

Tips And Tricks To Get Most Out Of Your Printer

Most small businesses (and individuals) have a home printer. It allows us to print documents, and may double as a scanner and photocopier too.

This blog offers some great tips and tricks to get the most out of your printer.

- Challenging the “Low Toner/Ink” Notice
- A Clean Printer is an Effective Printer
- Easy Ways to Boost Print Quality
- Where Has All the Ink Gone?
- How to Print the Perfect Photo

Almost everyone has a home printer these days, allowing them to easily print documents and photos from home. But sometimes our printing jobs are less than easy. For everyone who has ever found themselves with a clogged printhead, smeary printouts, or a less-than-perfect photo, here are some tips and tricks to try out.



Challenging the “Low Toner/Ink” Notice

Users may find they’re able to repeat these strategies a few times before they actually need to replace their cartridge.

TONER

The toner in laserjet printers can settle over time

This can cause streaking or faded areas

Remove the cartridge from the printer and shake it a few times

This will redistribute the toner

INKJET

“Empty” ink cartridges may still have some ink in them

If an inkjet cartridge is reported as low:

1. Remove it from the printer
2. Gently shake the cartridge from side to side
3. Reinstall the cartridge

Declogging Solutions

When a “fat” inkjet cartridge, that has its printhead built in, doesn’t print any ink, dip its base into warm water

Dab the printhead dry on a piece of paper or kitchen towel

Once it leaves a clean line of ink, reinstall it into the printer

Most ink cartridges have a “use by” date

If the ink is stored or unused for too long, particles in the ink can clump together

These particles can clog the nozzle in the printhead

Printing at least once weekly will help keep printheads from drying out or clogging up

Adequate humidity can also help prevent printheads from drying out

A Clean Printer is an Effective Printer

Cover printers when not in use to prevent dust and other particles from accumulating on print rollers

Be wary of using canned or compressed air to clean printers

They can force dirt and dust deeper into the machine

Keep the area around the printer dust free

Do not use ammonia or ammonia-based cleaning products when cleaning printers

Ammonia can damage some kinds of plastic

Easy Ways to Boost Print Quality

Smearred printouts are usually caused by printhead obstructions

Clean or clear away anything blocking the printhead

Be careful not to scratch or damage the nozzle plate

Remove the ink cartridge

Ensure the printer is using the correct paper settings

Different kinds of paper are better for certain print jobs than others

BRIGHTER WHITE PAPERS

tend to produce better images

BOND PAPER

is thin paper for everyday use

MID-WEIGHT PAPER is better for:

- Double-sided printing
- Crisper images

POSTER PAPER or cardstock is good for:

Posters / Flyers / Vivid colors

Printers also have a maximum width and paper thickness that they can handle

Users should check their printer spec to see the max paper weight (called gsm) it can take

Where Has All the Ink Gone?

KEEP THE PRINTER ON

Most printers use a small amount of ink when turned on

Keeping the printer on should reduce the number of times the printer has to go through its starting service routine

How to Print the Perfect Photo

Determine ideal print size

To select appropriate print size:

- Divide the picture's dimension in pixels by desired DPI
- Those dimensions will be the maximum print size in inches

200 DPI (dots per inch) is considered average quality

300 DPI is high-quality

For example: A picture measuring 1600 by 1200 pixels

Divide each dimension by **200** for good quality and **300** for better quality

At 200 DPI : 8 x 6 inches

At 300 DPI : 5.3 x 4 inches

Consider Direct Printing

Some printers allow users to print:

- Directly from the camera In a printer's specifications, this is called "PictBridge"
- Through a USB stick or memory card

Choose the Right Paper

There are three basic types of paper for photos. Each kind is suited for specific types of pictures:

1. MATTE :

- **Good for large pictures** that are well-lit
- **Paper is not reflective**, which eliminates glare
- Images can be damaged by handling
- Has **smaller color gamut**, which produces duller images

2. GLOSSY :

- Images can be scratched and will hold fingerprints
- Reflective paper **can cause glare**
- Larger color gamut allows for **bright, vibrant images**

3. SEMI GLOSS :

- **Less reflective** than glossy paper
- Images can be handled, **will not smudge**
- **Smaller color gamut** than glossy, but is often close

Double-check Settings Before Printing

Be sure to SELECT THE CORRECT PAPER SETTINGS before printing

Don't send a 6×4 photo print through as an A4 page.

DETERMINE which way the paper should be facing

Photo paper typically has one side which is designed to receive ink

Edit Photos from the Page, Not the Preview

CROP PHOTOS before printing

MAKE ADJUSTMENTS based on how the images look when printed

Photographs may look different in a camera, editing program, or printer preview

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