



INDUSTRIAL SUPPLIES & PACKAGING

Stretch Film Guide

Learn the difference between the various stretch films and their appropriate uses. A simple breakdown to help you choose the right product for your business.

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STRETCH FILM MADE SIMPLE.

There are many types of stretch film to choose from. When considering the right product for your business you must take in to consideration the specific needs of your wrapping operation, such as load size and type, performance requirements as well as budget. The following guide will help you make a better informed decision for your operation.

KEY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING STRETCH FILM

QUESTION	SITUATION(S)	SOLUTIONS
Is there a centralized packaging area?	Yes	Consider using wrapping equipment
	No	Likely candidate for hand wrapping
What is the production volume?	Low (<30 pallets/8 hours)	Hand applied film
	Medium (30-100 pallets/8 hours)	Semi-automatic machine applied film
	High (>100 pallets/8 hours)	Automatic film application
What is the load weight?	Low (Under 1200 lbs)	60 gauge or below hand or machine applied film
	Medium (1200-2000 lbs)	63-80 gauge hand or machine applied film
	High (Over 2000 lbs)	90 gauge or above hand or machine applied film
What is the load type?	Type "A" - Regular shaped pallet with product fitting pallet closely	60 gauge or below hand or machine applied film
	Type "B" - Slightly irregular load - corners and/or product fitting within 3 inches on sides	63-80 gauge hand or machine applied film
	Type "C" - Highly irregular loads and/or loads which are greater than 3 inches from fitting size of pallet	90 gauge or above hand or machine applied film
What is the speed of the film application?	Low (hand applied or <15 RPM)	Any hand wrap or machine grade film
	Medium (machine applied 16-25 RPM)	Any machine grade film
	High (machine applied above 25 RPM)	SSC (single-sided cling, high-performance film)

HAND APPLIED VS. MACHINE APPLIED

Hand Stretch Film

This type of film is designed specifically to be applied manually and it is typically used in lower capacity packaging operations. However, you should regularly re-evaluate your manual stretch film operations to ensure it is the most efficient film for your business. If your operations continue to grow, it may be beneficial at some point to upgrade to a machine wrapper.

Machine Stretch Film

This type of film is manufactured specifically to be applied with a stretch wrap machine. If you have a high volume packaging operation, machine stretch film would be the most efficient and cost effective option. Other benefits of machine stretch film include: reduced packaging material costs, safer application and more secure loads.



FILM TYPES

CAST FILM

- Manufactured in multi-layer versions
- Excellent load retaining capability
- High film puncture and tear resistance
- Superior film clarity
- Single-sided or two-sided cling varieties
- Quiet unwind

BLOWN FILM

- Manufactured in multi-layer versions
- Excellent load retaining capability
- High film puncture and tear resistance
- Single-sided cling
- Thinner gauge films with significant performance

Cast Film vs. Blown Film

Blown film is tougher and has less of a chance to puncture than cast. It also has a higher level of cling, making it stick to itself easier. Cast stretch wrap has a clear, glossy finish allowing various scanning technologies to be used with it while blown is more hazy and dull. Cast stretch film unwinds much quieter and it is also easier to stretch and control the gauge with cast film. Cast is naturally clingy on both sides, whereas blown has one sided cling. The best choice of film for your business would depend upon your specific requirements and operations.

ENGINEERED FILM

Converted (or engineered) film is film that is stretched before wrapping a load. Converted Film benefits include:

- Reduced amount of film used, so film costs are greatly reduced
- Requires fewer revolutions to wrap a load, saving time, more efficient
- Less packaging film means less waste to clear and dispose of
- Converted films are recyclable
- Converted film is strong, consistent

PRE-STRETCHED FILM

Pre-stretched film is stretched close to its ultimate break point prior to being wound onto rolls for final use. This means the film doesn't require as much stretching energy as a standard stretch film to achieve the same wrapping force. This is a key reason why pre-stretched films are popular for hand wrap. In fact, with pre-stretched wrap, hand applications can create the same load stability as machine applications.

Pre-stretched Film Benefits Include:

There are many benefits to using pre-stretched film. Basically, users get the same (or better) load stability with less product, less physical energy, and greater control. Benefits include:

- Price: Pre-stretched film consumption can be less to one half that of traditional stretch film. This creates a cost savings of anywhere from 25% - 40%.
- No Edge Damage (no wasted rolls)
- Pre-stretched film has rolled edges and has air blown into the roll to support the middle of the roll from telescoping down. These two processes together make it almost impossible to damage the roll edge when dropping it. Traditional stretch film rolls often are thrown away because the user drops them and damages the edge.
- Easier to Apply
- Lower torque requirements allow users to walk forward instead of backward during application – making for safer and easier control. Also, little or no stretching is required, so it much easier to wrap with less physical strength. The roll is lighter (about 2/3 less than traditional film) and easier to manage. It's about half the thickness and double the strength.

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