

Printmaking Materials and Techniques

Print sizes

Print sizes are based on the number of pieces that can be cut from a "standard" sheet of paper. Although paper size varies somewhat, the size of a papermaking screen is similar everywhere, as it is limited to the papermaker's arm span. The most common woodblock print size, large format, is made from a sheet cut in half. Medium format paper is a quarter of a full sheet.

The popularity of print sizes changed over time. The extra-large format was prevalent around the year 1700. From the 1710s to 1740s a narrower format was preferred. The medium format came into fashion for full-color woodblock prints of the 1760s, and the large format became standard after 1780.

Format	Format in Japanese	Approximate size (in.)
Extra large	Ooban 大大判	22 x 12 (not shown in diagram)
Double	Obaiban 大倍判	15 x 20
Large	Oban 大判	15 x 10
Medium	Chuban 中判	7½ x 10
Hanging scroll	Kakemono-e 掛物絵	30 x 10 (not shown in diagram)
Narrow	Hosoban 細判	6⅝ x 15
Pillar picture	Hashira-e 柱絵	28 x 6 (not shown in diagram)

