

Glossary of Envelope Terms

Like most industries, the envelope industry has its own technical terms or jargon. The following list summarises many of the terms and definitions used.

BANKER	Diamond shape or V-flap opening on the long edge, also known as invitation envelopes.
BANGTAIL	Special type of wallet incorporating a perforated flap extension from the throat e.g. Barclaycard cash envelope.
BASKETWEAVE	Manilla Paper with a weave effect finish, traditionally used for Heavy weight manilla papers typically in 115gsm.
BESPOKE	Envelopes made to customer specifications, not from stock.
BIODEGRADABLE / RECYCLABLE	These envelopes can be recycled and will biodegrade, so do not need to be used for landfill.
BLANK FED	Envelopes manufactured from flat sheets, punched out and made up.
BOARD BACK	Generally a pocket made with a cardboard back & paper front. 120gsm paper and around 1000 micron board.
BRE	Business Reply Envelope – normally an undersize DL (105 x 216mm or 102 x 216mm) also an undersize C5 (155 x 220mm) is now available and gaining popularity.
CARD ENVELOPE	An envelope made from card, for instance our Premium Optima range, not to be confused with an envelope that you would send a greetings card in. In this case this would refer to our Purely Everyday envelopes.
COLOUR WASH	Printing technique used to give a tinted or coloured effect, often relates to internal opaque's.
CORN STARCH	
WINDOW FILM	Normal window films will not biodegrade, however using corn starch window film it will, under the right conditions, biodegrade in 30 days. See our recycled range.
DIAMOND	
ENVELOPE PRESS	A make of envelope printing press, good for larger sizes such as C3, board backs and gussets.
DRILLED HOLES	Holes drilled normally in internal mail transit pockets, used to check for inserts.
ENDURO	Tear resistant material made from a tri-laminate of Paper / Polythene / Paper, fully overprintable, an alternative to Tyvek.
FLEXO	Printing technique carried out during manufacture or printing in-line, for large quantities not up to the quality of litho printing.
FSC®	Stands for Forestry Stewardship Council, gives full traceability on raw materials such as pulp/paper.
GLASSINE	Paper based material used for window and some wage and photographic pockets.
GREETING CARD ENVELOPES	A gummed envelope with a diamond flap usually used for greetings cards and invitations and sometimes referred to as a 'Banker'.
GSM / GRAMMAGE	Determines the weight of the paper, measured in g/m ² .
GUMMED	Refers to the envelope sealing method that requires moistening to seal, refer to the gummed sealing section of this guide.
GUSSET	Normally a pocket envelope with expandable sides. Can be block bottom or V-bottom. All our stock is V-bottom as it is suitable for over printing.
HALM JET PRESS	A make of envelope printing press most commonly used in the industry. Available in 2 and 4 colour and more recently 5, with dryers that enable the envelope to be printed 4 colours on face and 1 colour on the flap (i.e. return address) in one pass, known as EM 5000.
POWER SEAL	Is a form of Peel & Seal adhesive, a narrow band of adhesive with a heavier gram weight than normal gives a shelf life of 5 years, looks similar to double sided tape adhesive.
INVITATION ENVELOPES	A gummed envelope with a diamond flap usually used for greetings cards and invitations and sometimes referred to as a 'Banker'.
LASER WINDOW FILM	This window film is double the thickness of normal film enabling it to go through laser / digital printers without melting in the machine. It measures 40-50 microns as opposed to standard 22 mm.
MACHINABLE	Envelope for use on an inserting/ mailing machine.
MAILING WALLET	As machinable.
MATT COATED	Envelopes made from coated paper designed for full colour overprint
MICRON	Describes the thickness of paper in 1mm/1000
OPAQUE	Printed design or wash inside an envelope typically for security.
PANTONE	Reference for shades of print colours – each one has an individual number. Also referred to as PMS colour (Pantone Matching System).
PAS 2020	Responsible mail - run by Royal Mail offering cheaper postal rates for environmentally sound mailings - our three recycled ranges meets the necessary criteria.
PEFC	Programme for the endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes, gives full product traceability.
PERFECTING	Litho printing on both sides of an envelope at the same time.
PIP	'Pricing in Proportion' is how The Royal Mail now charge for posting of mail, based primarily on the size of the envelope, small letter, large letter, parcel.
POCKET	Envelope with opening on short side.
PPI	Postage Paid Impression e.g. 1st Class, Mailsort.
RECYCLED	Envelopes made from post consumer waste, see our three Recycled ranges.
REEL FED	Envelope manufactured from reels of paper, most cost effective from out envelope
SELF-SEAL	Refers to the sealing method where the two flaps are pressed together to form an instant bond.
SECURITY SLITS	Small slits in the flap of some self seal envelopes designed as 'tear points' for tamper proof security.
SHELF LIFE	Useable life of an envelope. Generally applied to Self Seal and Peel & Seal envelopes.
SHOULDER	Top of the side-flaps of a wallet. Can be a critical design aspect for inserting machines.
SET-OFF	This is where the print on one envelope marks on another. UV driers will avoid this ensuring the envelope is dry when going onto the feed table.
STRING & WASHER	A type of fastener for the envelope flap, where a string is looped around two washers to enable re-use in internal mail applications.
THROAT	Gap between the score line and back flap of a wallet. Can be a critical design aspect for inserting machines.
THUMB CUT	Shape cut from a topless pocket or wallet, normally a semi circle.
TOPLESS	Pocket or wallet without a flap.
UV DRYER	Fitted to the back of the envelope press, it enables substrates such as matt coated envelopes to be printed without risk of set-off.
WALLET	Envelope with opening on the long edge.
W & D 212/214	The Rolls Royce of envelope presses, more expensive than the other two mentioned, strongly built and with heavy roller power which is ideal for solid blocks of printed colour. The 212 is two colour whilst the 214 is four colour.
W & D 102	Reel fed machine specifically used for producing gummed wallet envelopes up to oversize C5. Has the mantle of the most popular envelope manufacturing machine ever.
W & D 249	Envelope press specifically for the production of larger format pocket envelopes particularly C4 size.