

Masu Box Size Chart

Two rules, two tables, and a gauge you measure your own paper against. From the craft table of Donna.

Print this at 100%. The stack gauge below is drawn at actual size. If your printer is set to “fit to page” or “shrink to fit”, the gauge lies. Check the ruler bar at the bottom first.

Rule 1 · what size square to cut

Paper square = 2.8 × the box you want.

Your finished box is a bit over a third of your paper, and it is always half as deep as it is wide. Want a 75 mm box? Cut a 215 mm square.

Paper square	Box inside	Deep
150 mm	53 mm	27 mm
200 mm	71 mm	35 mm
A4 short side	74 mm	37 mm
250 mm	88 mm	44 mm
300 mm	106 mm	53 mm
12 in sheet	108 mm	54 mm

The stack gauge · actual size

bars are actual size · hold your folded scrap against them

Kami origami paper
16 layers = 1.28 mm
gap 2.5 mm

Printer paper
16 layers = 1.60 mm
gap 3 mm

Scrapbook paper
16 layers = 3.20 mm
gap 4.5 mm

Light cardstock
16 layers = 4.00 mm
gap 5 mm

Heavy cardstock
16 layers = 4.80 mm
gap 6 mm

Fold a scrap of your paper in half four times. That is 16 layers. Hold the folded edge against these bars, which are printed at actual size, and find the one it matches. The gap beside it is the one your lid needs.

Heavy cardstock will not fold four times. Stack 16 loose sheets and hold those against the bars instead.

If your paper falls between two bars, take the wider one. A loose lid still closes. A tight one does not.

Working it out instead of matching it: measure the 16-layer stack in millimetres and add 1.

Fold order · the base

1. Cut a true square. Face down.
 2. Crease both diagonals. Open flat.
 3. Fold all four corners to the centre.
 4. Fold top and bottom edges to the centre line. Open both.
 5. Quarter turn. Repeat with the other two edges. Open.
 6. Open out two opposite corners. Lift the side walls.
 7. Bring the points up and over into the box. Press flat.

Fold order · the lid

Same seven steps, with one change at step 3. Mark four dots on the diagonals, **half your gap** out from the centre, and fold each corner to its own dot instead of to the centre. The lid comes out wider and a little deeper, which is what lets it sit down over the base.

Rule 2 · the lid gap

Fold a scrap in half 4×. Measure it. Add 1 mm.

A lid folded from the same square as the base comes out the same size, so it cannot fit. On the lid only, stop the four corner folds short of the centre by this gap.

Paper	Thick	Gap
Kami origami paper 60-70 gsm	0.08 mm	2.5 mm
Printer paper 80 gsm	0.10 mm	3 mm
Scrapbook paper 160 gsm	0.20 mm	4.5 mm
Light cardstock 200 gsm	0.25 mm	5 mm
Heavy cardstock 250 gsm	0.30 mm	6 mm

If it goes wrong

- Lid will not go on.** Gap too small, or you folded both from the same pattern. Reopen the lid corners and take another half millimetre outward on each dot.

Lid falls off. Gap too big. Loose is safe, so only refold if it will not stay put.

Box will not sit flat. Your square was not square. This is the most common cause and it is invisible until the end.

Walls lean outward. The four corner folds missed the centre.

White shows inside. Single-sided paper. The tucks show the reverse.

What fits

A masu box is shallow: the depth is under a fifth of your paper square. Even a 12 inch sheet gives only 54 mm of depth, so tall things do not fit.

Earrings, a bracelet, chocolates: 150 mm square.

A 70 mm soap bar: 212 mm square.

A gift card (85.6 mm): 260 mm square.

Check your scale

