

GLOSSARY OF PRINT TERMS

To help you find your way through all the confusing jargon, here are our explanations of some of the terms most commonly used by Printers.

If you click on any of the terms, you will be taken to their respective definition. Similarly, you will find that some of the terms are referred to in explanations of other terms. Wherever they appear as [hyperlinks](#), just click on the term to be taken to its own definition.

This list isn't exhaustive, so if you would like to know more about something in particular, just get in touch.

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Board	Imposition	Pulp Board
Book Proof	Laid Paper	Recycled Paper
Bond Paper	Lamination	Register
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Crease	Machine Seal	Score
CTP	Make Ready	Sections
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Drilling	Offset Paper	Spiral Binding
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Films	Pantone	UV Varnish
Foiling	Page	Wire-O Binding
Folio	Paper	Wove Paper
Four Colour Process	PDF	
FTP	Perfect Binding	

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Art Paper

A general term used to describe coated paper. This coating may be **Gloss**, **Silk** or **Matt**.

Artwork

Usually the compiled digital files supplied to a printer by the client, which are then used to originate **proofs** and **printing plates**. Also used to refer to the actual montage of elements within those digital files. Similarly, the term 'Artwork' is sometimes used to refer to an original illustration, which may then be scanned or photographed for origination purposes.

Bleed

An extra few millimetres of artwork which extend into the 'waste' area, outside the finished document size. This is done so that when the document is trimmed to its finished size, there are no unintentional white edges left due to slight positional variations when cutting.

Board

Thicker, or heavier weight material, usually implying a weight of **200gsm** or greater. Often used in conjunction with the term **paper**, referring to a lighter weight material to accompany the Board. An example of this would be **Cover & Text** materials, where a Board weight **cover** would be used for the outside pages of a booklet, and the lighter **text** paper used for the inside pages of the booklet.

Book Proof

A Book Proof is a made-up **proof**, folded and trimmed to replicate the finished job, with pages in the correct order, to make it easier to handle and approve. If the Book Proof is a machine wet-proof, the material will be that used for the final print run. If the Book Proof is a hard-copy digital proof, it will be on proofing paper and not the 'job' material.

Bond Paper

A general purpose, lightweight uncoated **paper**. Also sometimes referred to as **offset paper**.

Cartridge Paper

A heavy uncoated **paper**, often used for drawing. Sometimes mistakenly used to refer to as **Bond** or **Offset** materials.

CMYK

Short for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black, the constituent colours used in **Four Colour Process** printing.

Cover

The outside front and back pages of a booklet. Usually a heavier or thicker material than the inside **Text** pages. If the material used for the Cover is the same as that for the **Text**, this is referred to as a Self Cover.

Crease

A mechanical process to literally crush the fibres in paper or board, to facilitate easier folding of the material, and to limit the propensity for cracking when doing so. Typically necessary when material weights are **200gsm** or heavier.



CTP

An abbreviation of Computer To Plate, referring to the process of imaging a **Printing Plate** without the need to use **Films**. A plate imaged in this way will have sharper **Halftone** dots, meaning sharper printed images and greater colour accuracy.

Die-Cutting

A method of cutting a sheet of paper to a particular shape, using a metal cutter or Die. Most often used for folders where a pocket and glue tab are required.

Digital Printing

A method of printing that is typically based on Ink-jet or other similar technologies, and which doesn't require the **Printing Plates** used in **Litho Printing**. Most cost effective for printing jobs in very small quantities, or for jobs with high numbers of variables, e.g. personalisation, possibly even resulting in every single copy having a unique variable.

Drilling

The means of creating holes in collated sets of pages, especially for leaves that are to be inserted into ring binders.

Dummy

A mock-up of a document prior to its production. This may be a blank, un-printed booklet, made-up using the actual **paper** and **board** to be used, to give an idea of how the finished job will feel.

Duotone

A method of reproducing an image using typically just two **Spot Colours**. A dark colour (often simply Black) is used for the darker **Halftone** areas of the image, and a light colour is used for the lighter **Halftone** areas of the image. Often used to highlight an image, giving it impact without having to resort to using **Four Colour Process**.

Embossing

A method of producing a raised area on a sheet of paper, by squeezing it between 'male' & 'female' dies, thereby creating a particular shape or pattern. 'Blind' embossing is when this raised area does not fit in with a similar printed image or area.

Ex Works

A term used to mean that no deliveries have been allowed for when estimating the cost of a print job.

Films

Essentially like very large camera films, and used in a photochemical process to produce **Printing Plates**. **Halftone** dots on Plates produced using Films are liable to vary in size by +/- 5%, with a corresponding effect on press, due to the inherent deficiencies in the process. Now largely superseded by Computer to Plate (CTP), where a **Printing Plate** is imaged directly using a laser.

Foiling

The application of a very thin metal leaf, usually coloured and highly reflective, to give an image great impact. May be combined with a conventionally printed image, or just used on its own. Can also be used to apply holograms. Applied in a very similar fashion to **Embossing**, using dies.



Folio

A term used by printers to describe the labelling system of page numbering in a document, in order to distinguish a **page's** label (or folio) from its physical position in a booklet. Note that the folio denoting 'Page 1' of a document may not necessarily be positioned on the very first **page** of a document. For a printer, page 1 of a document is always the very first **page** of the document, regardless of whether or not it is labelled as such.

Four Colour Process

The method of printing that combines four constituent inks (**CMYK**) in order to simulate almost any other colour. Most usually used when reproducing photographic images containing many different colours and shades. When printing in Four Colour Process, the printer may have to strike a balance or compromise when trying to match the colour for a specific element, without it also being to the detriment of the other images being printed at the same time. Where this is not possible, **Spot Colours** may be used for that specific element, with the four process colours being used for the rest of the elements. An example of this is the decision whether to print a Corporate colour using a **Spot Colour**, or simulate it using Four Colour Process.

FTP

Short for File Transfer Protocol. Typically used to refer to a computer server onto which digital artwork files are uploaded or downloaded from.

Gloss Paper & Board

Material that has a very shiny reflective surface, due to the very smooth coating on the material. Less popular now than **Silk** or **Matt** coated materials. Jobs printed on this material will not typically require a **Machine Seal**.

GSM

Short for Grammes per Square Metre, and the unit of measurement most commonly used to refer to the weight of a particular material. Generally, the higher the weight, the thicker and more rigid the material will be. 300gsm might be used for a business card, 170gsm might be used for a poster, 130gsm might be used for a leaflet, and 100gsm might be used for a letterhead.

Halftone

The name given to the dots that, when viewed as a whole, come together to form a larger image. The image is broken down into constituent Halftone dots by the **RIP**. The smaller the dots, the lighter the 'tint' of that colour; the larger the dots, the heavier the 'tint' of that colour. **Four Colour Process** uses a combination of halftone dots in each of the **CMYK** colours, to simulate many other colours. The dots of different colours are sited next to or overlapping each other, not directly on top of each other. The Human Eye blurs the individual dots together, giving the 'illusion' of another colour entirely.

Imposition

The laying out of pages onto a larger sheet as specified by the printer, in a particular order or laydown, to create a **Section**. When this larger sheet is folded up, the pages then appear together in the desired order. A task typically done by the printer using special software.

Laid Paper

High quality uncoated paper, with a textured finish of thin parallel lines. Usually used for stationery. Also see **Wove Paper**.



Lamination

A thin film of plastic that is adhered to a printed sheet, to give the finished product greater impact and protection. Usually Gloss or Matt, although other variations are available. Commonly used on outer **Cover** pages.

Landscape

Refers to the orientation of a finished product, where the vertical dimensions are shortest. e.g. an A4 Portrait booklet would have a top and bottom width of 297mm, and side heights of 210mm. The decision to make a document Landscape or **Portrait** may result in a difference in cost.

Line artwork

Artwork which consists only of solid areas of single colours, and does not require the use of **Halftone** dots. Usually printed using **Spot Colours**.

Litho Printing

Short for Lithographic. A form of printing based upon the principle that oil and water do not mix. A thin covering of Printing Ink (once oil-based, but now more commonly vegetable or soya-based) is applied to the **Printing Plate** using a system of rollers on the printing press. The ink adheres to the image area, and water is used to wash away the excess ink, leaving the ink only on the image area, ready for transfer onto the waiting material. See also **Offset Printing**.

Machine Seal

A neutral water-based sealer, applied on press over the entire printed sheet, to aid drying and help prevent marking. Usually necessary on **Matt** and **Silk** papers and boards. Can also be applied as a spot gloss varnish, using a **Printing Plate**.

Make Ready

The process of readying a job to run on a printing press. Each colour to be printed will require its own Make Ready. This involves loading the **Printing Plate** onto the press and subsequently adjusting the ink levels, whilst running some test sheets of the material through the press, until a point is reached where the operator is happy for the actual print run to begin. This process can form a significant proportion of the overall print cost if the quantity to be produced is small.

Matt Paper & Board

A type of coated material where the coating has a very dull and unreflective finish. Jobs printed on this material will typically also require a **Machine Seal** to help prevent the printed sheet from marking. Commonly used for printing 'template' documents prior to laser personalisation, or for forms that need to be written on. See also **Gloss** and **Silk** papers and boards.

NCR

Short for No Carbon Required. Very thin sheets of paper that are used in sets of 2 of more leaves. When the top sheet is written on, the pressure of the impression transfers onto the sheets underneath, thereby replicating the writing on the top sheet without needing to use a sheet of carbon paper.

Offset Paper

A general purpose, lightweight uncoated paper. Also sometimes referred to as **Bond Paper**.



Offset Printing

A form of **Litho Printing** where the **Printing Plate** carrying the ink never actually comes into contact with the sheet of material to be printed on. Instead, the ink on the image area is transferred, or 'Offset', onto an adjacent cylinder wrapped in a rubber blanket. This cylinder then rotates and transfers the ink onto the sheet of material, thereby printing the image.

One-Sided Board

A heavyweight material with a coating on only one side, and uncoated on the reverse. Often used for postcards and packaging.

Overprint

The act of printing on pre-printed sheets of material. The pre-printed sheets will typically be some sort of template ('Blanks'), and are held as un-trimmed flat sheets. The second print run literally prints on top of these sheets, filling in blank areas of the templates with data or copy, such as price lists or other date-specific information. 'Overprinting' is also a form of trapping, whereby one colour is deliberately printed on top of another colour.

Pantone

Refers to the colour matching system developed by Pantone Inc. The Pantone Matching System is the standard used by the Printing Industry for consistently matching specific colours that cannot easily be achieved using a mix of the conventional **CMYK** colours. **Spot** or **Special Colours**, also sometimes referred to as 'Pantone colours', are produced by mixing special ingredient inks to achieve a particular colour reference specified in the Pantone Guides. This also includes metallic and fluorescent colours.

Page

A single side of a paper, whether in booklet or leaflet form. Printers refer to Printed Pages (pp), and mean the number of a sides that are printed. Hence a single sheet of A4, if printed on both sides, would be a 2pp document. However, if it were printed on only one side, it would be a 1pp document, even though the sheet of paper still has 2 'sides' to it. See also **Folio**.

Paper

A commodity of thin material manufactured from fibres of wood pulp, although it may include other non-wood ingredients. Paper is not the only material that can be printed upon. The term 'Paper' may also be used to refer to a lightweight material accompanying a heavier weight **Board** material. See also **Cover** and **Text**.

PDF

The abbreviation of Adobe's Portable Document Format. Files saved in this format can be opened on different computer platforms such as Mac or PC, using the free Adobe Reader, in the knowledge that the file will look the same. As long as all the images and fonts are embedded in the file when it is written, a PDF should always display correctly. A PDF based workflow allows a printer to process jobs more quickly and with greater accuracy than ever before. Berrico offers an 'extension' for Adobe Distiller so that PDF artwork can be created using Berrico's preferences, further enhancing speed and accuracy. Post-RIP PDF proofs should always be viewed using Adobe Acrobat v7 or later, or Adobe Reader v8 or later, and with 'Overprint Preview' selected. See also **Proofing**.



Perfect Binding

A form of binding where separate **Sections** of a book or magazine are folded up before being collated into consecutive sets. The spines of the **Sections** are then glued into the spine of the cover. Most commonly used when there are more than around 60 text pages in a book, depending on the thickness of the material used.

Portrait

Refers to the orientation of a finished product, where the horizontal dimensions are shortest. E.g. an A4 Portrait booklet would have a top and bottom width of 210mm, and side heights of 297mm. The decision to make a document Portrait or **Landscape** may result in a difference in cost.

Printing Plate

A thin sheet of aluminium with an ink-receptive coating. Using a Platesetter, the coating is burned off with a laser, to leave the desired image area. The imaged plate is then loaded onto press ready for printing. See also **Litho Printing**, **Make Ready** and **Offset Printing**.

Proofing

The process of checking the integrity of a post-**RIP** artwork file, prior to printing the document. Checks should include looking at every aspect of the document, including fonts, images and colours. Proofs may be 'digital', generated at a stage where no other media have been created (such as **Printing Plates**). This includes both **PDF post-RIP** proofs, and hard-copy Epson digital ink-jet proofs. A Machine Wet Proof is a 'test' print carried out on the printing press, requiring a set of **Printing Plates**, and done on the correct job material. Note that only post-**RIP** proofs can be guaranteed for output, as they are the only genuine way of confirming what is to be printed.

Pulp Board

A heavyweight uncoated material. Pulp boards are usually specified and differentiated through a measurement of their bulk (microns) rather than their weight (**GSM**). Two different pulp boards might have a similar **GSM**, but a different thickness or bulk. This can also affect the rigidity of the material. See also **Uncoated Paper**.

Recycled Paper

Most commonly a **Paper** or **Board** which has been manufactured, either partly or entirely, from pulp made of de-inked 'Post Consumer Waste' (PCW). Where a material consists partly of PCW, the remainder is usually 'virgin' fibre from sustainable sources. Not to be confused with 'Recyclable' paper, which doesn't necessarily have any recycled content at all.

Register

The fitting together of the different colours being printed on sheet, to create the desired image. A printed sheet where the colours have been fitted together correctly can be said to be 'In Register'. Images on a printed sheet that is not in register will often have a 'blurred' characteristic to them.

RIP

Short for Raster Image Processor, the piece of software that converts a digital **Artwork** file into the **Halftone** dots used to generate the printed image.



Run-on

An extra 'marginal' quantity, of a given number of copies over and above a 'base' quantity, but without the set-up and make-ready costs already included in the initial quantity. Run-on quantities need to be added to the initial quantity (and are therefore inseparable from that initial quantity). Most often used to facilitate the calculation of estimated costs for different quantities when pricing a print job.

Saddle Stitching

A method of binding where separate **Sections** of a booklet are folded and then collated together, one inside another. The collated **Sections** are then placed flat and open over a 'saddle', where stitching heads punch wires through the spine of the booklet. The resulting stitches look like staples. A cost effective method of binding, limited by the thickness of material and number of pages.

Score

A mechanical process to literally crush the fibres in paper or board, to facilitate easier folding of the material, and to limit the propensity for cracking when doing so. Typically necessary when material weights are 200gsm or heavier.

Sections

A set of pages from a document, printed together on one sheet of material. Particular pages are selected depending on the **Imposition** used. Any given job may comprise one or more **Sections**, depending both on the page size and the number of pages that can be most economically fitted onto the sheet.

Sheet-fed

Where material is automatically fed sheet-by-sheet into a printing press. Contrasts with 'Web' printing, where the material is fed into a printing press from a Reel, e.g. when printing newspapers.

Silk Paper & Board

A type of coated material where the coating has a duller and less reflective finish than that of **Gloss** paper. Jobs printed on this material will typically also require a **Machine Seal** to help prevent the printed sheet from marking. The most commonly used coated paper. See also **Matt** paper and board.

Spiral Binding

Binding using coloured wire, with it being wound in continuous loops through punched holes. Typically used in 'Reporters' Notepads'. Not to be confused with **Wire-O Binding**.

Spot / Special Colours

Colours that are printed using inks that which have been mixed specifically to match a given colour, rather than through trying to match the colour using the conventional **CMYK** inks. Also see **Pantone**.

Text

The inside pages of a booklet, within the **Cover** pages. Usually a lighter or thinner material than the outside **Cover** pages.

Uncoated Paper

As the name implies, **paper** or **board** that does not have a coating. These type of materials will not require a **Machine Seal**, but are liable to marking so need to be left to dry thoroughly after printing, prior to any other process being carried out. Heavier weight uncoated paper is usually referred to as **Pulp Board**.



UV Varnish

A liquid varnish applied to a printed sheet, and cured (hardened) through exposure to Ultra Violet light. Usually has a high gloss finish, although other finishes are available. Can be used over an entire printed sheet as an alternative to Gloss **Lamination** (Overall Varnish), or used to pick out specific images and words (Spot Varnish). The hardened varnish is very brittle, and will crack when folded, making it unsuitable for some applications.

Wire-O Binding

A patented method of binding using a series of small consecutive loops of coloured wire. Most often used for binding calendars, in conjunction with a 'thumb cut' and hanging loop. Not to be confused with **Spiral Binding**.

Wove Paper

High quality uncoated paper, without an obviously patterned textured finish. Usually used for stationery. See also **Laid Paper**.