



*The Ultimate Guide to*

---

# CARD STOCK

*Created by*



**ThePAPERMILLStore**.com

WHERE YOUR PAPER PROJECTS BEGIN



*The Ultimate Guide to*

# CARD STOCK

Card stock, sometimes spelled “cardstock”, is thicker and more durable than regular printer paper, but it’s thinner and more flexible than cardboard. This balance between durability and flexibility makes cardstock ideal for a number of crafting and design applications.

Card stock is also sometimes referred to as “cover stock”. While the terms “card stock” and “cover stock” are roughly analogous, there are subtle differences between the two:

## CARD STOCK

Card stock is typically smoother and more generic in appearance, and is often measured and sold according to caliper, or thickness in points.

## COVER STOCK

Cover stock is often coated and textured, and is typically measured by basis weight. This term is often reserved for heavy-weight papers of a decorative nature.

The Ultimate Guide to Card Stock will explore the many varieties of cardstock and suggest some common and ideal uses for each.

## CONTENTS

Sheet Size	2
Paper Weight	4
Paper Finish	7
Color	11
Tips for Printing at Home	12
Using Card Stock	13



# SHEET SIZES

## CUT SIZE

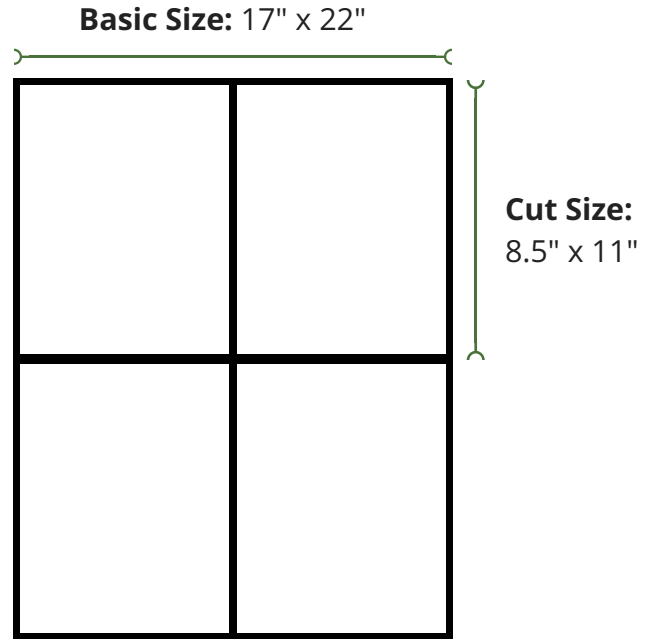
The size of the pre-cut and packaged paper you buy from a store, such as 8.5" x 11".

Measured *after* a sheet has been cut down from its basic size.

## BASIC SIZE

The size of a sheet *before* it's cut down to common cut sizes. Each paper grade has a different basic size.

Before a sheet is cut, it is weighed and categorized according to basis weight.



PAPER GRADE	BASIC SIZE
Book	25" x 38"
Bond	17" x 22"
Bristol	22H x 28H
Cover	20" x 26"
Index	25H x 30H
Tag	25" x 38"
Writing	17" x 22"

# SHEET SIZES

## COMMON CUT SIZES

### DESKTOP

Used for small, quick printers: desktop, laser, inkjet, photocopy machines, fax machines, and small presses.

8½" x 11"      11" x 17"      17" x 11"

### DIGITAL

Intended for high production digital printing presses such as HP Indigo®, Xerox iGen®, Kodak NexPress®, Canon imagePRESS™, etc.

12" x 18"      13" x 19"      18" x 12"      19" x 13"

### FULL

Largest sizes available, used for printing large scale projects like signage, posters, banners and large runs. Rather than printing off lots of smaller size sheets, smaller works are printed on a sheet with larger dimensions (called a parent size), then cut down.

19" x 25"	20¾" x 29½"	23" x 29"	25½" x 38"	28" x 44"
20" x 26"	20 13/16" x 29½"	23" x 35"	26" x 40"	28.3" x 40.2"
20" x 28"	22" x 30"	24" x 36"	26½" x 40"	28.35" x 40.16"
20½" x 24¾"	22½" x 28½"	25" x 38"	27½" x 39⅝"	35" x 23"
20¾" x 29⅝"	22½" x 35"	25½" x 30½"	28" x 40"	35½" x 23"

### CRAFTING

Standard dimensions for scrapbooks and other paper crafts.

8½" x 11"      12" x 12"

### OTHER

Cut to non-standard specifications or custom sizes, including legal (8½" x 14"), as well as Imperial sizes like demi (17½" x 22½") and quarto (9" x 11"). These sizes can be used in a variety of applications and products.

9" x 11"	17½" x 22½"	18.1" x 12.6"	20" x 14"	26" x 14⅓"
14" x 20"	17 5/7" x 25⅓"	18 ⅜" x 12⅝"	20½" x 14⅓"	26" x 20"
14⅓" x 26k"	18 1/18" x 12⅜"	19" x 12½"	26" x 14"	

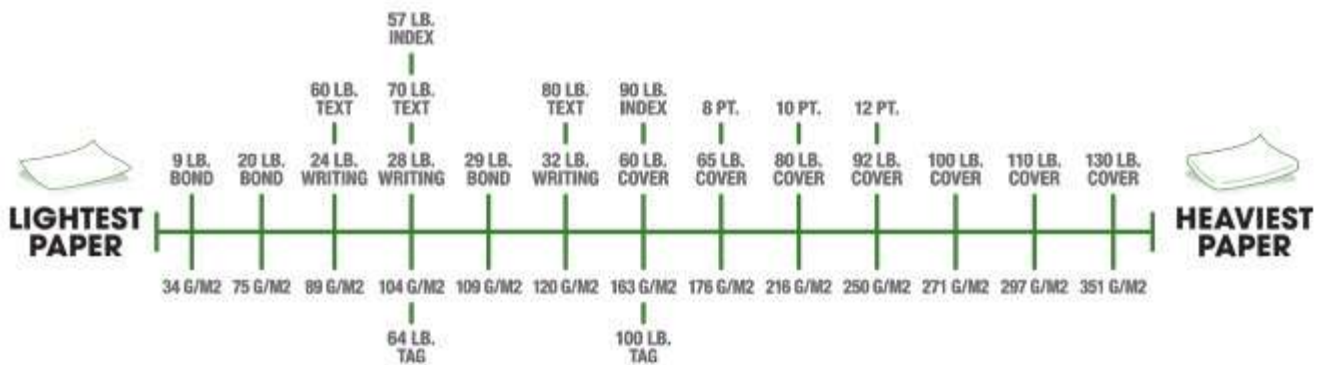
# PAPER WEIGHT

## BASIS WEIGHT (LBS)

The weight of 500 sheets (1 ream) of card stock, weighed at its basic size.

*A basis weight of 80lbs means that a 500-sheet stack of that paper grade at its basic size weighs 80 lbs.*

Basis weight varies depending on the grade of stock because every paper grade has its own basic size. This is why a thick card stock can have the same basis weight as a thinner text weight paper, and also why two papers can have the same basis weight but different calipers.



## CALIPERS (PTS)

Measures the thickness of a sheet, with each point representing 1/1000 of an inch.

*10pt cover is 0.010" thick.*

Generally speaking, the higher the caliper, the thicker the sheet.

# PAPER WEIGHT

BASIS WEIGHT				CALIPERS
BOND	TEXT	COVER	INDEX	1 Pt = 0.0001"
36	90	50		
38	100	55		6.0
43	110	60	90	
47	120	65	97	8.0
54		74	110	
58		80	120	10.0
		90	135	
		93	140	12.0
		100	150	
		115	170	14.0
		130	200	16.0

# PAPER WEIGHT

## COMMON BASIS WEIGHTS

65 lb		80 lb	
Light-weight business cards Greeting cards Postcards Book covers Posters Tickets Crafts		Standard-weight business cards Posters Greeting cards Invitations Table tents Folders Tickets Crafts	
100 lb		110 lb	
Business cards Flat cards Invitations Posters Folders	Tickets Crafts Gift tags Greeting cards	Business cards Awards Certificates Report covers Menus	Price lists Crafts Gift tags Invitations
10 pt		12 pt	
Awards Business cards Brochures Calendars Certificates Crafts	Event programs Lookbooks Media kits Menus Report covers Trade show materials	Business cards Postcards Gift tags Pocket folders Report covers	Marketing campaigns Media kits Crafts Presentation materials



# PAPER FINISH

## WHAT IS PAPER FINISH?

Paper finish describes the surface or texture of a sheet of paper or cardstock. It affects the look and feel of the paper, as well as printability and absorbency.

## COMMON PAPER FINISHES



### COCKLE

Rough texture and wavy look designed to imitate hand-crafted papers.

**Used To:** Add a rustic, artisanal feel.

#### Ideal For:

- Invitations
- Menus
- Crafting
- Wedding stationery
- Promotional materials



### EMBOSSED

Raised, unique pattern.

**Used To:** Add an unusual texture to your projects.

#### Ideal For:

- Crafting
- Hang tags
- Invitations
- Table tents
- Announcements
- Wedding stationery
- Menus



### FELT

Looks and feels like wool felt.

**Used To:** Create a soft, tactile texture.

#### Ideal For:

- Brochures
- Packaging
- Direct mail
- Crafting
- Business cards
- Pocket folders
- Invitations



# PAPER FINISH



## GLOSS

A coated finish available in varying degrees of shine.

**Used To:** Reproduce vibrant colors; increase durability.

### Ideal For:

- Covers
- Catalogs
- Media kits
- Photography
- Business cards
- Pocket folders
- Promotional materials



## LAIID

Sheer, transparent lines run through the page.

**Used To:** Enhance professional look and feel.

### Ideal For:

- Covers
- Crafting
- Folders
- Reports
- Packaging
- Business cards
- Brochure covers
- Pocket folders
- Corporate identity communications



## LETTRA

Thick and fluffy; designed for Letterpress printing.

**Used For:** Letterpress printing, embossing, debossing, foil work.

### Ideal For:

- Covers
- Crafting
- Folders
- Reports
- Packaging
- Business cards
- Brochure covers
- Pocket folders
- Corporate identity communications



## LINEN

Mimics the look and feel of linen cloth.

**Used To:** Add a luxurious touch.

### Ideal For:

- Menus
- Invitations
- Stationery
- Business cards
- Letterheads
- Wedding stationery

# PAPER FINISH



## MATTE

Coated finish with subtle sheen. Shows colors well while producing easy-to-read text.

**Used To:** Reproduce vibrant colors; increase durability.

### Ideal For:

- Calendars
- Catalogs
- Flyers
- Inserts
- Direct mail
- Reports
- Business cards
- Brochures
- Newsletters
- Marketing materials
- Postcards



## METALLIC

Coated stocks ranging from subtle shine to bold sparkle. Smooth paper tend to be more subtle.

**Used To:** Add some glitz or pizzazz.

### Ideal For:

- Covers
- Crafting
- Invitations
- Announcements
- Wedding stationery



## PARCHMENT/VELLUM

Slightly rough texture designed to imitate the animal skin paper for which it was named.

**Used To:** Add a traditional, classic feel or a touch of ceremony.

### Ideal For:

- Awards
- Crafting
- Diplomas
- Certificates
- Business documents
- Newsletters
- Stationery

# PAPER FINISH



## SATIN

A coated stock part way between glossy and matte.

**Used When:** You need more readability than high gloss, but better colour reproduction than matte.

### Ideal For:

- Covers
- Gift tags
- Hang tags
- Photography
- Portfolios
- Brochure covers



## SILK

A coated stock part way between glossy and matte, closer to glossy than satin.

**Used When:** You want to produce crisp images, but need something you can also write on.

### Ideal For:

- Brochures
- Flyers
- Newsletters
- Business cards
- Corporate identity communications
- Presentation folders
- Marketing materials



## SMOOTH

Soft and smooth to the touch.

**Used To:** Produce crisp images and text, embossing, and foil stamping.

### Ideal For:

- Brochures
- Flyers
- Menus
- Newsletters
- Reports
- Correspondence
- Corporate identity communications
- Promotional materials



## WOVE

Smooth finish that's slightly rough to the touch; likely the finish you buy for printing at home.

**Used To:** Suitable for all uses.

### Ideal For:

- Covers
- Calendars
- Crafting
- Folders
- Packaging
- Office use

# COLOR

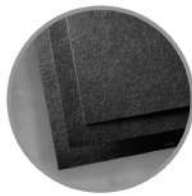
Colors are closely linked to concepts, emotions, and identity. Different colors create different impressions that can help convey a certain tone or facilitate a certain interpretation.

## COLOR ASSOCIATIONS



### WHITE

Purity  
Innocence  
Cleanliness



### BLACK

Sophistication  
Power  
Mystery



### GRAY

Neutral  
Practical  
Conservative



### RED

Love  
Passion  
Anger



### ORANGE

Fun  
Cheerful  
Enthusiasm



### YELLOW

Purity  
Innocence  
Cleanliness



### GREEN

Nature  
Money  
Envy



### BLUE

Trustworthy  
Relaxation  
Security



### PURPLE

Royalty  
Luxury  
Spirituality



### PINK

Romance  
Joy  
Nurturing



### BROWN

Rugged  
Stable  
Reliable

# PRINTING AT HOME

Not all at-home printers are capable of printing on card stock. Always check your instruction manual for the weight range your machine can handle. Most printers can handle 65 lb and 80 lb sheets.

## TIPS FOR PRINTING AT HOME

### DO A TEST RUN

Test print runs give you a chance to see how your chosen card stock prints in your machine. They also give you an opportunity to troubleshoot and correct any printing issues.

### HAND-FEED SHEETS

For thicker sheets, try hand-feeding them into your printer for a smoother, more professional outcome.

### USE A REAR-FEED OR TOP-LOADING PRINTER

Bottom- or front-feed trays can damage card stock because the paper has to move through tight spaces in order to flip over inside the printer. This can cause sheets to develop a permanent curvature. Rear-feed or top-loading printers can help you avoid this issue.

### ADJUST PRINT SETTINGS

Adjust your printer's settings to reflect the size and weight of card stock you are printing on.



# USING CARD STOCK

## PAPER VS CARD STOCK

A light sheet of paper is just as capable of conveying high quality as a heavy sheet of card stock. Whether you use paper or card stock depends on the project, budget, and your personal preference.


PAPER	CARD STOCK
Everyday and office use Documents Memos Schoolwork Flyers Letters	Business cards Greeting cards, notecards, invitations Announcements Prints Photos Reports Covers



## DESIGN VS CRAFTING

Because of its versatile nature, card stock is used by both graphic designers and paper crafters.

DESIGN	CRAFTING
Client projects Promotional materials Prints Booklets Handouts Invitations	Personal or artisanal use Scrapbooking Cardmaking Cut-outs Gift tags Decorations



# USING CARD STOCK

## BASIS WEIGHT

### 65 lb

Greeting cards	Tickets
Posters	Crafting
Postcards	

### 80 lb

Business cards	Table tents
Posters	Folders
Greeting cards	Crafting
Invitations	

### 100 lb

Business cards	Folders
Flat cards	Tickets
Invitations	Gift tags
Posters	Crafting

### 105 lb

Awards	Menus
Certificates	Crafting
Report covers	Gift tags
Business cards	

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

### EMBOSSING

A weight that is too thick or heavy may not emboss properly. Aim for 80 lb.

### FOLDING

Thicker sheets may crack if they are not folded properly.

### CRAFTING

Thin or transparent sheets can show glue and may pucker.

### PUNCHING

Thicker sheets may tear during cutting and hole punching if the tools are not sharp enough.

# USING CARD STOCK

## SHEET SIZE

### 8.5" x 11"

Standard print size for home and office use  
Day-to-day printing  
Flyers

### 11" x 17"

Posters  
Architectural plans  
Visuals

### 12" x 12"

Scrapbooking  
Card making

### 18" x 12"

Posters  
Artwork  
Display materials

## PAPER FINISH



### GLOSSY

**Features:**

- Vibrant colors
- Crisp image reproduction

**Uses:**

- Photography
- Colorful graphic design projects



### LINEN

**Features:**

- Tactile
- Luxurious texture

**Uses:**

- Wedding stationery
- Menus
- Crafting



### METALLIC

**Features:**

- Sparkly sheen
- Glamorous

**Uses:**

- Wedding stationery
- Crafting
- Packaging



### SMOOTH

**Features:**

- Soft to touch
- Crisp text reproduction

**Uses:**

- General printing



# SHOP SIZE & WEIGHT

Click to find the perfect card stock for your project.

## *Sheet Sizes*

[Cut Sizes](#)

[Full Sheets](#)

[Desktop Sizes](#)

[Crafting Sizes](#)

[Digital Sizes](#)

## *Paper Weights*

[65 lb](#)

[110 lb](#)

[80 lb](#)

[10 pt](#)

[100 lb](#)

[12 pt](#)

# SHOP FINISH & COLOR

## *Paper Finish*

[Cockle](#)

[Lettra](#)

[Silk](#)

[Embossed](#)

[Linen](#)

[Smooth](#)

[Felt](#)

[Matte](#)

[Parchment/Vellum](#)

[Gloss](#)

[Metallic](#)

[Wove](#)

[Laid](#)

[Satin](#)

## *Color*

[Red](#)

[Blue](#)

[White](#)

[Orange](#)

[Purple](#)

[Black](#)

[Yellow](#)

[Pink](#)

[Gray](#)

# PRINTING & FINISHES

## *Printer Compatibility*

[Inkjet](#)

[Digital Press](#)

[Laser](#)

[Color Copy](#)

## *Finishing Services*

[Cutting](#)

[Perforating](#)

[Scoring](#)

[Hole punching](#)

*Learn more about our [paper finishing services](#).*

*Read the complete  
Ultimate Guide to Card Stock  
on The Paper.*

---

*Find the perfect card stock for your  
project at The Paper Mill Store.*