

PAPER WEIGHT BASICS

PAPER WEIGHTS

Paper weight designations seem nonsensical at first. How can 24# letterhead be the same as 60# text and why would 100# text be the same as 55# cover?

The weight referred to in the paper name is called the basis weight, which is simply the poundage of 500 sheets of that paper. Text stock is produced at a larger size of 25" x 38" than cover stock which has a standard production size of 20" x 26", for example. Paper grades each have their own standard sizes. For most people, the chart below will serve their print buying needs.

COMPARATIVE BASIS WEIGHT

Bond	Text	Cover	Bristol
20	50	—	—
24	60	—	—
28	70	—	—
—	80	—	—
—	100	—	67
—	120	65	80
—	—	80	100
—	—	100	120

Bond: originally referring to a cotton-content paper and preferred for its strength, performance and durability. Now may be made from either cotton and/or chemical wood pulp and reconfigured for handwriting as well as laser and ink jet printers. Popular for letterhead.

Text, book or offset: the general terms for papers suitable for offset and digital printing. May be coated or uncoated. Often used for flyers, newsletters and booklets.

Cover or Card Stock: May have matching book paper. Used for folders, business and greeting cards, postcards and brochures.

Bristol: Often used for paperback book or catalog covers, file folders, tags, tickets and engraved wedding invitations. Originally made from rags from Bristol, England.