

Ad Import Plug-in

21.0

User Guide



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Introduction

Page Director® ALS, ALS for Magazines, AdforceX and AdForce are used to build issues and place display and classified ads on pages based on customer requests, editorial and press requirements and other site-specific rules. These issue files can then be opened as Adobe® InDesign® pages using Cognitive's Ad Import plug-in.

Ad Import creates a graphic frame in the InDesign document for each ad placed by ALS, ALS for Magazines, AdforceX or AdForce. If the ad information includes valid file paths for the ads, their graphics are automatically linked to graphic boxes in the InDesign document. Ad Import can also apply folio information to the InDesign pages.

Ad Import Requirements

The Ad Import Plug-in 21 works with InDesign CC 2026 for Macintosh (on Intel and Silicon Macs) or Windows. It will import pages from AdforceX, ALS 5.9.4, ALS for Magazines 5.9.4 and AdForce 5.9.4.

- ❑ *You must have InDesign CC 2026 21.0 or greater to use this version of the plug-in.*

Installation

Listed below are the instructions for installing the Ad Import plug-in, for Mac and Windows installations. When you start InDesign, it loads any plug-ins in the designated Plug-Ins folder.

Mac Installation:

1. Two AdImport installer URLs are supplied with your license key. Choose the Silicon version download if you are running an M1 Mac; otherwise choose the non-Silicon version. If you are running Big Sur on an Intel Mac, you must run your InDesign application in Rosetta mode (Get Info on InDesign 2025 and check Open in Rosetta).
2. Double-click on the installer and follow the installation prompts. The Ad Import plug-in folder is installed in the Plug-ins folder inside the InDesign application folder.

Windows installation:

1. Download the Ad Import zip file from the URL that was supplied with your license key. Extract the zipped Ad Import file.
2. Drag-and-drop the Ad Import folder to the Plug-Ins folder inside the InDesign Application folder.

When the Ad Import plug-in is installed, it will be one of the choices in the InDesign Preferences submenu and in About Plug-ins, located under InDesign in the Mac application menu and under Help in the Windows application menu.

Ad Import Workflow

Here are typical steps to use Ad Import:

1. Complete the process of building the issue and laying out the ads in the ad layout application.
2. Create a new InDesign document using an InDesign template with pages of the proper dimensions to accommodate the contents of your ad layout file.
3. With the InDesign file active, click **Open** in the InDesign **File** menu.
4. In the browser, select the ad layout file you want to overlay. Click **Open**.
5. A dialog opens asking whether you want to create a new document, overlay the issue on the active InDesign document or insert the issue in the active InDesign document. Choose **Overlay**.
6. The Ad Import **Overlay Pages** dialog opens. Choose to overlay the entire ad layout issue or just a range of pages and select where in the InDesign document the imported pages should start and which Ad Import preference set to use.
7. Click **OK**. Ad Import will apply the ad layout issue information to the InDesign pages. If the InDesign document has fewer pages than the ad layout issue, Ad Import will add the necessary pages.

Using This Guide

These terms are used in this document:

Graphic frame	The ad box drawn in InDesign by Ad Import to accommodate the ad graphic.
Infobox	A text frame created in InDesign by Ad Import displaying information about an imported ad. Ad Import lets you decide which information, if any, to display in the Infobox. Infoboxes and graphic frames may be placed on different layers.
Issue	The file created in ALS/ALS for Magazines/AdforceX/AdForce. Also, that file's contents, which are the collection of pages that make up a publication. The issue and its contents are what Ad Import applies to an InDesign file.
Item	A generic term used to describe the contents of frames in the InDesign pages.

- For the purposes of this manual, “ALS” refers to ALS, ALS for Magazines, AdforceX and AdForce.
- Chapter 2 covers setting up ALS preferences.
- Chapter 3 describes how to import issues.

Ad Import Settings

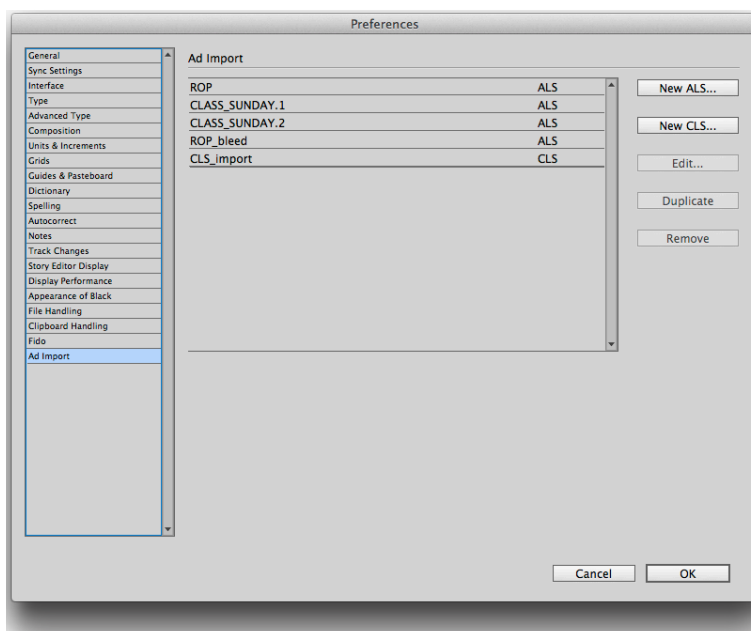
When Ad Import opens an ALS issue in InDesign, it uses Ad Import preferences to determine how the information appears in the InDesign document. Although Ad Import comes with default settings, most sites prefer to build custom preference sets for their specific production workflows. Once configured, preference sets are stored on the local computer. User Preferences in the Library on the Macintosh are hidden, you need to open it using the “Go to Folder” option (~/Library/).

- **Macintosh:** <Startup Disk>:Users:<Current User>:Library:Preferences:Adobe InDesign:Version 20.0:en_US:InDesign Defaults
- **Windows:** C:\Users\<Current User>\AppData\Roaming\Adobe\InDesign\Version 20.0\en_US\InDesign Defaults\

Creating Ad Import Preference Sets

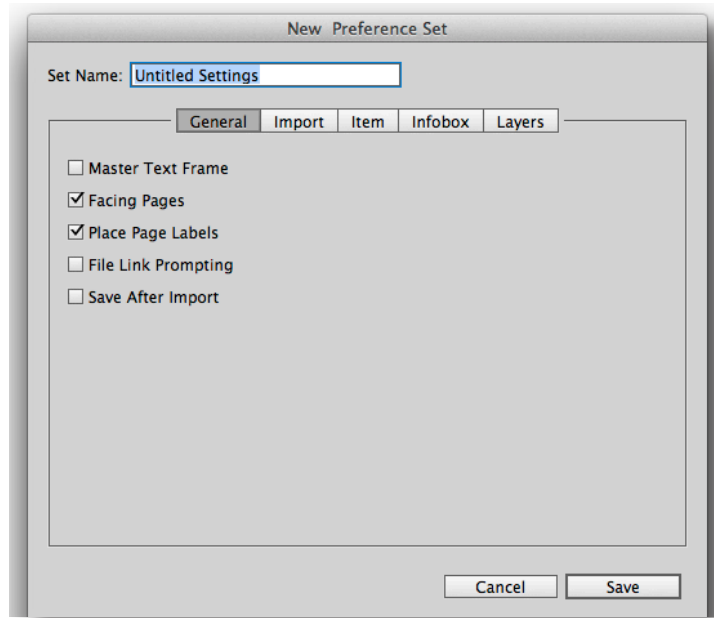
To create, edit, duplicate and delete Ad Import settings, navigate to the InDesign Preferences submenu — under **InDesign** on the **Macintosh** and under **Edit** in Windows — and click on **Ad Import**.

The Ad Import Preferences window opens.



If you already have preferences sets, they will be listed in the center pane.

Different preference sets are needed for ALS issues, so to create a new setting, click **New ALS**. To edit or duplicate an existing set, select it and click **Edit** or **Duplicate**. To delete a set, select it and click **Remove**. You will be asked to confirm the action.



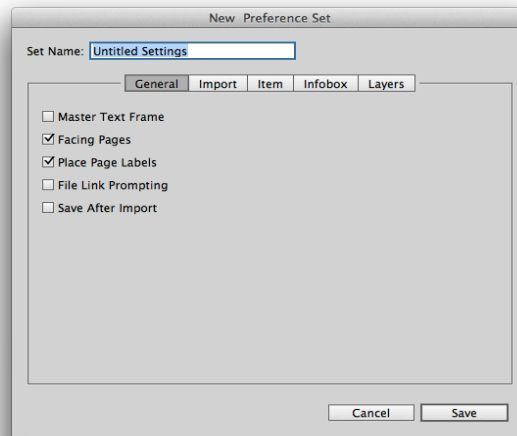
The **New Preference Set** and **Edit Preference Set** windows have five tabs: **General**, **Import**, **Item**, **Infobox** and **Layers**.

Enter a label for your preference set in the **Set Name** field.

When you are finished configuring the set, click **Save**.

- *In the following sections, entries marked with an asterisk are the defaults. If you do not set up any preference sets, these options will be in effect if you use Ad Import to open an ALS issue in InDesign.*

General Tab



The General tab includes options for document-level controls of the ALS issue.

Master Text Frame

Sets the InDesign Master Text Frame option for the new document.

*Facing Pages

When creating a new InDesign document, Ad Import looks at this option to determine whether to generate two-page spreads or single pages.

However, when inserting or overlaying pages in an existing document, Ad Import always honors the facing-page option of the source. Single pages will be inserted into a single-page document, spreads will be inserted into a document with facing pages, and overlays will follow the existing page setup.

*Place Page Labels

Creates a text frame above each InDesign page containing the sequential page number or complex folio (e.g., "A2") assigned to the pages in ALS.

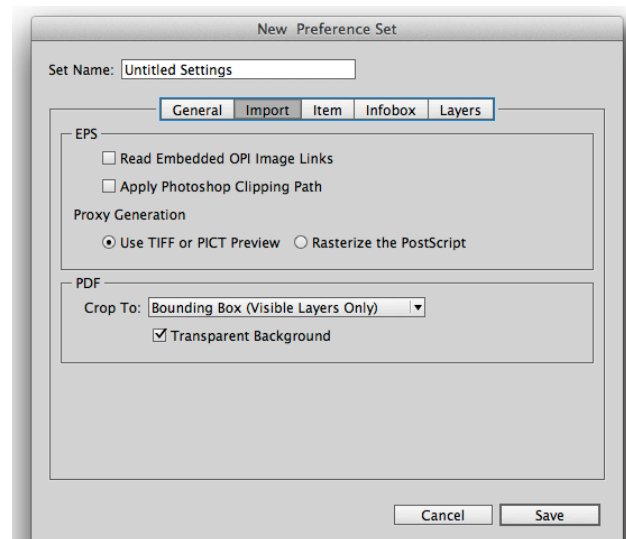
File Link Prompting

Sets InDesign to prompt for each file that Ad Import cannot find during import, based on the file path set in the ALS runsheet. This option allows you to browse to relink a graphic frame with the actual ad.

Save After Import

Automatically saves the document after overlay or insert; prompts you to name and save new documents.

Import Tab



The Import tab includes page-import options for the ALS issue.

EPS Options

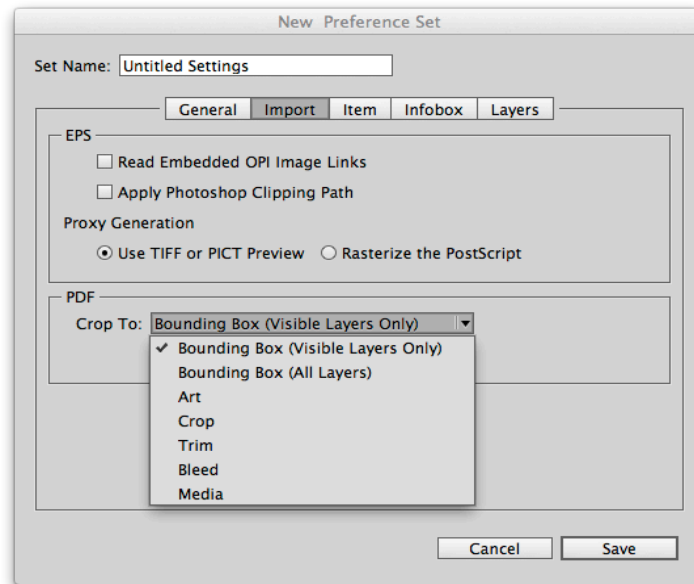
- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Read Embedded OPI Image Links | Select if you want InDesign to replace low-res images when you output the file. |
| Apply Photoshop Clipping Path | Placed EPS files always include a clipping path in InDesign. However, deselecting this option may result in a different bounding box size. |

Proxy Generation Options

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| *Use TIFF or PICT Preview | Select to generate the low-res proxy from the existing image preview, if available. If there is no preview, a low-res will be generated by rasterizing the EPS. |
| Rasterize the Postscript | Select to ignore the embedded preview and produce an offscreen bitmap. This option is typically slower but provides better results. |

PDF Options

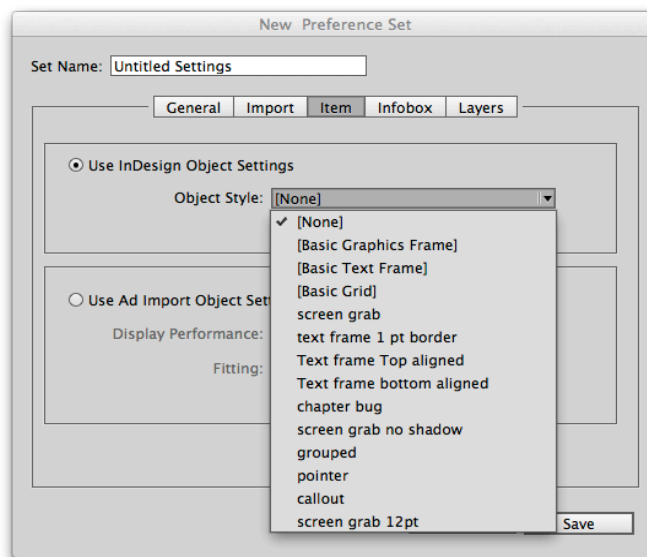
The PDF options are the same as those found in InDesign.



- *Bounding Box (Visible Layers Only)** Places the PDF's bounding box, or the minimum area that encloses the objects on the page.
- Bounding Box (All Layers)** Same as above, applied to all layers, including page marks.
- Art** Places the PDF only in the area defined by a rectangle that the author created as a placeable artwork (for example, clip art).
- Crop** Places the PDF only in the area that is displayed or printed by Adobe Acrobat.
- Trim** Identifies the place where the final produced page will be physically cut in the production process, if trim marks are present
- Bleed** Places only the area that represents where all page content should be clipped, if a bleed area is present.
- Media** Places the area that represents the physical paper size of the original PDF document (e.g., the dimensions of an A4 sheet of paper), including page marks.
- *Transparent Background** Check this option to reveal text or graphics that fall beneath the PDF in the InDesign layout. Deselect to place the PDF with an opaque white background.

Item Tab

The **Item** tab contains options that define the behavior of graphic frames and the treatment of images contained in graphic frames. You can use InDesign settings or Ad Import settings.

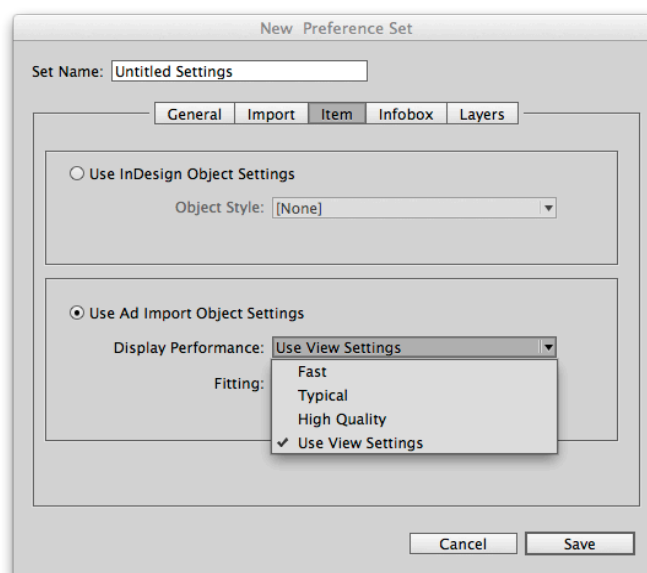


Use InDesign Object Style

Pop-up lets you choose an object style from InDesign for how the ads' graphic frames are displayed.

*Use Ad Import Object Settings

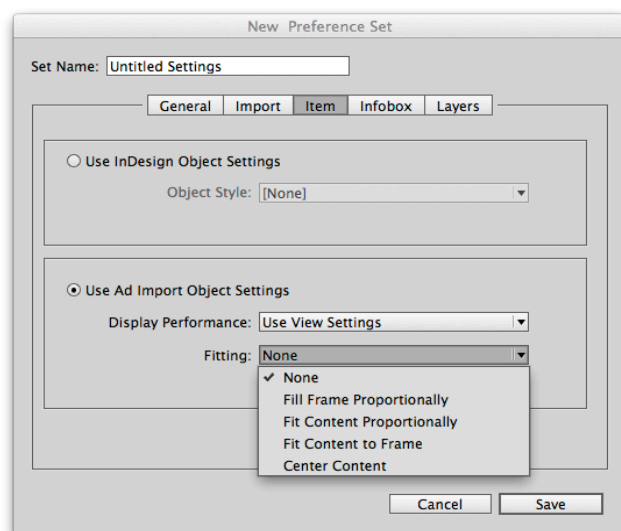
The **Display Performance** pop-up allows you to select the quality at which preview images will be displayed. Higher resolution images take longer to draw and use more memory. You can always alter the display settings of individual images after import. These options do not affect the output.



*Use View Settings	When overlaying or inserting, retains the display performance setting of the existing InDesign document.
Fast	Draws a raster image or vector graphic as a gray box.
Typical	Draws a low-res image that is usable for identifying and positioning an image or vector graphic.
High Quality	Draws a high-res raster image or vector graphic. This option provides the highest quality but the slowest performance.

Fitting Options

Fitting affects how imported ads fit in graphic frames. These settings correspond to the image-fitting settings in InDesign.



*None	Positions ad image in frame starting at the default reference point in InDesign. Neither image nor frame is altered.
Fill Frame Proportionally	Resizes ad image to fill frame without morphing. Parts of the image may be cut off.
Fit Content Proportionally	Resizes ad image so it all fits in frame. The image is not morphed, but it may not fill the frame.
Fit Content To Frame	Resizes ad image to fit frame and allows image proportions to change. The image may be morphed.
Center Content	Centers ad image in frame without resizing either the image or the frame. The frame is unaffected, but the image may be cut off or may not fill frame.

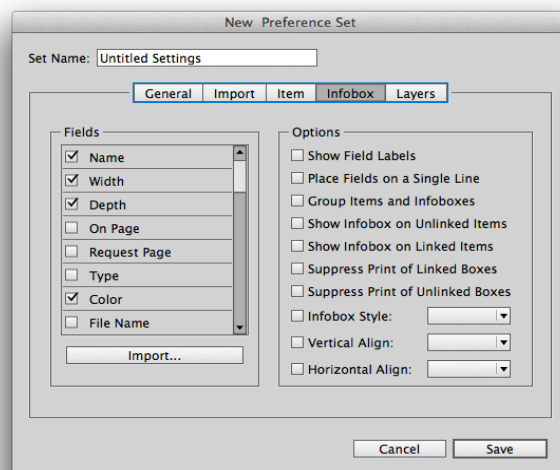
Infobox Tab

Ad Import can place a text frame with each graphic ad frame displaying information from the ALS runsheet. These Infoboxes can be placed on all ads or on missing ads only; they may also be placed in their own layer of the document.

This tab lets you choose what runsheet fields to include in the Infoboxes, as well as how they look.

Fields

The checklist on the left shows standard ALS runsheet fields; information from checked fields will be displayed, appearing in the Infobox in the same order in which they are listed.



These fields are checked by default:

Name

Width

Depth

Color

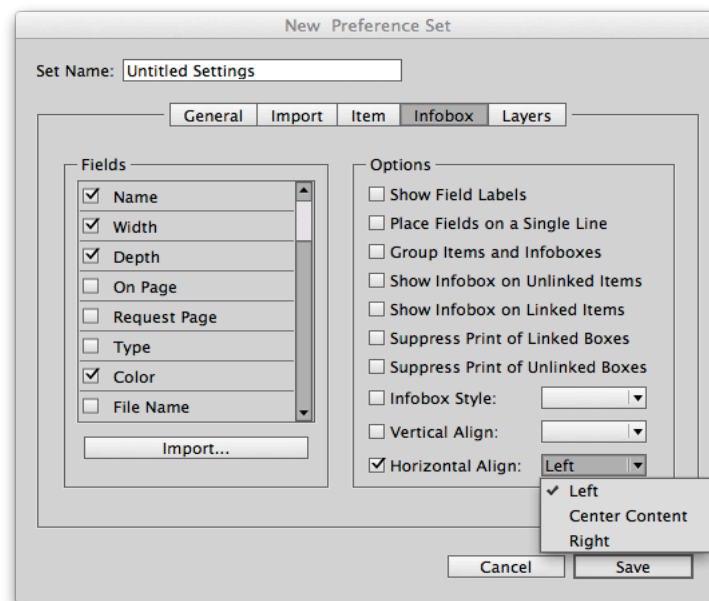
Ad Number

If custom runsheet fields have been added to the ALS document, the **Import . . .** button can be used to add those fields to the list. Click **Import . . .** and select an ALS issue containing those fields. The new fields will be appended to the bottom of the checklist.

Options

The checklist on the right controls the appearance of the Infoboxes.

Show Field Labels	Displays the runsheet field name before its value; for example, “Name: Roeger’s,” not just “Roeger’s.”
Place Fields on a Single Line	Displays the information for each field on a separate line.
Group Items and Infoboxes	Groups the graphic ad frame and Infobox into one unit, so if you move the ad, the Infobox will move with it. If you select this option, you cannot place ads and Infoboxes on separate layers; Ad Import will create the layers but put the group on the Ad layer.
Show Infobox on Unlinked Items	Creates Infoboxes for graphic frames where the file path does not link to an ad.
Show Infobox on Linked Items	Creates Infoboxes for graphic frames where the file path links to an ad.
Suppress Print of Linked Boxes	Keeps Infoboxes from printing for graphic frames where the file path links to an ad.
Suppress Print of Unlinked Boxes	Keeps Infoboxes from printing for graphic frames where the file path does not link to an ad.
Infobox Style	Lists InDesign paragraph styles that can be assigned to the Infobox text. Styles must be available to InDesign when the ALS document is imported. If the selected style is not available, the default paragraph style will be assigned.

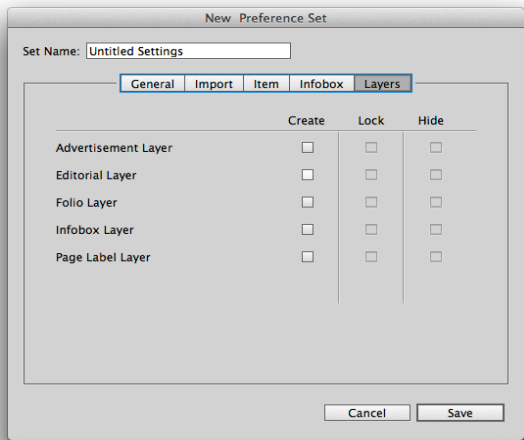


Alignment options tell the Infoboxes where to place relative to the ad’s graphic frame.

Vertical Align	Top, Center Content, Bottom
Horizontal Align	Left, Center Content, Right

Layers Tab

When creating a new document, Ad Import builds one layer and places all imported items on it by default. The Layers tab allows you to specify additional layers, and to lock and/or hide those layers automatically when they are created.



- Advertisement Layer

Creates an additional layer for ads and their graphic frames imported by Ad Import. If you select this option first, and then select the “Group Items and Infoboxes” option in the Infobox tab, you can place the grouped item/infobox in the Advertisement Layer.
- Editorial Layer

Creates an additional layer for editorial matter with no ads on it.
- Folio Layer

Creates an additional layer for folios; for folios to place, however, you must configure the pages in a separate procedure.
-  For directions on how to import folios, see “Placing Folios” in Chapter 3, “Using Ad Import.”
- Infobox Layer

Creates an additional layer for Infoboxes imported by Ad Import.
- Page Label Layer

Creates an additional layer for Page Labels imported by Ad Import. For these labels to show, you must select “Place Page Labels” in the General tab.

Using Ad Import

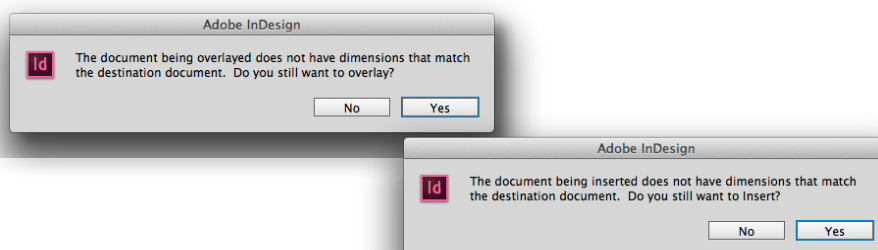
When you use Ad Import to open an ALS issue in InDesign, you may:

- Create a new InDesign document containing all or part of the ALS issue.
- Insert all or part of the ALS issue into an existing InDesign document.
- Overlay an existing InDesign document with all or part of the ALS issue.

Page Dimensions

When you use Ad Import to create a new InDesign document, it automatically sizes the pages to match the ALS issue. However, if you are doing an overlay or an insert, Ad Import will honor the dimensions of the existing InDesign page.

Ad Import compares the issue's page specifications (depth, width, gutters, columns) with the current InDesign document. If the two documents vary in dimensions, a dialog appears warning that the two documents are not the same size.



- ❑ *This warning may appear when the pages are effectively identical if your InDesign and ALS documents are using different internal measurement systems.*

If you click **Yes**, new inserted pages will match the InDesign pages, or Ad Import will overlay the existing pages, even if the ads do not fit. The top-left corners are matched, and items are imported from ALS into InDesign using the item's offset as determined in ALS. For example, if a box is placed 3 inches down from the top in ALS, it also will be 3 inches down from the top in InDesign. Differences in document specifications are most apparent at the bottom-right corner of the InDesign document.

So it is important to be sure that the InDesign pages are properly set up to accept the ALS issue. Many sites create InDesign templates in advance to be sure documents that will be opened with Ad Import have the required dimensions.

- 📖 *For details on InDesign templates, please consult your Creative Cloud documentation.*

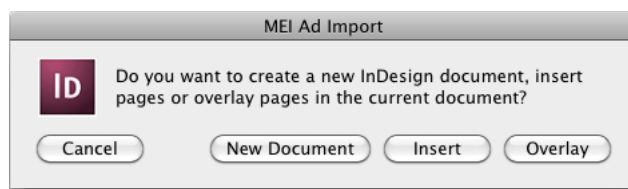
Folios

Ad Import will place folios automatically, provided you have set up the InDesign pages correctly with a Folio layer and folio tag.

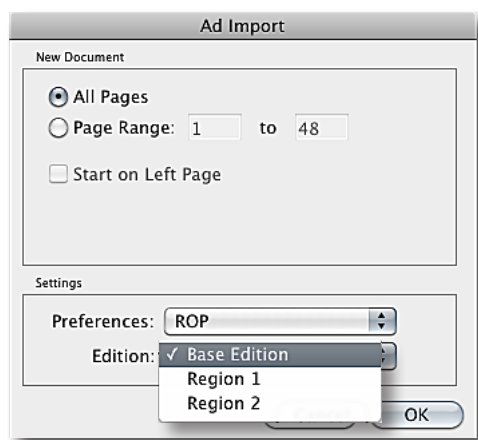
1. In InDesign, create a template or new document. Make sure it has the page dimensions and column model required for the ALS issue.
2. In the InDesign Layers palette, add a new layer named “Folio” (case-sensitive).
3. On the Folio layer of a master page, place a text frame containing the tag <FOLIO> (case-sensitive), with the desired typographical formatting applied. Apply to pages as needed. (You may also insert the folio frame and tag on individual pages.)
4. Select **Open** from the InDesign **File** menu and choose the ALS issue to be overlayed or inserted. After the overlay/insert is complete, you should see the <FOLIO> tag converted to the correct folio information.

New Document

1. Launch InDesign.
2. Select **Open** from the InDesign **File** menu, then browse to the ALS issue you want to open in InDesign.
 - ❑ *In Windows, the file MUST have the .als extension.*
3. Click **Open**.
 - If you have any InDesign file active, a dialog opens asking you to choose **New Document**, **Insert** or **Overlay**.



Click **New Document** to open the Ad Import **New Document** dialog.



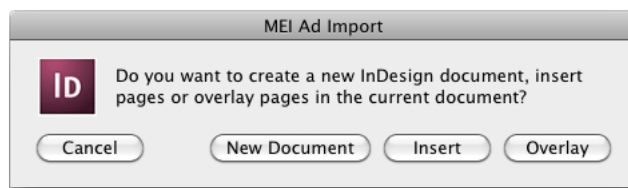
- If no InDesign file is active, the Ad Import dialog opens immediately.
4. Choose **All Pages** or enter a **Page Range**.
 - ❑ *All dimensions of the new InDesign file — page width, depth and margins, gutter widths and number of columns — will be the same as the ALS issue.*
 5. By default, ALS begins ranges on a right-hand page. If your page range actually begins on the left, you must check **Start on Left Page** to force the issue to flow correctly.
 6. Select an import setting from the **Preferences** pop-up.
 7. Make a choice from the **Edition** pop-up, if available.
 8. Click **OK**.
 - ❑ *If “Save After Import” is set in your preferences, you will also be prompted to name and save the new document.*

Insert Pages

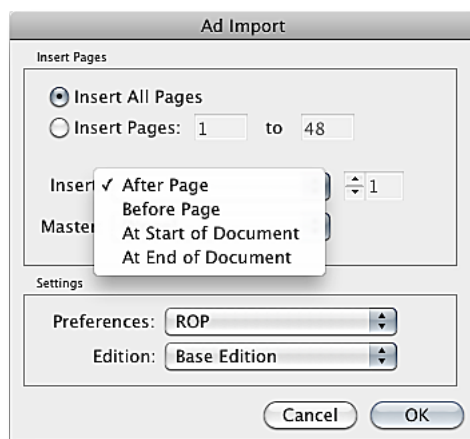
1. Launch InDesign and open the InDesign document you want to use for the import.
2. Select **Open** from the InDesign **File** menu, then browse to the ALS issue you want to insert in the InDesign document.

❑ *In Windows, the file MUST have the .als extension.*

3. Click **Open** and choose **Insert** from the dialog.



4. The Ad Import **Insert Pages** dialog opens.



Choose **All Pages** or enter a **Page Range**. Inserted pages will inherit the dimensions of the active InDesign document, not the ALS issue. This behavior is different from **New Document**.

5. Choose from the **Insert** pop-up and pick a page number if necessary to determine where your inserted pages will go.
6. If desired, specify the InDesign master page to be used for any added pages.
7. Select an import setting from the **Preferences** pop-up and an edition from the **Edition** pop-up, if available.
8. Click **OK** and the additional pages will be built with your ALS information and inserted into the active InDesign document.

❑ *If "Save After Import" is set in your preferences, the document will save automatically.*


Overlay Pages

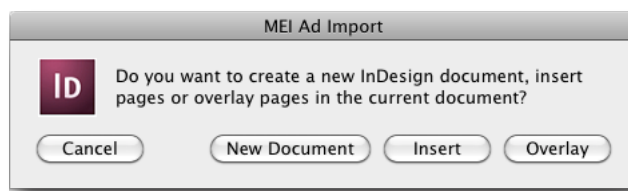
If there are fewer pages in the open InDesign file than the ALS document you want to overlay, Ad Import will automatically insert pages at the end of the InDesign document. So, for example, if you are starting with a 20-page InDesign document and the issue to be imported is 24 pages, Ad Import will add four pages to the end of the InDesign document.

The master page specified in the Ad Import dialog will be applied to these pages.

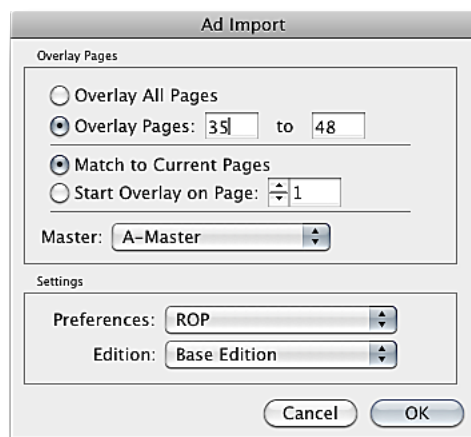
If there are more pages in the open InDesign file than the ALS document, Ad Import overlays its pages and leaves the remainder of the document unaltered. So, for example, if the open InDesign document has 20 pages and the ALS issue contains only 16 pages, Ad Import overlays the 16 InDesign pages you designate in the Ad Import dialog and leaves the other four pages untouched.

1. Launch InDesign and open the InDesign document you want to use for the import.
2. Select **Open** from the InDesign **File** menu, then browse to the ALS issue you want to open in InDesign.

 *In Windows, the file MUST have the .als extension.*
3. Click **Open** and choose **Overlay** from the dialog. .



4. The Ad Import **Overlay Pages** dialog opens.



Choose **All Pages** or enter a **Page Range**. Ad Import will add InDesign pages or leave pages blank at the end of the document as needed. Added pages will inherit the dimensions of the InDesign document, not the ALS issue. This behavior is different from **New Document**.

5. Choose **Match to Current Pages** for your overlay to start at the beginning of the InDesign document. You can also choose **Start Overlay on Page** . . . and fill in the number of the InDesign page where you want ALS issue information to start.

6. If desired, specify the InDesign master page to be used for the added pages.
7. Select an import setting from the **Preferences** pop-up, and an edition from the **Edition** pop-up, if available.
8. Click **OK** and the ALS information will be overlaid on your InDesign document, with additional pages created if necessary
 - ▣ *If “Save After Import” is set in your preferences, the document will save automatically.*