

# GUIDE TO CHOOSING THE RIGHT MATERIALS





Choosing the right material for the job can be a daunting task - here is our guide to the many different paper types available.

## Coated Materials

Coated materials have, as the name suggests, a number of layers of coating to the surface which offer a smooth, quality feel. This helps to improve and enhance colour reproduction and quality. The most suitable weights for most common printing requirements are from 115gsm up to 400gsm. Above or below these weights may require specialist machinery and are often not economical for short or medium print runs.

**Gloss:** These materials have a smooth surface with a high sheen and are excellent for reproducing vibrant, sharp colours and images. Gloss papers are often used in leaflets, flyers, colour brochures, catalogues, magazines and folders.

**Silk:** These materials are also sometimes called 'Matt' or 'Velvet'. They don't have the reflectivity found on gloss materials but are none the less smooth and are excellent for boosting colour in circumstances where light reflection may be an issue (such as posters or calendars) offering improved readability over Gloss. Silks are often used for business cards, leaflets, flyers, posters, calendars, colour brochures, catalogues, magazines and folders.

## Uncoated Materials

Uncoated materials have no coating and can feel rough to the touch. These are often used for items that require handwriting where coated materials may cause smudging (such as postcards, compliment slips and reply cards etc).

Lower weights (usually 80gsm to 120gsm) are used for stationery items such as letterheads, compliment slips, desk pads and single-part invoices. Laser-guaranteed brands are suitable for overprinting through a laser or inkjet office printer.

Heavier weights are often used for reply cards, business cards, postcards, swing tags or tickets and invitations.

Uncoated materials are also often used within company reports, handbooks and text books etc where a premium coated finish isn't necessary.

Uncoated materials are also often used for brochures where a 'rustic' or natural feel is required. They offer a unique texture and can be very effective for reader interaction when used carefully.

Not all uncoated materials are rough, however. Ivory boards, for example, use a special manufacturing process to achieve a smooth, even surface. These are popular for business cards and greetings cards.

## Recycled Materials

These materials are made from either part- or fully-recycled paper pulp which has been processed using unwanted paper items (e.g. newspapers, magazines, directories etc). Recycled materials are available in coated (silk or gloss) or uncoated format and can be used in a variety of different circumstances where the display of environmental responsibility is paramount. They are often used within corporate brochures, reports, leaflets, magazines and catalogues.

These materials aren't always 100% recycled, and can be as low as 50%. They are also not necessarily better for the environment than non-recycled materials; it can require as much or more energy to produce recycled paper than it does to produce virgin papers (those which have been manufactured from non-recycled wood pulp) produced in a factory using nuclear, hydro or bio-fuelled energy. See our Environment page on our website [www.newtonprint.co.uk](http://www.newtonprint.co.uk) for more information and facts.

## FSC & PEFC Materials

Most materials nowadays are certified to either FSC or PEFC. This means that the wood pulp used to make the paper comes from trees from sustainably managed forests and have an environmentally and socially responsible chain of custody from planting through to the paper we print on. All common material types can be certified to FSC or PEFC, including coated, uncoated, recycled, one-sided, NCR and many more. For more information on our accreditation to both FSC and PEFC please see our Environment section within our website: [www.newtonprint.co.uk](http://www.newtonprint.co.uk) or call 0800 183 0480 to speak to one of the team about how FSC and PEFC can help you win business.

## One-sided Materials

One-sided materials are coated only on one side, while the other is left uncoated (or sometimes just with a single coating for extra smoothness). These are excellent for use on items which require high clarity of print on only one side of the product, such as postcards, folders, book covers, desk calendar bases and packaging. Postcards, for example, usually have a full colour image or graphic to one side, while the reverse is left blank with perhaps black or single-colour print for overwriting.

## NCR Materials

Non-Carbon (NCR) materials have a special coating to one or both sides which is used for transferring handwriting from one sheet to others beneath it. These are mostly used for stationery items such as invoices and delivery notes where multiple copies are required.

## Commonly used applications for paper types and weights

Below is a guide to which type and weight of material are typically used in different applications.

Application	Typical Size & Pagination	Typical Material Weight	Typical Material Type
Circulars, flyers and leaflets	A5 1pp or 2pp; DL 1pp, 2pp, 4pp or 6pp	115gsm to 150gsm	Coated
Business Cards	85 x 55mm	350gsm or 400gsm	Silk or uncoated, matt lamination popular
Postcards	A5 or A6	300gsm to 400gsm	Silk or one-sided
Corporate Leaflets	A5 2pp, 4pp or 6pp DL 6pp	150gsm to 250gsm	Usually coated, possibly uncoated
Corporate Brochures	A5 4pp up to 32pp Text plus 4pp Cover A4 4pp up to 16pp Text plus 4pp Cover	170gsm Cover; 130gsm Text 250gsm Cover; 170gsm Text 350gsm Cover; 200gsm Text	Usually Silk coated, possibly lamination to outer cover. Sometimes uncoated text pages
Corporate Brochures	A5 36pp up to 72pp Text plus 4pp Cover A4 20pp up to 52pp Text plus 4pp Cover	170gsm Cover; 115gsm Text 150gsm Cover; 115gsm Text	Usually coated
Catalogue	A5 76pp and over plus 4pp Cover A4 56pp and over plus 4pp Cover	150gsm Cover; 90gsm Text 250gsm Cover; 70gsm Text	Usually Silk cover with lamination and 'catalogue gloss' text pages
Folders	A4+ with or without capacity	350gsm or 400gsm	Coated, often with lamination

Please remember that this is only a guide and there is almost no limit to the creativity of your design. Often an unorthodox approach to materials and pagination gives a brochure or mailer added impact and a unique touch of class.

This guide is by no means comprehensive and we know that everyone is different, so please do give us a call to discuss the best way to plan your brochure. Or your mailer. Or your mailing campaign. Yes, all of it; from design and planning through to storage, distribution and mailing ...