

SUTTLE STRAUS

HOW-TO

FOLDED SELF MAILER (FSM) STANDARDS

Definition

A folded self-mailer (FSM) is an advertisement, booklet, or the like, that has space for a name, address, and postage and can be mailed without a wrapper or envelope. The number of sheets in the mailpiece and the number of the times the sheets are folded determine the number of panels. Sheets that are bound by one or more staples are not considered folded self-mailers even when all other preparation recommendations are met.

Physical characteristics

Height: minimum of 3.5 inches, maximum of 6 inches

Length: minimum of 5 inches, maximum of 10.5 inches

Thickness: minimum of 0.007 inch; (0.009 inch if the height exceeds 4.25 inches or if the length exceeds 6 inches); the maximum thickness is 1/4 inch

Maximum weight: 3 ounces

Shape: Rectangular, with four square corners and parallel opposite sides

Maximum number of panels = 12 for most designs

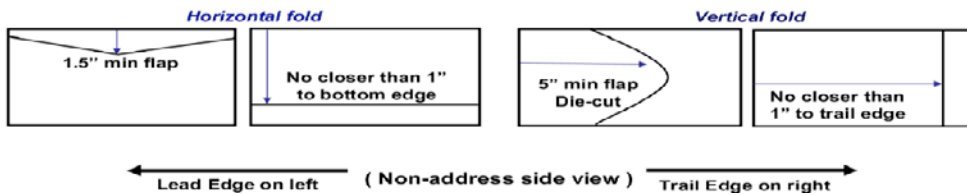
Paper cover basis weight: Book grade (Text, Offset). 70lb min for 1oz mailpiece, 80lb min over 1oz and up to 3oz

Common fold methods

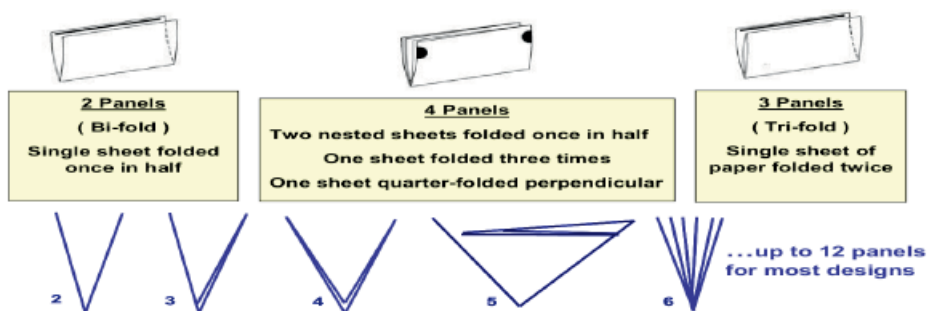
- **Bi-fold:** single sheet folded once in half forming two panels
- **Tri-fold:** single sheet folded twice forming three panels
- **Quarter-fold:** single sheet folded at least two times with the second fold at a right angle (perpendicular) to the preceding fold. (One sheet of paper quarter-folded produces four panels)
- **Oblong:** mailpiece with fold(s) vertical to length of letter. Final fold must be on lead edge
 - When a folded self-mailer is made of multiple sheets, multiply the number of sheets by the number of panels created when folding a single sheet to determine the number of panels in the finished multi-sheet folded self-mailer. (e.g. (3) sheets of paper folded once in half (2 panels) = (6) total panels. Both sides of a panel count as “one and the same” panel)

Flaps & panels

- External panels created by folding must be equal or nearly equal in size
- The final folded panel creates the back (non-address) side of the mailpiece
- The open edge of the back panel must be at the top or within 1" of the top or trailing edge of the mailpiece
- The final folded edge must be the bottom of a folded self-mailer unless prepared as an oblong
- The final folded edge of an oblong folded self-mailer must be the leading (right) edge
- Internal shorter panels must be covered by a full-size panel, and count toward the maximum number of panels
- Flaps are formed when the final exterior panel is folded over and affixed to the unaddressed side of the mailpiece
- The folded edge of a flap must be flush with the top edge of the mailpiece and end 1" or more above the bottom edge
- Flaps on oblong pieces must be at least 5" long at the longest point when measured from the leading edge and must end more than one inch from the trailing edge



- Each folded section of a sheet is a separate panel
- Both sides of panel count as one and the same panel
- Equal -nearly equal size; varied fold styles with panels of differing sizes, short panels covered by full-size panel(s)
- Internal partial panels count toward # panels allowed
- Final fold panel creates non-address side of mailpiece by folding from bottom to top, or lead to trail edge

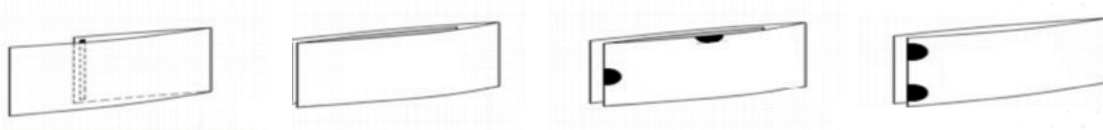


Sealing methods

Folded self-mailers must be sealed using tabs or glue under the following conditions.

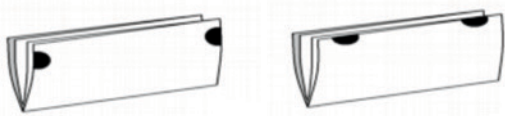
To seal oblong pieces that weigh up to 3 ounces:

- Place one tab in the center of the top edge and one tab in the center of the trailing edge (preferred)
- Or place both tabs on the trailing edge within 1" of the top and bottom edges
- Tabs may not be placed on the bottom of an oblong piece



To seal quarter-fold pieces that weigh up to 1 ounce or less:

- Place two non-perforated tabs on the top edge, one within 1" from the leading and another within 1" from the trailing edge
- Or place one tab on the leading and another on the trailing edge, both placed within 1" from the top of piece
- Final folds must be on the lead and bottom edge of piece



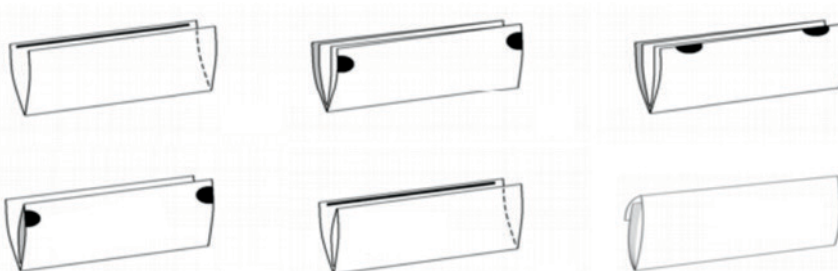
To seal quarter-fold pieces that weigh more than 1 ounce and up to 3 ounces:

- Place two tabs, one on the leading edge and one on the trailing edge within 1" from the top, and affix a third tab on the lower leading edge 1/2" from the bottom
- Final folds must be on the lead and bottom edge of piece



To seal bi-fold & tri-fold pieces that weigh up to 3 ounces:

- Place two non-perforated tabs on the top edge, one within 1" from the leading and another within 1" from the trailing edge
- Or place one tab on the leading and another on the trailing edge, both placed within 1" from the top of piece
- Final fold must be on bottom of mail piece



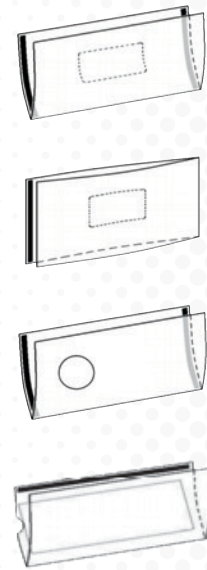
Die cuts

Folded self-mailers may be produced with two types of die-cut elements in the exterior panels:

- Address windows (max. window size is 4" long x 2" high)
- When an address window appears on a mailpiece, no other die-cut openings may be made on the exterior panels.
- Die-cut reveal (limited to two on only one external panel) (Die-cut openings may not be used to create die-cut punched holes - openings in the same location on all layers and panels so that there is a hole through the entire mailpiece)

Prepare die-cut elements as follows:

- Up to two die-cutout holes allowed (no through holes)
- Size: Circular or Oval - 2" max (up to ¼" radius corners); Rectangular - 1.5" x 2" max
- Placement: 1.5" from all edges; 5" from lead edge on non-address side
- Thumb notch (½" max semi-circular die-cut): At trail edge of address or non-address panel



Pop-out panes

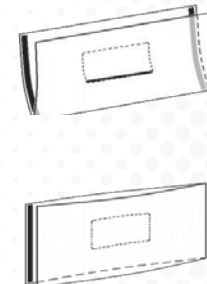
Folded self-mailers may be prepared with strips called panes that are pulled open to reveal the contents. These design elements must be placed only on the unaddressed side of the mailpiece and may be rectangular, circular, or oval shaped. Perforated panes may not be prepared on pieces with die-cuts or on any mailpiece made of newsprint.

Pop-open pane - three sides perforated

- The outer edges of the pop-open panel are a maximum of 4" long by 4" high or 4" in diameter
- If prepared with multiple panes, they must be spaced at least 1" apart
- Panes must be placed at least 1" from all edges

Pop-out pane - full perimeter perforation

- Pop-out panes with perforations around the outer edges have a maximum size of 4" long by 4" high or 4" in diameter
- Place panes at least 1" from any edge of the mailpiece
- When using two panes, space them at least 1" apart
- Address elements may not appear in perforated openings

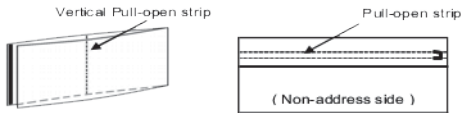


Perforated pull-open strips and tear-off strips

Perforated pull open strip - a row of small holes punched in a sheet of paper so that a section can be torn easily, are used to create pull-open strips:

Pull-open vertical or horizontal strip – must be placed on non-address side of mailer

- Two parallel perforated lines must be spaced at least ½” apart creating a pull open strip
- Position perforated strips parallel to the height of the mailpiece at least 5” from the leading edge and 2” from the trailing edge
- Position perforated strips parallel to the length of the mailpiece at least 1” from the top



Tear-off strip at lead and/or trail edge

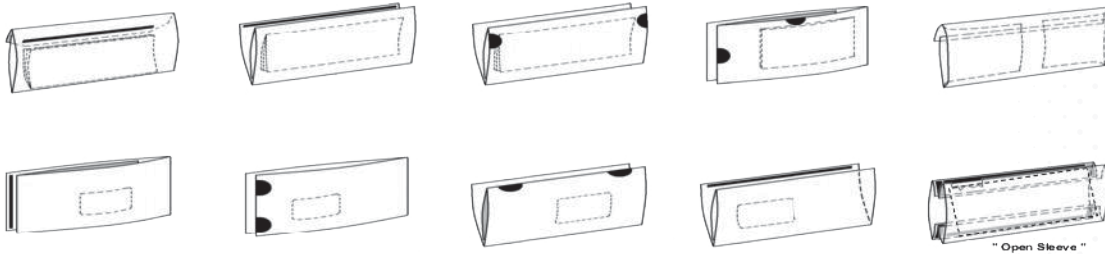
- Perforations are vertical lines no more than 9/16” from lead and/or trail edge
- Complete seal along all unfolded edges is required
- May have a perforated horizontal line joining the lead/trail edge perforation



Interior attachments

Interior attachments must be secured within a folded self-mailer under the following conditions:

- The attached material may not exceed a maximum thickness of 0.05" thick for mailpieces weighing up to 1oz., 0.09" thick for mailpieces weighing over 1oz. and up to 3oz.
- The attachment must be affixed to an inside panel and secured to it at least ½" from any edge
- If multiple attachments are used, they must be positioned so that the host mailpiece remains nearly uniform in thickness
- When multiple attachments are affixed to separate panels in stacked alignment, the combined thickness of the attachments must be no greater than the maximum thickness allowed
- When multiple attachments are affixed adjacent to each other across the length of a mailpiece, the thickest attachment must be no greater than the maximum thickness allowed
- Folded self-mailers with die-cut openings may contain attachments if the inserted material is larger than the die-cut opening
- Quarter-fold self-mailers may have only one internal attachment not exceeding .012" thick and the attachment must be secured at least ½" from all edges

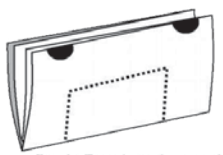


Loose enclosures

Folded self-mailers with loose enclosures must be securely sealed to ensure containment of the enclosed material and prevent excessive enclosure shift during processing.

Loose enclosures must be made of paper and must meet the following conditions:

- Enclosed material may not exceed the maximum thickness of 0.05” thick for mailpieces weighing up to 1oz., 0.09” thick for mailpieces weighing over 1oz. and up to 3oz.
- Must be contained securely within the mailpiece
- Must be inserted into an interior pocket or secured by any method that prevents excessive shift during normal handling; pockets are not counted as panels
- Folded self-mailers with die-cut openings may contain loose enclosures only if the inserted material is larger than the die-cut opening
- One empty reply envelope may be inserted within the first fold (manufacturing fold) of a quarter-folded self-mailer and must be secured within a fold to prevent separation during normal handling



Reply Envelope inserted
within fold

