

GSM vs LBS Paper Weight

It can be confusing sometimes discussing paper choices with some printers, especially if they are not located in the United States. The reason for this is the standard measurement used in Asia and Europe is GSM (Grams per Square Meter) whereas the United States uses pounds (lbs or #).

In order to understand what each side is talking about, a little background information can be helpful. GSM refers to how many grams the paper weighs if you had one sheet cut to a 1 meter x 1 meter piece.

Pounds refers to how many pounds 500 sheets of paper weighs at a certain cut size. This is called the Basis Weight. The thing to remember is different types of paper have different cut sizes. The following list shows some of the paper sizes:

Paper Type

Dimensions of 500 Sheets

Bond Paper 17" x 22"

(Typical Office Paper)

Offset 25" x 38"

(Book, Text, Coated Paper)

Cover 20" x 26"

Text stock: # of lbs x 1.5 = gsm

Cover stock: # of lbs x 2.70 = gsm

For Example:

80# Text = 120 gsm

80# Cover = 216 gsm

This formula is meant for basic conversions.

NOTE: Availability of various gsm and lb paper stocks vary by country, therefore the closest equivalent is often substituted. Check with your printer on paper stock availability.

Book 25 x 38	GSM
30	33
40	59
45	67
50	74
60	89
70	104
80	118
90	133
100	148
120	178
