

This glossary contains printing terms that may be of interest as well as help to you in completing your next project.

A

Accordion fold: Bindery term, two or more parallel folds which open like an accordion.
Against the grain: At right angles to direction of paper grain.
Alteration: Change in copy of specifications after production has begun.
Author's corrections: Also know as "AC's". Changes or additions to copy after it has been typeset.

B

Back up: Printing the second side of a sheet.
Banding: Packaging printed materials using rubber or paper bands.
Basis weight: Weight in pounds of a ream of paper cut to the basic size for its grade.
Bind: To fasten sheets or signatures with wire, thread, glue, or other means.
Bindery: The department where the flat printed sheet is transformed into the final format.
Blanket: The thick rubber mat on a printing press that transfers ink from the plate to paper.
Bleed: Printing that goes to the edge of the sheet after trimming.
Blind embossing: An image pressed into a sheet without ink or foil.
Blueline: Blue photographic proof used to check position of all image elements.
Bond & carbon: Business form with paper and carbon paper.
Bond paper: Strong durable paper grade used for letterheads and business forms.
Brightness: The brilliance of paper. Higher numbers are brighter white.
Bulk: Thickness of paper stock in thousandths of an inch or number of pages per inch.
Bulk pack: Boxing printed product without wrapping or banding.
Burn: Exposing a printing plate to high intensity light or placing an image on a printing plate by light.
Butt: Joining images without overlapping.
Butt fit: Printed colors that overlap one row of dots so they appear to butt.

C

Carbonless: Pressure sensitive writing paper that does not use carbon.
Caliper: Paper thickness in thousandths of an inch.
Camera-ready copy: Print ready mechanical art.
Cast coated: Coated paper with a high gloss reflective finish.
Chrome: A term for a transparency.
Coated paper: A clay coated paper with a hard, smooth finish.
Collate: A bindery term for arranging paper in a precise order.
Color bar: A quality control term regarding the spots of ink color on the tail of a sheet.
Color break: Separate mechanically or by software, the parts to be printed in different colors.
Color correction: Methods of improving color separations.
Color key: Color proofs in layers of acetate.
Color matching system: A system of formulated ink colors used for communicating color.
Color separations: The process of preparing artwork, photographs, transparencies, or computer generated art for printing by separating into the four primary printing colors (CYMK).
Composite color: Combining all images, type, and design elements on one or more pieces of film directly from the page layout program.
Continuous-tone copy: Illustrations, photographs or computer files that contain gradient tones from black to white or light to dark.
Contrast: The tonal change in color from light to dark.
Copy: All furnished material or disc used in the production of a printed product.
Cover stock: A heavy paper used to cover books, make presentation folders, business cards, etc.

Crash number: Numbering paper by pressing an image on the first sheet which is transferred to all parts of the printed set.

Crimping: Puncture marks holding business forms together.

Cromalin: Trade name for DuPont color proofs.

Crop: To cut off parts of a picture or image.

Crop marks: Printed lines showing where to trim a printed sheet.

Crossover: Printing across the gutter or from one page to the facing page of a publication.

Cyan: One of four standard process colors - Blue.

D

Densitometer: A quality control, measurement device to measure the density of printing ink.

Density: The degree of color or darkness of an image or photograph.

Die: Metal rule or imaged block used to cut or place an image on paper in the finishing process.

Die cutting: Cutting images in or out of paper.

Digital color: Combining all images, type, and design elements on a color proof sheet directly from the page layout program.

Dot: An element of halftones. Using a loupe you will see that printed pictures are made many dots.

Dot gain or spread: The difference in size between the dot on film v. paper.

Double burn: Exposing a plate to multiple images.

Draw-down: A sample of ink and paper used to evaluate ink colors.

Drop-out: Portions of artwork that do not print.

Dummy: A rough layout of a printed piece showing position and finished size.

Duotone: A halftone picture made up of two printed colors.

Dylux: Photographic paper made by DuPont used for blueline proofing of a job. Shows all elements in blue. Usually used for 1 or 2 color printing only.

E

Emboss: Pressing an image into paper so that it will create a raised relief.

Emulsion: Light sensitive coating found on printing plates and film.

Eurobind: A patented method of binding perfect bound books so they will open and lay flatter.

F

Flat: An assembly of negatives taped to masking materials for platemaking.

Flood: To cover a printed page with ink, varnish, or plastic coating.

Flop: The reverse side of an image.

Foil: A metallic or pigmented coating on plastic sheets or rolls used in foil stamping and foil embossing.

Foil emboss: Foil stamping and embossing a image on paper with a die.

Foil stamping: Using a die to place a metallic or pigmented image on paper.

4-color-process: The process of combining 4 basic colors to create a printed color picture or other colors composed from the basic 4 colors.

French fold: Two folds at right angles to each other.

Fugitive glue: Soft, pliable, transparent glue strip approximately 1/8" wide used to seal self mailers to post office standards.

G

Galley proof: Text copy before it is put into a mechanical layout or desktop layout.

Gang: Getting the most out of a printing press by using the maximum sheet size to print multiple images or jobs on the same sheet. A way to save money.

Gate fold: A page that folds into the gutter creating a page when open about twice the original size.

GBC bind: To plastic comb bind by inserting the comb into punched holes.

Generation: Stages of reproduction from original copy. A first generation reproduction yields the best quality.

Ghosting: A faint printed image that appears on a printed sheet where it was not intended.

Gloss: A shiny look, highly reflective of light.

Glue bind: A rubberized coating of glue on the edges of stacked pages.

Grain: Predominant direction of the fibers in a sheet of paper.

Grippers: The metal fingers on a printing press that hold the paper as it passes through the press.

Gutter: Blank space where 2 pages meet at the binding or the space between columns of type

H

Hairline: A very thin line or gap about the width of a hair or 1/100 inch.

Halftone: Converting a continuous tone to dots for printing.

Hard copy: The output of a computer printer, or typed text sent for typesetting.

Hickey: Reoccurring unplanned spots that appear in the printed image from dust, lint, dried ink.

High-bulk paper: A paper made thicker than its standard basis weight.

Highlight: The lightest areas in a picture or halftone.

I

Image area: Portion of paper on which ink can appear.

Imposition: Positioning printed pages so they will fold in the proper order.

Impression: Pressure of printing surface to the paper.

Imprint: Adding copy to a previously printed page.

Indicia: Postal information place on a printed product.

Ink holdout: Characteristic of paper to keep ink on the surface and not bleed or spread throughout the fibers. Results in sharper and finer image quality.

Ink fountain: The reservoir on a printing press that hold the ink.

J

Jog: To straighten or align a pile of papers by vibration.

Justify: Lines of type that align on left and right sides.

K

Keylines: Lines on mechanical art that show position of photographs or illustrations.

Kiss die cut: To cut the top layer of a pressure sensitive sheet and not the backing.

Knock out: To mask out an image.

L

Laid finish: Simulating the surface of handmade paper.

Laminate: To cover with film, to bond or glue one surface to another.

Line art: High contrast black & white copy not requiring a halftone.

Lines per inch: The number of rows of dots per inch in a halftone.

Loose color: A collection of color images from the print project shown outside of the page layout.

Loupe: A magnifying glass used to review a printed image, plate and position film.

M

Magenta: Process red, one of the four basic colors in process color.

Makeready: All activities reading a press for printing.

Mask: Blocking light from reaching parts of a printing plate.

Matchprint: Trade name for 3M integral color proof.
Matte finish: Dull paper or ink finish.
Mechanical: Camera ready art all contained on one board.
Mechanical separation: Color breaks as overlays for each color to be printed.
Micrometer: Instrument used to measure the thickness of paper.
Middle tones: The tones in a photograph that are approx. half as dark as the shadow area.
Moire: When screen angles are incorrect odd patterns are created in photographs.

N

Negative: The image on film that makes the white areas of originals black and black areas white.
Non-reproducing blue: A blue color the camera cannot see. Used in marking up artwork.

O

OAGV: Overall gloss varnish.
OADV: Overall dull varnish.
Offsetting: Using an intermediate surface used to transfer ink. Also, an unpleasant happening when the images of freshly printed sheets transfer images to each other.
Offset paper: Term for uncoated book paper.
Ok sheet: Final approved color inking sheet before production begins.
Opacity: The amount of show-through on a printed sheet. The more opacity or the thicker the paper the less show-through. (The thicker/heavier the paper the higher the cost.)
Outline halftone: Removing the background of a picture or silhouetting an image in a picture.
Overlay: The transparent cover sheet on artwork often used for instructions.
Overrun or overs: Copies printed in excess of the specified quantity. (Printing trade terms allow for + - 10 % to represent a completed order.)

P

Page count: Total number of pages in a book including blanks.
Pattern carbon: Special carbon paper used in business forms that only transfers in certain areas.
Perfect bind: A type of binding that glues the edge of sheets to a cover like a telephone book, Microsoft software manual, or Country Living Magazine.
Perfecting press: A sheet fed printing press that prints both sides of a sheet in one pass.
PDF: Portable Document Format (Adobe) - compressed data in standard format for cross platform viewing.
Pica: Unit of measure in typesetting. One pica = 1/6 inch.
Picking: Printers nightmare that occurs as the surface of a sheet lifts off during printing. Generally a paper manufactures quality control problem.
Pin register: A standard used to fit film to film and film to plates and plates to press to assure the proper registration of printer colors.
Plate gap: Gripper space. The area where the grippers hold the sheet as it passes through the press.
PMS: Abbreviation for the Pantone Color Matching System.
PMT: Abbreviation for photomechanical transfer or position prints.
Point: For paper, a unit of thickness equaling 1/1000 inch. for typesetting, a unit of height equaling 1/72 inch.
PostScript: The computer language most recognized by printing devices.
Press number: A method of numbering business forms or tickets.
Pressure-sensitive paper: Paper with self sticking adhesive covered by a backing sheet.
Process blue: The blue or cyan color in process printing.
Process colors: Cyan (blue), magenta (process red), yellow (process yellow), black (process black).

Q

R

Ream: Five hundred sheets of paper.

Recto: Right-hand page of an open book.

Reflective copy: Copy that is not transparent.

Register: To position print in the proper position in relation to the edge of the sheet and to other printing on the same sheet.

Register marks: Cross-hair lines or marks on film, plates, and paper that guide strippers, platemakers, pressmen, and bindery personnel in processing a print order from start to finish.

Reverse: The opposite of what you see. Printing the background of an image. For example; type your name on a piece of paper. The reverse of this would be a black piece of paper with a white name.

Rip film: A method of making printing negatives from PostScript files created by desktop publishing.

S

Saddle stitch: Binding a booklet or magazine with staples in the seam where it folds.

Score: A crease put on paper to help it fold better.

Screen angles: Frequently a desktop publishers nightmare. The angles at which halftone, duo tones, tri tones, and color separation printing films are placed to make them look right.

Self-cover: Using the same paper as the text for the cover.

SGV: Spot gloss varnish.

SDV: Spot dull varnish.

Shadow: The darkest areas of a photograph.

Show-through: Printing on one side of a sheet that can be seen on the other side of the sheet.

Side guide: The mechanical register unit on a printing press that positions a sheet from the side.

Side stitch: Binding by stapling along one side of a sheet.

Signature: A sheet of printed pages which when folded become a part of a book or publication.

Silhouette halftone: Or silo; an outline halftone.

Skid: A pallet used for a pile of cut sheets.

Specifications: A precise description of a print order.

Spine: The binding edge of a book or publication.

Split fountain: Putting more than one ink in a printing fountain to achieve special color affects.

Spoilage: Planned paper waste for all printing operations.

Spot varnish: Varnish used to highlight a specific part of a page.

Step-and-repeat: A procedure for placing the same image on plates in multiple places.

Stet: A proof mark meaning let the original copy stand.

Stock: The material to be printed.

Stripping: The positioning of film on a flat prior to platemaking.

Stripped flats: Complete collection of project negative films on flats ready for platemaking.

Substance weight: A term of basis weight when referring to bond papers.

Substrate: Any surface on which printing is done.

T

Text paper: Grades of uncoated paper with textured surfaces.

Tints: A shade of a single color or combined colors.

Tissue overlay: Usually a thin transparent paper placed over artwork for protection & used for marking color breaks & printer instructions.

Transparency: A positive photographic slide on film allowing light to pass through.

Transparent ink: A printing ink that does not conceal the color under it.

Trapping: The ability to print one ink over the other.

Trim marks: Similar to crop or register marks & show where to trim the printed sheet.

Trim size: The final size of one page after the last trim is made.

U

Under-run: Production of fewer copies than ordered. See over run.

Up: Printing two or three up means printing multiple copies of the same image on the same sheet.

UV coating: Liquid laminate bonded and cured with ultraviolet light. Environmentally friendly

W

Washup: Removing inks from a press, washing the rollers and blanket. Some colors require multiple washups to avoid ink &/or chemical contamination.

Waste: A term for planned spoilage.

Watermark: A distinctive design created in paper at the time of manufacture that can be easily seen by holding the paper up to a light.

Web: A roll of printing paper.

Web press: The name of a type of presses that print from rolls of paper.

Wire O: Mechanical binding using double loops of wire through a hole. Allows material to lie flat.

With the grain: Folding or feeding paper into the press or folder parallel to the grain of the paper.

Work and tumble: Printing one side of a sheet and turning it over from the gripper to the tail to print the second side using the same side guide and plate for the second side.

Work and turn: Printing one side of a sheet and turning it over from left to right using the same side guides and plate for the second side.

Wove paper: A paper having a uniform unlined surface with a smooth finish