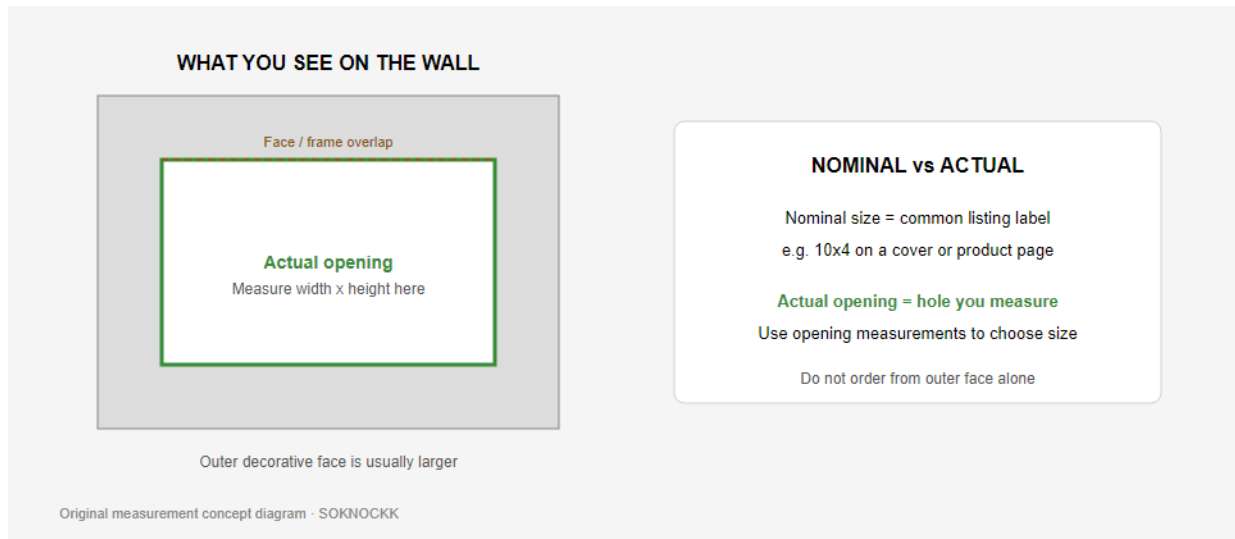


Nominal Size vs Actual Opening Size for Vent Covers

Understand why a stamped “10×4” on an old register is not the same thing as your tape reading — and how to use both when selecting a SOKNOCKK catalog size.



Original educational diagram — label versus measured opening.

Quick Answer

Nominal size is a size-family label. Actual opening size is what your tape measures. Shop from the tape reading; use the old label only as a starting clue.

Definitions

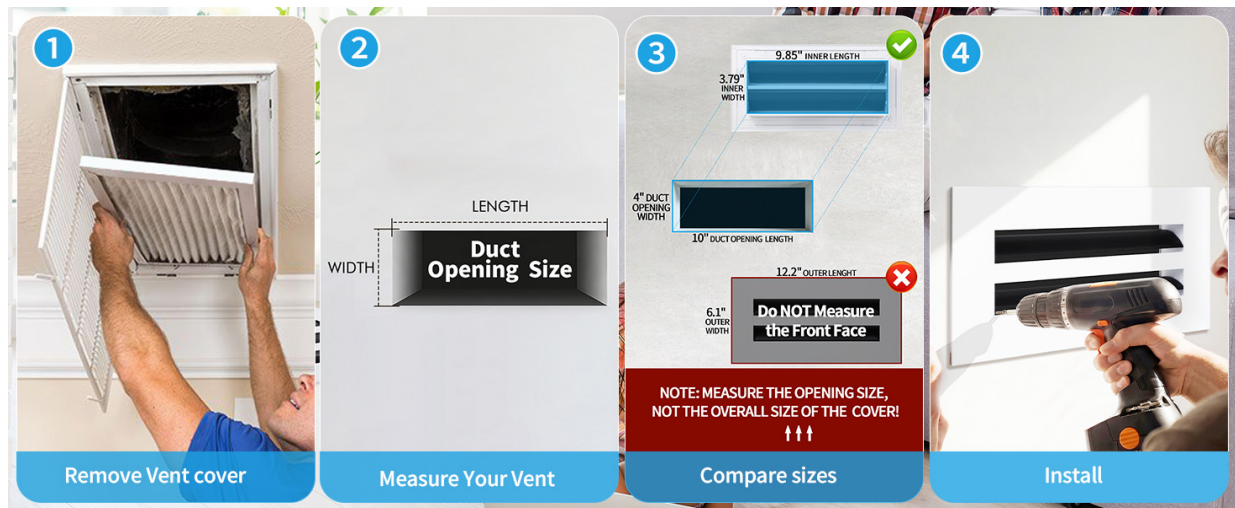
Nominal size is the common industry-style label printed or assumed for a register family (for example 10×4). **Actual opening size** is the clear width and height of the duct or wall opening you measure on site.

Both matter, but they answer different questions: the label hints at the family; the tape decides the order.

Why They Differ

- Drywall cuts are rarely perfect rectangles.

- Boots can be slightly compressed or out of square.
- Older grilles may use a different maker's nominal series.
- Paint build-up changes what you can see before removal.



Verified How-to-Measure — always verify with a tape on the opening.

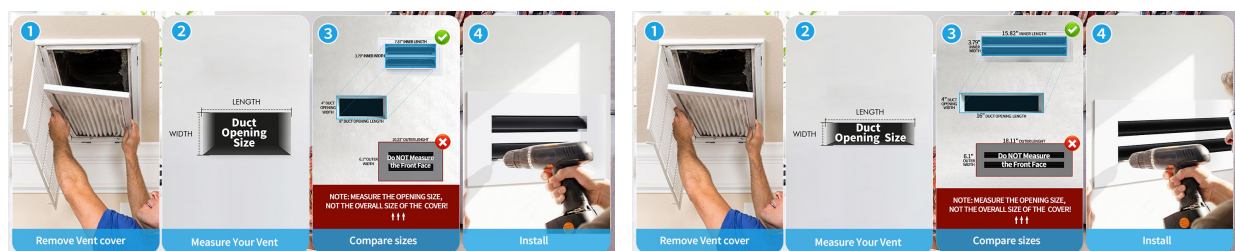
Practical Workflow

1. Read any stamped label and note it.
2. Measure the clear opening (Measure the Duct Opening First).
3. Compare the tape reading to SOKNOCKK catalog rows.
4. If label and tape disagree, trust the tape and photograph both.

Worked Examples

Old label	Tape reading	Action
10×4	~10 × 4	Shop 10×4 Confirmed rows
10×4	~9.5 × 3.8	Still compare to 10×4; photo-check fit concerns
12×6	~16 × 4	Do not force the label — shop the tape family
(none)	24 × 4	Shop 24×4; finish after size
8×4	~8 × 4	Shop 8×4 Confirmed

Examples are educational. They are not a promise that every house matches these numbers.



Field Decision Tree

1. Can you expose the opening safely? If no, pause.
2. Write the tape reading first.
3. Write the old label second (if any).
4. If they disagree by a wide margin, photograph both and ask before buying.
5. If they roughly agree, shop the matching Confirmed catalog row.

How SOKNOCKK Lists Sizes

Public cards show Confirmed Size+Color combinations with mapped Amazon paths. Pending combinations stay off the public buy path. Color never changes the opening size family — see [White and Black FAQ](#).



10×4 White — Confirmed catalog example.



Longer linear catalog example — still size-first.

Evidence You Should Keep

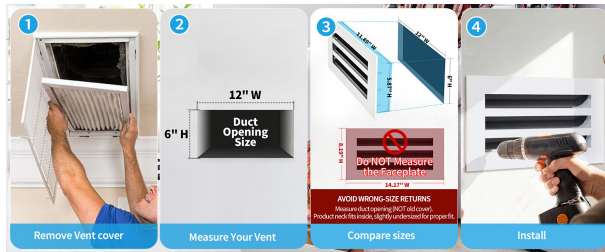
- Photo of empty opening
- Photo with tape across width and height
- Photo of any stamped label
- Note of room and wall vs ceiling

Mistakes to Avoid

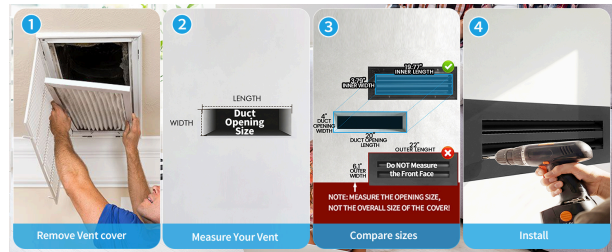
- Ordering from the outer face only.
- Assuming every brand's "10×4" is identical.
- Picking color before the opening is known.
- Rounding up "to be safe" without photos.

Practice Scenarios

1. **Label matches tape:** Shop that family; still confirm Confirmed status for your finish.
2. **Label missing:** Shop from tape only; keep photos.
3. **Label disagrees:** Trust tape; send both to Contact/quote if unsure.
4. **Between families:** Do not round up blindly — ask with photos.



Verified HTM — 12×4.



Verified HTM — 20×4.

Rule of thumb Write tape first, label second, catalog third. Never reverse that order.

Connecting to the Catalog

After you resolve nominal vs actual, open the size on [Vent Covers](#), compare the size-specific How-to-Measure module, then choose White or Black. Color never repairs a wrong size family.



10×4 White Confirmed example.



10×4 Black — same family.

Related

- [FAQ: Choose the right vent cover size](#)
- [Blog: How to Measure Your Vent Opening](#)
- [Choose Size and Color Independently](#)
- [Vent Covers catalog](#)