover the mouse over the corresponding button for a moment. You can also use some typical Windows shortcuts.

Keyboard shortcuts / key combinations in AquaSoft YouDesign

Page editor vertical scroll: **SHIFT+MOUSE WHEEL**

Page editor horizontal scroll: **MOUSE WHEEL**

Change zoom in page editor: **CTRL+MOUSE WHEEL**

Maintain aspect ratio of the object when resizing: **SHIFT+MOUSE MOVE**

Maintain center of an object when resizing: **ALT+MOUSE MOVE**

Windows keyboard shortcuts / key combinations

Undo action: **CTRL+Z**

Redo action: **CTRL+Y**

Copy: **CTRL+C**

Cut: **CTRL+X**

Paste: **CTRL+V**

Delete: **DEL**

Select multiple elements: hold down **CTRL** and click on elements

New project: **CTRL+N**
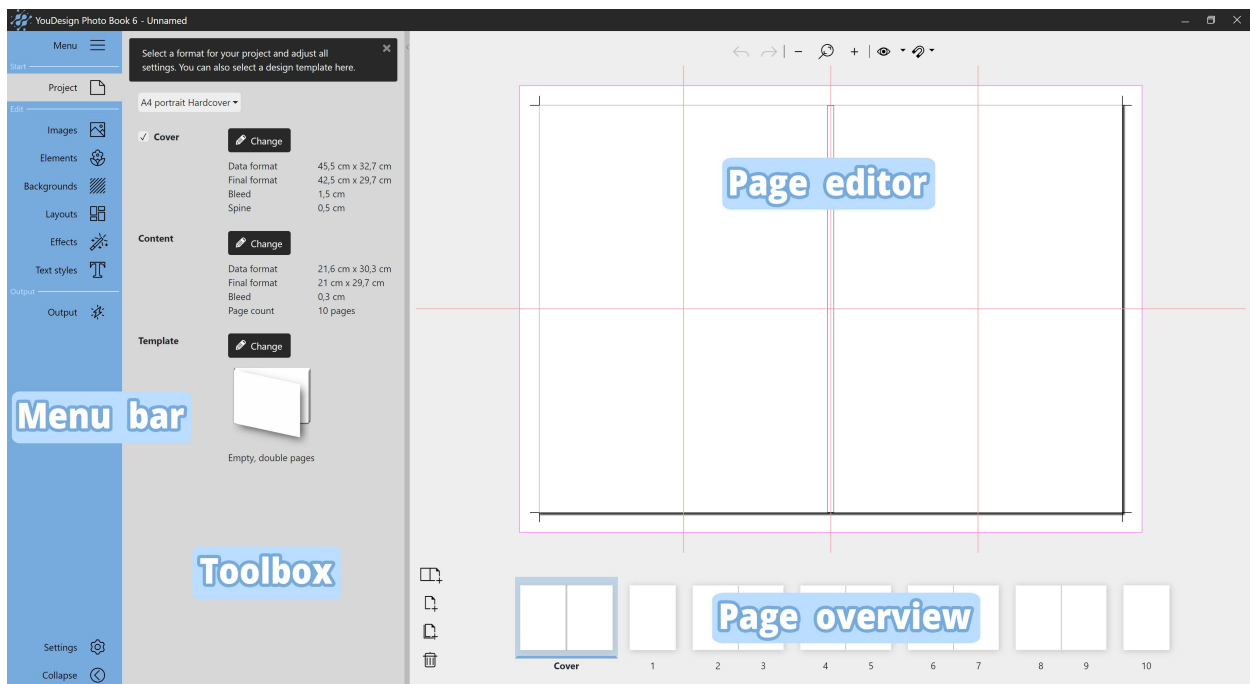
Open project: **CTRL+O**

Save project: **CTRL+S**

Save project as...: **SHIFT+CTRL+S**

Help/Manual: **F1**

2.2 Program overview

The structure of the surface

After starting the program you will see this view.

Program overview

Use the colored **Menu bar** on the left edge to select your work step from the Start, Edit, Output areas. Next to it is the **Toolbox** with all the tools available for the currently selected menu item.
On the right you will find the **Page editor**, the workspace, and below it the **Page overview**.

The Menu bar

☰	Create new project, Open project, Save project, Save project as, Archive project, Exit program Call help, program info, search update, change license
▢	Select template, customize template or make settings for own template
▣	File browser, from which images are dragged to the page editor, and image tray, for bookmarking images
❀	Decorative elements for use in the Page editor
▨	Full-page background designs for use in the Page editor
▦	Image arrangement layouts for use in the Page editor
✦	Effects for photos, decorations and text elements for use in the Page editor
𝕋	Text objects for use in the Page editor
✦	Project output

⚙	Activate/deactivate language settings, hints and dialogs
◁	Minimize/maximize the Menu bar
▷	

The Toolbox

In the **Toolbox** you will find the tools for creating your photo book. The detailed descriptions of the tools can be found in the following chapters.
For the tools *Images, Elements, Backgrounds, Layouts, Effects, Text styles* you will find a slider at the bottom of the **Toolbox** to change the zoom level of the **Toolbox**.
With *Search* and a keyword you can search the respectively opened **Toolbox**. Click on the crossed-out circle symbol to remove your search word. You will then be shown all the selection options again.

The Page editor

In the **Page editor**, you can see how images and text are arranged on the book pages. The **Page editor** is your workspace for placing objects.
Move images, backgrounds, decorations and texts to the desired position. Use the handle points on the objects to zoom in or out. Arrange your images using image layouts and apply image effects.

←	Undo last action (can be executed multiple times)
→	Restore last action
− +	Reduce page view / Enlarge side view
🔍	Zoom page view to full size
👁	Activate/deactivate display of bleed, crop marks, center lines `Pro version` Show/Hide Ruler, Show/Hide Custom auxilliary lines
🧲	Enable/disable snapping to centerlines, page margins, rotation grid, bleed, elements. `Pro version` Enable/disable snapping for Custom auxilliary lines

Toolbar with top ruler

Rulers `Pro version`

In the Pro version, the **Page editor** is bordered by rulers on the left and top. You can show/hide the rulers at the Grid item.
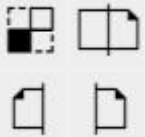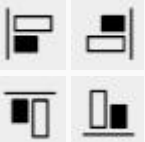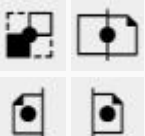
Custom auxilliary lines `Pro version`

To use your own auxilliary lines, drag an new auxilliary line from the ruler while holding down the left mouse button. Auxilliary lines can be dragged from the horizontal ruler as well as from the vertical ruler. The custom auxilliary lines are displayed in blue in the **Page editor**. Custom auxilliary lines can be moved with the mouse in the page editor. To do this, move the mouse over the auxilliary line until a black double arrow appears, then move it while holding down the left mouse button.

To remove a custom auxilliary line, click it with the right mouse button.

Tools for object alignment and mirroring Pro version

You can use the following tools to align objects on a page or spread.

	Alignment: Align to selection / Align to side / Align to left side / Align to right side
	Align left / Align right / Align top / Align bottom
	Center horizontally / Center vertically
	Mirror axis: Center of the selection / Center of the page / Center of the left side / Center of the right side
	Mirror vertically / Mirror horizontally

You can find application examples for Change alignment and Mirror in chapter "Layouts"

Objects in the Page editor

Right-click on objects in the **Page editor** to find more functions.

	Properties - changing properties of the element
	Edit crop - crop image or change image crop
	Cut - cuts out the selected element
	Copy - copies the selected element
	Paste - inserts an element from the clipboard

🗑	*Delete* - deletes the selected element
⬙	*Placement* - change the arrangement of the element

The properties of an object can also be opened by double-clicking on an element in the **Page editor**.

Page overview

In the lower **Page overview**, click on the individual pages or the book cover to edit them in the **Page editor**. With the icons on the left edge you can add or remove book pages.

|	
	Inserts a new double page after the selected one.
	Inserts a new single page after the selected one.
	Duplicates the selected page and inserts it after the selected one. In the next step you can enter the number of copies.
🗑	Deletes the selected pages.

3 Designing step by step

3.1 First steps (quick guide)

How to create a photo book using a template available in the program.

Start the program. You are in the *"Project"* menu area. You can save your creation progress at any time via the *"Menu - Save project"* item.
Your book project will be saved with the **.YD*BOOK file extension.

### Select format
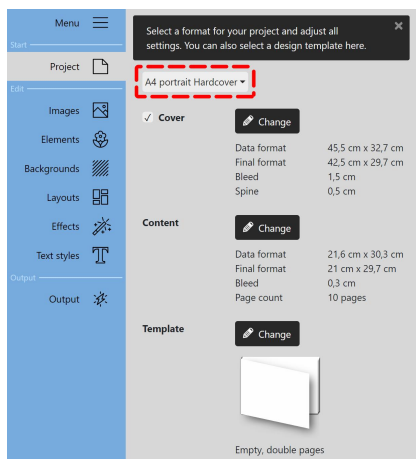
Change book format

Use the small black triangle to change the format for your photo book. Scroll through the selection to choose the appropriate DIN A portrait, landscape or square format. Depending on the selected preset, new precalculated values for the *Cover*, the *Contents* and the *Spine* will appear.

If necessary, adjust the precalculated values to the specifications of your print provider. To change the individual values for the *Cover* or the *Contents*, press the *"Change"* button. In the window that opens, enter the dimensions from your print provider and confirm with *OK*.

You can change the *page number* at the *Contents* item using the *"Change"* button.

Select template

In the lower part of the **Toolbox**, at Templates, click the *"Change"* button to choose from the available designs.
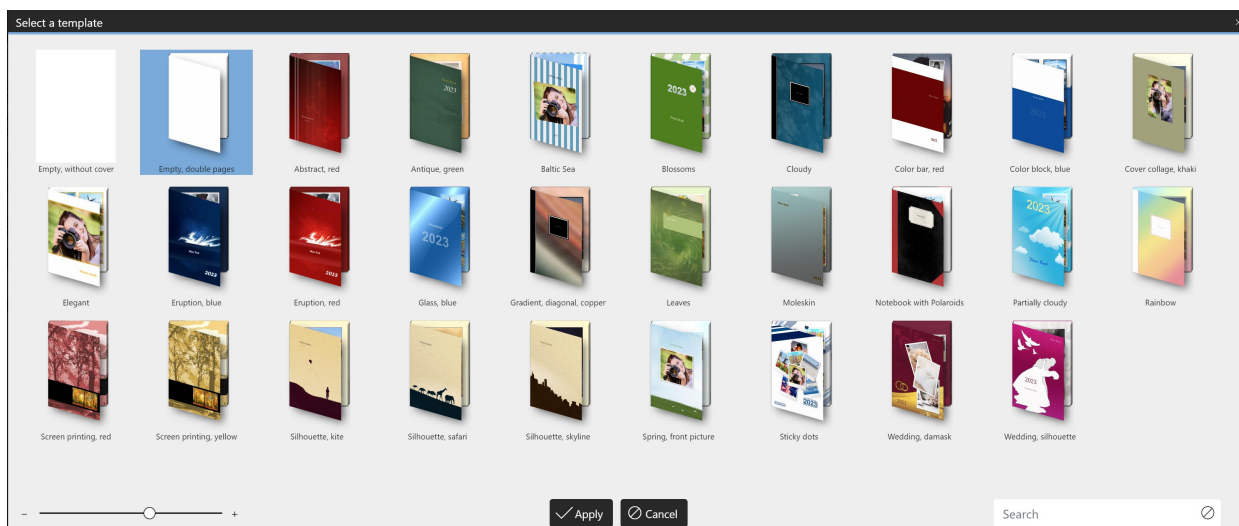
Select template

Click the desired design. Use the *"Apply"* button to confirm the selection.

You will now see the template in the **Page editor** and can start filling the book pages.

Adding images
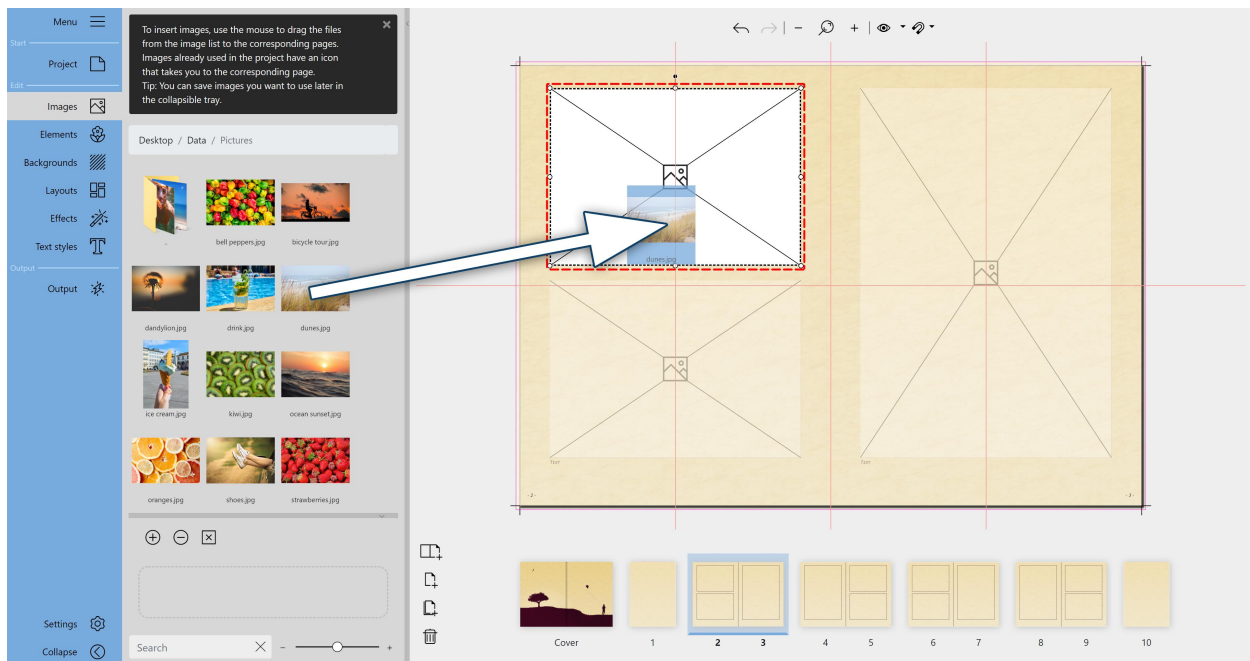
The image is dragged from the Toolbox file browser to a placeholder in the Page editor

Click on "*Images*" in the **Menu bar**. In the **Toolbox**, you will see the **File browser**. Navigate to your images folder.

Drag an image from the **File browser** to the **Page editor** to the area of a *placeholder*. Release the image when the *placeholder* turns white. The image is adjusted according to the template.

To edit the image crop, *right-click* on the image and select *Edit crop*.

At the bottom of the **Page editor**, the **Page overview**, you can switch pages with a *mouse click*.

Adding captions
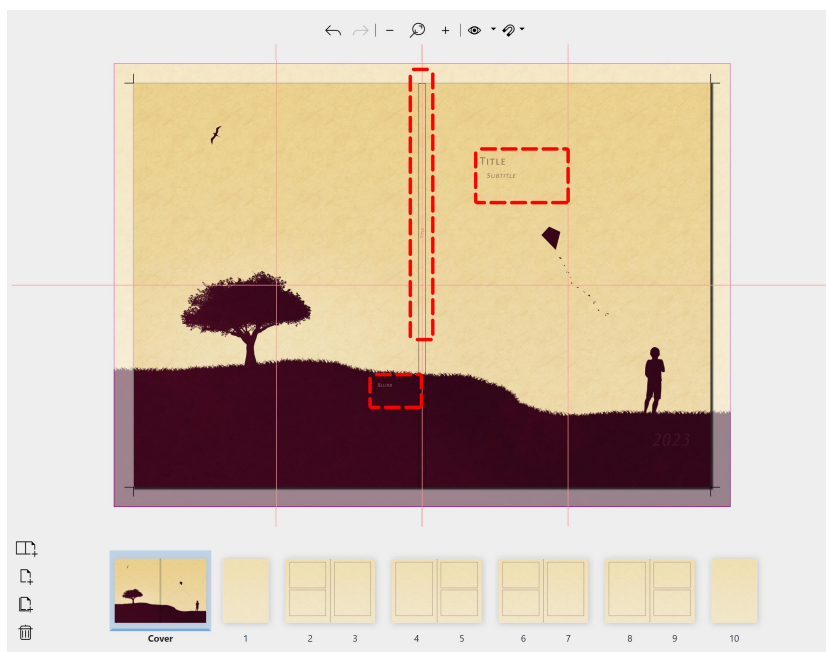
Marked in red: Text fields in the template

Depending on the selected template, text fields are already available for labeling. These usually include title, year and author lines on the cover.

Edit text field

Double-click on an existing text object to open the **Text editor**. You can also access it by *right-clicking* on the text object and selecting *Properties*. Paste your text into the text field and adjust the text properties if necessary.

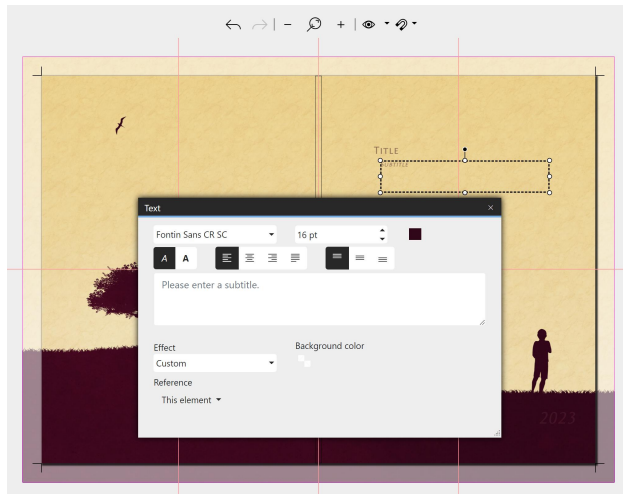To insert your own text object, switch to *Text styles* in the **Menu bar**. Drag a text object to the desired position in the **Page editor**. To edit the text object, *double-click* on it or *right-click* and select **Properties**.

Close the text input window via its cross in the upper right corner.

Output
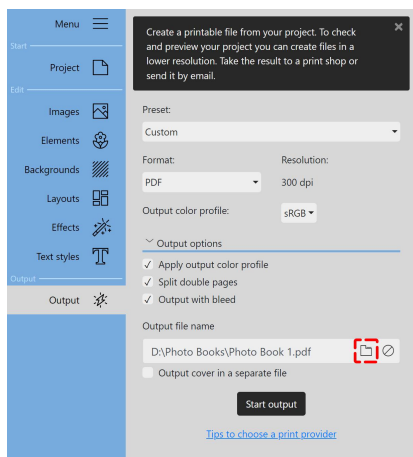
Output as PDF

Click on the *Output* menu item. Use the folder icon to the right of the input field to select or change the storage location.
Check *Output with bleed* to get a PDF document with bleed marks. Click *Start Output* to start the PDF output.

You can now print the generated PDF yourself or pass it on to a print shop.

More information on the topic can be found in the ["Output" chapter](#).

4 Creating a project

4.1 Selecting and changing the format

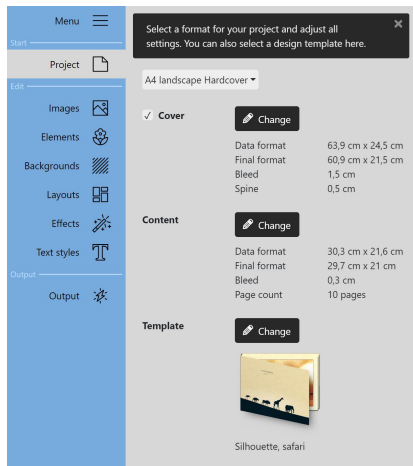Under the menu item *Project* you define the *format* and the *number of pages* for your photo book. Choose a *template* suitable for your *format* or start your own design with blank pages. The toolbox is divided into four sections: Format preset, Cover, Content and Template.

Selecting the format

Toolbox "Project"

Format default

Choose from the DIN A standard formats in the Toolbox at the top. The maximum output size is DIN A3. There is no limit in the Pro version.

Wenn Sie eine der Vorgaben wählen, erscheinen die vorberechneten Werte für den *Einband,* den *Inhalt* und den *Buchrücken*. Für den *Einband* und den *Inhalt* gelten in der Regel unterschiedliche *Beschnittzugaben*. Über den Button *Ändern* können Sie alle Werte anpassen.

When you have your book produced by a print provider of your choice, you create your book exactly according to their print or bleed specifications.

Cover

At the *Cover* item you can use the *Change* button to adjust the values for the *size* and *bleed* of the cover and for the *spine* to the specifications of your print provider. If you remove the *checkmark* from *Cover*, the project will be created without a book cover.

The bleed refers to the margin that extends beyond the final format of the printed matter. This margin is trimmed off during finishing. Always place your objects planned right up to the edge in the bleed to avoid unsightly "flashes" on the edge of the book. The page backgrounds offered in the software are automatically guided into the bleed.

Content

In the *Content* section you can use the *Change* button to adjust the values for *page size*, *bleed* and *spine* to the specifications of your print provider. You can also specify the number of pages for your book in this section.

Template

At the *Template* item you can access our provided book templates via the *Change* button. Select a *template* and confirm with *Apply*.

The *templates* already contain *placeholders* for images and texts (images and graphics of the template preview are only examples and do not have to be part of the actual template).

Repeat the process to switch to another *template*.

Subsequent template changes can lead to loss of content or shifts! If you change to one of the "Empty..." templates, no previous designs will be adopted - an empty template will appear.

Changing the format defaults

To edit the *Cover* or *Content* defaults, press the *Change* button in the corresponding section. The following window will open.
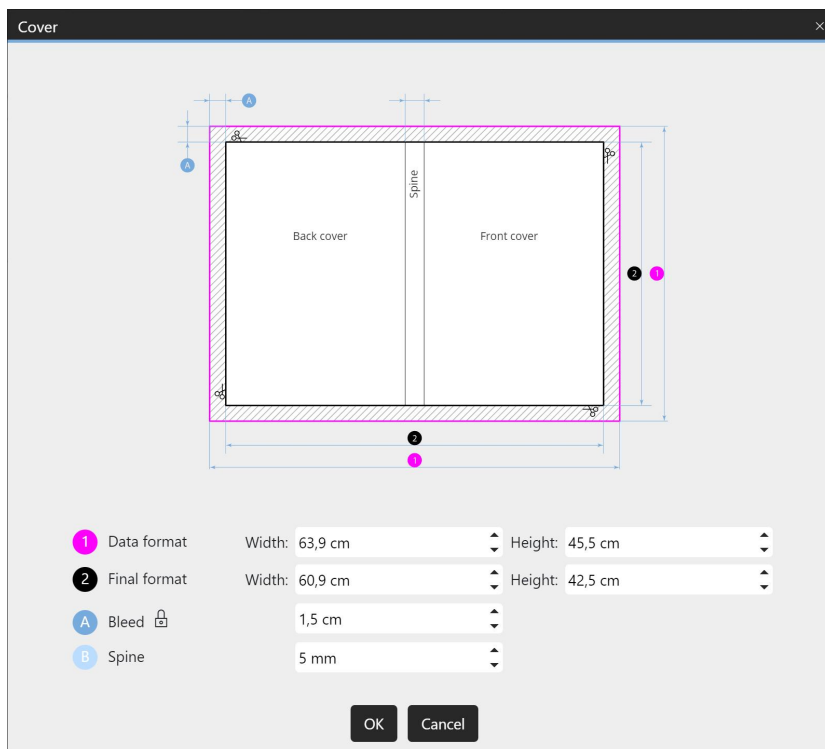
Change properties for cover

The schematic diagram illustrates the characteristics of the cover or the contents.

Always use the print specifications or bleed specifications that your print provider specifies.

If your print provider requires different bleeds at the edges, click the *Lock* icon. Now you can specify different bleeds for left, right, top and bottom.

Apply changes using the *OK* button.

Note: The display is not dynamic, i.e. the display does not change when other values are entered. It is for orientation purposes only.

Changing the format or template

If you decide to use another format or template after you have started designing, the program will try to transfer already inserted photos to the new format/template. However, if you switch to one of the "Empty..." templates, no previous designs will be applied - a blank template will appear.

Subsequent template changes can lead to content losses or shifts!

4.2 Adding and removing pages

Adding or duplicating pages

During the photo book creation you can add additional *single* or *double pages* to your project. You can do this using the icons on the left side of the **Page overview**.

|	
	Inserts a new double page after the selected page.
	Inserts a new single page after the selected page.
	Duplicates the selected page and inserts it after the selected page. In the next step, the number of copies can be entered.
	Removes the selected page.

Alternatively, right-click on a page in the **Page overview**. The context menu offers you the options *Cut, Copy, Paste before this page, Paste after this page*.

Duplicate page ×

How many copies of the page do you want to create?

Number of copies 1

OK   Cancel
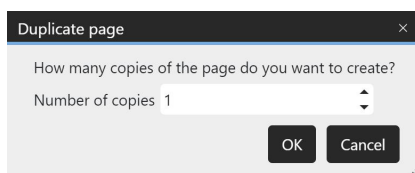
Set number of new pages when duplicating

To apply a self-designed page design to additional book pages, select the page to be duplicated in the **Page editor** and click the **Duplicate** icon. Enter the number of copies.

For colored templates, the number of pages can also be increased at the menu item Project at "Contents". With "Empty, ..." templates, all existing (and possibly already designed) pages are then newly created and overwritten empty.

Removing pages

To remove a page from your project
- select the page you want to remove in the **Page overview** and click the trash can icon
- right-click the page to be removed in the **Page overview** and select *Delete* in the context menu

Changing the page order

If a page is to be moved to a different position in the page order, use the mouse to drag the page to the desired position in the **Page overview**. A vertical line marks the insertion position.

Alternatively, you can right-click the page you want to move in the **Page overview** and select *Cut*.
Then right-click the page after which you want to paste the cut page and select *Paste after this page*.

5 Images

5.1 Adding images

Under the menu item *Images* the **Toolbox** appears divided into two parts. In the upper part you will find the **File browser**, with which you can browse your computer. The lower part serves as [Tray](#).

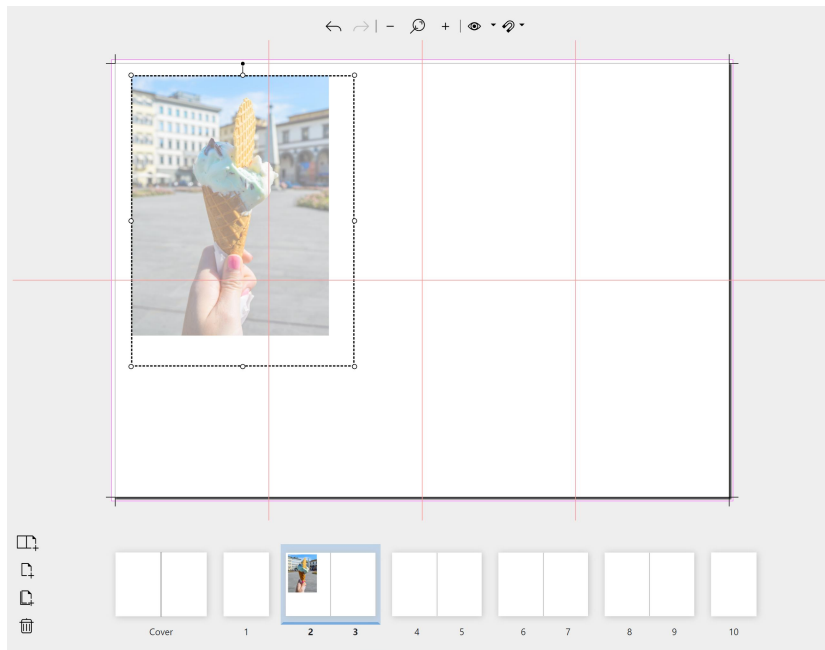### Inserting an image into template or layout
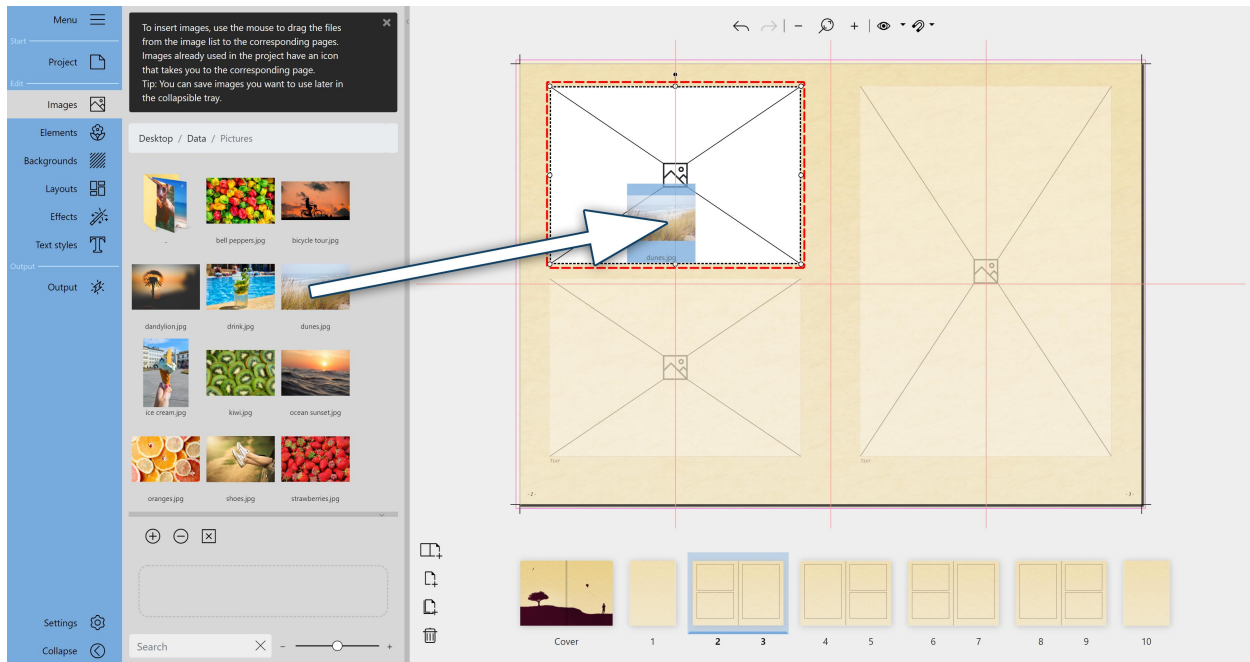
Insert image into template

In the **Page overview**, select the page on which the image is to be inserted by clicking on it. If you are working with a template or [layout](#), **drag** the image onto the **placeholder** with the left mouse button pressed until it turns white and release the mouse button. The program will crop the image.

Inserting an image into blank page

In the **Page overview**, select the page to be filled with one click. *Drag* an image from the **File browser** or **Tray** directly onto the open page to the desired position in the **Page editor**.
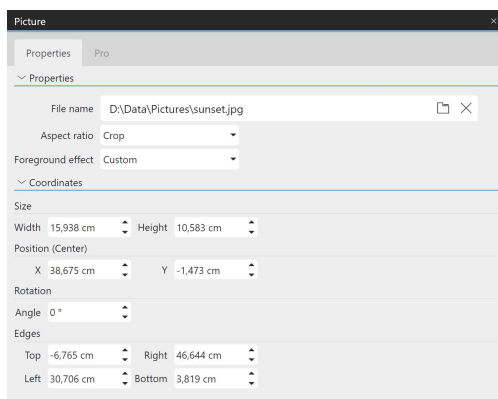
Changing the image size

At the corner handles of the dashed selection frame, drag the image in the **Page editor** to the desired *size*. Hold down the SHIFT key while dragging the handles to maintain the aspect ratio.

At the rotation handle centered on top of the image, the image can be rotated.

Resizing an image in the Page editor

In the Pro properties the image size is also displayed

This feature is only available in the Pro version.

In the **Properties** of the image you can also set the *size* and *position* of the image by *manual input*. Open the **Properties** window of an image in the **Page editor** by *double-clicking* on the image or by *right-clicking* on the image and selecting **Properties**.

At the top of the *Pro tab* you will find additional design settings. For example, by adding the appropriate value, you can change the opacity of the image.

Edit image crop
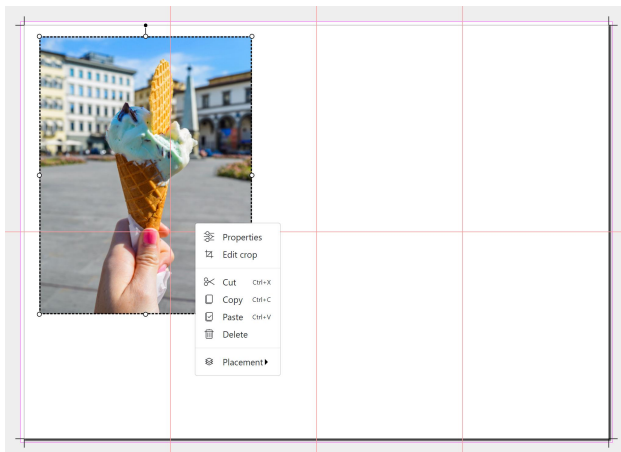
Edit crop

Right-click on an image and select *Edit crop* to change the image crop. This is recommended for images that have a different aspect ratio than the image selection frame you set. This way you can also zoom images.
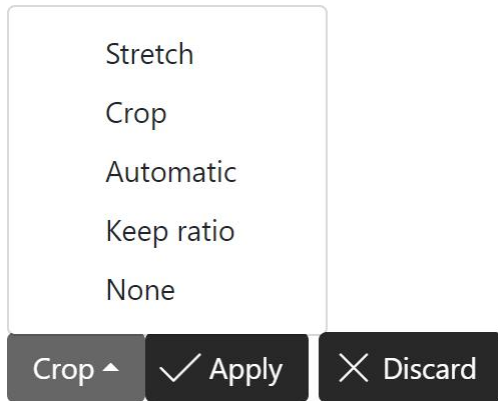

Move image section

Use the mouse to move the image under the crop frame. The pale areas of the image will not be displayed on the photo book page. Confirm the new crop by clicking the *Apply* button.
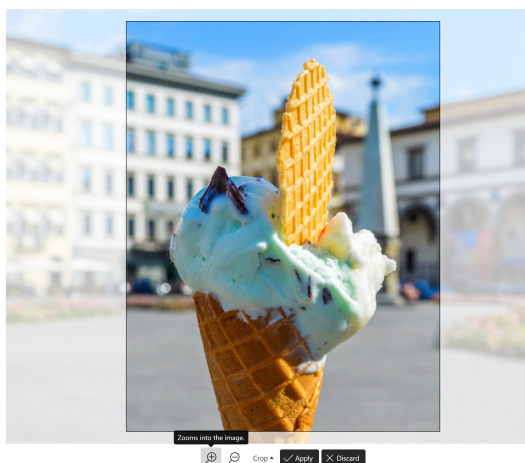
Zoom into image subject

To zoom in or out of an image subject, use the *magnifiers* at the bottom of the image.

The following modes are available for the **aspect ratio**:

Stretch: Stretches or compresses the image to fit the aspect ratio of the selection frame.
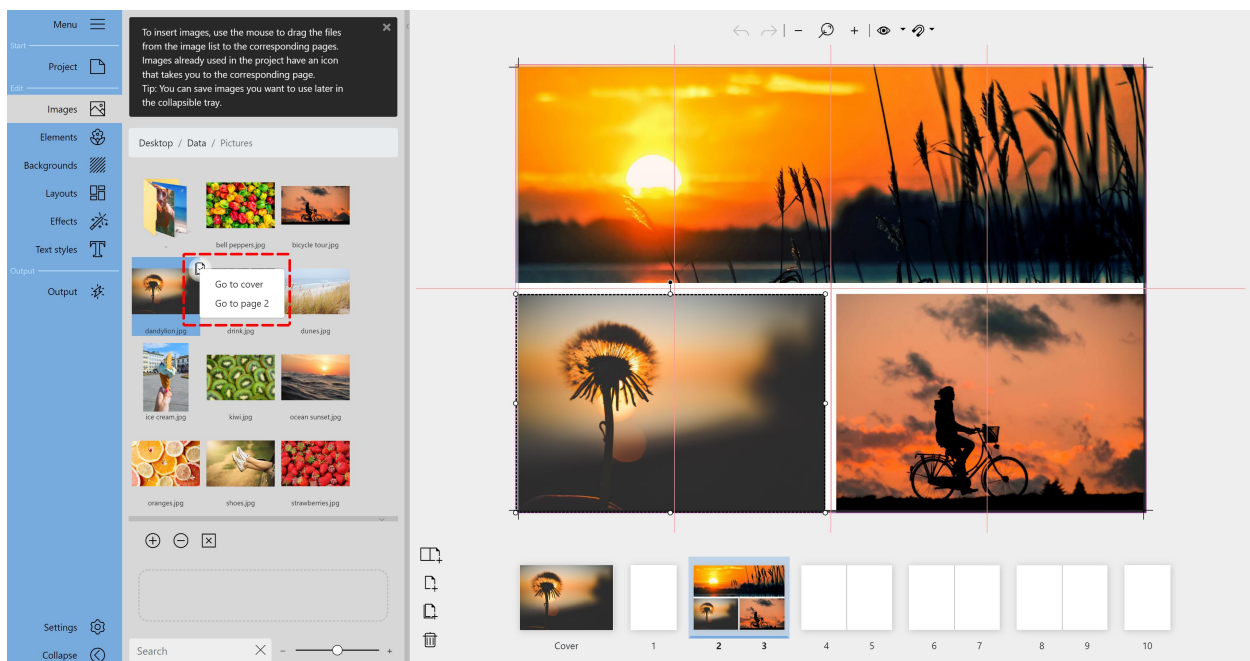
Crop: Crops the image to fit the aspect ratio of the project.

Automatic: Selects a mode between Crop and Keep Aspect Ratio.

Keep ratio: Image is fit into the selection frame while maintaining the image aspect ratio.

None: Image is displayed original. It starts at the top left edge of the selection frame.

Markers on images

In the Toolbox, the images that have already been used are marked.

In the **File browser** and **Tray**, a *Page* icon with a *check mark* appears next to images that you have already used in your project. *Left-click* the *Checkmark* icon to see which page or pages the image was used on.

> If an image was only used on one page, clicking the *Checkmark* icon opens the page in the **Page editor** where the image was used.

> If an image has been used multiple times or on multiple pages, the *Checkmark* icon *with multiple pages* appears. *Left-click* on the checkmark and a selection list of the pages on which the image has been used appears. By clicking on *Go to...* in the selection list, this page will be opened in the **Page editor** and the corresponding image will be selected.

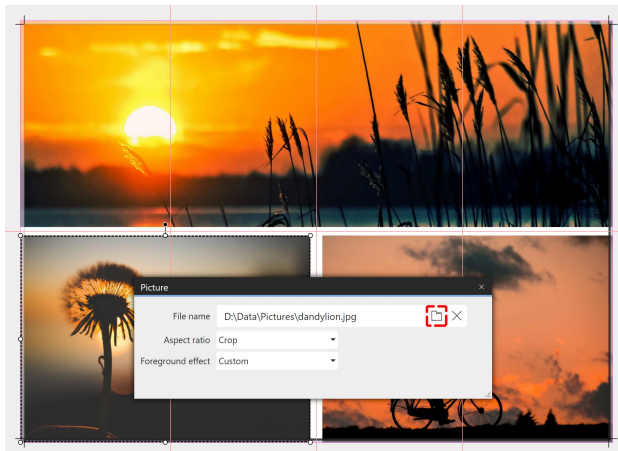# Replacing an image on page
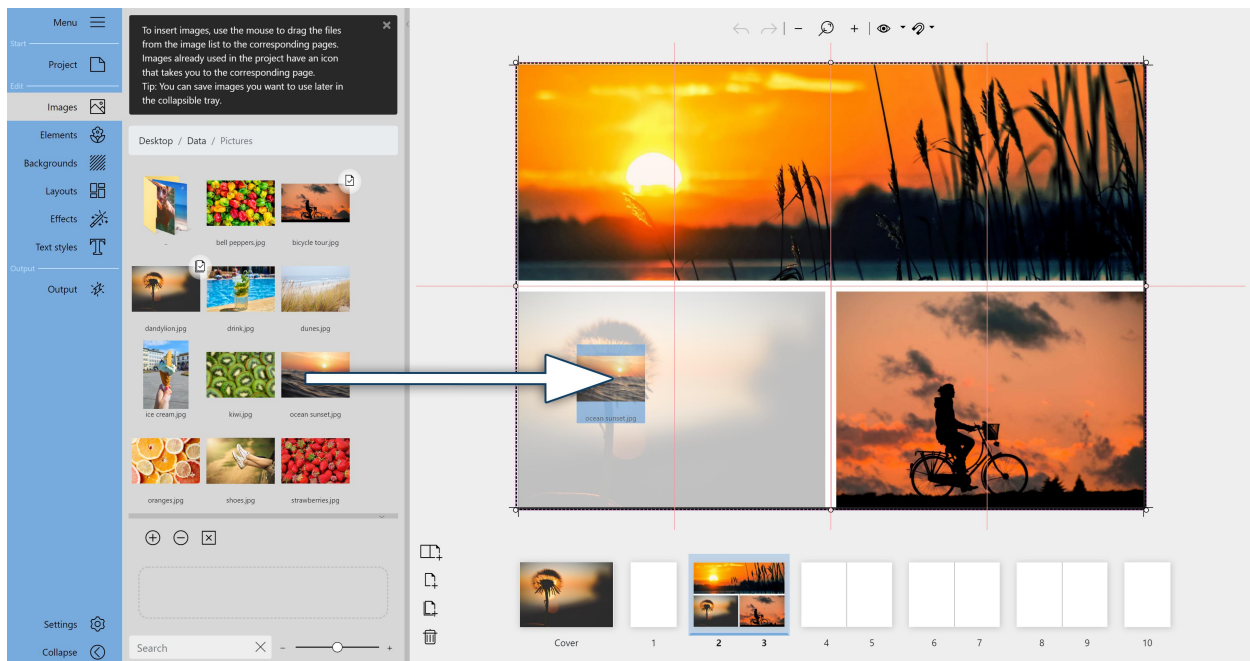
Drag replacement image onto the existing image

To replace an image with another and apply its properties, drag the new image from the **Toolbox** directly onto the image to be replaced until it appears whitish. All the properties of the previous image (size, image effects, etc.) are transferred to the new image.

Alternatively, *double-click* the image to be replaced and select the new image from your computer in the **Properties** window via the *Folder* icon. All properties of the previous image (size, image effects, etc.) will be applied to the new image.

Replace existing image with new image in Properties

Removing an image from page or layout
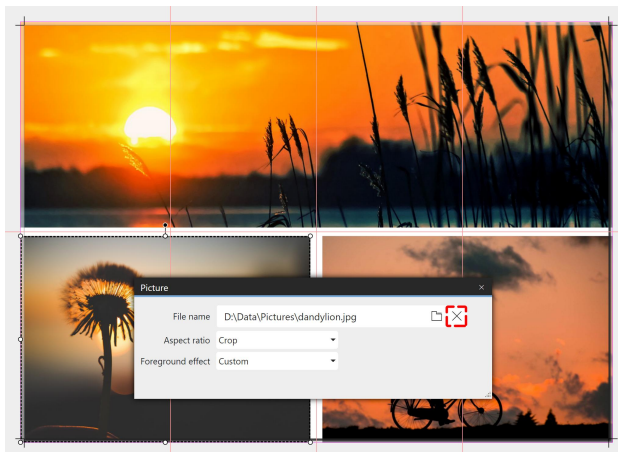
Remove image from placeholder

If you want to remove an image from a layout, *double-click* the image to open the **Properties** window. Next to the *file name* you will find a crossed-out *Circle* icon. If you press this, the inserted image will be removed and the original placeholder will be displayed again.

If you want to remove an image completely with its layout and placeholder, select the image and *press* the `DEL` key or *right-click Delete*.

You accidentally removed an image from the Page editor? Press the *Undo* arrow at the top of the Page editor or `CTRL+Z`. The last step will be undone.

5.2 Rotating an image
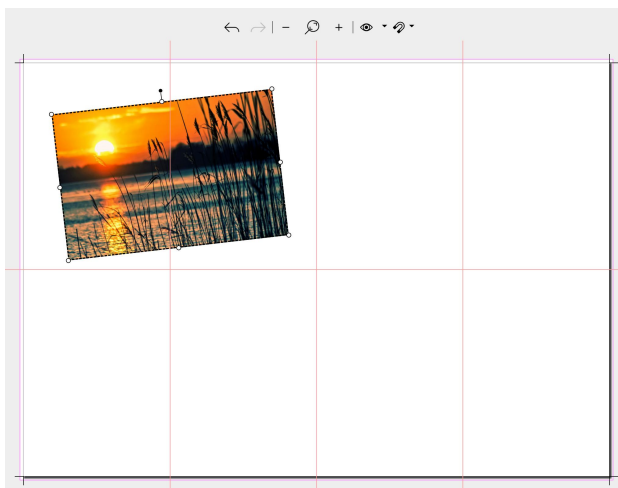
Rotate image in the Page editor at the top handle

To place an image diagonally on the page, touch the point above the selection frame with the mouse. A cross with four arrowheads appears. Move this until the desired rotation is achieved.
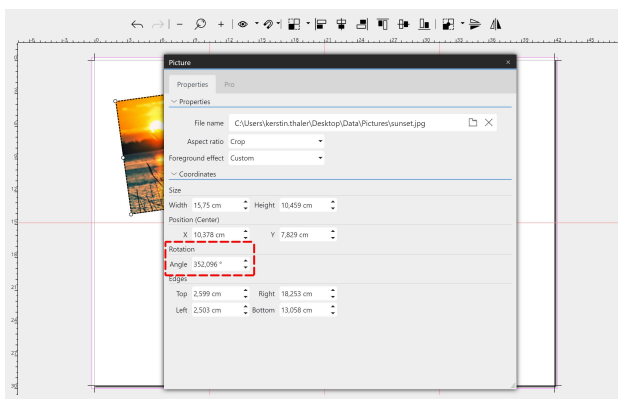
Set rotation angle in the properties (Pro version)

This feature is only available in the Pro version.

In the Pro version you can also define the *rotation angle* of an image via a manual input. To do this, open the **Properties** by *double-clicking* the image in the **Page editor** or *right-clicking* the image in the **Page editor** and selecting **Properties**.

Change the angle to achieve rotation of the image.

5.3 The Tray

Collect images in the **Tray** that you want to use multiple times or later. Used images are marked.
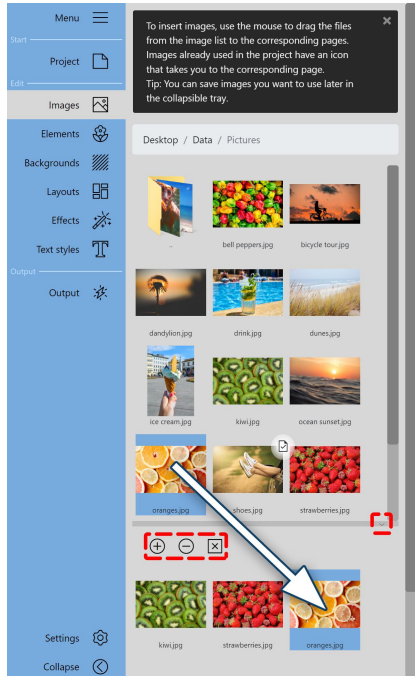
Add an image to the Tray via drag and drop

You can change the height of the **Tray** at the *horizontal separator* to the **File browser**. On the right of the separator strip, the Tray can be opened and closed.

Insert image into the Tray

Drag an image from the **File browser** to the **Tray** to deposit the image there.

You can also select one or more images from your computer and add them to the **Tray** using the **Tray**'s *Plus* icon.

Remove image from Tray

If you want to remove one or more images from the **Tray**, select them and then click the *Minus* icon.

To clear the entire image list, click the *Cross* icon of the **Tray**.

If an image is removed from the Tray, it remains on the pages where it was used.

Search

With the search and a keyword you can search the opened file directory and the Tray.

Click on the *Cross* symbol to remove your *search word*. You will then be shown all the selection options again.

6 Elements

6.1 Using elements

In the **Elements** section you will find decorative elements, emojis and stickers to design your photo book. There is also a *text element* and a *page number element* to choose from. The individual sections in the **Elements Toolbox** can be collapsed and expanded.
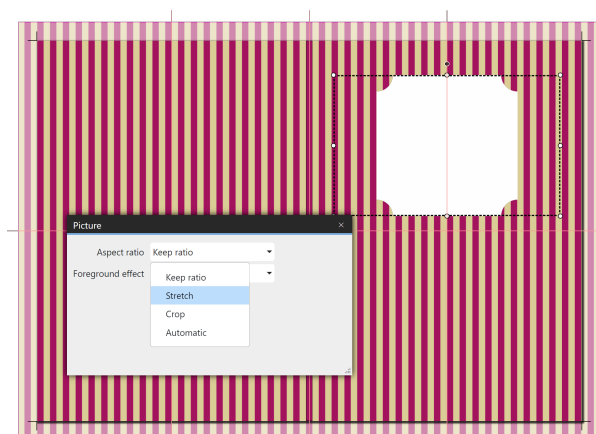
Using decorative elements

Drag the desired element from the **Toolbox** to the open page in the **Page editor**.
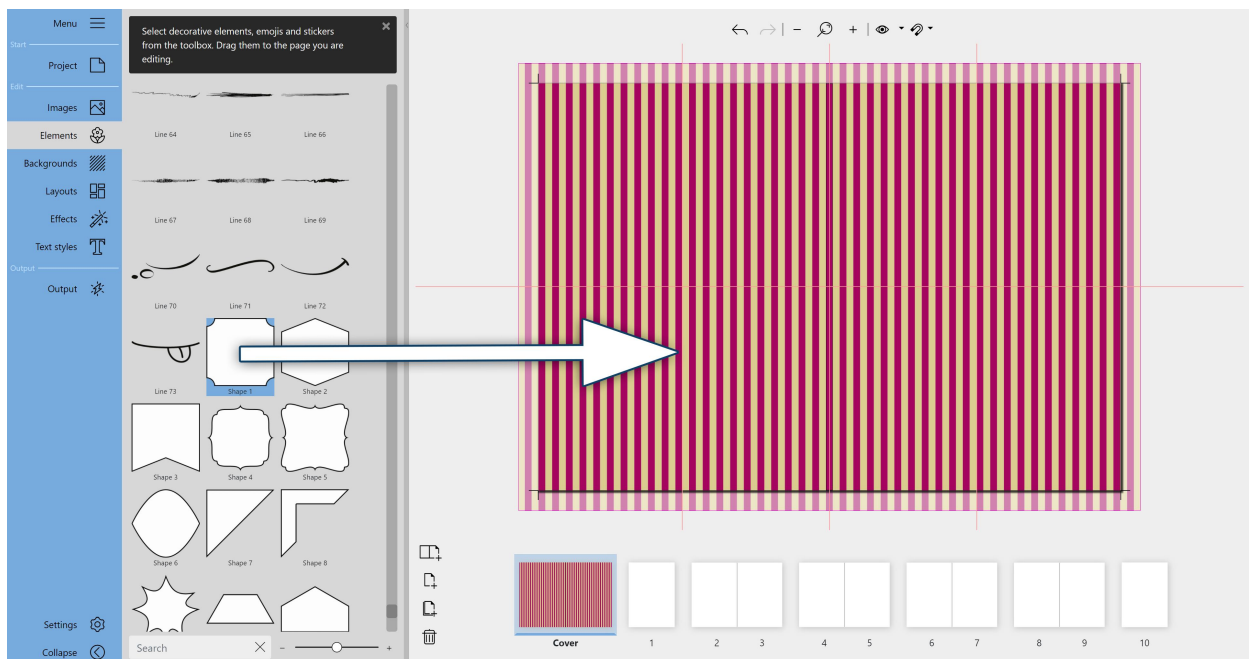
Drag decorative element from the Toolbox to the page

Change the size or position of a decorative element

Selection frame and Properties of the element

If you want to resize an element, drag it larger or smaller in the **Page editor** using the *corner handles* of the selection frame.

To **stretch** an object in the selection frame, *double-click* the element in the **Page editor** and change the *aspect ratio* to *Stretch* in the **Properties**. The **Properties** can also be opened by *right-clicking* the element in the **Page editor** and selecting **Properties**.

To rotate an element, grab the *rotation handle* of selection frame with the mouse and move it until the desired rotation is achieved.

To **mirror** an element, apply the *"Mirrored, horizontally"* or *"Mirrored, vertically"* **foreground effect** to the element.

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Using the Text element

Drag the *Text* icon from the **Toolbox** to the page in the **Page editor**. You can also place the text element on top of another decorative element to label notebook or sticker decorations, for example.

To enter your own text, *double-click* the text element in the **Page editor** with the left mouse button. Or *right-click* the text element in the **Page editor** and select **Properties**.
Overwrite the existing text in the text field of the Properties window. Close the **Properties** window at the top right using the window's *Close* cross.

Preformatted text elements can be found under the Text styles menu item.

Copy element to other page

To copy an element with identical size, position and setting to another page, right-click this element in the **Page editor** and select *copy* or select it with the left mouse button and use the key combination **CTRL+C** . The element is now in the clipboard of your computer. Now go to the desired page in the **Page overview**. Paste the copied element into the page by *right-clicking* and choosing *Paste* or by pressing **CTRL+V** .

6.2 Dynamic shapes

To design your book you can use the geometric shapes *Circle*, *Ellipse*, *Square* and *Rectangle*. You can apply color fills and effects to them, and display them with or without borders.
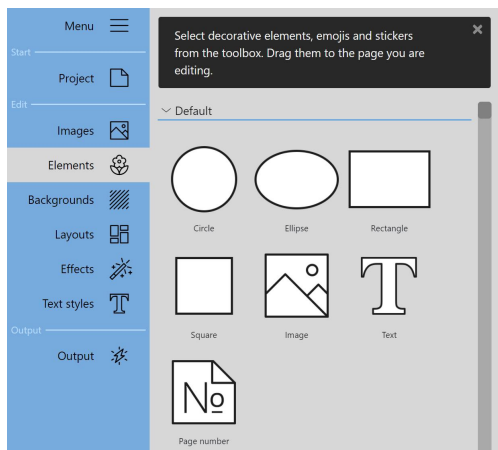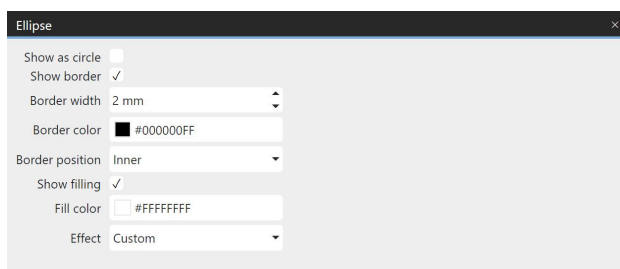

Shapes in Standard elements

To use a shape, *drag* the desired element from the **Toolbox** to the open page in the **Page editor**.

If you want to resize the element, *drag* it larger or smaller in the **Page editor** at the *corner handles* of the selection frame.

To rotate the element, *grab* the *rotation handle* of the selection frame with the mouse and move it until the desired rotation is achieved.

The properties can be *adjusted* by *double-clicking* on the element or by right-clicking on the element in the **Page editor** and selecting **Properties**.

Properties of the Ellipse shape

For the **Standard elements** *Circle*, *Ellipse*, *Square* and *Rectangle* you can find the following options in the **Properties**:

Show as circle - shape circle element to ellipse when dragging selection frame or keep circle shape (corresponding to Rectangle<> Square).

Show border - show element with or without border

*Border width* - enter a value for the border width

Border color - click on the color field to specify the color of the border in the **Color picker**

Border position - the border will be drawn inside, outside or centered on your selection frame in the **Page editor**

Show fill - defines whether the border will be filled with color or the border will be displayed unfilled.

Fill color - click the color field to set the color of the fill in the **Color picker**

*Effect* - select an image effect if needed, for example a gradient).
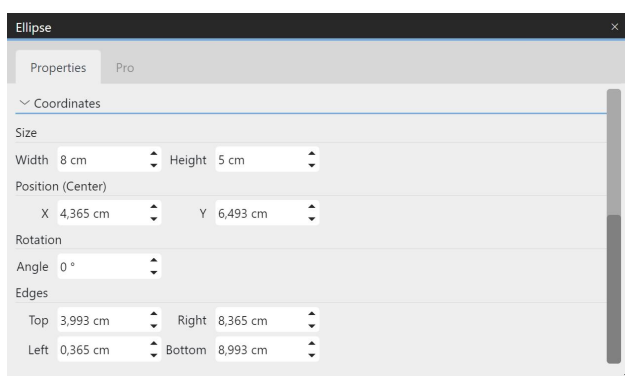
Additional properties of the Ellipse shape (Pro

These features are only available in the Pro version.

In addition to the properties just described, in the Pro version you can also define the *size* (width and height) as well as the *position* and *rotation angle* of an element via a **manual input**.

6.3 Page number

The *page number* element allows you to display your book pages numbered consecutively. Once placed on the page, the count is automatically adjusted as pages are added or removed.
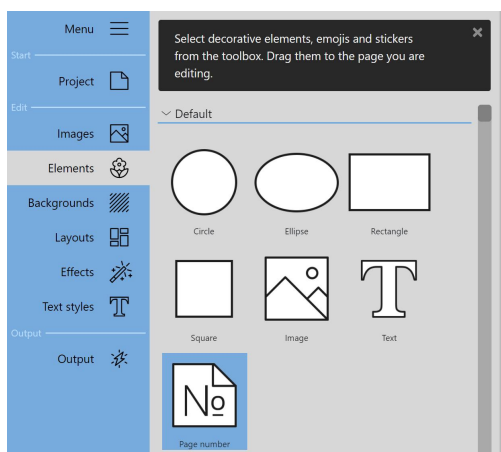
Page number element in the Standard elements

Using the page number element

Drag the page number element from the **Toolbox** to the **Page editor** to the area of your page where you want the page number to appear. The correct page number is automatically inserted.

If the page order is changed, the content of the page number display automatically changes accordingly.

The font, font size, font color and alignment can be adjusted by *double-clicking* the element. You can also open the **Properties** by *right-clicking* the element in the **Page editor** and selecting **Properties**.

If you have designed a double page with page number elements on the left and right, you can copy them together to other pages. To do this, select the page number element on the left side and on the right side while holding down the CTRL key. Copy the selected elements with `CTRL+C` , go to the next page in the Page editor and press `CTRL+V` to paste. Then move to the next page and paste again with `CTRL+V` .

7 Backgrounds

7.1 Using backgrounds

In this menu section you will find format-filling backgrounds for designing your photo book. In the **Toolbox**, the backgrounds are divided into different thematic sections. The backgrounds are always applied to fill the page. They are suitable not only for use as page backgrounds, but also for designing the cover.

Assigning a background to a page
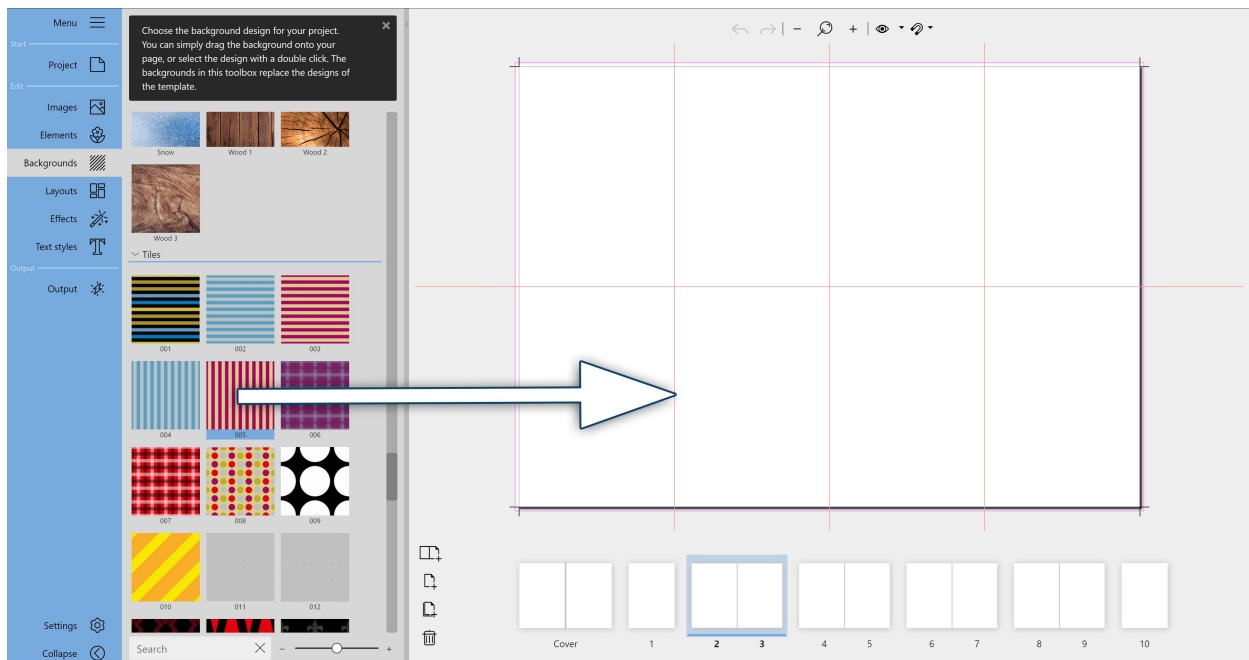
The background is dragged to the page

To add a background to a page, *double-click* the desired background or drag a background from the **Toolbox** to the open page in the **Page editor**. The background is automatically fitted to fill the open page up to the bleed.

To use a different background, simply drag a different background onto the page.

Changing background properties
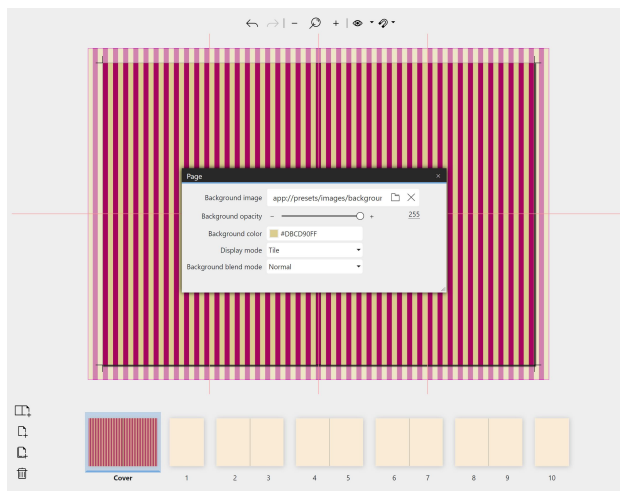
Background properties

For all backgrounds you can set the opacity, change the background color and select the display mode and background blend mode in the Properties.

To do this, *double-click* on a free area of the background in the **Page editor**. You can also access the **Properties** by *right-clicking* on the background in the **Page editor** and selecting **Properties**.

Change the opacity of the background: Move the Background Opacity slider to decrease or increase the *opacity*.

Change background color: *Click* in the colored square at *Background color*. In the color selector, make your color choice and confirm with OK. This applies the color change to the **Page editor**.

Backgrounds from the *Gradients* section change from white to color or black to color. Only the gradient color can be changed; the initial value of white or black is retained. Only one color can be changed in the backgrounds of the *Tiles* section as well. The backgrounds from the *Full Screen* section can also be colored. Select an additional *background blend mode* here, for example *Add*, to colorize the background image.

With the settings under *Display mode* - Stretch, Tile, Crop - you can change the appearance of patterned backgrounds.
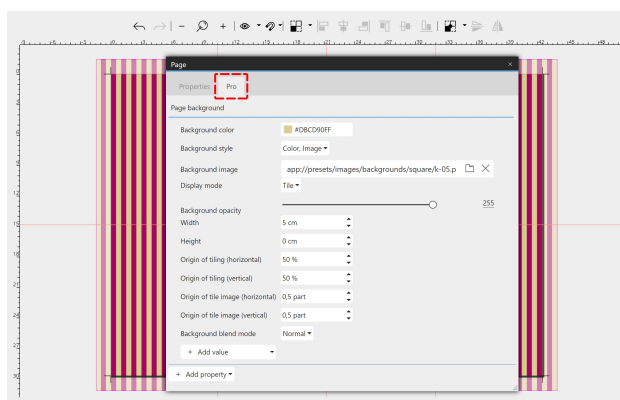
More background properties in the Pro version

This feature is only available in the Pro version.

You can find additional design settings via the "Pro" tab.

If the window is too small, drag the window larger at the lower right shaded border area to see more properties at once.

For backgrounds from the Pattern category, you can change the *pattern* width or height and the start of the pattern in the **Pro editor**.

If you have an image as background (i.e. anything that is visible as a "png" file in the Properties) or a gradient (i.e. an "svg" graphic), change the opacity via the slider. If you have a solid color background, change the transparency in the Properties via the alpha value in the Color picker.

Removing the background

A background can be replaced by another background at any time. To replace, drag the new background from the **Toolbox** onto the existing background in the **Page Editor**.
This can also be a white background. At the top of the **Backgrounds** toolbox, you will find the all-white background. **A white background will not be printed.**

7.2 Photo as background
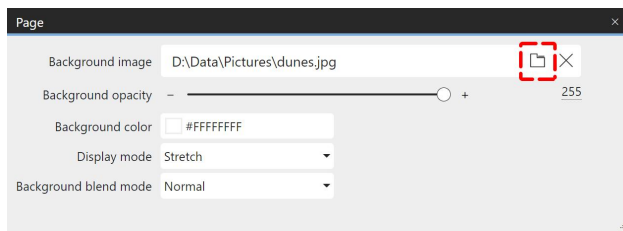
Own photo as background

To use your own photo as a background, double-click the background in the **Page editor** or right-click the background in the Page editor and choose **Properties**. Using the folder icon, select the image for your background from your files.

You can also use a photo as a background by dragging the image to the desired page in the **Page overview**.

Use the slider to change the opacity of the background image to make your image appear as a slightly or strongly transparent background or with full opacity.

To remove the background image, click the cross icon to the right of the folder icon.
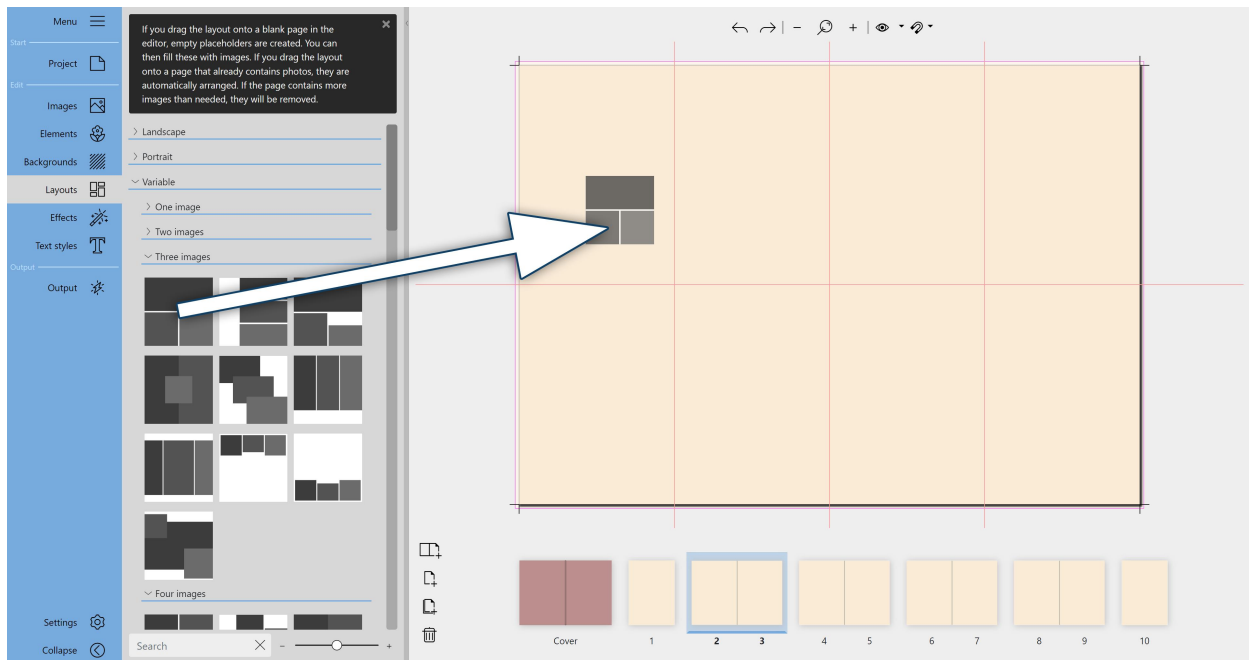
8 Layouts

8.1 Using layouts

Under the menu item *Layouts* you will find templates for your page design with placeholders for one or more images. A *layout* can be applied to a double page as well as to a single page.

The *layouts* in the **Toolbox** are sorted by format and number of images.

Using layouts

Use layout on page

To apply a *layout* to a page, drag it from the **Toolbox** to an open page in the **Page editor**.

If the page is a double page, you can drag the *layout* to the left and/or right side in the **Page editor**.
If you want to apply a *layout* to fill the format of an open double-page spread, double-click the *layout* in the **Toolbox** or drag it to the page thumbnail in the **Page overview**.
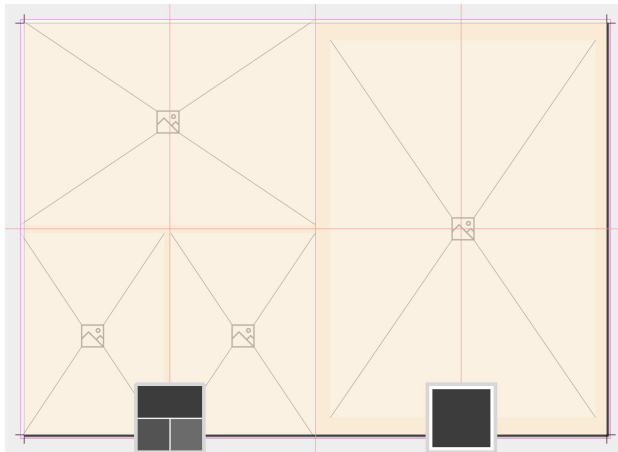
Different layouts on left and right page
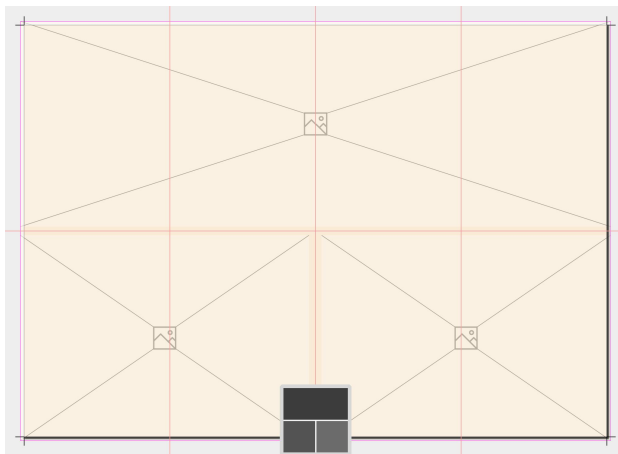
A layout applied to a double page

If the page is empty when you insert the layout, empty *placeholders* are created with the selected arrangement. You can then fill the *placeholders* with images.

Images will automatically fit into the new layout if they already exist on the page. If all the images are on one side of the double page and you double-click to insert a layout, the images will be spread across both sides.

Excess images will be removed if there are more images than the new layout allows.

Modify a layout

The arrangement of the *placeholders* can be changed by moving them in the **Page editor**. The size of the *placeholders* and the rotation angle can also be changed.

To replace an existing layout on a page, drag the new layout from the **Toolbox** onto the existing *layout* of the open page in the **Page editor**.

In a *layout*, not all *placeholders* have to be filled. You can leave placeholders empty or select them individually and right-click to *cut* or *delete* them. Empty *placeholders* are not displayed in the output.
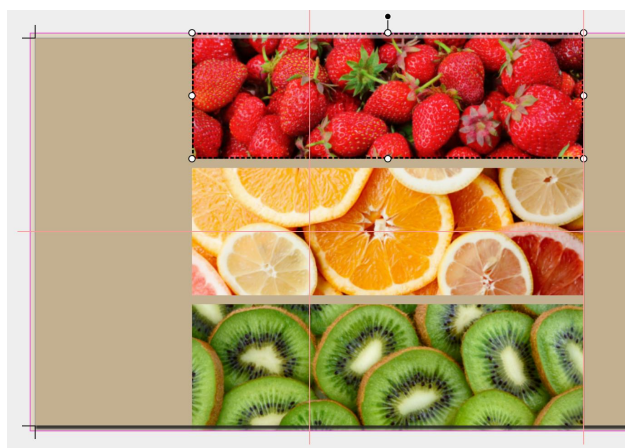
8.2 Realigning a layout

For some layouts, the arrangement of images may be different than you prefer for your page. You can realign a layout as follows:
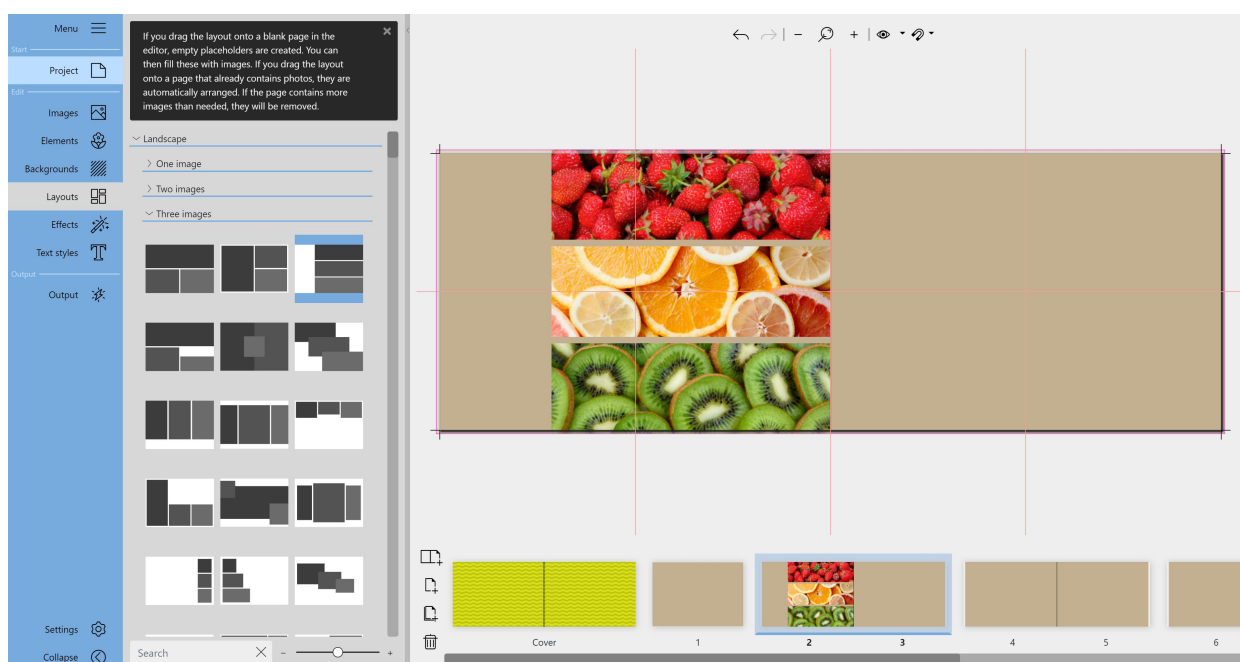
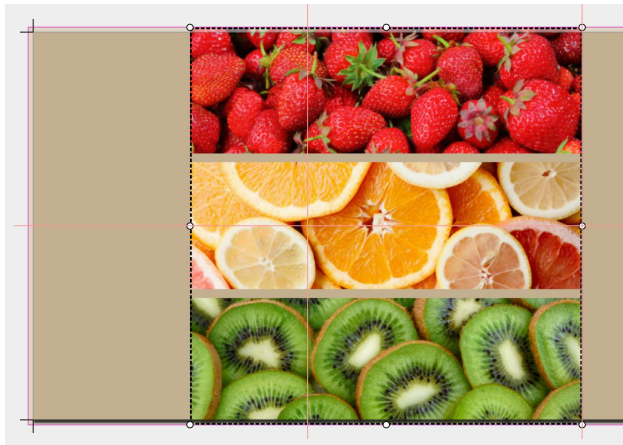**Layout is on the right side of the page**

The three-line layout was placed on the left double page. The images are in the center of the book. However, they should start at the left edge of the book.

Move images by grouping
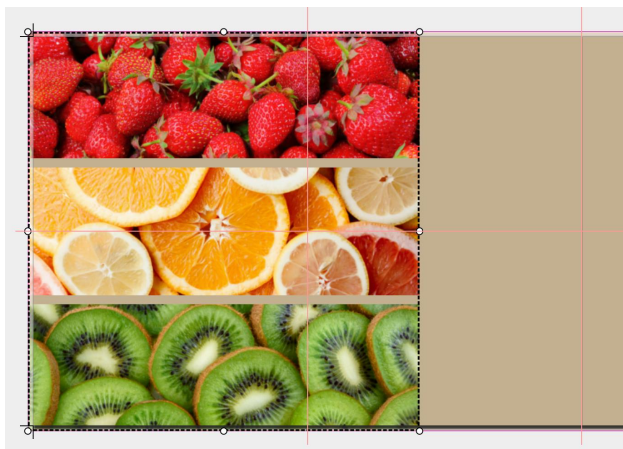

First element selected

1. First, select the first element of the layout by clicking on it in the Page editor.

All three elements selected

2. Press the **CTRL** key and click the mouse on the other two objects.

Now all objects of the layout are selected and enclosed by a selection frame. You can release the **CTRL** key.


The selected elements were moved

3. Now in the Page editor, use the mouse to move the selection with the three objects to the desired new position on the page.

The following features are only available in the Pro version.

Place group of images with alignment tool

To align a layout or any arrangement differently, you can use the layout tools at the top of the **Page editor**. You always select first where the alignment should take place (double page, left page, right page) and how the alignment should be done (left margin, right margin, top, bottom or centered).
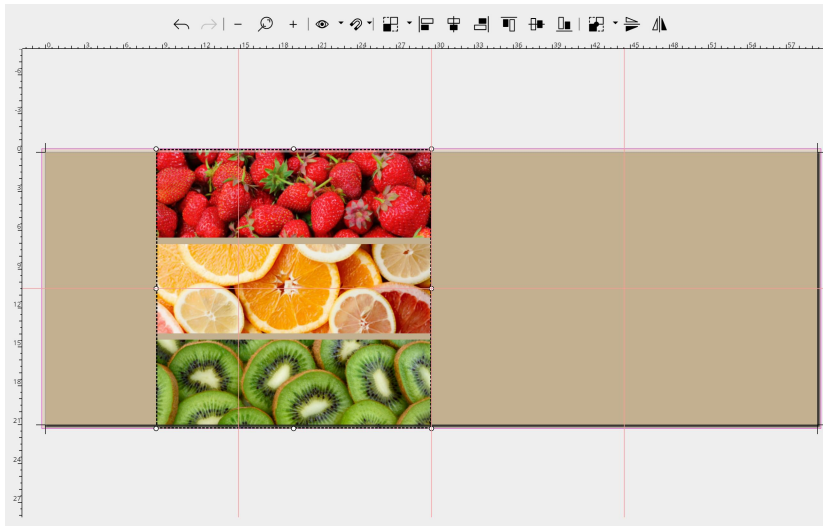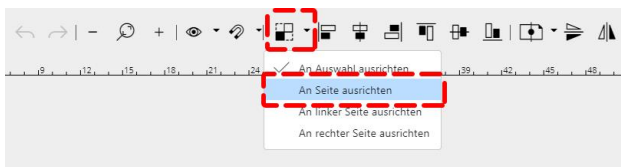
All elements are selected

The three-line layout is placed on the left double page. The pictures are in the center of the book. However, they should start at the left edge of the book.

1. First, select the first element of the layout by clicking on it in the **Page editor**.

2. Press the **CTRL** key and click the mouse on the other two objects.

Now all objects of the layout are selected and enclosed by a selection frame. You can release the **CTRL** key.

"Align to page" selection
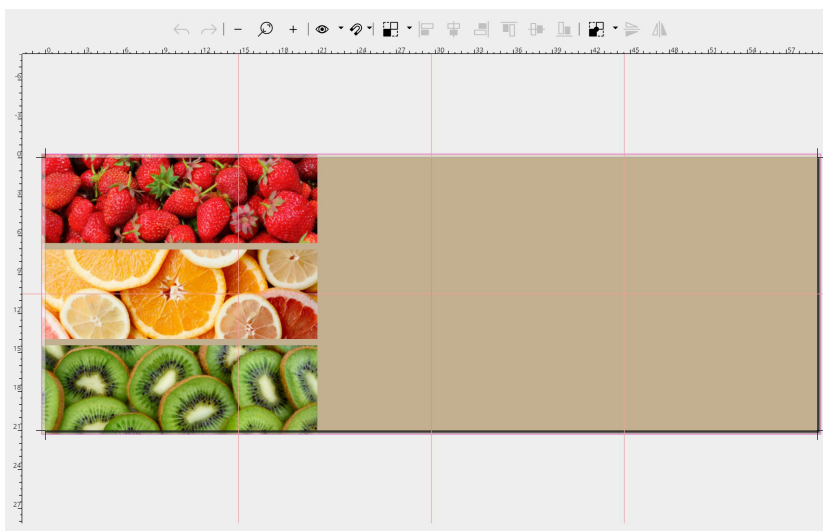
3. Click the *Alignment* icon in the 5 at the top of the **Page editor**.

Select *Align to side* or *Align to left side*.

"Align left" selection

4. Then click the *Align left* icon

The elements are now aligned to the left
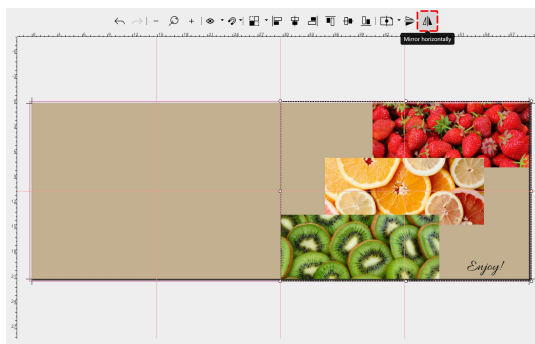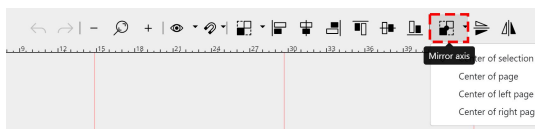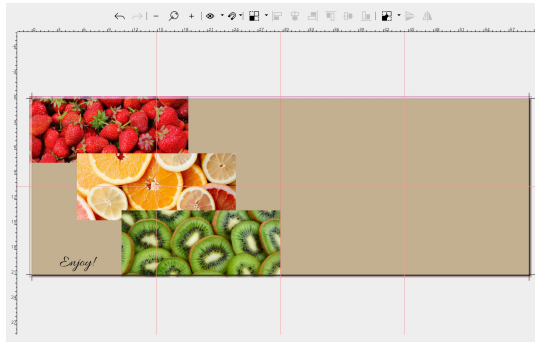
5. The layout now appears in the left margin.

If necessary, drag the selection into the bleed.

8.3 Mirroring a layout

The following feature is only available in the Pro version.

To mirror a layout, page, or any arrangement from a left page to a right page (or vice versa), you can use the layout tools at the top of the Page editor.
A selection can also be mirrored within a page.

This 3-picture arrangement plus text is to be mirrored from the left side to a right side.

1. First select all elements of the page by clicking on them in the **Page editor** while holding down the **CTRL** key. Once all the objects to be mirrored are selected, you can release the **CTRL** key.

2. Select the *Center of the page* as the mirror axis.

3. Click the *Flip horizontally* icon.

The image arrangement with the text is now on the right page.

When mirroring with the layout tools, only the arrangement is mirrored, not the content. For example, to mirror an image motif or an element, use the "Mirrored, horizontal" or "Mirrored, vertical" effect from the "Effects" menu item.

9 Effects

9.1 Using effects

You can apply the effects to images, texts and decorative elements. For example, you can colorize, sharpen, brighten, add shadows or frames to images.

Appling an effect
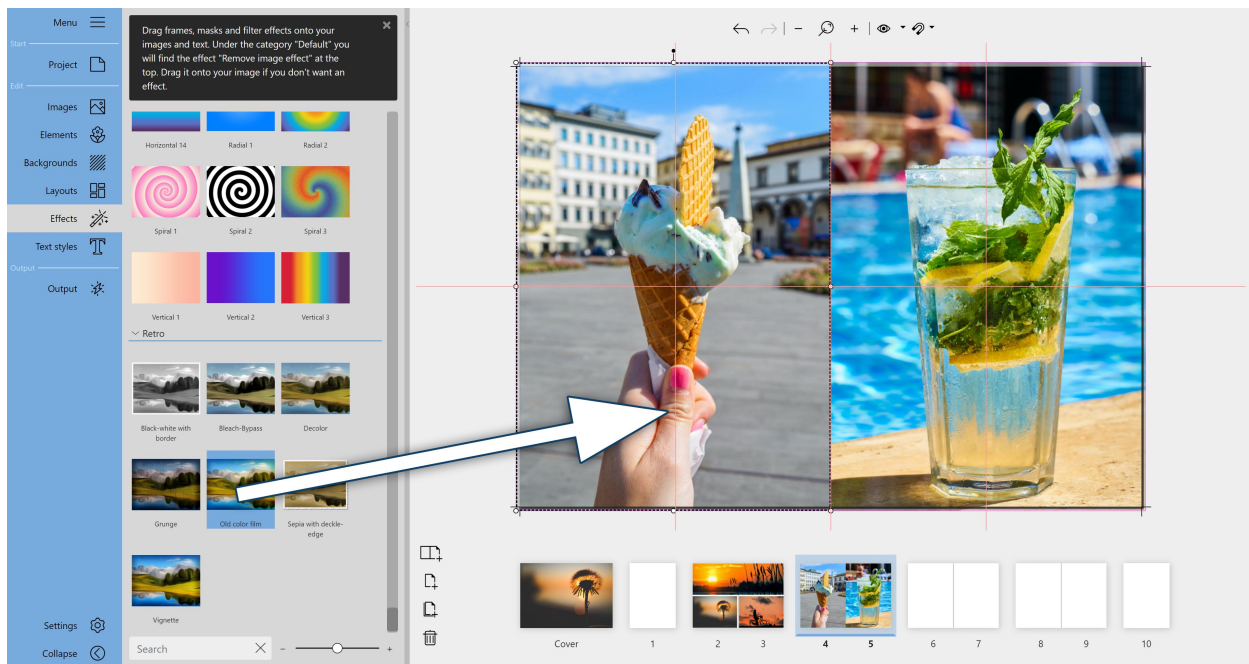
Apply image effect from Toolbox

To apply an effect, *drag* the desired effect from the **Toolbox** onto the object in the **Page editor**.

If the object that is to receive the effect is selected in the **Page editor**, the effect can also be assigned by *double-clicking* from the **Toolbox**.
If several objects are selected in the **Page editor**, the selected effect is assigned to all selected objects by *double-clicking*. In this way, several objects on a page can receive the same effect in a time-saving manner.
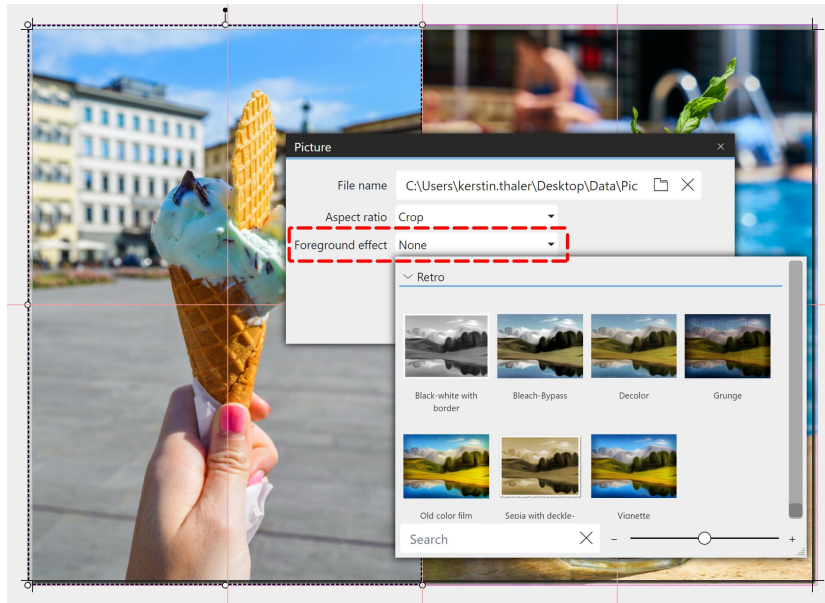
Assigning image effect via Properties

Alternatively, you can open the **Properties** window of an object by *double-clicking* or *right-clicking* and selecting the desired effect under *Foreground effect*.
In the **Properties** window you can also see afterwards which effect was applied to an image.

Applying multiple effects

Initially, only one effect can be used per image or object. If you drag an effect onto an object that already has an effect, the old effect will be overwritten by the new effect.

If you want to combine several effects - for example, "Black & White" and "Rounded" on one image - first apply one effect to the image by dragging it from the toolbox and then, while holding down the **CTRL** key, drag the second effect onto the object.

9.2 Removing an effect

Remove image effect

The *Delete image effect* icon can be found at the top of the **Effects Toolbox**. To remove an effect, drag the *Delete image effect* icon onto the object in the **Page editor**.

If the object from which an effect is to be removed is selected in the **Page editor**, the *Delete image effect* can also be assigned by *double-clicking* it in the **Toolbox**.

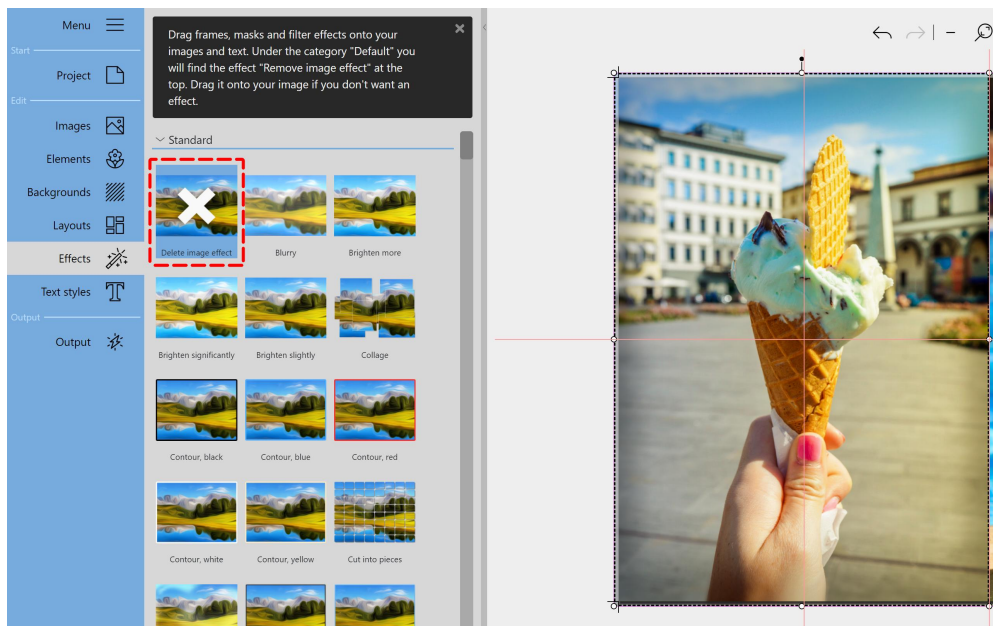Alternatively, open the Properties of an object by *double-clicking* or *right-clicking* and select the *Delete image effect* item under *Foreground effect*. If multiple objects are selected in the **Page editor**, *double-clicking* will remove the effect from all selected objects.

10 Text

10.1 Using text styles

Use the text styles to add text elements to your pages. In the Toolbox, you'll find templates for *headings*, *text blocks*, and *combinations*.
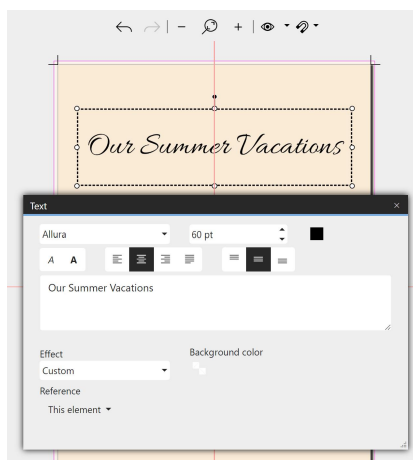
Unsing text styles
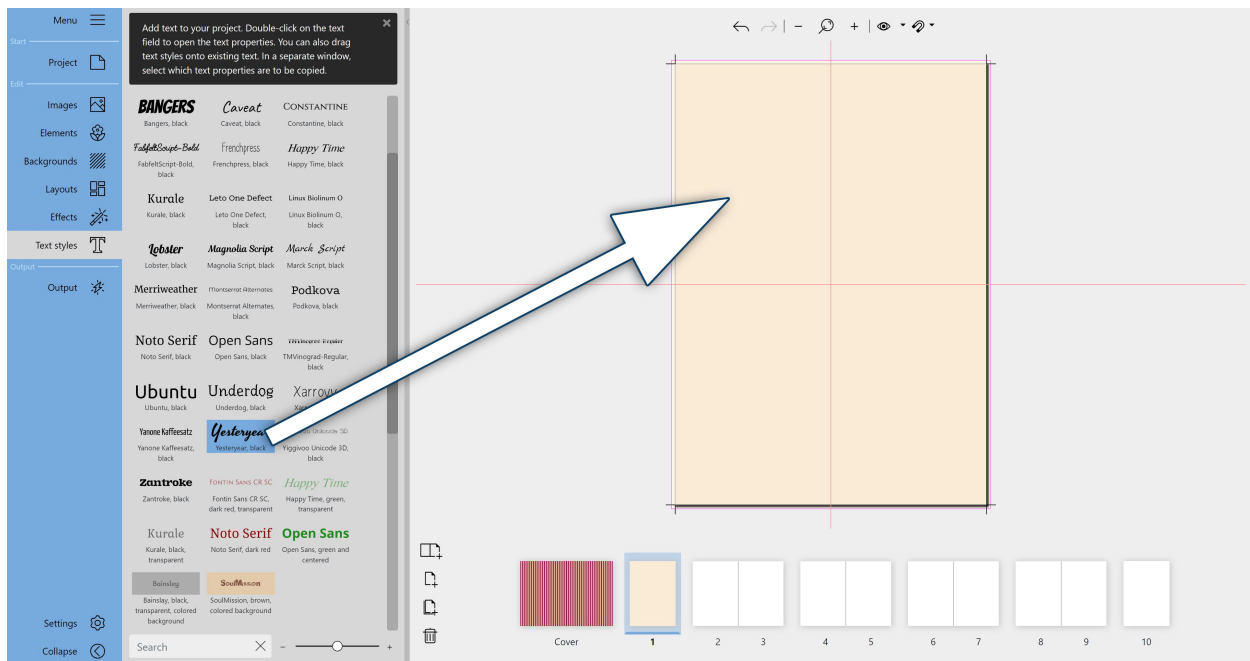
Drag heading from Toolbox to page in Page editor

Drag a *text style* from the **Toolbox** to your open page in the **Page editor**. Move the *text style* to the desired position with the mouse.

Note: You can also find a way to insert text with your own formatting into your book under the [Elements](#) menu item.

Text properties

2. Change labeling

To enter your own text, double-click the text element in the **Page editor** with the left mouse button. Or right-click the *text element* in the **Page editor** and choose *Properties*.

Overwrite the existing text in the text box of the *Properties* window.
Close the *Properties* window in the upper right corner with the window's close cross.

3. Customize font / font color / font size / formatting

To change the font, font color, font size, or alignment of a text style, double-click the text style element in the Page editor with the left mouse button. Or right-click the text element in the Page editor and choose *Properties*.

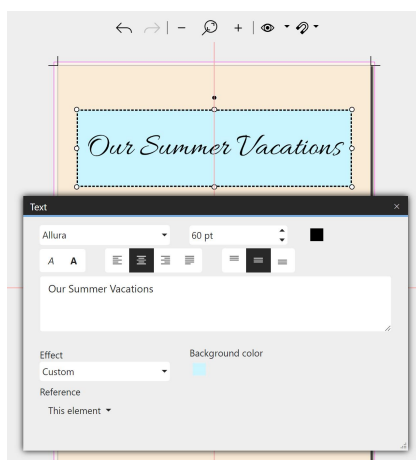You can also apply an effect to the text. Select it from the [Effect](#) selection list.
For designing captions, the effects from the **"Text friendly"** section are especially recommended.


Background color for text

4. Add or change background color for text

By default, the text element has no background color or is transparent. Click the box icon in the text properties to use the color picker to apply a background color to the entire area in the selection frame.

To make the background color transparent again, set the A(lpha) value in the color picker back to 0.

Applying a text style
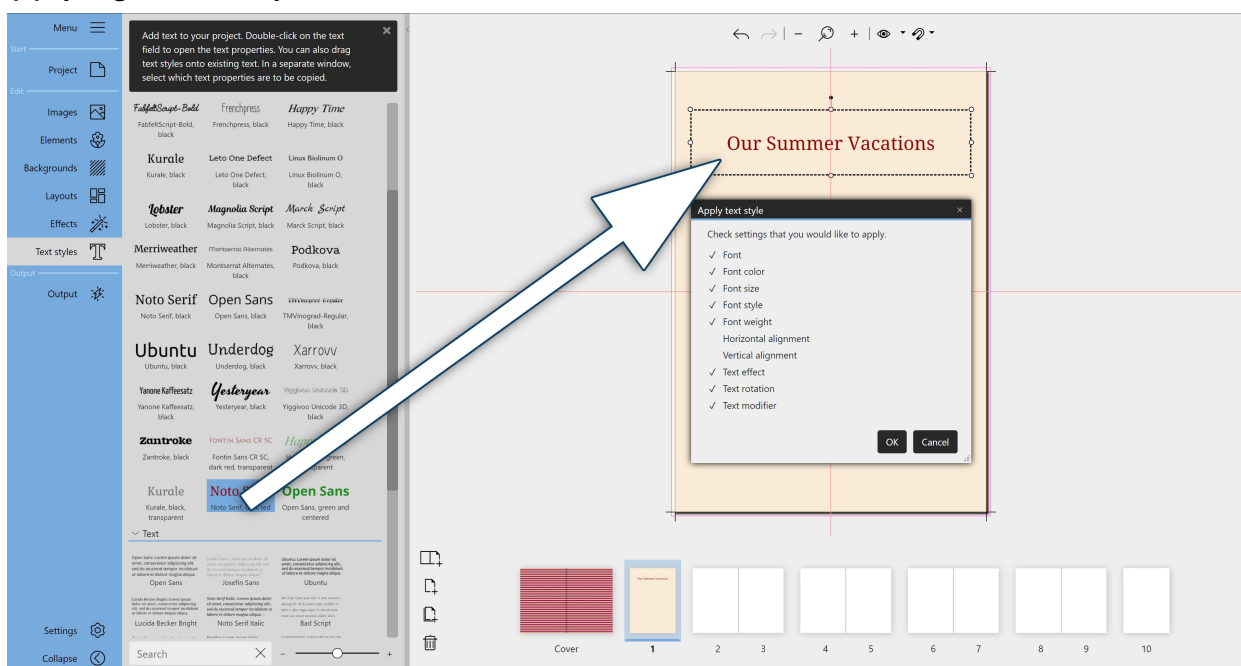
Apply new text style and inherit properties

You can also apply a *text style* to an existing text afterwards. To do this, drag the *text style* from the **Toolbox** onto the existing text in the **Page editor**.
Or, in the **Page editor**, select the text you want to change and double-click the new *text style* in the **Toolbox** to apply it.

In the *Apply Text Style* window that opens, specify whether you want to apply only some or all of the properties of the new text style to the old text style. For example, to leave the black font color in the book and not transfer the red font color from the new text style, remove the checkmark from *Font color*.

Copying text to other pages

To copy a text to another page, right-click this text element in the Page editor and select copy or use the key combination **CTRL+C** . The text element is now in the clipboard of your computer. Now go to the desired page in the page overview. Paste the copied text element into the page by right-clicking and choosing Paste or by using **CTRL+V** .

Placeholder text elements in templates
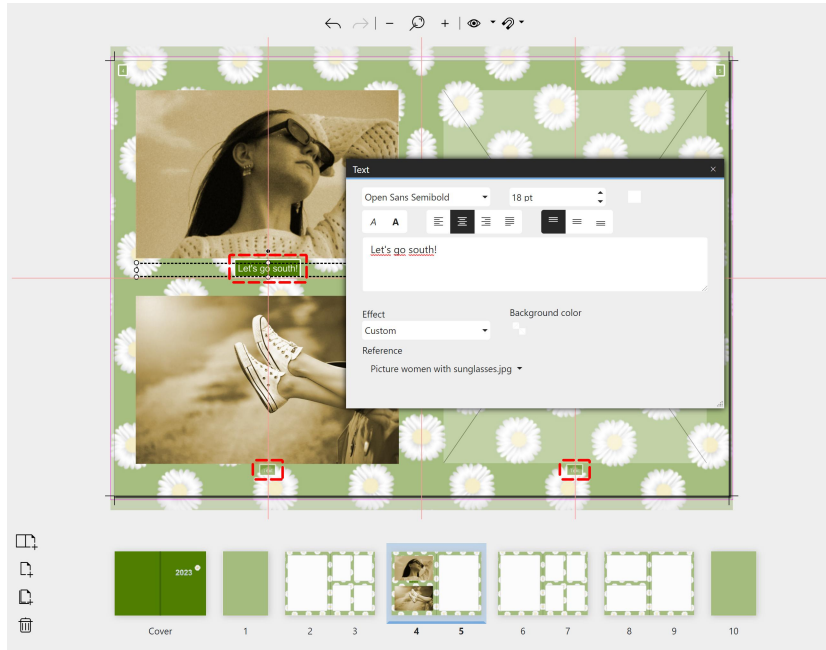
Fill placeholder with text

Some templates contain *placeholders*, such as the title of the photo book, year numbers, the blurb or image captions. You can fill these *placeholders* with content by double-clicking them or right-clicking the text element in the Page editor and going to Properties.

You can customize the placeholder text elements from the templates in size, font, font size and font color if needed.

Unfilled placeholder elements are not included in the output.

Reference

In the Properties window of a *text style*, you can create a *reference* to an image. To do this, select the image associated with the text from the selection list.
If the template style is changed and the template also contains image placeholders with associated text placeholders, the text is adopted to match the image.

This *reference* is also used for the use of variables. If one enters placeholder variables in the text field, the information of the image will be displayed accordingly. Example variables: **%capturedate%** or **%captureyear%**.

11 Output

11.1 Exporting the photo book

When your photo book is finished, you can export it under the **_Output_** menu item. The output creates a PDF, for example, that you can print yourself or pass on to a print shop.

Output settings
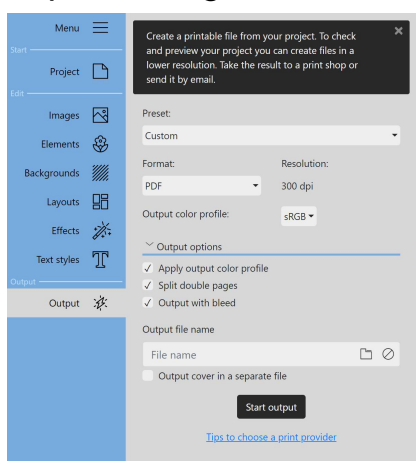
Output

Preset

Choose a preset output setting, for example, Preview PDF for a lower quality PDF to check the photo book. To save a PDF print file, choose Print PDF.

Format

Determine whether the pages of your photo book will be output as PDF or as single images as JPEG.

Output color profile

Select the color profile that matches your print shop. You can usually find information about this on the website of your provider.
If they offer a specific profile for download, you can import it by selecting **_"Add custom profile"_**.
If you do not have any detailed specifications, select **_sRGB_**.

Output options

By checking **_Apply output color profile_**, the selected output color profile will be applied to the photos in the export file. In the case of a printer color profile, this usually also converts the color space to CMYK format.

If the checkmark **_Separate double pages_** is set, double pages will be split in the result file - you will receive each book page as a single page.
However, depending on the printer or book format (e.g. layflat books), double pages must be exported as such - in this case you must remove the checkmark.

Select whether the PDF should be created with bleed (data format) or only the pages without bleed (final format).
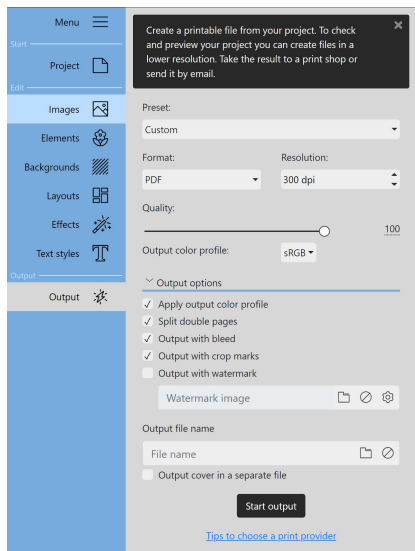(Passing the data to a printing house is usually done with bleed).

Output file name

Enter a file name with file storage path or select it via the **_Folder_** icon.

Output binding in separate file

Depending on the selected print provider, the cover and pages may need to be delivered separately. Check the box if you want to receive separate result files for cover and content.

Output Pro version

Preset

Choose a preset output setting, for example, Preview PDF for a lower quality PDF to check the photo book. To save a PDF print file, choose Print PDF.

Format

Determine whether the pages of your photo book will be output as PDF or as single images as JPEG or lossless as PNG.

Resolution

Set the resolution.

Quality (or compression ratio)

Set the quality with which you want to output your photo book. (100 = Best quality, for PNG compression level 0 = Best quality).

We recommend a value of 95 for the quality.

Output color profile

Select the color profile that matches your print shop. You can usually find information about this on the website of your provider.
If they offer a specific profile for download, you can import it by selecting *"Add custom profile"*.
If you do not have any detailed specifications, select *sRGB*.

Output options

By checking *Apply output color profile*, the selected output color profile will be applied to the photos in the export file. In the case of a printer color profile, this usually also converts the color space to CMYK format.

If the checkmark *Separate double pages* is set, double pages will be split in the result file - you will receive each book page as a single page.
However, depending on the printer or book format (e.g. layflat books), double pages must be exported as such - in this case you must remove the checkmark.

Select whether the PDF should be created with bleed (data format) or only the pages without bleed (final format).
(Passing the data to a print shop is usually done with bleed).

Select whether the *crop marks* should be displayed or not.
(Data is usually passed on to a print shop without crop marks).

You can also optionally *watermark* the pages of the output file. This allows you to pass the output file to a third party for review in a protected manner. (Remember to run a new output without watermark before passing it to a printer, if necessary).
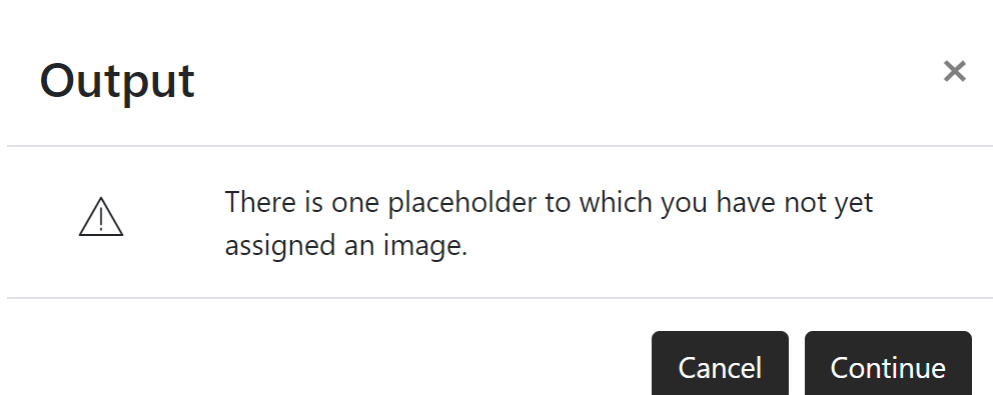
Output file name

Enter a file name with file storage path or select it via the *Folder* icon.

Output binding in separate file

Depending on the selected print provider, the cover and pages may need to be delivered separately. Check the box if you want to receive separate result files for cover and content.

Placeholder note

Output warning

If not all *placeholders* of a template or layout are filled yet, the program informs you about it as soon as you select the *Output* item in the menu.

Click *Cancel* to continue editing your photo book or click *Continue* to continue the output process.

It is up to you whether you fill all *placeholders* or not. Empty placeholder objects are not printed.

Check result and repeat output
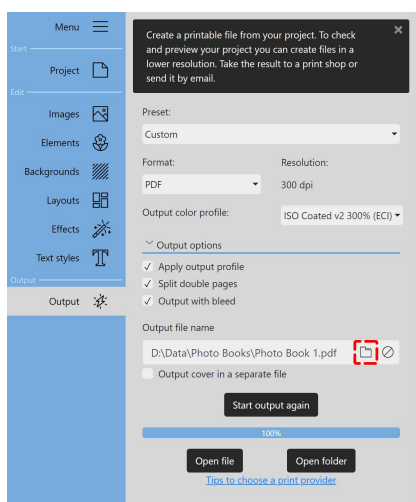
Output finished

If the format was created successfully, click the *Open file* button to open the created file in a suitable viewer. The *Open folder* button opens the save directory.

Use the *Start output again* button to repeat the creation process.

11.2 Archiving the project

When you save your photo book project in **AquaSoft YouDesign Photo Book**, it is in the form of a YDBOOK project file. This saves the layout, structure, and text of your book, but not the images and graphics used. The project file contains only the file paths from which your images were inserted. If these are moved or if the project is opened on another computer, the images can no longer be found under the known path and thus can no longer be displayed.

For this purpose there is an option under *Menu / Archive project*, which copies the project file and all used files into a folder. Via this archive file you can continue editing your project on another computer where **AquaSoft YouDesign Photo Book** is installed.
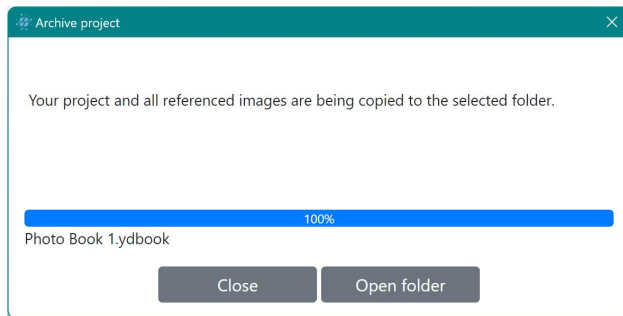
Archiving successful

Archive project

Click *Menu* and the *Archive project* item.

Navigate to the folder where you want to archive your project and confirm with *"Select folder"*. The archiving process starts.

Click *"Open folder"* button to open the destination folder of your archiving.