

Calculating Spine Width

$$\frac{\text{Number of pages} \times \text{Weight of paper in gsm} \times .6}{1,000} = \text{Width of spine in mm}$$

There are times when you will need to know the thickness of the bookblock during the design process. A tight-back perfect bound publication; for instance, has the cover attached at the same time the bookblock is glued so the spine width needs to be calculated beforehand to setup the cover design for printing.

The above equation is used to determine the thickness of the bookblock from which the spine width can be calculated. The equation will give an accurate result for perfect bound books unless you are using a particularly bulky paper.

The Spine-width will depend on the the type of cover and binding.

Add 1mm to the calculated thickness for perfect binding to allow for the thickness of the cover stock.

For a square back case binding the spine width is roughly the thickness of the bookblock + 2x thickness of greyboard.

Tips

- For particularly heavy or thick paper contact the paper supplier to find out the paper's bulk and replace 0.6 in the equation with this number to provide a more accurate calculation.
- When working with multiple paper stocks, calculate the width for each weight paper and its number of pages individually and add them together.
- With sewn sections the thread will produce extra swell adding thickness to the bookblock so it is best to take the measurements from the sewn bookblock.