



Confetti Quick Tips

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Mastering Metric: The Ultimate Guide to Converting Imperial Measurements for Card Making

Sometimes, we come across a beautiful project that catches our eye, but the measurements are given in imperial, and we're used to working in metric. Plus, our paper sizes are metric, which adds another layer of complexity.

Simply converting each measurement to centimetres isn't always the solution, though. The proportions of Letter paper differ from A4—Letter is shorter and wider. So, just converting measurements might not produce pieces that fit the card base correctly or maintain the same proportions as the original.

Let me show you an example with the same card made in both sizes. In this scenario, there are two layers that need to be scaled proportionately for the card base.

1. Cutting the Right-Hand Side of the Card Base:

Measure half of the card front's width—this is where you'll make your cut.

- **Metric:** The width is 10.5cm so cut at 5.2cm.
- **Imperial:** The width is 4-1/4" so cut at 2-1/8"



Once cut, trim this piece to create the embossed layer for the left-hand side. For metric, trim it by 0.5 cm in both length and width. For imperial, trim it by ¼ inch in both length and width.

2. Scaling the Inner Card:

For the inner card, use the following measurements:

- **Metric:** Use the layer 1 width multiplied by 2, giving you 20 cm x 14.4 cm. The width is double that of the layer 1 card front (scored at 10 cm), and the length is the same as layer 1's normal length.
- **Imperial:** Use the layer 1 width multiplied by 2, giving you 8" x 5-1/4".

By using the layer 1 measurements, you can be confident that the inner card will fit perfectly within the card base.

A guide to the sizes for standard card bases, card fronts and layers

Country	Paper Name	Length	Width	Card Front Size (w x h)	Layers	Measurements (w x h)	Rule of Thumb
UK, Europe, South Pacific (Metric)	A4	29.7 cm	21.0 cm	10.5 x 14.9 cm	1	10.0 x 14.4 cm	Each layer is 0.5cm narrower and 0.5cm shorter than the previous
	A5	21.0 cm	14.9 cm		2	9.5 x 13.9 cm	
					3	9.0 x 13.4 cm	
USA and Canada (Imperial)	US Letter	11"	8-1/2"	4-1/4" x 5-1/2"	1	4" x 5-1/4"	Each layer is ¼" narrower and ¼" shorter than the previous
	US Half Letter	8-1/2"	5-1/2"		2	3-3/4" x 5"	
					3	3-1/2" x 4-3/4"	

For more intricate layers, I often create a mock-up using scrap paper or cardstock, starting with my best estimate based on the original measurements. If the first attempt isn't perfect, it's at least a good starting point, and I can tweak the sizes from there. I frequently round up or down to the nearest 5mm or ⅛ inch—after all, no one really measures in sixteenths of an inch when making cards!

There are also times when I don't bother converting measurements at all, or only partially. For example, many 6" x 6" One Sheet Wonder templates work well with either card base, though full-length strips might need to be cut longer for A4.

As for complex fun fold cards, which require a lot of recalculations, I usually don't convert those entirely. Often, you can resize the card base and one layer to metric, leaving any complicated elements in imperial—but this really depends on the specific design.

Once you get used to viewing cards from both the imperial and metric perspectives, making the necessary conversions and adjustments becomes easier. It's also helpful to create your own set of layer templates. I keep mine in a slim stamp case for easy reference.

Here's how you can make your own set:

1. Create a card base and fold it in half.
2. Cut each subsequent layer 0.5cm or 1/4" smaller in width and height than the previous one, and jot down the measurements on the cardstock.

When you're making cards, you can use these templates as a guide. Start with the card base, then place a template on top. If the look isn't quite right, try a different-sized template until it's pleasing to the eye. When you're done, just pop the templates back in the case for next time.

If you'd like the Free tutorial to create the card above, you can click for my blog post with additional photos and a video

[How to Convert Imperial to Metric for a Card with Stampin' Up! Nests of Winter Suite](#)