

Reducing Unnecessary Use of Paper - Tip Sheet (Paper Workgroup Suggestion #14)

Use Used Paper

Draft reports and memos can be printed on the back of paper that has been used once. Set aside such paper for printers and copy machines.

Make scratch pads from used paper (e.g., for taking notes at meetings).

Use outdated letterhead for in-house memos.

Only use “new” paper for important documentation (e.g. documents for external consumption).

Print and Copy Double-Sided

Use printer with duplex capability. Print double-sided.

Make double-sided photocopies.

Print Less Hard Copies

E-mail should not be printed unless absolutely necessary, and if so, they should be printed on re-used paper (Paper Workgroup suggestion #10).

Print only the number of copies necessary. Limit the distribution of correspondence and reports only to those who really need “hard copies.”

When immediate distribution is not a priority, circulate one hard copy of memos, documents, periodicals, and reports to several readers. Use a routing slip to ensure it gets to everyone

Post company bulletins on a central bulletin board or distribute bulletins by voice mail.

Avoid unnecessarily printing your documents: save more documents on hard drives, CD-Rom, Zip disks, etc. instead of making paper copies for reference or storage.

Use centrally-located files available to multiple staff to reduce the number of hard copies retained.

Eliminate unnecessary reports.

Be careful not to print e-mail or documents and then forget you printed them. By forgetting, you might then print them out again or just leave them to waste. Write a note to yourself when you print.

Avoid printing out web pages unless absolutely necessary.

Consider including a sentence or two in your e-mail that indicates: a) where a hard copy of any referenced materials might be found electronically; and/or b) “Please do not print this e-mail.”

Use Electronic Copies of Documents As Often As Possible

Wherever possible, reports (i.e., bank card tallies, financial forms, time sheets) should be converted to electronic format (Paper Workgroup Suggestion #11).

All draft reports are to be sent electronically for review. If not, only one hard copy needs to be printed with a routing slip attached (Paper Workgroup Suggestion #12).

If you need to access documents off-line, save the information to a disk instead of printing a copy.

Avoid printing draft copies of materials—edit them on-line instead.

Ask others to provide materials to you in electronic form.

If someone sends a draft document for you to comment on/edit, use the Review Document option (in WordPerfect - choose File - Document - Review) or track changes option (in Microsoft Word) rather than printing out the document and writing on it. You can then e-mail this back to them and it has the added advantage that they will not need to re-type your suggestions. Not only will this save paper; it will also save you time, because the changes only have to be made once rather than twice (i.e., first on paper, then in the computer file).

Use the “Print Preview” Function and Other Word Processing Tools (e.g., Spell Check) to Reduce Paper Use

Proof documents on the computer before printing by using spell check and print preview functions.

The print preview function can be used to:

- determine whether information on the last page (e.g., when printing web pages or e-mail) is unnecessary to print.
- proof documents for formatting problems.
- lay out your publication with the minimum necessary white space.

Print as few pages as possible by making formatting adjustments such as:

- reducing margins.
- printing two (or more) pages on one page.
- using single-spacing or no more than 1.5 spacing.
- reducing your standard font size from 12 to 11 or 10. Use a smaller typeset for reports and memos.

Get Rid of Junk Mail

Reduce the amount of advertising mail you receive by writing to the Direct Marketing Association Mail Preference Service, P.O. Box 9008, Farmingdale, NY 11735-9008, and ask that your name and address be eliminated from mail lists. Sign and date your letter.

Reduce Use of Paper Office Supplies

Use white boards with erasable markers instead of paper flip charts.

Reuse envelopes or use two-way (“send-’n-return”) envelopes.

Use fax tags (small, horizontal stickies) instead of faxing cover pages - it saves paper at both ends

Other Good Ideas for Preventing Unnecessary Paper Use

Keep mailing lists current to avoid duplication.

Donate old magazines and journals to hospitals, clinics, or libraries.