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CHECKERBOARD | DESIGNERS' FINE PRESS | LALLIE

Foil Stamping

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Introduction to Foil Stamping

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Designing for Foil Stamping

the method: foil stamp

Foil stamping is a specialty printing process with a rich history in adorning precious literary titles with glistening metallic embellishments.

Today, this artisan print method continues to thrive because of its unique finish—opaque, shiny and decadent! Like letterpress, there is nothing computerized about this plate based print method. Foil stamping uses heat, pressure, thin films of foil, and metal dies. Skilled operators heat a plate then use mechanical pressure to imprint and seal a thin film of foil onto the paper. Foil is applied one color at a time and requires constant attention to alignment, paper feeding, and temperature. The temperature is adjusted to best suit the artwork to assure consistent foil coverage throughout each and every print job.

the art

Foil stamping loves art with line weights greater than 0.4pt. Coverage is typically opaque, as the foil seals to the top of the paper. Designs with large, all-over coverage or an extreme contrast between thick and thin lines may require special handling for the best opacity and finished results (fee applies).

Foil stamping can be mixed with other print methods like letterpress, thermography, flat and full color digital printing.

the colors

We have over 27 in-house foil colors to choose from in our Foil Stamping Palette swatch deck! You can also order a custom foil color from pre-set vendor palettes (fee applies). Unlike inks, custom foil cannot be ordered referencing a Pantone number.

Most foil colors have an opaque finish, so the paper color typically does not affect the final color. There are some semi-translucent foils, like Champagne and Cameo, which are recommended for light stocks only.

opacity

Foil sits on top of the canvas it is sealed to, creating opaque coverage. The final foil color is not typically affected by the color of the paper printed upon, making it great for light colors on dark papers.

FOIL COLOR
+ PAPER
FOIL COLOR



Some foils are specialty and formulated to be semi-translucent, like Champagne and Cameo, and are recommended for light stocks only.

the papers

Foil adheres and seals to tighter fibered smooth stock best. Foil loves flat surfaces, which makes loftier stocks like letterpress trickier. We recommend our 130# White, Pearl and Cream Cover over looser fibered letterpress for the best print quality.

Our matte colored cover and metallic cover stocks are beautiful options too!

Paper can also be supplied. Contact us for details.

Heavily textured stock is not recommended for foil stamping.

Letterpress

Made of 100% recycled cotton, its loose fibers can be trickier with foil stamping compared to a smooth stock

COLORS: Letterpress White, Letterpress Pearl,
Letterpress Cream

WEIGHTS: 300gsm (1-ply), 600gsm (2-ply), 900gsm
(3-ply), or any other variety of lush weights!

white cover

A smooth stock with a slightly textured surface, it accepts foil stamping beautifully, making it our preferred option

COLORS: White, Pearl, Cream

WEIGHTS: 130# (1-ply), 260# (2-ply), 390# (3-ply),
or any other variety of lush weights!

Works well in combination with letterpress,
thermography, flat and full color digital printing

matte colored cover

Smooth, matte finish colored stocks are typically 100# and accept foil stamping beautifully, making them a preferred option

COLORS: A wide assortment; see paper swatch deck

WEIGHTS: 1-ply, 2-ply, 3-ply, or any other variety!

Works well in combination with letterpress,
thermography, flat and digital printing

metallic cover

Smooth, metallic finish stocks (like Stardream) between 100# and 110# accept foil stamping beautifully, making them a preferred option

COLORS: A wide assortment; see paper swatch deck

WEIGHTS: 1-ply, 2-ply, 3-ply, or any other variety!

Works well in combination with thermography and
digital printing

specialty papers

WOOD VENEER is a unique textured canvas. Foil typically adheres well to wood, but very thin lines and certain colors can add a degree of challenge

VELLUM OR TISSUES are thinner stocks that will not withstand the heat and pressure of this type of foil stamping

HEAVILY TEXTURED STOCKS are not recommended as the texture can interfere with the foil adhering well

supplied papers

Clients can supply custom stock

Supplied stock takes extra handling and care on our side, therefore discounts are not applied to supplied stock

Please contact us before purchasing your supplied stock so we can confirm its printability and suggested supplied size and quantity

thin lines

Foil stamping loves art with thin lines or relatively similar line weights (rather than an extreme contrast between thin and thick lines).

MINIMUM LINE WEIGHT: 0.4pt

Line weights below 0.4pt are prone to break, shift, or disappear when printed.

IMPRESSION: light impression

solid areas

Designs with large, all-over coverage are prone to small pin holes, caused by the release of hot air as the foil seals to a canvas.

IMPRESSION: little to no impression

Designs with large, all-over coverage may need special handling for the best finished results (fee applies).

mix of thin lines & solids

An extreme contrast between thin and thick lines in the same color can add a degree of challenge to print. If printed together, the amount of heat on the press is limited to what the thin lines will allow, introducing less coverage in solid areas.

For best print results, we recommend splitting the color with extreme thin and thick lines into 2 plates, optimizing each area on press for the best print quality.

high coverage

Custom designs that incorporate large areas of foil coverage (large solids, floods of color, all-over patterns) are considered high coverage.

IMPRESSION: little to no impression

Special press handling can be an option to improve foil coverage (fee applies).

overlapping colors

We do not recommend overlapping foil colors unless a rough, uneven finish is acceptable

WHAT ABOUT OTHER PRINT METHODS?

CAN OVERLAP*: digital, flat, letterpress

CANNOT OVERLAP: thermography

** See swatch deck for most versatile foils. Foil stamping over another printing method may result in special press handling (fee applies); letterpress texture impacts foil; heating of the wax in any ink creates an uneven finish*

print area & registration

MAXIMUM PRINT AREA: 10" x 17"

Specialty, large format printing press options may be available for sizes up to 12" x 21" (fee applies).

SIDES: single layer cards have Foil on 1 side

REGISTRATION: we recommend color registration be at least 1/16" apart

FRAMES: we recommend they be at least 1/4" - 3/8" away from the cut edges of the card