

PAPER SIZES - The ISO 216 paper system

This is the standard paper size system used throughout Europe and beyond which covers a wide range of sizes, but not all of them are widely used. A4 is clearly the most important one for daily office use.

The ISO paper size concept

In the ISO paper size system, the height-to-width ratio of has been chosen so that sizes relate to each other diagonally in a unique way.

This ratio is especially convenient for a paper size. If you put two pages next to each other, they equal the next size up, or cut one into two equal pieces and the resulting page will again have the same width/height ratio, but will now be the next size down.

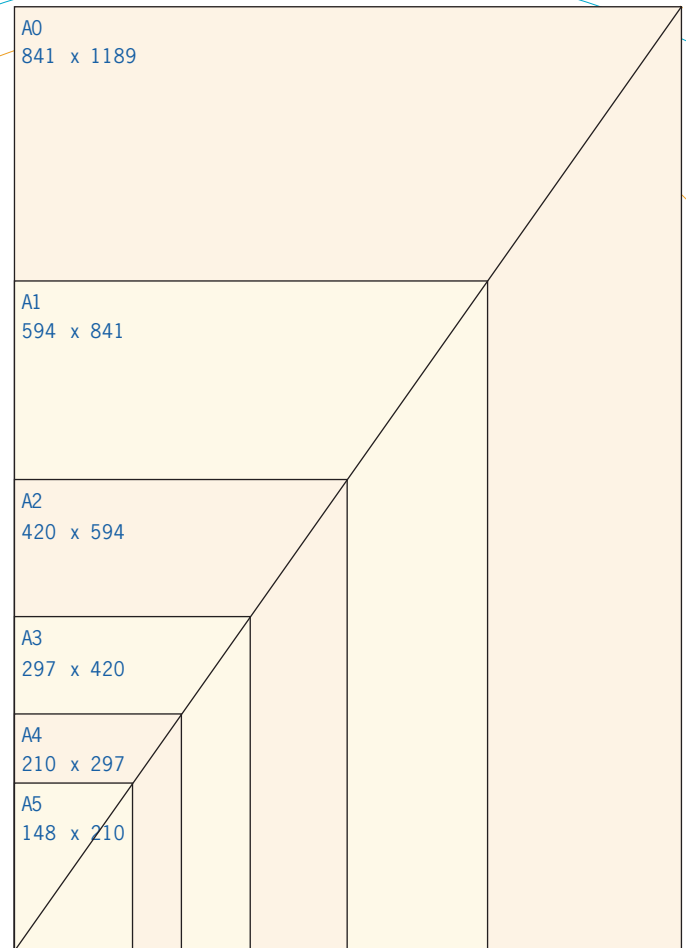
The ratio doesn't quite work out to round numbers, so the sizes are rounded to the nearest whole mm.

Paper is usually specified in g/m². This system simplifies calculation of the weight of a document, if the format and number of pages are known.

Some popular paper sizes are:

- A0 Technical drawings, Posters
- A1 Technical drawings, Posters, Flip Charts
- A2 Technical drawings, Posters, Flip Charts
- A3 Drawings, Diagrams, Large tables, Laser printer and Copier output
- A4 Letters, Magazines, Forms, Catalogues, Laser printer and Copier output
- A5 Note pads, Books
- A6 Postcards, Books
- A8 Playing cards
- B4 Newspapers, this size is supported by most copying machines in addition to A4
- B5 Books
- B6 Books
- B8 Playing cards
- C4 Envelopes for unfolded A4 sheets
- C5 Envelopes for A4 letters, folded once
- C6 Envelopes for A4 letters, folded in quarters
- DL Envelope for A4 letters, folded in thirds

The ISO paper ratio



The following table shows width and height of ISO A and B paper formats and ISO C envelope formats millimeters:

A Series		B Series		C Series	
A0	841 x 1189	B0	1000 x 1414	C0	917 x 1297
A1	594 x 841	B1	707 x 1000	C1	648 x 917
A2	420 x 594	B2	500 x 707	C2	458 x 648
A3	297 x 420	B3	353 x 500	C3	324 x 458
A4	210 x 297	B4	250 x 353	C4	229 x 324
A5	148 x 210	B5	176 x 250	C5	162 x 229
A6	105 x 148	B6	125 x 176	C6	114 x 162
A7	74 x 105	B7	88 x 125	C7	81 x 114
A8	52 x 74	B8	62 x 88	C8	57 x 81
A9	37 x 52	B9	44 x 62	C9	40 x 57
A10	26 x 37	B10	31 x 44	C10	28 x 40