Making Larger Signs Than Your Printer Thinks It Can

Your printer may think it can only make signs that are 8-1/2"x11" like the sign at the far right of this photo. Well, it's right, kind of, so let's humor it. The sign we *want* it to print is three times as wide: 24" (like the sign that's pasted atop the yellow sign at the right).

Not every computer can do this trick I'm about to show you. You need software that will let you change "canvas size" or "work area" or something like that. I use Photoshop (any version you're running now will work).

If your software has a dialog box like the one below, you're set. You can make signs any size you desire. I like to make my signs in multiples of 8x10" (or 10x8") because it helps me when it comes time to print them. In our example, we're going to make a 24"x10" sign as shown in the example above.
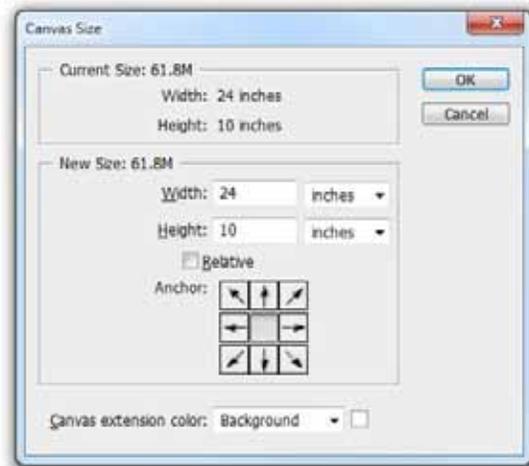
I just created a new Photoshop document 24" wide and 10" tall and put the text in as I wanted it to appear on my sign. I could have added a logo or any other illustration I wanted. My sign will look exactly like what's on my computer. I *SAVE* this.

OK, you say, now how can I persuade my printer to print a document this wide?

Obviously, we'll have to print it in three panels and tape the panels together. Let's send the left third to the printer first.

Go up to Image and drag down to Canvas Size (or use the shortcut: Control/Command - alt/option - c). Of those nine squares you see, click on the left square. We're going to temporarily crop off everything to the right of that third. In our example, we don't have to crop anything off the top or bottom, so we'll stick with a Height of 10" and tell it to give us a width of 8"

Just ignore the warning dialog
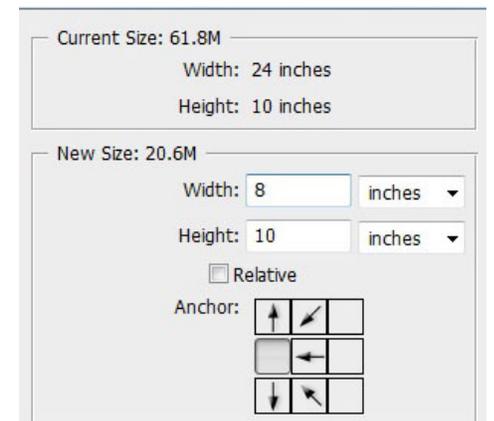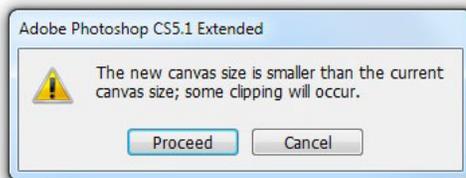
box that tells you that some clipping will occur. We already know that. We're asking it to do the impossible. Just click Proceed.
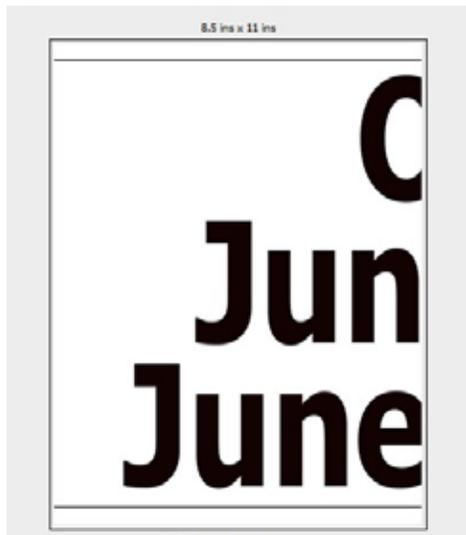
Your Print dialog box (left) will show you what you're about to print - just the left third. Tell it to go ahead and print. You're smarter than your printer - you know what you want it to do.

Oh, NO! Looking at your Photoshop document, you see that you've lost the right two-thirds of your sign!

Go back into your history panel (second from bottom left) and select the time in history just prior to (above) when you changed the canvas size.
(Whew!) The lost two-thirds of your sign have re-appeared!

In the meantime, the left third of your sign is coming out of your printer.

Now go back into Canvas Size (bottom left) and select the *middle* square and tell it to be 8" wide instead of 24" (just as you did with the left panel). Click Proceed through the warning dialog box and *Print* the center portion.

Now you know what to do

8.5 ins x 11 ins

C Jun June

HISTORY
Open June BP.psd
Open
Update All Text Layers
T Type Tool
Canvas Size

New Size: 20.6M
Width: 8 inches
Height: 10 inches
☐ Relative
Anchor:

Open ne 6 & e 13 &

HISTORY
Open June BP.psd
Open
Update All Text Layers
T Type Tool
Canvas Size
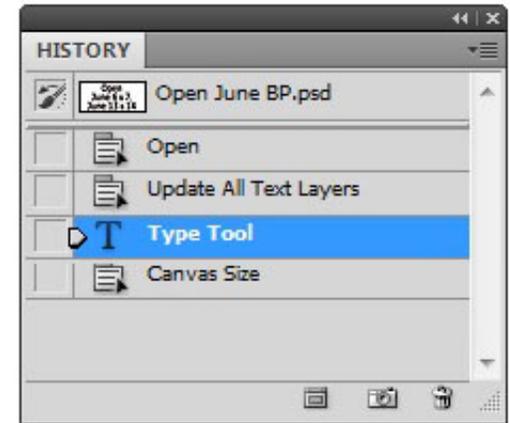
next: You've lost the outer two-thirds of your sign, so you need to go back in History as you did before and select whatever is before your Canvas Size change.

Now the center section of your sign is coming out of the printer and you're ready to change canvas size again, this time clicking on the right square and telling it to be only 8" wide. *Print.* You now have the three sections of your sign ready to tape together.

They will need a bit of trimming. I use a razor/hobby knife and a metal straight edge. Then I tape them together on the wrong side.
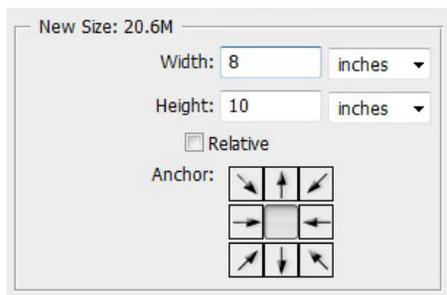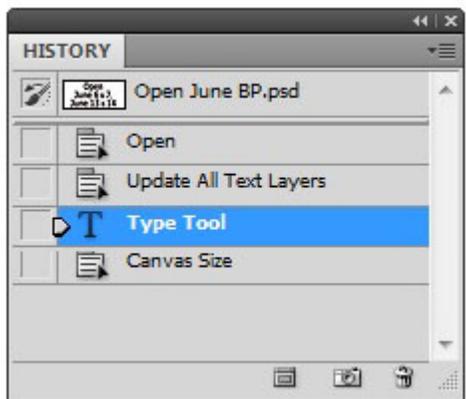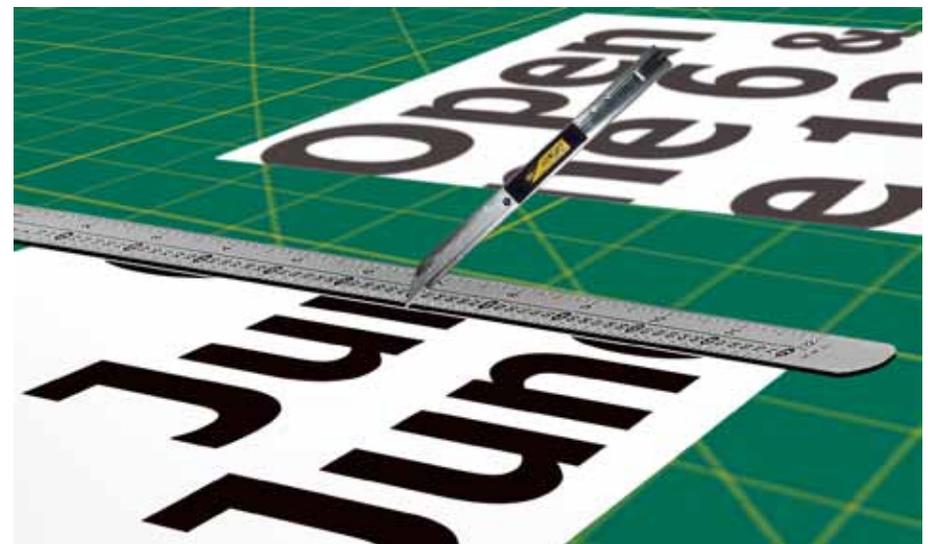
You're not limited in how many panels you make horizontally and vertically, either. The example above was easily divided into left, right and center, but you can divide further.

Yesterday, a budget-conscious filmmaker asked how he could make a low budget, temporary poster for his film. I sent him to this tutorial and then realized I should explain further how to make *really* huge signs if you want.
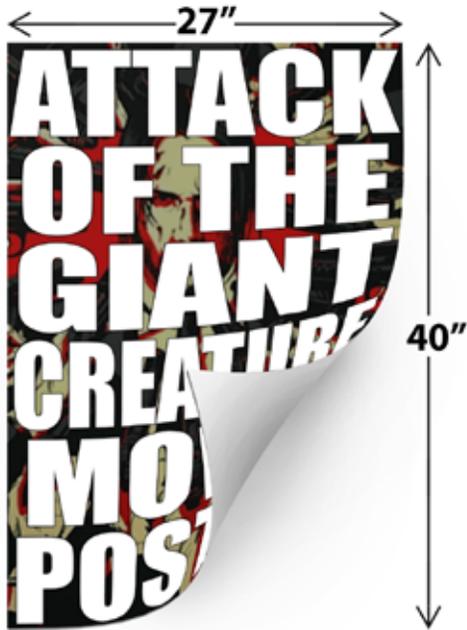

A standard movie poster is 27" wide by 40" tall. We'll make our Photoshop document that size. It won't complain.

In cases like this, you have to change canvas size more than once to isolate and print each section. (Make sure you've Saved your completed poster before we start changing Canvas Size!)

You'd have no problem changing Canvas Size to 6.75"x10" to print those corners. Getting those inner canvas rectangles, though, requires changing Canvas size twice for each printed section.

To isolate and print what I'm showing at the right as panel **6**, for instance, you'd need to Change Canvas Size to 13.5" wide by 20" tall (shown at upper right of this page) choosing the upper left anchor in the Canvas Size dialog box, and then change *that* Canvas Size to your desired 6.75" by 10" choosing the lower right anchor
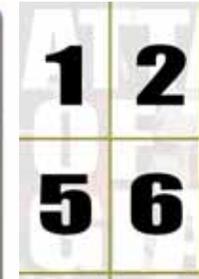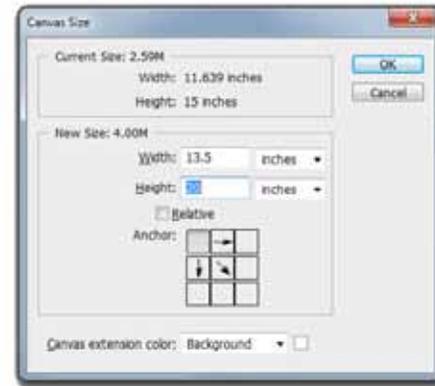
and then print that (Whew!)

When moving on to print a different panel, you'll find it's often handy to select the previous History State in your History Panel. When the History panel doesn't have a section you need, having Saved your completed poster, you can just go up to the top of your window
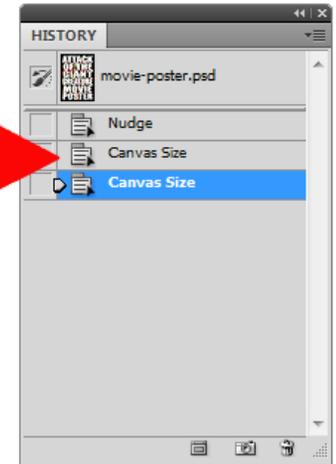
and click on **File** and choose **Revert**. This will bring you back to your entire Saved poster, ready to do dividing and sub-dividing for your next panel.