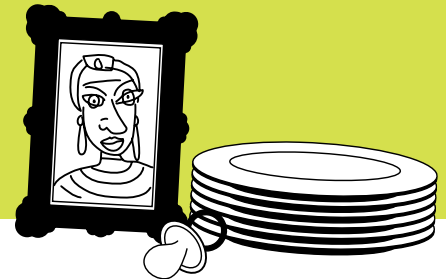


'What does it  
all mean?'



# Printing terminology

The world of print is full of jargon and terminology that can make it confusing and difficult when deciding on the specifications of a job. This guide is part of a series that will explain some of the most common terms to help you to efficiently communicate with your designer and printer.

## Paper & stock

### Paper Sizes

A6 105 x 148.5mm  
A5 148.5 x 210mm  
A4 210 x 297mm  
A3 297 x 420mm  
A2 420 x 594mm  
A1 594 x 841mm  
A0 841 x 1189mm

- Letterheads are usually A4
- Comp Slips are usually 1/3 A4 - 99 x 210mm
- Business cards are usually 55 x 85mm

### Envelope sizes

C4 (to fit A4)  
C5 (to fit A5 or A4 folded once)  
C6 (to fit A6 or A4 folded into quarters)  
DL (to fit A4 folded into thirds)

### What is gsm?

An abbreviation of grams per square metre, it is the most common unit of measurement for the weight of paper and board. Common paper weights:  
Black and white photocopying - 80gsm bond  
Colour laser photocopying - 100gsm laser bond  
Letterheads - 100gsm bond  
Compliment slips - 100gsm bond  
Business cards - 350gsm board

## Stock types

Stock is a general term for any paper or board which is used in printing. Common types of stock are listed below:

### Bond

An uncoated paper often used for basic photocopying. Higher quality and weight are used for letterheads and business stationery.

### Coated

This means the paper has had a coating applied, usually china clay, to give it a special finish. It usually comes in matt, silk or gloss formats and is suitable for jobs that need good quality print (particularly of photographic images). Examples of use are brochures, leaflets, direct mail cards.

### Laid

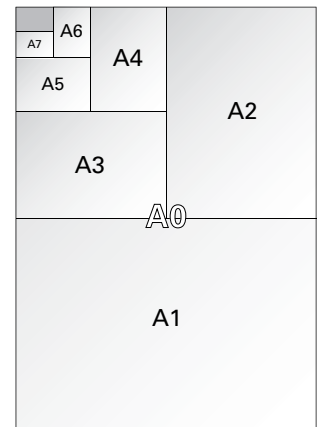
Uncoated paper that has a texture of very slightly raised parallel lines. Usually used for letterheads.

### NCR

Stands for no carbon required. NCR is a lightweight (usually 60gsm) paper used for order forms, receipts, purchase orders etc where multiple copies are required. Usually comes in 2-part, 3-part and 4-part multicolour sets.

### Wove

Uncoated paper with a smooth texture, often used for letterheads.



The international paper size standard, ISO 216, is based on the German DIN 476 standard for paper sizes.

Using the metric system, the base format is a sheet of paper measuring 1 m<sup>2</sup> in area (A0 paper size). Paper sizes in the series A1, A2, A3, etc., are defined by halving the preceding paper size parallel to its shorter side and are all based on a single aspect ratio of the square root of two, or 1:1.41.

This standard has been adopted by all countries except the US and Canada.

\* Portrait, Dummy, Plates

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## Printing terms

### Bleed

When the print is designed to finish right on the page edge, it is necessary to print beyond this edge (usually by 3mm) to allow for leeway when trimming. This extra print is called bleed.

### Cromalin

A DuPont trademarked system, it is often used as a generic term for a pre-press proof. This is where the final artwork files are printed on a machine that simulates how the final job will print. It is useful where colours are important.

### Crop/trim marks

Jobs are usually printed on larger sheets than the intended finished size. Crop marks are printed along with the design to act as a guide for trimming.

### dpi

An abbreviation of dots per inch. The more dots per inch there are (ie the higher the dpi) the better quality the print will produce. dpi can range from 72dpi (low quality) to 1200dpi and above (very high quality).

### Dummy

A mock-up produced by the printer using the intended stock (not printed) to demonstrate how the finished product will feel.

### Folio

Technical term for a page number printed on a document.

### Halftone

The method of producing a range of tones, such as a photograph or tinted area, by dividing the image into a series of dots. Dark areas have relatively big dots, close together. Light areas have small dots surrounded by white space. The number of dots used determines the quality of the image produced.

### Imposition

Most print is not printed one page at a time, for example business cards are often printed four at a time. The imposition is the layout of the artwork set up for printing.

### Insert

Technical term for leaflets than are found loose inside magazines.

### Interleaving

Including a plain sheet of paper between each printed sheet to prevent set-off.

### Landscape

Stock orientation - when the long edge of the sheet is at the bottom.

### Line artwork

Artwork which contains no halftones such as logos or simple diagrams.

### Overs

Printed material that is in excess of the quantity ordered. Many printers will 'give' you the overs rather than throwing them away. It is usually the case however, that printers will have in their small print that they will supply plus or minus 10% of the quantity ordered.

### Plates

A material that carries the image, or colour separation for printing. They can be made from various materials; paper plates are designed for short run use and then thrown away, metal plates are used for finer detail work and can be stored and re-used.

Plastic plates are becoming more common and although they can produce the same level of detail as metal plates they are much cheaper and are disposable.

### Portrait

Stock orientation - when the short edge of the sheet is at the bottom.

### Registration marks

When more than one colours are printed, each colour plate needs to be printed in the same place on the sheet to ensure the images are aligned. Registration marks are small target shapes that act as a guide to the printer. You can often see them left on the edges of newspapers where they haven't been trimmed off.

### Set-Off

When the ink transfers from one sheet to another. It can occur when the ink is run too heavily on the machine, when there are large areas of ink or on quick turnaround jobs (when the ink isn't given enough time to dry before trimming). It can be prevented by interleaving.

### Variable data printing

A digital print method of personalising the print (changing salutation, address, message etc) by combining database information with the design. Commonly used for direct mail sales and marketing campaigns.

*We're experts in managing print projects, so if you need a quote we're here to help.*

Below is an example of an imposition, showing the following print elements:

1. Crop marks
2. Bleed
3. Registration marks
4. Folio



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