



A Glossary of Printing, Binding, Graphic Arts and Typographical Terminology

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| A4 Paper | ISO standard paper size 210 x 297mm or 8.3 x 11.7". The common paper size used outside the US in place of 8.5 x 11. |
| Accordion fold | Folding paper by bending each fold in the opposite direction of the previous fold creating a pleated or accordion effect. |
| Acid-free paper | A paper containing no acidity or acid producing chemicals that degrades less over time than acidic papers. |
| Against the Grain | Running a sheet of paper through a printing press at right angles to the grain direction of the paper, as opposed to with the grain. This is usually suboptimal for both press operation and registration of the 4 color process inks. Sometimes called cross grain. |
| Airbrush | A compressed air tool that sprays a fine mist of paint or ink, used in illustration and photo retouching. |
| Anti-aliasing | The process of averaging between pixels of different colors. This results in a smoother, more blended transition between the edge of two areas rather than a distinctly jagged appearance. |
| Aqueous Coating | This clear coating is used to protect your printed pieces. It provides a high-gloss surface that deters dirt and fingerprints. Aqueous coating improves the durability of postcards as they go through the mail, and protects business cards as they ride around in people's pockets. It also looks beautiful on brochures, catalog covers, and stand-alone flyers. |
| Ascender | Any part of a lower case letter which rises above the main body of the letter such as in "d", "b" and "h". |
| Backslant | Any type that tilts to the left or backward direction; opposite of italic type. |
| Back Up | How an image on one side of a printed sheet aligns with the image on the other side. |
| Balloon | In an illustration, any line that encircles copy or dialogue. |
| Base line | The imaginary horizontal line upon which stand capitals, lower case |



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| | letters, punctuation points, etc. |
| Basis weight | Basis or basic weight refers to the weight, in pounds, of a ream (500 sheets) of paper cut to a given standard size for that particular paper grade. |
| Bible paper | A thin but strong paper (opaque), used for bibles and books. |
| Bindery | A business or department within a printing company that does the cutting, folding, collating, drilling and other finishing operations used on printing projects. |
| Blanket | The rubberized surfaced material secured onto a cylinder onto which the ink is transferred from the plate and then to the paper. |
| Bleed | Any element that extends up to or past the edge of a printed page. |
| Blind emboss | A design or bas relief impression that is made without using inks or metal foils. |
| Blocking | When ink or coating causes printed sheets of paper in a pile to stick together, causing damage when they are separated. This is normally caused by not enough anti-offset powder or too much ink, and usually ruins the printed job. |
| Body | In typography, the main shank or portion of a letter character other than the ascenders and descenders. |
| Bond | A grade of durable writing, printing and typing paper that is erasable and somewhat rigid. |
| Book Paper | Types of paper usually used for printing books. Book paper text weight and is divided into uncoated or offset paper, and coated paper, which includes matte or gloss coating. |
| Bounce | Inconsistent positioning of the printed image on the sheets of paper as they travel through a printing press. |
| Bristol | A board paper of various thicknesses having a smooth finish and used for printing or drawing. |
| Bulk | A term given to paper to describe its thickness relative to its weight. |
| Bullet | A boldface square or dot used before a sentence to emphasize its importance. |
| C1S and C2S | Acronyms for Coated One Side and Coated Two Sides paper stock. A cover stock with a glossy finish on one side and uncoated on the other, usually between 8pt (.008") and 18pt (.018") in thickness. |
| Caliper | The measurement of the thickness of paper measured in thousandths of an inch or mils. |



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| Case binding | Books bound using hard board (case) covers. |
| Carbonless Paper | Paper that is chemically treated to transfer the impression from the first page to the subsequent pages. See Carbonless NCR Form Printing for more detailed info. |
| Cast coated | A paper that is coated and then pressure dried using a polished roller that imparts an enamel like hard gloss finish. |
| Center spread | The two pages that face each other in the center of a book or publication. |
| Chain lines | Lines that appear on laid paper as a result of the wires of the papermaking machine. |
| Clip art | Graphic images, designs, and artwork in digital form that can be used in a digital document. |
| Coarse screen | Halftone screens commonly used in newsprint; up to 85 lines per inch. |
| Coated stock | Any paper that has a mineral coating applied after the paper is made, giving the paper a smoother finish. |
| Coil Binding | Where a metal or plastic wire is spiraled through holes punched along the side of a stack of paper. Commonly used for reports, proposals and manuals. Documents bound with coil have the ability to lay flat and can rotate 360 degrees. Also called spiral binding. |
| Cold color | Any color that is toward the blue side of the color spectrum. |
| Collate | To gather sheets or printed signatures together in their correct order. |
| Colophon | A printers' or publishers' identifying symbol or emblem. |
| Color balance | The relative amounts of process colors used to reproduce an image, either digitally or when printed on a press. |
| Color bars | A color test strip that is printed on the waste portion of a press sheet. It helps a press operator to monitor and control the quality of the printed material relative to ink density, registration and dot gain. It can also include a Star Target, which is designed to detect inking and press problems. |
| Color correction | Using a computer to adjust, change or manipulate a color image, such as retouching, adjusting color balance, color saturation, contrast, etc. |
| Color gamut | The entire range of hues possible to reproduce on a specific system, such as a computer screen, or four-color printing press. |
| Color separating | The processes of separating the primary color components (CMYK) for printing. |
| Color | The order in which process inks are printed on a printing press. Also |



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| Sequence | called the color rotation or laydown sequence. |
| Color transparency | Transparent film containing a positive photographic color image. |
| Comb Binding | Binding a stack of paper together by inserting the teeth of a flexible plastic comb into holes punched along one of the edges. Commonly used for catalogs, reports and manuals. |
| Condensed type | A narrow, elongated typeface. |
| Contrast | The degree of tonal separation or gradation in the range from black to white. |
| Cover | A term describing a general type of paper used for the covers of books, pamphlets, etc., also used for business cards and postcards. |
| Coverage | The extent to which printing ink covers the surface of a printed sheet. Ink coverage is frequently expressed as light, medium or heavy. |
| Crop | To reduce the size of an image. |
| Crop marks | Small printed lines around the edges of a printed piece indicating where it is to be cut out of the sheet. Sometimes referred to as cut marks. |
| Crossover | An image, rule or line art on one printed page that carries over to an adjacent page of a bound or folded work. |
| Cyan | A shade of blue used in four-color process printing. The C in CMYK. Also referred to as process blue. |
| Dampening | An essential part of the offset printing process whereby rollers distribute a solution to the plate that covers the non-printing area of the plate, repelling ink in those areas. Some newer presses use a waterless ink technology that does not use dampening. |
| Deckle edge | The rough or feathered edge of paper when left untrimmed. |
| Densitometer | An optical device used by printers and photographers to measure and control the density of ink or color. |
| Density | The degree of tone, weight of darkness or color within a photo or reproduction measured by a densitometer. |
| Descender | A term that describes that portion of lower case letters that extends below the main body of the letter, as in "p". |
| Desktop Publishing | Creating materials to be printed using a personal computer, as opposed to taking non-electronic documents to a commercial |



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| | printing company to be prepared for printing. |
| Die Cutting | The process of cutting paper in a shape or design by the use of a wooden die or block in which are positioned steel rules in the shape of the desired pattern. |
| Digital Proof | Color separation data is digitally stored and then exposed to color photographic paper creating a picture of the final product before it is actually printed with ink. |
| Dithering | The process of averaging between pixels of different colors. This results in a smoother, blended transition between the edge of two areas rather than a jagged or 'stair-step' appearance. Also a method used on ink jet printers where colors are produced by mixing colored dots in a randomized pattern. |
| Dot | The smallest individual element of a halftone. |
| Dot gain | A term used to describe when dots are printing larger than they should. |
| Drill | The drilling of holes into paper for ring or comb binding. |
| Drop shadow | A shadow image placed offset behind an image to create the affect of the image lifting off the page. |
| Dull finish | A semi-gloss finish on paper that is less glossy than gloss and more than matte paper. |
| Dummy | The preliminary assemblage of copy and art elements to be reproduced in the desired finished product, also called a comp. |
| Duotone | A two-color halftone reproduction generated from a one color photo. |
| Dye sublimation | A photographic looking color print created by heating dyes on a substrate instead of using inks. Often used for proofing. |
| Electronic Proof | A process of generating a prepress proof in which paper is electronically exposed to the color separation negatives and passed through electrically charged pigmented toners, which adhere electrostatically, resulting in the finished proof. |
| Embossing | The molding and reshaping of paper by the use of special metal dies and heat, counter dies and pressure, to produce a raised image on the paper surface. |
| Enamel | Another term for gloss coated paper. |



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| Felt side | The smoother side of a sheet in the paper. The wire side is the rougher side of the paper. The difference happens in the papermaking process. The differences are eliminated when papers are gloss or matte coated. |
| Finish | The surface quality of a paper. |
| Fit | The registration of the different colors on a printed sheet. |
| Flexography | A printing method using flexible plates where the image to be printed is higher than the non-printing areas. The inked areas are then contact the material to be printed, transferring the ink from the raised areas to the material. Fast drying inks are usually used in this process. Common uses are the printing of cans and bottles and other non-flat items. |
| Foil | Then metal sheet that is applied to paper using the foil stamping process. Frequently gold colored, but available in many colors. |
| Foil Embossing | Stamping a thin sheet of metallic foil onto a sheet of paper and then embossing a pattern under it, creating a three dimensional raised area, usually text or an image. See a sample of foil embossing. |
| Foil Stamping | Impressing metallic foil onto paper with a heated die. |
| Font | The characters which make up a complete typeface and size. |
| Free sheet | Any paper that is free from wood pulp impurities. |
| Ganging | The combining of two or more different printing projects on the same sheet of paper. |
| Gate fold | A three or four panel fold where the two outside panels fold inward to meet in the center. In an open gate fold, there are three panels, the bottom of which is twice the size of the folded panels. In a closed gatefold, there are four panels of roughly equal size where the outer panels are folded inward together. |
| Gathering | Assembling sheets of paper and signatures into their proper sequence. See also collate . |
| Ghosting | Also known as gloss ghosting. A condition occurring during the printing process when vapors from drying ink on one side of a press sheet interact chemically with dry ink or blank paper on sheets in contact with or on the reverse side of the same sheet creating unintended faint images. |
| Grain | Paper fibers lie in a similar direction in a sheet of paper. This direction is called the grain. Printing is usually done so that if folding |



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| | is required, the fold is done parallel to the grain. |
| Gravure | A printing process using recessed areas on a metal cylinder that hold the ink. |
| Gripper | A series of metal fingers that hold each sheet of paper as it passes through a printing press. |
| Gripper edge | The side of a piece of paper held by the gripper fingers as it passes through a printing press. Nothing can be printed in this area. |
| Gutter | A blank space or margin between components on a printed piece or press sheet. |
| Halftone | Using small dots to produce the impression of a continuous-tone image. The effect is achieved by varying the dot size and the number of dots per square inch. |
| Halftone screen | A sheet of film or glass containing ruled right-angled lines, used to translate the full tone of a photo to the halftone dot image required for printing. |
| Hickey | The effect that occurs when a spec of dust or debris (frequently dried ink) adheres to the printing plate and creates a spot or imperfection in the printing. |
| Highlights | The lightest tones of a photo, printed halftone or illustration. In the finished halftone, these highlights are represented by the finest dots. |
| Hot melt | An adhesive used in some binding processes, which requires heat for application. |
| House sheet | This is a term that refers to a paper that a printer keeps on hand in their shop. |
| Image area | That portion of a printing plate that carries ink and prints on paper. |
| Imposition | The correct sequential arrangement of pages that are to be printed, along with all the margins in proper alignment, before producing the plates for printing. |
| Indicia | An image and/or text pre-printed on mailing envelopes in place of a stamp. |
| Insert | A piece of printed material that is inserted into another piece of printed material, such as a magazine or catalog. |
| Italic | Text that is used to denote emphasis by slanting the type body |



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| Jacket | Or dust jacket. The paper cover sometimes called the "dust cover" of a hardbound book. |
| Jog | To vibrate a stack of finished pages so that they are tightly aligned for final trimming or binding. |
| Justification | Adjusting the spacing or hyphenation of words and characters to fill a given line of text from end to end. Sometimes referred to as word spacing. |
| Kerning | The narrowing of space between two letters so that they become closer and take up less space on the page. |
| Keyline | Lines that are drawn on artwork that indicate the exact placement, shape and size of elements including halftones, illustrations, etc. |
| Kraft | A coarse unbleached paper used for printing and industrial products. |
| Laid finish | A parallel lined paper that has a handmade look. |
| Lamination | Applying thin transparent plastic sheets to both sides of a sheet of paper, providing scuff resistance, waterproofing and extended use. |
| Layout | A rendition that shows the placement of all the elements, images, thumbnails etc., of a final printed piece. |
| Leading | Space between lines of type. The distance in points between one baseline and the next. |
| Letterpress | Printing that utilizes inked raised surfaces, usually type, to create the image. |
| Letterspacing | The addition of space between typeset letters. |
| Line copy | Any copy that can be reproduced without the use of a halftone screen. |
| Linen | A paper that emulates the look and texture of linen cloth. |
| Lithography | The process of printing that utilizes flat or curved inked surfaces to create the printed images. |
| Logotype | A personalized type or design symbol for a company or product. |
| Loupe | A small magnifier used to observe the details on a printed sheet. |



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| M weight | The actual weight of 1000 sheets of any given size of paper. |
| Magenta | One of the four process colors, or CMYK, the M is for magenta. Magenta is a predominately red color with some blue. Magenta, cyan and yellow are also the three subtractive primary colors. |
| Magnetic black | Black ink containing iron oxides, used for magnetic ink character recognition used for check printing. |
| Make-ready | Paper that is used in the press set-up process before the printing run actually starts. |
| Matte finish | A coated paper finish that goes through minimal calendaring. |
| Metallic Ink | Ink that looks metallic when printed. Made with powdered metal or pigments that look metallic. The most common colors used are gold and silver. |
| Moiré | An undesirable halftone pattern produced by the incorrect angles of overprinting halftone screens. |
| Mottle | A term used to describe spotty or uneven ink absorption. |
| Natural | A term to describe papers that have a color similar to that of wood, also called cream, off-white or ivory. |
| Newsprint | A light, low-cost unbleached paper made especially for newspaper printing. |
| Offset | An erroneous variation of the word "setoff". Ink that is unintentionally transferred from a printed sheet to the back of the sheet above it as the pieces are stacked in a pile when printed. |
| Offset printing | The most commonly used printing method, where the printed material does not receive ink directly from a printing plate but from an intermediary blanket that receives the ink from the plate and then transfers it to the paper. |
| Offset paper | A term for sometimes used for uncoated book paper. |
| Onionskin | A light bond paper used for typing and used with carbon paper because of its thinness. |
| Opacity | Quality of papers that defines its opaqueness or ability to prevent two-sided printing from showing through. |
| Opaque ink | Ink that completely covers any ink under itself. |



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| Overlay proof | A process of proof-making whereby the color separations are individually exposed to light sensitive film. This film is then set in registration with a piece of white paper in the background. |
| Overprinting | Any printing that is done on an area that has already been printed. |
| Overrun | Quantities of sheets printed over the requested number of copies. |
| Pagination | The numbering of individual pages in a multi-page document |
| Parchment | A hard finished paper that emulates animal skin used for documents, such as awards, that require writing by hand. |
| Parent sheet | A sheet that is larger than the cut stock of the same paper. |
| Perfect Binding | A binding process where the signatures of a book are held together by a flexible adhesive. |
| Perfecting press | A printing press that prints on both sides of a sheet in a single pass through the press. |
| Pica | A typesetting unit of measurement equaling 1/6th of an inch. |
| Picking | An occurrence in printing whereby the tack of ink pulls fibers or coating off the paper surface, leaving spots on the printed surface. |
| Plastic comb | A method of binding books whereby holes are drilled on the spine, and a plastic grasping device is inserted to hold the pages together. |
| PMS | The abbreviation of the Pantone Color Matching System. |
| Point | A measurement unit equal to 1/72 of an inch. 12 points to a pica, 72 points to an inch. |
| PostScript | A tradename of Adobe Systems, Inc. for its page description language. This language translates a digital file from an application into a language a compatible printer or other device can use to create its output. |
| Ppi | Pages per inch or pixels per inch. |
| Premium | Any paper that is considered better than grade #1 by its manufacturer. |
| Pressure-sensitive Process printing | Self-adhesive paper covered by a backing sheet. A system where a color image is separated into different color values (cyan, magenta, yellow and black or CMYK) by the use of filters and screens and then transferred to printing plates and printed on a printing press, reproducing the original color image. |
| Progressive proofs | Any proofs made from the separate colors of a multi-color printing project. |



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| Quark | Short for QuarkXPress, one of the primary computer applications used in graphic design. |
| Rag paper | Papers with a complete or partial content of cotton fibers. |
| Ragged left | The term given to right-justified type that is uneven on the left. |
| Ragged right | The term given to left-justified type that is uneven on the right. |
| Ream | 500 sheets of paper. |
| Register | The arrangement of two or more printed images in exact alignment with each other. |
| Register marks | Any crossmarks or other symbols used on a press sheet to assure proper registration. |
| RGB | The color space of Red, Green and Blue. These are the primary colors of light, which computers use to display images on your screen. An RGB computer file must be translated into the CMYK (the primary colors of pigment) color space in order to be printed on a printing press. |
| Right angle fold | A term that denotes folds that are 90 degrees to each other. |
| Running head | A title at the top of a page that appears on all pages of a book or chapter of a book. |
| Saddle stitch | The binding of booklets or other printed materials by stapling the pages on the folded spine. |
| Safety paper | A paper that shows sign of erasure so that it cannot be altered or tampered with easily. |
| Scoring | To crease paper with a metal rule for the purpose of making folding easier. |
| Screen angles | The placement of halftone screens to avoid unwanted moiré patterns. Frequently used angles are black 45°, magenta 75°, yellow 90°, and cyan 105°. |
| Screen ruling | A measurement equaling the number of lines or dots per inch on a halftone screen. |
| Scum | Unwanted deposits of ink in the non-image area of a printed piece. |



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| Self cover | A cover that is the same paper stock as the internal sheets. |
| Sharpen | To decrease the dot size of a halftone, which in turn decreases the color strength. |
| Sheetwise | The printing of two different images on two different sides of a sheet of paper by turning the sheet over after the first side is printed and using the same gripper and side guides. |
| Show through | When the printing on one side of a sheet is seen from the other side, a frequent problem with thin papers. |
| Side guide | The guides on the sides of a printing press that consistently positions the sheet sideways as it is fed through the press. |
| Side stitch | The stapling of sheets or signatures on the side closest to the spine. |
| Signature | A printed sheet with multiple pages on it that is folded so that the pages are in their proper numbered sequence, as in a book. |
| Smoothness | That quality of paper defined by its levelness that allows for pressure consistency in printing, assuring uniformity of print. |
| Soy Inks | Inks made with soy oils instead of petroleum as the base. They are considered to be more environmentally friendly, a standard component of green printing. |
| Spiral bind | A type of binding where a metal or plastic wire is spiraled through holes drilled along the binding side of a document. |
| Stock | A term for unprinted paper. |
| Super calendaring | A machine procedure that produces a very smooth paper surface that is exceptional for printing. |
| Synthetic papers | Any non-wood or cloth paper, usually petroleum (plastic) based. |
| Text Paper | A high quality light weight printing paper. |
| Thermography | A printing process whereby slow drying ink is applied to paper and, while the ink is still wet, is lightly dusted with a resinous powder. The paper then passes through a heat chamber where the powder melts and fuses with the ink to produce a raised surface. |
| Tint | A halftone screen that contains all the same sized dots. |
| Trapping | The overlapping of one color over a different, adjacent color to ensure that no white space is visible where the two colors meet, especially when there are slight variations in the registration of the two colors during the printing process. Or the process of printing wet ink over wet or dry previously printed ink. |



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| Trim marks | Marks placed on the printed sheet to indicate where cuts should be made. |
| Typo | A spelling mistake in printed material resulting from a mistake in typing or setting type. See common printing term misspellings . |
| Undercolor removal | The removing of cyan, magenta, or yellow from a heavily colored image to limit the total amount of ink being applied to that image to avoid potential production problems. |
| Up | A term used to describe how many similar pieces can be printed on a larger sheet; two up, four up, etc. |
| Variable Data Printing | Is a form of on-demand printing in which elements (such as text, graphics, photographs, etc) can be changed from one printed piece to the next, without stopping or slowing down the press, using information from a database. For example, a set of personalized letters, each with the same basic layout, can be printed with a different name and address on each letter. |
| Varnish | A clear coating added to printed material as a protective layer for improved scuff resistance and usually higher gloss. |
| Vellum | A finish of paper that is somewhat bulky and is slightly rough. |
| Vignette | A photo or illustration, in which the tones fade gradually away until they blend with the background they are printed on. |
| Warm color | A color with a reddish tone rather than a blue tone. Browns, oranges, reds, and yellows are generally considered to be "warm" colors. |
| Washup | The procedure of cleaning a particular ink from the unit of a printing press. |
| Watermark | A translucent mark or image that is embossed during the papermaking process, or printed onto paper, which is visible when the paper is held up to the light. |
| Web press | A printing press that prints on rolls of paper passed through the press in one continuous piece, as opposed to individual sheets of paper. |



- Widow** A single word or two left at the end of a paragraph, or a part of a sentence ending a paragraph, which loops over to the next page and stands alone. Also, the last sentence of a paragraph, which contains only one or two short words.
- Work and Turn** A printing production format that has the front and back of a printed piece on one side of the paper, that is then printed the same on the back side, producing two copies of the piece.
- Wove Writing paper** A smooth paper with a gentle patterned finish.
Another name for bond paper.
- Xerographic paper** Papers made to reproduce well in copy machines.
- Yellow** One of the four process colors of ink, or CMYK. The Y is for yellow.
- Zip file** Zipping a file compresses one or more files into a smaller archive. It takes up less hard drive space and less time to transfer across a network or the internet.
- 80# Gloss Text** Standard glossy paper stock, about as thick as a light magazine cover. The shiny finish provides an excellent opaque base for rich process color printing. This is our most popular stock for: Brochures, Catalog Inserts, Flyers, Posters, etc.
- 100# Gloss Text** Similar to the 80# gloss text, but 25% thicker and heavier, for a piece that feels more substantial. Standard Uses: Brochures, Information Sheets, Self-mailers, etc.
- 80# dull/matte text** This stock is finely coated with a non-gloss finish. It provides an excellent opaque base for easy to read, crisp typography. Standard Uses: Brochures, Catalog Inserts, and Flyers, etc.
- 80# Gloss Cover** As a "cover" stock, this paper is stiff, about like a postcard or baseball card. This stock is coated with a glossy finish, making photographs and other images look beautiful. Standard uses: durable, heavy-weight Brochures, Catalog Covers, Product Spec



- Sheets.
- 100# Uncoated Cover** An option for business cards, rack cards and bookmarks. This bright white smooth #1 grade cover stock is 14 pt in thickness and matches the 70# text-weight stock we use for letterhead and envelopes.
- 120# Gloss Cover** We offer this high-quality, thick 14 pt stock on all of our card products. The glossy, coated finish makes photographs and other images look beautiful. Consider adding aqueous coating to your four color sides for added protection and shine.
- 70# Uncoated Text** We use 70# Lustre for stationery and envelopes and 70# Cougar Opaque Offset on calendars and newsletters. These uncoated (non-glossy) white stocks are guaranteed safe for desktop laser printing. Many common stationery stocks are not appropriate for 4-color printing, so we have selected these for best results. Feels thick and substantial in your hands.
- 24# Uncoated and 28# Uncoated 10-point C1S** This is a standard stock commonly used for envelopes, also called White Wove. The 28# is thicker and heavier than the 24#.
- A bristol stock, gloss coated on the outside and uncoated on the inside. Used for Greeting Cards.