

GLOSSARY

Guides

1. LABEL ADHESIVES GUIDE PART 1: TYPES AND PROPERTIES

With many different options available, selecting the right adhesive can be intimidating – especially when all you want is a label that “just works.” In this guide, you’ll learn the basic characteristics of Pressure Sensitive Adhesives (a fancy term for self-stick adhesives where no solvents or heat are required to activate the adhesive) so you can find the right “stick” for your labels.

Types of Label Adhesives

There are three main classifications of adhesives to know: permanent, removable and repositionable. Within those categories, pressure sensitive adhesives have different properties that vary from one to the next, but we’ll get to that in a bit. First, let’s learn more about adhesive types and reasons why they’re used.

- **Permanent:** The majority of labels we print use a permanent adhesive because they work for most label applications and tend to be the most budget-friendly. Since permanent adhesive labels create a strong bond with the container they are applied to, removing the label can damage the label or container.
- **Removable:** Labels with a removable adhesive can be removed for a window of time after application without damaging the label or surface it’s applied on. Removable adhesive labels and stickers are ideal for temporarily marking items, store coupons, and limited-time promotions. Be aware that temperature can affect the stickiness and removable capabilities of labels with this adhesive type.
- **Repositionable:** Repositionable adhesives are designed for short-term removability in cases where the label needs to be repositioned or reapplied. This adhesive can save you time and resources in the long run when labels need to be removed for repositioning (e.g. a crooked label on a container) or reapplied to another surface without losing much adhesion. Depending on which type of repositionable adhesive is used, it can eventually become permanent. The time between initial application and permanent bonding varies depending on the formulation.

Getting Technical: Adhesive Properties

The information above is probably enough to help you understand the type of adhesive that will work best for your situation and our representatives are ready to walk you through all the variables that go along with these selections. That said, label adhesives can have varying characteristics even if they’re categorized as the same “type,” so for your reading pleasure and curiosity, we’ve outlined some of the basic properties that help determine an adhesive’s performance as tested by our material suppliers.

- **Initial Tack:** The immediate holding power of the label adhesive on contact with a specific surface. If initial tack is low, it will have low adhesion, allowing the label to be removed cleanly. Adhesives with a low initial tack will build up adhesion over time (i.e. the difference between removable and repositionable). On the flipside, adhesives with high initial tack will have a stronger adhesion and bond to the container much more quickly.
- **Ultimate Adhesion:** The maximum holding power the label will achieve as the adhesive fully bonds to the surface. How long it takes for an adhesive to gain ultimate adhesion varies and depends on factors like the adhesive’s stiffness, the roughness of the receiving surface and environmental conditions. Depending on those factors, it can take anywhere from 2 – 24 hours for ultimate adhesion to happen.
- **Shear Resistance:** Simply put, label adhesives with a low shear are soft which allows them to flow into the surface they’re applied. They also have a higher initial tack, but can split apart under stress. A higher shear adhesive is more firm so it doesn’t flow as well into the surface, resulting in a lower initial tack and making it less likely to split apart under stress.
- **U.V. Resistance:** If your labels will be exposed to ultraviolet (U.V.) light for extended periods, they may be susceptible to colour changes or weakened adhesion. Select a U.V. resistant adhesive in cases where your labels will be exposed to U.V. light on your end, or if your labels will be exposed to U.V. light during the printing process (e.g. when a U.V. laminate or coating is applied to your labels) to minimize these effects.

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2. LABEL ADHESIVES GUIDE PART 2: PERFORMANCE FACTORS

In Label Adhesives Guide Part 1: Types and Properties, we covered the three main types of pressure sensitive adhesives and how basic properties (initial tack, cold flow and service range temperature) vary – even if the adhesives are classified as the same “type.” Part 2 of our guide adheres to the same theme with an overview of the factors that affect adhesive performance.

Performance Factors to Know

Pressure sensitive adhesives are available in different levels of stickiness which affects how quickly they absorb into the surface they're applied to. But along with a basic level of stickiness, there are other factors outside of the adhesive that can affect overall performance. Below are seven considerations outlined by our material suppliers that we consider, and you should consider too, when selecting label materials.

Note: A “substrate” is the material, surface or container that comes in direct contact with the adhesive and facestock (i.e. the paper or film material your artwork is printed on).

1. **Composition:** The composition of the substrate can affect the adhesive's ultimate strength and bond. Plastic, glass, paper, cardboard, metal and fabric all have different compositions which can affect how an adhesive will perform. Our standard permanent adhesive works well on most of these surfaces but just keep in mind that special adhesives may require extra considerations to ensure it's compatible with the substrate's composition.
2. **Texture:** A substrate's texture matters because it can affect how well the adhesive bonds. Rough textures are harder for adhesives to stick to because there's less surface area for the adhesive to grip. In cases like this, a more aggressive adhesive is required to achieve an acceptable level of adhesion.
3. **Shape:** Curves and angles can be difficult areas to label – especially if the label facestock is more rigid. PSAs require some time to flow into the substrate to achieve ultimate adhesion and when a rigid label is applied to a curved surface, the label's stiffness can cause it to lift up from the surface before the adhesive can fully bond. If that curved substrate also has a rough surface, you have an even tougher challenge. At this point, consider using a more flexible facestock or a more aggressive adhesive.
4. **Cleanliness:** Whether it's dirt, oil, frost, dust, etc., it's important that the surface a label is applied to is clean. An unclean surface can prevent a label from achieving ultimate adhesion. In certain manufacturing processes, contamination is bound to happen. Of course, if having consistently clean surfaces isn't an option, there are special adhesives that can help you tackle that issue.
5. **Temperature:** Temperature also plays a role in how well an adhesive can flow into the substrate. Extremely low temperatures can be especially problematic since adhesives have a “minimum application temperature,” which is the lowest temperature they can be applied, and still have tack, before crystallizing and turning solid. If you must apply your labels in a cold environment, a special adhesive would be needed. The specialized “cold temp” or “all temp” adhesives can be used for application temperatures as low as -10 to -20 degrees F.
6. **Moisture contact:** Labels printed on paper materials don't hold up well against direct moisture or humidity in the air. If the paper label will have limited exposure to moisture, a laminate can be applied over the paper to protect the material's integrity and printed image. Film labels are more durable against moisture contact, but clear film has some special adhesive considerations. When clear labels have an emulsion adhesive, and they're applied to a wet or moist surface, the adhesive can re-emulsify turning the colour milky white. The discoloration will go away over time but may take days or even weeks to happen.
7. **Service conditions:** Labels don't live in a bubble – they interact with the environment around them. It's important to keep in mind the various

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2. LABEL ADHESIVES GUIDE PART 2: PERFORMANCE FACTORS

elements your labels will be exposed to over their lifespan because special materials may be required to ensure label quality. Moisture, abrasion, heat, cold, oil, dirt...the list of potential service conditions is practically limitless!

As you can see, label adhesives can act in many different ways depending on their environment and substrate. Fortunately, there are things you can do to ensure that the one you choose is right for your labeling needs.

3. LABEL ARTWORK SPECIFICATIONS

Performance Factors to Know

Before you start designing your label artwork, it would be beneficial to contact our customer service team for a listing of the available cutting die shapes and sizes that we have stocked in-house. Custom cutting dies can be created for you if you don't find the cutting die you want (prices vary). Below is a breakdown of the technical requirements needed to design label artwork that is suitable for printing. If you have any questions about artwork specifications pertinent to your order, please call your dedicated customer service representative 02 9667 3747.

Software Compatibility

Our preferred file format is Adobe Illustrator, however, we can also accept Adobe InDesign files. If you are using any other software for your labels, please consult your customer service or sales representative to verify compatibility.

- Please do not set type or layout your label in Adobe Photoshop or other pixel based programs. Instead, set type and compose your artwork file in Adobe Illustrator. You can use .psd (Photoshop's file format) for the background image. at least 300 DPI (dots per inch) at the intended label size plus .125 (1/16th inch bleed) past the die line.
- If you must use an alternative vector based software application you **MUST** export it as a .pdf file. The file should include a .125 (1/16) artwork bleed past the die line.
- PDF file settings: Embed thumbnail, retain file colours & edit ability, no compression, down sample to 300 DPI, no colour conversion and no passwords.

Artwork Setup

- RGB flat files CANNOT BE USED.
- Always send linked files with your label file. If you have an InDesign file, send all linked files and fonts. Where PostScript fonts have been used, include both printer and screen fonts.
- Please remember to convert ALL text to outlines (make sure that you have carefully proofread your label art before sending it to us!).
- Always provide .125 – 1/16th inch bleed (artwork/colour extending past the dieline that you want to bleed off of the label.)
- PNG and GIF files cannot be used to produce quality labels (this includes low res or web .jpg files).

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3. LABEL ARTWORK SPECIFICATIONS

Artwork Setup

Original Art/Scans/Text: Please include placed graphics and photographs with your art. Scan resolution should be a minimum of 300 dpi at final scale. When supplying paragraphs of text converted to curves or rasterized into a bitmap format (1200dpi), please include original text (.txt) files on your disk, as well as the font files.

Image Area: Maintain 1/16 inch margin in from dieline, unless it is an intentional bleed.

Colour Specifications: Specify required Pantone swatch numbers on spot colour artwork.

Trapping: It's not necessary to add traps to your artwork. Minimum trap and hold back requirements 0.5 pt.

Lines/Rules: Minimum setting .35 pt. When printing negative (reverse) lines/rules .5 pt is the minimum recommended.

Colour Matching: Process colour matches cannot be made to your laser or inkjet print outs. You must provide a sample to match prior to proofing if you are requiring us to match a previously printed label.

4. GETTING THE RIGHT LABEL FOR YOUR CONTAINER

Save Time on Your Quote or Order

We often get questions from our customers about how to label tubes, spray bottles, glass jars, squeezable bottles and more. If you're launching a new product or have multiple products with different containers, there are things you should consider to help you find a label that works with the container. The following information has steps you can follow to better ensure a successful label application.

A common misconception that our customers have is that there is a standard label size for each type of container. Unless your container is very small, you have some flexibility with the size and shape of your label. It's important to note that a special facestock and adhesive may be needed if your container has a tight circumference. Having the right materials will better ensure your label's edges don't lift off the surface after application (also known as flagging).

Acceptable labels for a particular container depend on several variables. Below are some points you should take into account before obtaining a price quote so the rest of your order won't be unnecessarily delayed.

- **Consider the container's shape** – There are certain labels that work better for some containers more than others. Wraparound labels look best on round containers whereas it's easier to label square containers with front, back or side panel labels. Irregular shaped containers can also use pressure sensitive labels if it has a flat surface, or shrink sleeves since they can conform to ridges and curves.
- **Find the container you need** – The easiest way to find a packaging container company is by searching on the Internet. You can also ask your label manufacturer if they recommend or have partnerships with any container or bottle companies. Once you know what the container will be, you will be able to give your customer service representative more specific information so you can get a faster and more accurate quote.
- **Don't forget about the application method** – Labels can be applied either by hand or machine. If you want to machine apply your labels to different container types or sizes, the machine applicator has to be compatible with the containers' specifications.
- **Measure the container/bottle** – Before you contact your label manufacturer, take down the measurements of your container so getting a quote is a smoother process. Having your measurements on hand will help your customer service representative give better suggestions on what labels can work with the container.

Your product's container is an important part of its complete packaging – both from a functional and design standpoint. Save yourself some time by having your container and its measurements readily available before getting a quote so your customer service representative can better help you get the best label application for your container. Keep in mind as you look around for a container that the one you choose can affect your label options and how your brand is perceived.

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5. BEST PRACTICES OF DESIGNING CUSTOM LABELS

Designing A Custom Label on Your Own

Designing custom labels is usually best left up to an experienced label designer due to how much can be involved. Since we regularly print labels for small businesses, startups and nonprofits, we understand how hiring a professional may not be feasible for some customers. Our list of best practices for designing custom labels will help you get started in the right direction. Below are some points of consideration to better ensure your label artwork is suitable for printing.

Before You Start Designing...

Save yourself some time and headaches by using the appropriate software to design your label. Adobe Illustrator is the preferred method for designing custom labels because it can create high quality vector artwork that will ensure good print quality on a variety of printing equipment. Illustrator is better for label design than Microsoft Office and Paint because it can work with layers and vector (wireframe) elements. Artwork that is "layered" means that individual design elements can be changed, moved or edited.

Our Best Practices of Custom Label Design

Here are some of our most popularly given tips compiled by our art and customer service teams:

- Measure your container. It's important that you measure your container before you start working on the design so you can have the right label size. Not working with the label size or shape that's suitable for your container can create challenges later on with the design's layout because it will need to be resized or reformatted to fit your label specs.
- Line up artwork with a guide/ruler. Design software has tools you can use to make sure your artwork is lined up properly. Rulers and guides can create a line graph so you don't have to guess whether the graphics, texts and images are evenly spaced or straight. Find out how to setup a document so you can rest assured that you're starting your design on the right path.
- Design in CMYK colours – not RGB. Label printing uses a four colour process – also known as CMYK (cyan, magenta, yellow and 'key' black) – with the option of printing Pantone spot colours. RGB (red, green and blue) is used for web/video applications because it's the colour scheme associated with electronic screens. Don't create your label in the RGB colour space as the colour will shift when converting it to CMYK; see our article on CMYK, RGB and spot colours for more information.
- Put a .125" (1/16 in. for each side) bleed for all images. A 'bleed' is when the artwork extends beyond the edge of where your label will be cut (aka die cut) so that there's no white spaces around the label's borders. If you need help creating a bleed, please see our Artwork Support section.
- Use high resolution images. Images on the Internet tend to have low resolutions so it's essential that you use find high-res images of at least 300 dpi (dots per inch) so that the print quality of your label will be good. Please note that PNG and GIF files can't be used for high quality printing. Click here to see an example of what we mean by high and low-res images.
- Choose vector graphics over raster. Vector and raster are two types of graphics that are used for different reasons. Vector graphics are preferred for printing text on labels because they can be enlarged or reduced without it losing its quality or becoming pixelated like raster. See what other differences exist between vector and raster graphics so the design process won't be unnecessarily delayed because of poor quality graphics.
- Place logo where it's most prominent. Having a logo that is too small or obscured by other artwork can hinder the label design and make your brand unrecognizable. Good places to put your logo are at the top or center of the label design where customers are most apt to see it.
- Convert text into outlines. Converting your text to outlines will make design software recognize the text as a wireframe object instead of a font. Converting your text will make sure no "missing" font errors or font substitutions occur when our art department opens your files in Adobe Illustrator.
- Follow applicable labeling regulations. Certain products are regulated more than others so it's important to see what labeling regulations

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6. FIVE KEY ELEMENTS TO CREATING A SUCCESSFUL LABELING STRATEGY

Our Best Practices of Custom Label Design

Developing a clear and focused labeling plan is an important component of a branding strategy because labels and packaging are usually the first things consumers notice. Small businesses and startups tend to have fewer resources at their disposal making it harder for their product to compete with better known brands.

A well thought out label development plan can put a business' limited resources to better use and help their label manufacturer have a deeper understanding of what is expected from them. Also, label development can lessen the chances of waste or error occurring during printing.

Your labeling plan is just a small, albeit important, part that should fit within the context of your branding strategy. We've come up with a list of the five best practices we've noted from our customers who have created and managed successful labeling strategies. To better ensure your labeling strategy is effective, you should follow these guidelines:

1. Fail to Plan, Plan to Fail

"What's the message?" should be one of the first questions you ask yourself before you start getting quotes, and definitely before you place an order. Your labels aren't on your product only to look good; they should also be communicating a predetermined message that you want the customer to receive.

After you've developed your message, next you should gather all the technical information that will be on the label. Most products are labeled with basic information such as: product name, logo, ingredients, directions, net weight, barcode, website, customer service line and manufacturer/distributor information. Consider what your customers might like to know and research labeling trends in your industry to determine what technical information should be labeled.

2. Don't Forget About the Container

A big part of your product's presentation is the container. It's hard to separate the container from the rest of your product's design elements because it's all supposed to complement one another. When looking at container options, you should examine and compare characteristics like the container's shape, colour, material and cap – just to name a few. If the container fits your brand and product's identity, then you can probably go ahead to the next stage of your labeling strategy.

3. Keep in Mind the Product's Different Environments

Your labels should be designed so your product can look good in a multitude of places. It's important to take into account whether the design will work with the container in different settings as well as from a design and functional standpoint. Your materials and printing process are two other important factors that affect your label's aesthetic, and should be carefully considered.

4. Get Your Label Professionally Designed

A cost effective way for designing a stellar label design is to hire a graphic designer (if you don't already have one). You can probably find a multitude of local designers in your area that work out of home for a reasonable price. Getting your label professionally designed will boost your product's shelf appeal and help ensure that the design works within your branding strategy. Also, a graphic designer can make it easier to create labels for product families that your company may or will have. Save yourself some headaches, however, by thoroughly researching graphic designers. Before obtaining services, make sure you visit their website/portfolio and check out listed references.

5. Remember, Your Design Has Limits

We suggest to our customers to stay away from overly complex designs because it can look completely different when it's shrunk down to label size. It's important to decide on your label's shape and size before your artist starts designing anything. Size and shape can completely alter a label design if it's not taken into account during the planning phase. Also, resizing artwork can result in additional fees and wasted time.

Now that you've picked out the container and settled on a design, the next step is to obtain price quotes. Depending on who you're getting a quote from, there are several different ways you can go about it. For example, customers obtaining a quote from us have three available ways: online, phone and in person. However, certain products and services can only get a quote by phone or in person because our online

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6. FIVE KEY ELEMENTS TO CREATING A SUCCESSFUL LABELING STRATEGY

Our Best Practices of Custom Label Design

system can't give a quote for certain specialty products and services (e.g. shrink sleeve labels). The best way to ensure your labeling strategy is successful is to keep the lines of communication open with your label manufacturer so there are no surprises when you receive and open your custom labels order.

7. HOW TO SELECT A FINISH FOR YOUR LABELS

Integrity of Labels

Did you know applying a finish to your custom labels can better maintain its quality? In fact, laminates and varnishes can improve the integrity of labels by protecting it from environmental elements like humidity, moisture, heat, etc. You can also create certain looks with finishes to make your labels more appealing. In this article, we're going to break down some of the most popular laminates and varnishes so you can have an easier time picking a finish (or finishes) that preserves your labels and makes them look good.

Overview of Label Finishes

Applying a laminate or varnish to your labels is one of the final steps in converting label materials into finished products. The difference between the two is that laminates are made of film whereas varnishes are liquids. Laminate is generally used for applications where the surface will see more abrasion, chemical/alcohol contents or outdoor exposure.

Not every label needs a finish, however, many do. Labeled products can encounter various issues like constant handling, varying temperatures, friction, etc. You can better protect your labels from factors outside of your control by picking a laminate or varnish that works with your labeled product's environment.

Finishes can offer your custom labels:

- Label artwork protection
- Different looks and label effects
- Withstand outdoor or indoor environments
- Durability for longer lasting labels

The Benefits of Laminates and Varnishes

Consumers nowadays are inundated with product offerings making it harder for companies to distinguish its brand and attract customers. Finishes not only can help product owners protect their branding, it can also help enhance it. Below is a list of popular finishes and a brief description of their applications:

Gloss Finish – Popular in a variety of markets, gloss laminates and UV coatings work great to protect a label's inks from rubbing off or smearing. Gloss is recommended for many indoor applications as outdoor environments can cause fading to the label.

Matte Finish – Available as a laminate or UV coating, matte finishes offer a more subtle effect to your labels with a flat, soft look and feel. Like gloss, matte is recommended for indoor applications and protects a label's ink from coming off.

Outdoor Lamination – Labels that will be mostly outside should have a durable finish like outdoor polyester laminate because it will assure the labels won't crack, yellow or peel for several years.

Spot UV Coating – Sections of your labels can be applied with a spot UV coating to better protect aesthetic effects like accent colours, foils, textures, etc. Spot UV coatings can also be used as an additional inventory control by allowing the customer to add dates and product information coding to label areas where there's no coating.

We typically suggest using a finish because it can help boost the label's overall quality. The important thing to remember when you start considering finishes is the product's contents and environments. Once you have a good idea of what your labels will encounter and how you want them to look, your choice of laminates and/or varnishes should be narrowed down for an easier decision.

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8. WEATHERPROOF LABELS – HOW TO GET STARTED

Common Uses

Weatherproof labels are commonly used on products that face moisture, direct sunlight and other less than ideal conditions for maintaining a label's quality. Popular in many outdoor and indoor applications, custom weatherproof labels can last up to several months and even years depending on how much sunlight exposure the label(s) receives. In this article, we will examine the various applications of weatherproof labels so you can be better able to determine whether this type of label is right for your project.

Weatherproof Label Capabilities

There are a lot of variables that weatherproof labels can face like water, sunlight, chemical and abrasion. If your labels need to be water or chemical resistant, specifically mention to your label manufacturer what your weatherproof label needs to do. Direct sunlight is one of the biggest challenges of making labels that won't fade or deteriorate. Our weatherproof labels are best suited for environments with minimal to no direct sunlight. Below are some examples of markets that use weatherproof labels so you can get a better idea of how versatile these labels can be.

- Warning and safety signage
- Automotive
- Construction
- Pool and spa
- Boating and marine

Technical Aspects of Selecting Materials

One of the biggest challenges of maintaining a weatherproof label's quality is preserving the printed image – especially if it's in constant, direct sunlight. The sun can be a challenge because the label's inks can fade if it's not formulated to handle UV sun rays. Water can also be problematic to the label's printed image if the right substrate (material being printed on) and finish aren't chosen. To help you get a better understanding of what to look for when placing an order, below is a breakdown of the basic elements of weatherproof labels.

- **Adhesive:** Different adhesives are used depending on the label application. Weatherproof labels need a more aggressive adhesive than a standard strength adhesive used for indoor applications.
- **Ink:** Using fade resistant inks instead of regular water base inks will help increase the lifespan of the label because it has higher grade pigments that will fade less in sun exposure. Since fade resistant inks are a special type of ink, ask your label manufacturer if they can procure it for you.
- **Substrate:** Vinyl and polyester are types of film that can withstand freezing to hot temperatures (-50 to 200 degrees) and other elements like sun, chemical and abrasion. Although paper is less expensive, it can absorb water even if a laminate is used because water can seep through the layers of paper and laminate, and ruin the printed image.
- **Finish:** Applying a finish to your weatherproof labels can give it some extra protection when exposed to outside elements. We suggest you use a polyester laminate because it lasts much longer than polypropylene laminate and won't wear off like a varnish.

It's important to note that the temperature you apply weatherproof labels can affect its adhesion. That's why you should apply labels to room temperature containers unless you know for sure the adhesive can be applied at low or high temperatures. After the label is applied, the product can be in outdoor conditions without the adhesive being affected.

Getting Started with Weatherproof Labels

Whether you're sure or undecided about weatherproof labels, below are some key points you can consider to help make the decision a little easier.

- **Look at your budget** – Weatherproof label materials typically costs more than regular materials. You can help offset the cost of materials by increasing the quantity of labels in your order therefore lowering the unit cost per label.
- **Know your environment(s)** – The product's ultimate use and environment should be able to help you determine if weatherproof labels are needed. If there's a good chance the label will be exposed to the sun, water, chemicals or abrasion, then weatherproof labels will be the best choice for your outdoor application.

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8. WEATHERPROOF LABELS – HOW TO GET STARTED

Getting Started with Weatherproof Labels

- Examine the product's contents – Through constant handling and use, it's possible for a product with harsh chemical contents to spill onto the container and damage the label. That's why a polyester label should be used as it can handle various damaging conditions.
- Communicate your labeling needs – One of the best ways you can ensure your labels can handle outside conditions is to communicate all aspects of your labeling needs with your label manufacturer. Give them details about your product, legal requirements, goals, concerns, etc. so your customer service representative can guide you to the right materials.

Picking the right kind of label for outdoor applications can be difficult if you're unfamiliar with the materials and technical processes of label printing. If possible, take the necessary time to examine your labeling needs so your weatherproof labels are more likely to be compatible with your product and its environment. Remember, open communications with your label manufacturer is essential for getting the right kind of weatherproof label.

9. YOUR QUICK GUIDE TO LABEL MATERIALS

There are a lot of material options for custom labels – but which one is right for you? From aesthetic to performance to budget, selecting the right label material for your project is essential for achieving successful labels. Consider this guide your crash course to label materials so you can confidently select one that's optimal for your labeling needs.

White Gloss Paper

Our most popular material, white gloss paper is a lightweight, coated facestock that offers a balance of economy and performance. It has enhanced opacity, brightness, smoothness and gloss that gives labels a professional, finished look.

Indoor White Film

Also known as white polypropylene, indoor white film is a semi-conformable material designed for excellent print quality, high durability and pristine aesthetics. It's recommended for semi-rigid and rigid containers. In terms of longevity, indoor white film is a step up from white semi-gloss paper.

Clear Film

Clear, semi-conformable polypropylene (i.e. clear film) is designed to provide a "no label look" on clear or coloured plastic and glass containers. Clear film is water and tear resistant making it suitable for a variety of markets.

Silver Polyester

Silver polyester is a high quality, hard, rigid film that maintains its dimension (i.e. shape) in varying temperatures. Although not recommended for extreme curved surfaces, this material can be tinted to any colour for added visual interest.

Metalized Paper (Gold/Silver)

This lightweight, coated paper has an acrylic top coating which gives it excellent printability, and can be tinted to a variety of colours. Suitable for all indoor use, metalized paper is engineered for maximum flexibility and strength.

Squeezable White Film

White polyolefin – better known as squeezable white film – is a flexible material with exceptional dimensional stability. That means it's able to maintain its shape while being handled. Squeezable white film is our go-to material when printing labels for squeezable bottles or containers.

Outdoor White Vinyl Film

Suitable for industrial marking and outdoor use, white vinyl film is a high performance material that offers excellent tear strength, dimensional stability, opacity and water/chemical resistance. Outdoor vinyl film is a superb choice if you need extremely durable labels.

Selecting the right label material is an important consideration, not only for how the label will look but how it will perform over a certain period of time. Our dedicated customer service team is a great resource to use since they can discuss with you one-on-one different material options, and give suggestions based on your label needs.

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10. LABELING EQUIPMENT TYPES

Tired of applying custom labels by hand?

Hand applying labels is an easy and affordable way to label small batches of product; however, that method can become inefficient if your production is expanding beyond your labeling capabilities. If you find that hand application is no longer a practical labeling method, then the next step you can take is investing in some labeling equipment. Before you start searching online or calling up suppliers, it's helpful to learn the different types of label application machines to help narrow your search and make an informed buying decision. Below is a quick reference guide to labeling equipment you can use while shopping around.

NOTE: We do not sell label equipment. Below is a reference guide to assist you with buying a label equipment that best suits your business

Types of Standard Equipment

As you start researching, you will find that many brands have different categories and subcategories of label application machines due to price, container abilities, speeds, configurations and much more. Your desired labeling speed and what you are labeling will dictate which type of labeling equipment you should get. Some suppliers can even customize a machine to your specifications depending on your labeling needs. Below are some basic descriptions of the most common types of labeling equipment ranging from low to high volume labeling.

Hand held label applicator

Portable and easy to use, most hand held label applicators (also called dispensers) can accommodate several size configurations to address varying label shapes and widths. Square products and boxes are the easiest to label when using a hand held applicator. The cost for a hand held applicator typically start in the low to mid hundred dollar range depending on its range of label shapes and sizes it can dispense.

Manual label applicator

A hand operated label applicator is a cost-effective solution for somebody looking to move beyond hand application but doesn't want to spend thousands of dollars on labeling equipment. The manual dispenser to the left can apply up to 1000 labels an hour on round bottles from 1.5" to 5" in diameter. Low set up time and minimal training are just a couple of the benefits of hand operated labeling machines.

Semi-automatic label applicator

Activated by a foot or hand switch, semi-automatic labeling machines are considered the next step up from hand operated. Semi-automatic machines are compact and range in capabilities from different container types to front and back labeling. Investing in a semi-automatic labeling machine can pay for itself as it speeds up labeling capabilities to match production output.

In-line automatic labeling

Rapid expansion may require your operations to skip hand operated and semi-automatic machines for equipment that can do high volume output. In-line automatic machines are more of an investment; however, it has better packaging consistency and production times. Labeling large amounts with in-line automatic equipment also produces at a lower labor cost per unit than semi-automatic.

Rotary labeling

Best for high speed labeling or 24/7 production, rotary labeling machines (also called rotary labeling systems) are the priciest and biggest yet offer superb label control at high velocities. Rotary machines are also highly customizable to fit inside an operational plant. They can also run at fast speeds of over 500 units a minute.

Labeling equipment typically runs at 100 units per minute, however, businesses with smaller labeling quantities would probably find it more cost effective to outsource or hand apply. Some bottle manufacturers can label for an up charge if buying labeling equipment isn't yet feasible. In contrast, production lines would be significantly more efficient having some type of labeling equipment if thousands of units run each day.

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11. SHRINK SLEEVE LABELS GUIDE

Section 1: What are shrink sleeves?

With more choices available on store shelves, businesses need a way to differentiate their product from competitors, and one way they're doing that is through shrink sleeve labels. Shrink sleeve labels are a relatively new type of label that has been making a name for itself in the label industry for several reasons:

- Its full body design allows for more creativity with graphics, colour and impact.
- The sleeve film is durable, abrasion resistant and waterproof.
- Labels can be removed from bottles and containers allowing the bottle/container to be reused.

Although shrink sleeves tend to cost more than other types of labels, they can in some cases increase market share and improve the product's shelf appeal. Shrink sleeves can also decrease container expenses because a generic, cost-effective container can be used since the product is completely covered with the sleeve. These labels are used in a wide variety of industries and will continue to grow in popularity as companies see the benefits of shrink sleeve labels.

Section 2: Why should you pick shrink sleeves?

The Benefits

With its full body design and high quality graphics, shrink sleeves are a great way to attract new and potential customers. With high consumer demand, studies have shown shrink sleeves to boost sales by as much as 20 percent. Below are some key benefits and uses of shrink sleeves.

- Applicable on plastic, glass and metal packaging containers.
- Shrink material is damage resistant.
- Seamlessly fits onto many uniquely shaped bottles and containers while accenting the shape.
- Can incorporate a tamper evident protection seal to ensure a product's safety.
- Its 360 degree design can fit contoured areas allowing for more display area for the label design.
- The design is printed on the inside of the shrink material so the artwork doesn't easily bleed, fade or smudge.
- Various marketing and promotional opportunities: multi-packs, cross-merchandising, promotional band, on-pack sample promotions.

Industries Using Shrink Sleeves

Almost every product industry can use shrink sleeves, however, we have found that certain industries benefit the most from shrink sleeves.

Food & Beverage – Shrink sleeves work well with food and beverage products (especially juices, energy drinks, alcoholic beverages) because the tamper evident protection seal keeps food and beverage products from being opened intentionally or unintentionally. The aesthetic design also can tempt consumers' taste buds with vibrant colours and graphics.

Pharmaceutical– Product safety is an important factor when making custom labels for the pharmaceutical industries. Shrink sleeves' tamper evident protection seal, damage resistant material and structural design decreases the chances of a product being accidentally or purposefully opened. Complying with government regulations is easier with shrink sleeves because the graphics and text can be easily changed out while allowing the containers to be reused for the new shrink sleeve.

Household Cleaning Products –Detergents, soaps and cleaning agents can benefit from shrink sleeve labels because its material can withstand moisture, friction and varying temperatures. In most cases, household cleaning products using shrink sleeves will look as new as the day they were bought regardless of how many times the product has or will be used.

Section 3: Shrink Sleeve Label Printing and Application

There are different ways to apply a shrink sleeve onto a product, most notably by machine or hand. Shrink sleeves applied by hand are done using a shrinking-specific hot air gun or heat tunnel. We can manufacture single cut sleeves or provide sleeves on rolls for machine application. Mechanical application is generally preferred over hand application because it's less labor intensive and quicker. Mechanical

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11. SHRINK SLEEVE LABELS GUIDE

Section 3: Shrink Sleeve Label Printing and Application

shrinking equipment like radiant heat tunnels, hot air tunnels, steam tunnels and hybrid tunnels (combines heat and steam) are some of the most popular methods for shrinking sleeves onto containers.

We use a steam tunnel for internal quality checks and prototyping. We recommend that customers use a steam tunnel for their shrink sleeve applications because it uses less energy to run than other types of tunnels, produces better results and is easier to configure. Steam tunnels are becoming the label industry's standard method of shrinking sleeves onto filled product containers because its relatively low temperatures (usually between 170-180 degrees) make it safe for filled products to pass through. There are copackers who will apply your sleeves if you don't want to purchase the equipment when starting up.

Steps of Shrink Sleeve Label Printing

1. The label design is mirrored and printed on the inside of the shrink sleeve material using a flexographic printing press.
2. The printed material is checked for quality control by machine and human inspection.
3. The printed material is seamed together by machine using a small amount of a heated adhesive to create the sleeves for application.
4. The roll of sleeves goes through an air inspection machine to ensure the integrity of the seam.
5. The sleeves are wound up on a roll or cut into individual sleeves depending on the order.

12. UNWIND DIRECTION

The unwind directions below show how the label design will be positioned when it comes off a roll label.

13. LOW RES VS. HIGH RES IMAGES

The Difference Between Low and High Res Images

Photographs and graphics can really make your label artwork stand out. In order to make sure your images are printed at the best quality, there are a few things you should know about resolution.

Image resolution refers to how many 'pixels' that make up an image will fit inside each inch of the printed photo area. More pixels per inch makes the image appear smaller on paper, while fewer pixels makes the image appear larger on paper. However more pixels per inch means more detail is present in your image. Image resolution is really only important when it comes to printing. In fact, most images you find on the internet are only 72 dpi (dots per inch), which is enough detail to render a decent image on screen, but not nearly enough detail to print a quality image at full size. If you try to print a 72 dpi image at a larger size, the resulting printed image will be blurry and most likely unusable.

If your images are from a website, more than likely, the resolution will be 72 dpi and without enough detail to print as mentioned above.

14. HOW TO TURN FONTS TO OUTLINES

Convert Text to Outlines Before Submitting Artwork

Converting text to outlines before sending your artwork to us better ensures that your labels turn out how you expect. While we do keep an extensive library of fonts on hand, it'd be impossible for us to have them all. If you design your label with a font we don't have, and send your label artwork to us without having converted the fonts to outlines, the missing font will automatically be substituted by Illustrator. This means your finished label artwork will look different than you originally designed it.

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14. HOW TO TURN FONTS TO OUTLINES

Convert Text to Outlines Before Submitting Artwork

Fortunately, converting text to outlines is a very simple process. Before you follow the steps below, you'll want to make sure you save a separate copy of your file as a working backup. Also, make sure you spell check your text first!

Click-through Instructions: Edit > Check Spelling

Select "Check Spelling" in the "Edit" drop down menu before converting text to outlines.

If you're a graphic designer designing a label for a client, it may be helpful to have your customer approve the text and layout before you convert to outlines. This will save time if you need to edit the text. Converting font to outlines will permanently change the text to shape objects, rendering your text un-editable. Please follow the instructions below to convert fonts to outlines.

Click-through Instructions:

Select > All

Type > Create Outlines

1. Click "All" in "Select" drop down menu before converting.
2. Select "Create Outlines" in "Type" drop down menu and you're done!