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Proper Scoring Can Save the Looks of Your Project

To fold a sheet easily and cleanly along a line requires scoring. The indent made by the scoring creates an embossed ridge or bead on the other side of the sheet. The paper is then folded into the bead.

Scoring is especially important before folding heavy coated or uncoated papers. Generally, all cover weights, and text weights over 80 lb., need to be scored to fold smoothly. If a lighter weight sheet has full ink coverage extending over the fold areas, it too should be scored first.

For coated papers, a broad score with a rounded rule is recommended. The objective is to score the sheet without fracturing the coating.

Considerations for folding and scoring:

- Fold with the grain of paper
- Fold away from the score
- Avoid folding over inked areas
- Score all papers of 100 lb. text and heavier basis weights
- Letterpress scoring is recommended; litho scoring is not nearly as effective
- Scoring rule should be 2-3 mils thicker than the thickness of paper to be scored (paper 0.012 inches thick/score rule 0.15 inches thick)
- The thicker the paper, the wider the scoring rule, but less scoring depth
- Channel score heavy coated cover papers
- Minimize pressure on folder roller nips; a soft fold is better
- Hydro-liner technique can be used to soften the fold on heavily coated papers

Channel Scoring – Channel score with the male scoring rule 3-5 mils thicker than the thickness of the paper. Female channel needs to be wide enough to accommodate scoring rule plus 2 thicknesses of paper plus some slack to avoid pinching paper at the fold points. Using a bull-nosed, rounded male scoring rule can also be helpful.

Avoid scoring too wide, which creates a backbone that is too wide and causes a hollow area inside the fold. This can also cause excessive cracking.