

A LIST OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS RELATED TO PACKAGING DESIGN - 4|1

## DESIGN

**Branding:** The visual identity of a product or company, including logos, colours, typography and Imagery.

**Hierarchy:** Refers to the visual organisation and prioritisation of elements on the packaging, guiding the consumer's attention and focus. It's about creating a clear structure and order, so the most important information stands out and communicates the brand's message effectively.

**Typography:** The style and arrangement of text in packaging design.

**Imagery:** The visual elements and graphics used on the packaging to communicate the brand's message, showcase the product, and appeal to the consumer (Photos, Illustrations, Graphics, Icons, Textures, Patterns)

**Visual Mockup:** a digital sketch or rendering of a design concept, used to explore and finalise the visual aspects of a product, packaging, without creating a physical prototype.

**Physical Mockup:** a hands-on, realistic version of a design concept, used to refine and perfect the design before investing in mass production.

## PACKAGING FORMS

**Primary Packaging:** This is the packaging that holds the product and is what your customer unwraps to reveal the product inside, such as:

Boxes (paper, paperboard, cardboard, corrugated cardboard)

Bottles (glass, plastic, PET, aluminium)

Cans (metal, tin, aluminium)

Jars (glass, plastic)

Tubes (plastic, aluminium)

Pouches (flexible plastic, stand-up)

Bags (paper, plastic, foil)

Containers (plastic, glass, cardboard)

Vials (glass, plastic)

Ampoules (glass)

Blister packs (plastic, foil)

Canister: (glass, aluminium, cardboard)

**Secondary Packaging:** This is the medium by which groups of products are packaged together for transportation and/or distribution. Also called shippers.

**Shelf-Ready Packaging:** This is the presentation container that a retailer can put straight onto the shelf to display the products. It's often abbreviated to SRP or SRT (Shelf Ready Tray).

**Food Labelling:** refers to the process of assigning information to packaged food products, including:

Product name and branding

Ingredient listing

Nutritional facts/Nutritional Information panel (NIP) (e.g., calories, fat, sodium)

Allergen warnings

Serving sizes

Manufacturer information

Storage and handling instructions

Expiration or "best by" dates

Regulatory compliance information (e.g., [FSANZ](#), [FDA](#), [EU](#))

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## Label Types:

- Product Labels: Contain product information, ingredients, and instructions.
- Shipping Labels: Contain shipping information, addresses, and barcodes.
- Brand Labels: Promote the brand, logo, and marketing messages.

**SUBSTRATES:** The base material used to create the packaging, such as paper, plastic, glass, or metal.

**Uncoated Paper:** Paper without a protective coating, often used for packaging materials like paper bags, boxes, and labels.

**Coated Paper:** Paper with a protective coating, such as gloss or matte, to improve print quality and durability.

**PaperBoard:** A thicker, sturdier paper material used for packaging items like cereal boxes, file folders, and cartons.

**Corrugated Cardboard:** A fluted paper material used for sturdy packaging like boxes and shipping containers.

**Recycled Paper:** Paper made from post-consumer waste, used for eco-friendly packaging options.

**Kraft Paper:** A strong, brown paper material used for packaging items like paper bags, boxes, and wrapping paper.

**Vinyl:** A flexible plastic material used for packaging items like labels, stickers, and decals.

**Polypropylene (PP):** A flexible plastic material used for packaging items like bags, containers, and labels.

**Polyethylene (PE):** A flexible plastic material used for packaging items like bags, containers, and labels.

**PET (Polyethylene Terephthalate):** A clear plastic material used for packaging items like bottles, containers, and labels.

**Other:** - Fabric (Textile, FIBC), Glass, Metal (Tin, Steel, aluminium), Wood, Bamboo, Bioplastics (PLA, PBAT, PHB), Eco-friendly alternatives like Mushroom-based materials and Seagrass

## ARTWORK:

**Finished Art:** The final, print-ready design files prepared for packaging production.

**Working Files:** The editable design files used during the creative process.

## Barcodes:

- UPC (Universal Product Code): A 12-digit code used for retail packaging in North America.
- EAN (European Article Number): A 13-digit code used for retail packaging in Europe.
- QR Code (Quick Response Code): A 2D code used for tracking and marketing purposes.

**Trim:** The final size and shape of packaging after cutting and finishing

**Bleed:** The area outside the packaging's trim area, where the design extends to ensure no white edges show.

**Die-cutting:** A process that cuts packaging into a specific shape using a metal die.

**Die-line or Cutter guide:** A template or guide that shows the exact shape and size of the packaging, including fold lines and cut lines. To be supplied by producer/printer.

**CMYK:** A color model used in printing, standing for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black.

**Pantone:** A color matching system used to ensure consistent colors across different materials.

**RGB:** Red, Green, Blue: A color model used for digital displays, such as monitors and televisions. Not suitable for print: RGB colors may not accurately convert to CMYK, resulting in color shifts and inaccuracies in printed materials.

## File formats:

.JPEG/.jpg (Joint Photographic Experts Group): Used for photographic images, web use, and digital displays.

.PNG (Portable Network Graphics): Used for graphics, logos, and images with transparent backgrounds.

.TIFF (Tagged Image File Format): Used for high-resolution images, printing, and archiving.

.AI (Adobe Illustrator): Used for vector graphics, logos, and illustrations (editing and creation).

.EPS (Encapsulated PostScript): Used for vector graphics, logos, and illustrations (editing and creation).

.PDF (Portable Document Format): Used for final artwork, printing, and digital sharing.

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**PRODUCTION:** The process of manufacturing and assembling the final packaging product. Many packaging materials, such as boxes, cartons, and inserts, are typically flat-packed after production, meaning they are folded and glued (or otherwise assembled) in a way that allows them to be shipped and stored efficiently in a flat state. This helps reduce storage space and transportation costs.

**Proof:** A sample of packaging for review and approval before production.

**Printing:** The process of applying ink to packaging using various techniques (see below for types of printing).

## TYPES OF PRINTING

**Offset Printing:** High-volume printing using metal plates to transfer ink onto paper.

- Best for: High-volume printing (1,000-10,000 copies)
- Use for: Books, magazines, brochures, business cards

**Digital Printing:** Printing directly from digital files using toner or inkjet technology.

- Best for: Small to medium print runs (1-1,000 copies)
- Use for: Flyers, posters, postcards, personalized prints

**Flexographic Printing:** Using flexible plates and fast-drying ink for packaging and labels.

- Best for: Packaging, labels, and flexible materials
- Use for: Food packaging, stickers, and product labels

**Rotogravure Printing:** Engraved cylinders transfer ink onto paper for high-quality images.

- Best for: High-quality images and large print runs (10,000+ copies)
- Use for: Magazines, catalogs, and high-end advertising materials

**Screen Printing:** Pushing ink through a mesh screen to print designs onto various materials.

- Best for: Custom designs on t-shirts, mugs, and other items
- Use for: Promotional products, apparel, and accessories

**Pad Printing:** Transferring ink from an etched plate onto irregular surfaces.

- Best for: Printing on irregular surfaces and small objects
- Use for: Medical devices, electronics, and promotional items

**Letterpress Printing:** Raised plates press ink into paper for debossed designs.

- Best for: Elegant, debossed designs on paper and cards
- Use for: Wedding invitations, business cards, and luxury packaging

**Intaglio Printing:** Engraved plates transfer ink onto paper for high-security printing.

- Best for: High-security printing (currency, passports, etc.)
- Use for: Secure documents and sensitive information

**Thermal Printing:** Using heat to produce images on special paper.

- Best for: Barcodes, labels, and point-of-sale printing
- Use for: Retail labels, receipts, and inventory management

# Glossary

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**Inkjet Printing:** Spraying ink onto paper for rapid, high-quality printing.

- Best for: Fast, high-quality printing on various materials
- Use for: Photos, documents, and everyday printing needs

**Laser Printing:** Using a laser beam to produce electrostatic images.

- Best for: High-speed printing with precise text and images
- Use for: Office documents, reports, and presentations

**3D Printing:** Building objects layer by layer using various materials.

- Best for: Creating physical objects from digital designs
- Use for: Prototypes, models, art pieces, and functional parts

**FINISHING:** The final stages of packaging production, adding any final touches, such as trimming excess material or applying special effects such as folding, gluing, or laminating.

**Cutting:** Die-cutting or trimming the packaging material to the desired shape and size

**Creasing:** Creating fold lines or creases in the packaging material

**Folding:** The process of creasing and bending packaging to create flaps or shapes.

**Gluing:** Assembling the packaging by applying adhesives to bond materials together

**Embossing:** Raised artwork on paper or card. There are different types, such as blind embossing and foil embossing.

**Foil stamping:** A process that applies metallic foil to packaging using heat and pressure.

**Laminate (celloglaze):** A thin layer of plastic applied to packaging for protection and durability.

- Gloss Laminate: A shiny, reflective coating that protects packaging from moisture and wear.
- Matte Laminate: A non-reflective coating that provides a subtle, textured finish.
- Soft-Touch Laminate: A velvety coating that provides a tactile experience.
- Holographic Laminate: A shimmering, iridescent coating that creates a holographic effect.

**Spot UV varnish (or coating):** A coating applied to specific areas to highlight design elements. A coating technique that applies a glossy, UV-cured coating to specific areas of a packaging design, creating a contrasting effect with the surrounding areas. Used to highlight logos, text, or images, and enhance the overall aesthetic appeal of the packaging.

**Varnish:** A clear liquid coating that protects the ink from smudging and can be applied to the entire label or only certain sections of the label. More sustainable but least durable & least expensive of the 3 options.

- Gloss Varnish: A shiny, protective coating that enhances colors and protects packaging.
- Matte Varnish: A non-reflective coating that provides a subtle, textured finish.

If you have any other queries in regards of Brand & Packaging Design and Production,  
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