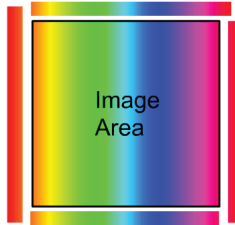


# Printing Jargon

## Understand the Vocabulary of the Press Person

If you're a customer or a sales rep of a company and you have a print project, you will be working with someone from a printing house. Companies in all industries have their own unique jargon or words they use for the department that they are in. Here are the definitions of some words a Press person might use in a conversation. ([Click on blue links to see animated examples](#)).

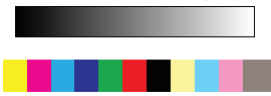
**Bleed** - images and/or page data that extends beyond the trim marks on a page. When the data extends beyond the page on all four sides this is known as a "full bleed". The excess bleed is trimmed away to make it appear that the page data extends across the full page. If bleed was not used when the page is cut on the trim marks, a small white gap on the edge might be seen. A 1/4" to an 1/8" bleed is generally used. ([Bleed](#))



**Blocking** - ink that has not adequately dried as it leaves the press and is laid on the next sheet. The ink adheres to the sheet and the sheets dry together to form a "Block".

**Colour Bar** - also known as a control strip, a printed strip with various colours used to control print quality, such as trapping, ink density, dot gain and print contrast. This strip is usually placed outside the "trim" area of a project, as a guide and visual aid for the pressman. One of the many "printer's marks" that can be found on a press sheet.

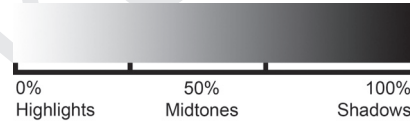
([Colour Bar](#))



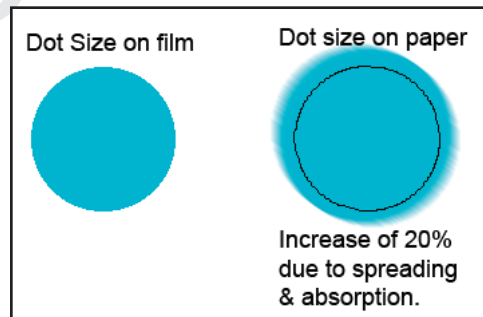
**Crop Marks (Trim Marks)** - Printed short fine lines used as guides for the final trim of pages within a press sheet. Usually found at the corners of the page about a 1/4 inch to an 1/8 inch away from image edge. ([Crop Marks](#))



**Density** - the ability of a material to absorb light or block light. In film, it refers to the opacity of a specific area of the image. For example, because film is a negative, 100% black would be a white area when printed and a clear area on the film would be 100% black when printed.



**Dot Gain** - the growth of a halftone dot that occurs whenever ink soaks into paper. This growth can vary from being very small (on a high speed press with fast drying ink and very non-porous paper) to quite dramatic, as is the case in newspaper printing where a dot can expand 30% from its size on the film to the size at which it dries. Failure to compensate for this gain in the generation of digital images can result in very poor results on the press. Therefore the porosity of a paper and the size of the printed dot can affect dot gain. Also known as Mechanical Dot Gain. ([See Example Below](#))



**Gasing (Chemical Ghosting)** - the appearance of faint replicas of printed images in undesirable places. Such as when a phantom image appears on the reverse side of the sheet, it originates from the sheet below. This usually occurs after the paper has run through the press and then dries in a stack. The faint image appears when the ink reacts chemically and creates a gaseous emission while drying. Though this event is rare, the image cannot be removed and if very noticeable, the job is ruined. ([Gasing](#))

**Ghosting (Mechanical)** - the appearance of faint replicas of printed images in undesirable places. A phantom image on the printed side of the sheet. It appears while printing and is caused by ink starvation on the rollers. Due to the fact that some image areas are inked heavily and other areas may have little or none, the rollers become ink starved. In some cases this can be corrected by slightly tilting the image so that the ink is better distributed and this will eliminate some of the ghosting. However, doing this, changes the image's grain direction and makes it more difficult to cut the paper. ([Ghosting](#))

**Grain Direction** - The direction or structure of paper fibers. "Grain long" if the grain runs the long direction of the sheet. "Grain short" if it runs the short direction of the sheet. Short grain paper is often used on large presses and long grain on small presses. If the paper rips clean in one direction that is called the grain direction. Grain direction is important when it comes to book assembly; in most cases the grain should run parallel to the spine so the book will open flat. ([Grain](#))

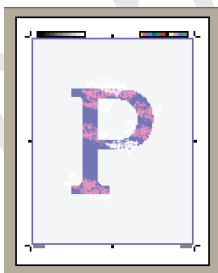


**Hickey** - Printing imperfections that appear as dried ink spots surrounded by white background. They are often doughnut shaped and sometimes are caused due to ink being contaminated with dry ink bits.



**Offset Printing** - A printing method in which inked images are offset or transferred from one surface to another. The plate's image area on the plate cylinder is wetted and inked and this is transferred to the blanket cylinder and then to the stock which moves between the blanket and the impression cylinder. Offset printing may be one colour or several colours (when several press units are lined up one after the other). [Offset Printing](#)

**Picking** - The tearing of bits of paper during a press run. This can happen when the first layer of ink is not yet dry or still tacky as the next ink is applied.

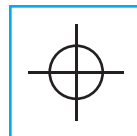


**Plugging** - a press and printing problem in offset lithography characterized by filled-in halftone shadows and small reverse type. When the ink and water on the printing plate do not separate, the ink gets into the non-image area and starts to fill in the holes.



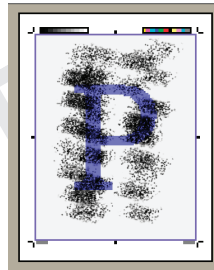
**Points and Picas** - basic units of measurement. There are 12 points in a Pica and 6 picas approximately in one inch or 72 points in an inch.

**Registration** - for alignment of plates on a multicolour printing press so that the images will superimpose properly to produce the required composite layout. This is also aided by various printer marks which guide the pressman and help him ensure that the colours are lined up and that both sides are even or back up. Registration marks are similar to crop marks in the fact that they are used for alignment and later for trimming. Printers marks are given a registration colour which is the four process colours CMYK, this aids the pressman when he is checks the colour alignment. [Registration](#)



**Rub-Off** - when the ink dries and fails to adhere to the substrate. The ink can be rubbed off merely by touching the paper. Also known as scuffing.

**Scumming** - ink material that collects on the rollers and then appear in clumps on the sheets. This is due to there being an imbalance in the pH levels on the press and the ink fails to adhere to the image area.



**Wet/Dry Trap** - a Wet Trap refers to printing a wet ink on top of another ink while the first ink is still wet. Dry Trap refers to printing a wet ink on top of another ink that is dry. Due to drying times, colour may vary. If poor trapping occurs the new ink can be rubbed off. *Note this is not the same as digital trapping which will be discussed in another brochure.* [Wet/Dry Trap](#)

For Part 3, see next brochure: "Printing Jargon, Understand the Vocabulary of the Bindery".

# Printing Jargon

Understand the Vocabulary of the Press Person

Definitions of words used in the Press Department

Produced by The Ink Rag