



Cold Foil Press Setup Checklist Before Production

Pre-production checklist for label converters and packaging printers

Use this checklist before a cold foil production run to review substrate, adhesive transfer, foil path, nip pressure, UV curing, registration and first-run inspection. Final settings must be confirmed by press trial because cold foil performance depends on the actual substrate, UV adhesive, ink system, foil grade, press speed and curing conditions.

This document is a practical worksheet, not a certification, lab report or guarantee of performance. All values are general starting points only and must be confirmed by press trial on your own substrate, ink system, UV adhesive, foil grade, press speed and curing conditions.

Pre-production checklist

Checkpoint	What to inspect	Why it matters	Pass / Needs adjustment	Notes
1. Substrate surface	Surface energy, coating, dust, moisture, lay-flat and roll edge condition.	Low or contaminated surface reduces adhesive anchorage and metal transfer.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	
2. Ink and coating compatibility	Inks/varnishes under and over the foil area; silicone or wax additives.	Slip additives and incompatible coatings are a common cause of transfer and overprint failure.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	
3. UV cold foil adhesive	Correct adhesive grade, viscosity, age, filtration and station condition.	Adhesive grade drives transfer sharpness and post-cure bond.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	
4. Anilox or adhesive transfer volume	Anilox volume/cell condition, cleanliness, doctor blade contact.	Too little adhesive causes pinholes; too much causes halo and squeeze-out.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	
5. Plate condition and image area	Plate wear, fine line and small text reproduction, mounting tape hardness.	Worn plates and wrong tape change the adhesive film and edge definition.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	
6. Foil roll direction and foil side	Metallised side facing the substrate; correct unwind orientation.	Reversed foil transfers nothing and wastes the roll and press time.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	
7. Foil unwind tension	Stable unwind tension, no slack, no telescoping, brake response at speed.	Unstable tension causes wrinkles, missing areas and register drift.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	
8. Foil rewind stability	Rewind torque, waste web tracking, spent foil edge quality.	Rewind instability feeds back into the transfer nip and disturbs coverage.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	
9. Nip pressure / contact pressure	Even pressure across the web; both sides equal; impression set by trial.	Uneven nip gives mottled coverage on one side of the web.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	
10. UV lamp output and curing window	Lamp hours, reflector cleanliness, shutter position, cure at run speed.	Under-cure gives poor bond; over-cure can embrittle the adhesive film.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	
11. Registration alignment	Foil image to print register; check at start, mid and end of the trial.	Register drift is usually tension or web path, not the foil itself.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	
12. First 50-meter trial inspection	Full-width inspection of the first metres before the run is released.	Most defects appear inside the first metres and are cheapest to fix there.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	
13. Adhesion check	Tape pull on cured foil at several web positions; record result and position.	Confirms the cured bond before committing the full order.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	
14. Rub / scuff check	Dry rub and, if relevant, wet or product-contact rub on cured samples.	Simulates converting, packing and shipping handling.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	



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15. Stop-and-retest condition	Defined defect threshold and who authorises a stop and retest.	Prevents a whole order being produced with a repeating defect.	☐ Pass ☐ Adjust	

Notes / operator observations**When to contact CFS**

Contact CFS when foil transfer is unstable, adhesion fails after curing, metallic coverage is mottled, or the same defect remains after substrate, adhesive, tension and UV checks.

Next step: Send your substrate, printing process and target foil effect to CFS for sample matching.
coldfoilstamping.com/contact