

# Paper and its Uses



Little can happen in modern life without paper or board.

We depend on it every day, even if we don't always realise. After all, try going to the toilet with no tissue!

Paper can be permanent or transient; delicate or strong; cheap or expensive; in abundance or scarce. It can decompose in water, yet maps are designed to withstand the weather. Even boat hulls have been made from it.

It may be coloured, coated, printed or even written on. It can be laminated with fabric, plastic and metal. It can be opaque, translucent or transparent. It is naturally combustible, or can be made fire-retardant.

The range of possible uses of paper seems almost limitless. New ways of using it are being devised daily. This evolution will continue because paper is an expression of everyday living.

**Agriculture** – Sacks, seed packets, animal bedding, and biodegradable plant pots.

**Building** – Wallpaper, damp-proof courses, roofing, flooring, flame resistant papers, plasterboard, and decorative laminates for furniture.

**Business** – Print out sheets, receipts, catalogues, filing systems, sales and service manuals, brochures, letter heading, packaging inserts, and smart paper labels.

**Cars** – Fascia boards, door and roof liners, filters, the Highway Code, and driving licences.

**Communications** – Writing pads, envelopes, newspapers, magazines, greeting cards, calendars, diaries, labels, business and identity cards.

**Domestic Products** – Tissues, paper plates and cups, toilet paper, kitchen towels, and lampshades.

**Education** – Books, exercise books, wall charts, and reports.

**Electrical** – Special insulating boards, electrolytic condenser paper, wrapping and identification for electrical cables, printed circuits, and battery separators.

**Entertainment** – Menus, paper hats, crackers, fireworks, wrapping paper, programmes, playing cards, board games, and kites.

**Filtration** – Filters for water, air, coffee, medicine, beer, oil, and mechanical uses.

**Impregnated Papers** – Polishing, waxing, cleaning, and protective coatings.

**Industry** – Protection for manufactured goods, in transport, transfer sheets for decorating chinaware, display boards, point of sale materials and in storage.

**Medical** – Wrapping to keep instruments and equipment sterile, bandages, first aid bands, clothing for nurses, face masks, surgeons' caps, disposable bed pans, sheets, and pillowcases.

**Money, Finance, Security** – Bank notes, insurance forms, passports, travellers' cheques, postal orders, stamps, cash bags, security papers that contain markings only visible in ultra-violet light, and anti-counterfeit papers.



Revised: March 2026