

ROWMARK EXPLAINS ICON LEGEND

Icon legend symbols provide helpful fabrication and installation advice for Rowmark engravable materials.

Understanding the properties and composition of an engraving material is key to achieving consistent, reliable performance for the operator, fabricator or installer. Rowmark strives to provide comprehensive technical help documents and information to the industry to help users increase their knowledge of our various product lines and troubleshoot technical issues. The following symbols were developed to help customers (engravers, fabricators, sign makers, etc.) identify key fabrication and weatherability properties/features of specific Rowmark engravable materials.

These symbols can be found throughout the Rowmark Swatch Binder and Color Chart and on the Rowmark.com product pages for easy reference. Should you have any questions, contact your Distributor Service Specialist.



Laserable (laser engraving)

“Laserable” indicates an acrylic core material with a thin cap surface that can be easily engraved with minimal wattage at increased speeds (Example: Rowmark’s ColorHues™ and LaserMax® product lines). ABS materials, for example, are not recommended for lasering applications because of their properties and composition. Any material that is considered “laserable” is also rotary engravable.



Rotary engravable (rotating carbide engraving)

This marking method uses a single or multiple fluted cutting tool which rotates through the work to remove material, leaving a trough of exposed core. As compared to diamond-drag, rotary engraving may result in deep cutting or the complete cutout of a letter or object. The cutter’s tip size determines the width of the cut. In most applications, the spindle micrometer setting controls the depth of the cut. This process is suitable for most commercial and industrial work. Unlike diamond-drag, rotary engraving is the only means of engraving plastic materials with controlled depth. Not all materials that are considered “rotary engravable” are laserable- this is contingent upon the material’s composition and the application. (Example: Rowmark’s Heavy Weights is recommended for rotary only because it is an ABS material.)



Indoor (interior signage)

The indoor symbol indicates signage produced for indoor applications where UV stability and weatherability are not required. If an engraving material is marked with this symbol, Rowmark recommends the product for indoor use only to ensure optimal performance.



UV Stable (ultra-violet stability)

UV stability is simply the ability of an engraving material to maintain its colorfastness in UV conditions for a limited period of time. This is separate from physical weathering. Although colorfastness is a desirable condition, no man-made product will remain colorfast in an exterior environment indefinitely. Rowmark uses UV stable plastic resins and films in many of its products to prolong the useful life of the material when used in exterior conditions. Most Rowmark products will remain colorfast for 2+ years when properly mounted vertically in exterior conditions. For signage, the use of an overcoat, overprint or protective acrylic clear sheet increases the outdoor durability to 4 years or longer. Sheltered environments also add significantly to the useful life.



Outdoor Weatherable

Often confused with UV stability, outdoor weatherability is the ability of the plastic engraving material to withstand exterior weathering conditions. Rowmark products designated as “outdoor weatherable” are designed to withstand average conditions and temperatures for up to 2 years without significant degradation. Although no specific life can be designated to any product, Rowmark recognizes that under normal conditions, the material will not break down physically. Materials may become brittle and some discoloration or fading will occur when used in harsh environments or exposed for extended periods of time.



Reverse Engravable (second surface)

This symbol means that the product has a thicker, clear cap with a microsurface or laminated core, machined/lasered from the reverse or back side of the material. The process is “backwards” from typical engraving because the core material is engraved, rather than the cap; paint is often applied in the engraved areas from the back to create a unique “back-painting” effect. Back-painting is a popular method of achieving color contrast and more color options (Example: Rowmark’s Ultra-Mattes Reverse Engravable product).



Front Engravable (first surface)

A front engravable material is multi-ply layered sheet material consisting of a thin/microsurface laminated top piece (cap) over a thicker base core layer. The cap layer is engraved or lasered through to expose the core layer, thus providing a color contrast between cap and core. Most of Rowmark’s sheet materials are front engravable.



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UV-LED Printable

Acrylic sheet materials developed to be print receptive with most UV-LED printing inks and light sources.



ADA/Tactile

Matte, non-glare acrylic sheet materials specially designed to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Federal regulations. Braille-engrivable, routable sheets come in a wide variety of color combinations.

Other icon legend symbols:



Gloss Finish



Not recommended for harsh or high humidity indoor or outdoor applications.



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