



mohawk

# ENGRAVING TIPS

Engraving is one of the most prestigious graphic techniques. It can reproduce delicate line work, making it suitable for small pieces of art and finely-serifed type, particularly when close registration is required. Engraving also yields the sharpest image of any printing method.

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Engraving requires a metal plate or die into which a design is cut by hand, chemically etched, or photoengraved. This process forms “wells” which are then filled with ink and forced—under immense pressure—into contact with paper backed by a counter die. In the process, ink is lifted out of the plate, transferring a raised, opaque image to the front of the sheets and creating a light depression in the back. One plate and one pass on press are needed for each color.

Engraving is usually specified for type and line work, although one-color photographs and continuous-tone illustrations can be reproduced as precisely as lithography. Engraving is not suitable for four-color process reproduction because the engraving inks are opaque. Any match color will work well on the engraving press and because of their high opacity, light color inks can be printed on dark paper and metallic inks will shine. Avoid large, solid areas of color which can appear mottled or uneven—outlining the image or using a screen tint are possible solutions. Engraving inks can be specified in either dull or gloss.

The plates used for engraving are either made of copper or steel. Copper plates are less expensive and used for runs under 5,000. Steel plates are used for higher runs and the highest quality. Both plates have a maximum size of 5 x 7 inches.

Talk with your engraver about paper. Because of the craftsmanship and sharpness, engraving demands fine papers. Uncoated papers with a wove, eggshell or vellum finish handle engraving beautifully. Coated stocks tend to crack, so pretesting is important. All basis weights can be engraved; heavier papers will show less of a depression on the back side. Envelopes can be engraved before or after converting. Engraving pre-converted envelopes may be necessary for critical and consistent placement of the image. To avoid the slight debossing that appears on the backs of envelopes, the printer can open the flaps before engraving.

Engraving is fully compatible with laser and inkjet printing. Be sure to specify a laser-guaranteed paper for these projects that will be run through laser printers.

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Visit [mohawkconnects.com](http://mohawkconnects.com) for complete stocking info for paper and envelopes.

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