

Willie's Wonkey Computer Factory

Should I use non genuine ink in my printer?

As always there are two sides to this argument. The easiest way to answer is to relate my own **personal** opinion, based on experience.....

The main reason for not buying genuine cartridges was quite simply the aftershock of finding out how much they cost. A complete set (5 colours and a black) can cost more than the printer did when new - and usually it's at the first replacement, you discover the cartridges that came with the new printer were 'Introductory' - i.e. they were only half full to begin with!

There are two types of inkjet cartridge. The first is merely an ink tank (Epson and Canon) and is much cheaper than the other - which has the ink nozzle **built into** the cartridge (HP). The latter is not really designed for multiple use as the head wears fairly quickly and the print quality deteriorates. This type is difficult to refill and a '*compatible*' cartridge is usually a factory refilled, recycled genuine one. How many times has it been recycled??

The next consideration is the actual ink itself. The main manufacturers spend millions developing the very best ink for their machines. Guaranteed to give crisp, clear, vivid colours every time, particularly with photographs. If that is why you bought the printer in the first place, don't compromise on quality for cost.

I have tried refilling many types of cartridge with mixed success. There are hundreds of online stores that sell **re-fill** kits with all the instructions. They are cheap but I found it tedious and usually messy, so I gave up on refilling and moved onto compatibles with fairly good results - and still made big savings. The problem I did have was that, if the printer wasn't used regularly, the ink nozzles dried out and had to go through a 'cleaning cycle'. Through experience I ended up using only 'Jet-Tec' cartridges. Their ink has a nozzle cleaning component which definitely prevented the drying out. Eventually, through print demand I moved onto a '**Continuous Ink System**' (CIS). A completely different ball game and best described through a Google search!!

The biggest success was on my laser printer in the Gala Life office. The advantage of laser printing is the fantastic quality combined with the thousands of copies you get from each cartridge. The downside is the £70 replacement (and they have 4 cartridges). So I invested in a toner refill kit (£17 each colour) and have to admit I am very pleased with results (and savings). I accept there is a limit to the number of refills before the cartridge wears out, but will cross that bridge when it happens.

I never damaged a printer by using non genuine ink.

In summary? It all comes down to what you use your printer for. If quality is important, then don't skimp on it to save a few pounds. If you do want to save money and you only print a dozen or so photos a year - try the non genuine ink/cartridges, then check out the printing facilities at some of the big supermarkets/department stores - great quality at a great price!

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