Blind Embossing

Definition

Blind embossing and debossing leave an impression in the paper, using pressure instead of ink. Visual and tactile contrasts create text, images or patterns, playing with light and shadows on the surface of the paper. Whether going for a bold or subtle design, both the design and paper choice should be considered carefully: in particular, bolder type and large designs can be embossed more deeply, and heavier papers can achieve greater depth and detail.

Dos

- Do choose your paper quality and weight carefully to get the desired effect. Strong boards such as Keaykolour, and papers with long fibres such as Conqueror Connoisseur 100% Cotton are recommended for greater dimensional depth. However fine papers from 90g can also be embossed and debossed for more subtle designs.
- Do ensure sharp corners or points (like the top of a capital “A”) are rounded off as they are areas of weakness and can cause creasing. Do use fonts above 8 point and lines thicker than 2 points. Spacing should also be increased to take into account added dimension.
- Do choose a slightly textured paper such as Rives Tradition if you wish to create a contrast with the flat areas of the embossing. Do keep in mind though that a ghost pattern of the original texture could compete with the embossing if the texture is too strong.
- Do duplex the back of your embossing if you wish to have a flat surface on the back of your printed material.

Don’t

- Don’t neglect the quality of the die, it will have an impact on the quality of the embossing. Brass dies are better than zinc for detailed pieces and longer runs, but more costly.
- Don’t underestimate the choice of paper colour: dark papers will absorb light more, resulting in a planar visual effect.
- Don’t forget embossed letterheads are meant to go through a laser printer. Use a shallow emboss design and limit the area to the header of the sheet, or it could cause feeding problems in office equipment.
- Don’t emboss Curious Collection Translucents if the paper or environment is dry, because it could tear.
- Don’t emboss papers below 120g for Curious Collection Translucents. Embossing Curious Collection Translucents Clear will cause the image edges to go white.
- Don’t emboss coated or varnished papers, as these are likely to crack during the process.