



Paper Tips - Uncoated Papers

Today there is a growing trend toward more specifications of uncoated paper for high quality printing. For specific end uses, uncoated is often a better selection than coated.

Why Uncoated

- a. **Better bulk than coated.** Generally speaking, a smooth finish uncoated grade will have a similar caliper to a coated sheet one basis weight higher. With a vellum finish the difference is even more pronounced
- b. **More opacity than coated.** Similar to the bulk, you can assume similar opacity at one basis weight lower for an uncoated sheet than a coated grade.
- c. **Better brightness.** Uncoated grades typically are both whiter and brighter
- d. **More stiffness than coated papers at the same basis weight**
- e. **Better folding with less tendency to crack.**
- f. **More resistance to scuffing** or chalking than coated matte or dull.
- g. **Faster drying times** than most matte or dull coated
- h. **Options for Colors** – Use cream or neutral whites for color balance. Pastels and bright colors for creativity and mood.
- j. **Softer printed appearance** than gloss coated.
- k. **Can write on them with pen or pencil** without smearing.
- l. **Laser Compatible** – Provides ability to cross platform (Specific grades only).
- m. **Can accept ink jet for mailing**

Cost Comparisons

Premium Opaque – On the high end of uncoated quality, these grades have **superior brightness and ink hold out**. They also cost more than most coated grades. When comparing costs between coated and premium uncoated papers it is important to take into consideration the higher bulk, stiffness and opacity of uncoated papers. This fact allows the designer to **drop at least one basis weight when utilizing an uncoated sheet compared to a coated**, and often 2 basis weights. The lower weight offsets much of the price disparity, and the end user can enjoy the benefits of a premium sheet without a significant cost impact.

#1 Opaque – This group includes **Plainfield Opaque, Accent Opaque, Lynx and Cougar**. All of these grades have a brightness level of around 96, much better than most coated papers. At the same basis weight their **costs are approximately in line with most commodity coated** sheets. While not providing quite as good of ink hold out as the premium uncoated grades, it is still reasonable to **drop at least one basis weight compared to a coated grade** while providing superior bulk and opacity.

The physical advantages of uncoated papers often offset print issues related to reduced ink hold-out and dot gain, and provide buyers with unique and affordable alternatives.