

after hours creative

print + foil registration

Because digital printing and foil blocking are different print processes, there is often movement between them, making tight registration problematic. Furthermore, this process becomes more complicated when stocks are duplexed (adhered back to back), which creates another opportunity for movement. We strongly recommend keeping the printed part of your design and the foil blocked part of your design separate, to avoid any potential registration issues. As a general rule of thumb, consider whether the different elements in your design can tolerate 1-2mm movement in any direction, without it affecting the finish. For example, if you have a company name and want one of the letters in foil, be aware that the foil blocked letter is unlikely to sit perfectly on the same line as the printed letters. The foil blocked letter may move up, down, left or right to some degree. Some customers are happy to accept this, but we like to make suggestions in order to achieve the best possible result.



In the above illustration, the M (highlighted in pink) is to be foil blocked in gold foil. This isn't recommended as the M could move in any direction, which would be instantly noticeable on the final card. We can process orders like this, but like to make it clear it's not recommended. We will always do our best to ensure registration is as accurate as possible, but there are limitations.



This example is ideal for print + foil. The logo (highlighted in pink) is to be foil blocked. This will tolerate some movement in any direction without detection.

overlapping print with foil

In the illustration to the right, the customer wanted the pink area to be foil blocked. To allow for movement, we increased the stroke thickness of the border, and then adjusted the purple printed artwork, so that it finished in the middle of the pink border. By doing this, we allow for a small amount of movement in any direction without it being noticed on the final card. The second image shows the pink with reduced opacity to show where the purple artwork element ends within the stroke outline.



setting up artwork & the correct resolution

Vector files created in Adobe Illustrator are always preferred, as they produce the highest quality finish when it comes to foil blocking. If you are unable to supply vector files, we can work with JPEG, TIFF and PSD files, however the resolution must be 1200dpi and the artwork sharp at this resolution (no blurry edges). Blurry edges and low resolution files will result in difficulty manufacturing foil blocking dies and can lead to jagged edges (especially on small text).

If you are unsure about your artwork files please email them to artwork@afterhourscreativestudio.com and we will be able to advise you.

foil colours

We stock the following metallic and satin foil colours at all times. Any choice of these colours is included in the prices shown on our website (gloss black and gloss white are also stocked for foil blocking on coloured boards like, Vanguard and Colorplan). Additional foil colours and special effect foils are available upon request, and range in price from an additional £45-£125 per roll. Price is contingent upon the chosen colour/finish and/or effect.



the hot foil blocking process...

Hot foil stamping/blocking is a technique used to apply metallic and special effect foils to print literature, using a combination of heat, pressure and a metal die (also called a stamp, block or plate). Foiling produces effects which are impossible to achieve using traditional ink printing. Therefore, adding foil to marketing literature not only visually elevates your printed media, but also ensures a luxury, high-end impression. We stock 13 different metallic and satin foils, and also have special effect foils such as, holographic silver (also called rainbow silver) which changes colour as it diffracts light across the colour spectrum. Patterned, brushed and custom foils are also available. If you would like a colour or foil finish that we don't stock, please call us on 01288 382923 or email support@afterhourscreativestudio.com to request foil(s) colours swatches.



card colours and white ink printing

Aside from printing white card stock in full colour, we also stock a large range of coloured uncoated papers and boards including Colorplan and Vanguard. Each range has vibrant, dyed card colours that are perfectly suited to most of the print processes we use. We also have a digital 5 colour press which has opaque white ink as the fifth colour. This allows us to print on any coloured board (smoother stocks such as Vanguard produce the best finish) by laying white ink down underneath the CMYK inks. We can also print standard white opaque ink on coloured stocks with excellent registration.



We can supply swatches of most card colours from the Colorplan and Vanguard ranges. We can also source other brands of paper/ card on request. Please email support@afterhourscreativestudio.com or call us on UK: +44 (0)1288 382923.

helpful foil blocking tips

Below, are some helpful tips to guide you with achieving the best results from the foil blocking process. If you have any queries regarding your artwork and foil blocking, call the studio on 01288 382 923 or email artwork@afterhourscreativestudio.com and we will gladly help you!



Tips to avoid foil 'filling in'

'Filling in' involves the foil bridging gaps when text or artwork elements are too close.

- 1)** Keep your font size at a minimum of 8pt (the larger the better though!). In (figure_01), the text has filled in between the smaller lettering making it difficult to read.
- 2)** Adjust your kerning! Ensure adequate space between letters, especially when fonts are small.
- 3)** Avoid solid areas of foil/large solid type and small type. In (figure_01), the large FM and circle required a good amount of pressure during the foil blocking process which caused the smaller text 'Fuller Marketing' to fill in more. When this arises, we may advise running the job with 2 foil blocking dies, this way, less pressure can be used during the pass for the smaller text and more pressure on the pass for the FM and circle outline. Keep in mind, that this approach will increase the cost of your job.



Foil 'knock out'

A popular way to utilise foil is to have a solid foil area with the text or an artwork element 'knocked out.' This is a great way to make use of a single foil colour, but it's important to keep the area that will be 'knocked out' fairly large. Small text and fine lines won't work, as they will simply 'fill in' as explained above.



Special effect foils..

We have a range of special effect foils which we don't promote on our website. These include; brushed foils, patterned foils, patterned holographic foils and colours such as holographic gold and holographic pink. For swatches of these foils, please call us on 01288 382 923 or email us at support@afterhourscreativestudio.com



Borders..

Borders are generally not recommended. We like to keep the quality of our products as high as possible and it's nearly impossible to keep borders all perfectly level, which is why we don't recommend them. With that being said, we still process a large number of orders with borders so if you decide you absolutely must keep your borders, then here are a couple of general guidelines to follow:

- 1)** Ensure borders are 5mm in from the edges of the card. This will help us minimise any discrepancies during guillotining. Having border 1-2mm from the edges makes it much more obvious if they are slightly uneven.
- 2)** If your border is being foil blocked ensure the border stroke is at least 1pt, and be aware that due to the nature of foil blocking your border may appear slightly thicker and/or thinner in some parts.

debossing vs embossing

Make sure you are ordering exactly what you want by understanding the difference between embossing and debossing. Often people ask us to quote for foil embossing when they actually just wanted standard foil blocking.



Foil debossing and blind debossing

Foil debossing (also known as letterpress foil) involves using a combination of heat and pressure to press the design into the surface of the card stock using a foil colour so that it is lower than the surface of the card.

Blind debossing involves creating an impression the card stock without a foil colour, hence the term 'blind'. It can be used to add a pattern to the card, or it can be used for text or any other artwork element. Blind debossing is perfectly suited to cotton and wild card stock due to the nature of the stocks. Blind debossing can be combined with hot foil blocking for a truly magnificent business card!

In the image on the left, POM & GRANAT has been debossed with a metallic rose gold foil while the pattern around it has been blind debossed. By using cotton card stock we were able to achieve a nice deep deboss.



Embossing

Embossing is the opposite of debossing and involves having your design raised on the front of the card rather than pressed in. Embossing requires the use of a counterforce to press the design through from the back of the card and is more expensive than debossing. Because the design is pressed through from the back most people like to keep artwork on the back away from the embossed area.



'Fake' embossing using blind debossing

The Maison du Luxe business card shown to the left has a raised perfume bottle outline and a raised border. Traditional embossing would involve pressing the bottle and border outline through the back of the card to raise it on the front. Our customer didn't want it pressed through the back, so to avoid doing that, we blind debossed the entire front of the business card with the bottle and border 'knocked out.' This meant the entire card was debossed leaving the bottle and border appearing embossed. We call this a fake emboss. Due to the pressure involved to achieve this, we are only able to offer this effect on cotton or Wild card stocks.

edge gilding

Edge gilding is the addition of metallic, satin or pigment foil to the side edge of a piece of paper or card. The thicker the stock, the more the gilt edge is noticeable when the sheets are separated. We are able to gild business cards in any of the metallic or satin foil colours we offer for foil blocking, including holographic silver. We also sometimes use matt or gloss pigment foils as an alternative to edge painting. The image on the right shows metallic gold edge gilding on 1050gsm business cards.

Prices for gilding start from £85 / \$145 and will vary depending on how many cards you'd like gilded and the thickness of the stock.



the gilding process...



cards are clamped and carefully sanded until the entire stack is completely smooth...



dust is brushed away and two coats of adhesive are applied and left to dry...



foil is carefully applied using a specialist heated roller and manual pressure...

printing options

We're able to offer a combination of hot foil blocking, debossing, embossing, foil embossing, digital printing with a 5 colour press (white + CMYK), white opaque digital printing, duplexing, triplexing, litho printing, die cutting, and edge gilding. However, not every print option is available on each stock, each have their limitations. For example, we're not able to digitally print on 450gsm wild card stock due to it's bulky nature. As an alternative we can digitally print on 300gsm cotton stock and then duplex it with another layer of 300gsm cotton or we can print on 150gsm Wild and duplex it with a sheet of 300gsm Wild. Solid ink coverage is also not recommend on cotton or colorplan stocks as it ruins the tactile finish and the ink can crack along the edges during guillotining. We can also produce more bespoke business cards such as a laminated card duplexed with an uncoated card such as colorplan, or triplex cards with coloured centre layers, the options available are pretty much limitless and we're confident we will have a solution for your needs! Talk to us about your requirements and our experts can advise on what stocks and finishes will be best for your project.

call the studio in the UK on: **01288 382 923** for more information

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online ordering is available at

www.afterhourscreativestudio.com