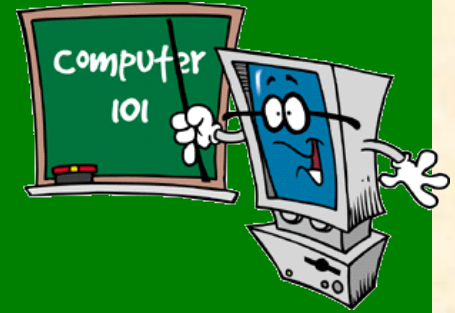


Computer & Networking Technologies, LLC

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Inkjet vs. Laser: Which Printer Is Right For You?

Shopping for a printer without knowing what makes each one different from the other is a mission that's bound to fail. The amount of options in the market these days can be overwhelming even for a seasoned buyer. Flashy features aside, you need to know how to strip each printer down to the basic functionalities you really need. With this guide, we hope to help you answer the most basic of all printer shopping questions: Should you get an inkjet or laser printer?

The biggest differences between inkjet and laser printers is that an inkjet printer uses ink, is suitable for low volume printing, and is the traditional choice of home users, while a laser printer uses toner, is ideal for high volume printing, and is mostly utilized in (but not exclusive to) office settings.

Inkjet printers are generally cheaper, smaller, and have the versatility to print both text-based documents and high quality images, especially photos. BUT be wary of cheap inkjet printers as those will end up costing you a fortune later on. Laser printers, on the other hand, offer a lower cost per page, faster print speeds and typically involve a lower total cost of ownership.

But let's take a closer look at the strengths and weaknesses of laser and inkjet printers so you can make your next purchase with confidence.

What Will You Use The Printer For

If you're looking for a home printer for **occasional** printing, most people would advise you to get an inkjet printer. However, a common complaint with inkjet printers is that the ink dries up if you don't use it often. With that said, if you have the budget for it, I strongly suggest you get an affordably priced laser printer instead; the toner used by laser printers don't dry up. But if you'll be printing a **small volume** of documents and colored images **regularly**, inkjet printers will get the job done.

Laser printers are known to be more durable and can print **large quantities** of black and white *and* colored documents **frequently**. Though laser printers were originally built for office use, they are now growing in popularity as a home printer for economical reasons. Color laser printers are good for everyday color printing but if you're looking to print professional high resolution photos, go with a photo inkjet printer.

High quality photo inkjet printers are particularly engineered for printing out vividly detailed photos with the tonal variety and deeper blacks that photographers

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need. Many professional photo inkjet printers use pigment-based ink which is more fade-resistant and works with a wide variety of art paper types as well as a range of paper sizes.

Inkjet vs. Color Laser Printer

One of the most popular questions we get from buyers is: Should I get a color laser printer or an inkjet printer? It boils down to what you need color printing for. If you need gallery quality photos, get a photo inkjet printer. But if you need to print medium quality colored images that don't require color depth and tonal range, we recommend color laser printers over inkjet printers for two reasons: first – laser toner does not dry up if left unused, and second – you print more pages from laser toner cartridges than inkjet cartridges.

Technology (How It Works)

Inkjet printers spray liquid ink through microscopic nozzles onto paper; laser printers have a drum unit that fuses toner powder onto paper with heat. One printer type uses ink, the other uses powder. With this difference in application between the two printer types, it's common belief that smudging is more common with inkjet printers than laser. That's not to say all inkjet printers do. Inkjet printers that use pigment based ink aren't likely to smudge whereas dye-based ink require a longer drying time for the ink to set. And this also depends on what paper you're printing on. Some paper types absorb ink better while some don't.

Print Quality

Print quality depends on the output you need. If you need to print vivid exhibit-quality photos, look for a good professional photo inkjet printer that produces high resolution images. If what you need is a reliable printer that can keep printing sharp documents, a laser printer is what you need.

A common perception is that inkjet printers are better with colored images, and laser printers are best for black and white. New color laser printer models in the market today beg to differ. Advancements in printer technology have allowed color laser printers to now produce pretty impressive colored photos as well. Although inkjet printers still win over laser when it comes to highly detailed and perfectly-toned photographic prints, color laser printers is now an option to consider for those looking to print medium-quality colored images while enjoying the reliability, endurance, and economic benefits of a laser printer.

Print Speed

Laser printers are built to accommodate the demands of a workplace so they are engineered to print faster between 15 to 100 pages per minute (ppm), while inkjet printers print slower at about 16 ppm. Since laser printers are faster, they are able to produce more documents compared to inkjet printers and therefore have a higher monthly print volume.

Printer vs. Cartridge Cost

Beware of dirt cheap inkjet printers. These cheap models have a high cost per page and use cartridges that can print only a few hundred pages that you'll end up having to replace cartridges frequently. Before you know it, you've already spent more on ink cartridges than the printer itself.

When compared with laser printers, inkjet printers have a lower price partly because —

- inkjet printers have a minimum life span of 3 years,
- whereas laser printers have a lifespan of at least 5 years

A more important factor to consider when shopping for a printer is its cartridge price.

In the same way that inkjet and laser printers widely differ in price, cartridge prices for a laser and inkjet printer also widely differ — *and for good reason*. Laser printer cartridges, also known as toner cartridges, can print significantly more pages than any inkjet cartridge!

Here's a summary of the differences between an inkjet and laser printer.

Inkjet Printers

PROS

Inkjet printers are usually smaller and lighter – making it ideal for a bedroom or home office where space saving is valued.

- Great at producing photo quality prints and image-heavy documents, as inkjet printers do a better job of blending and producing vibrant colors than laser printers.
- The price of an inkjet printer is less than most laser printers.
- No warm-up time needed before printing.
- Can print on a variety of paper types, including glossy photo paper, textured art paper, and fabrics.
- Can accommodate larger paper sizes.

CONS:

- Ink is expensive, especially for users who print on a regular basis who are continually forced to repurchase more cartridges because ink cartridges can only print a few hundred pages.
 - Much slower than laser printers.
 - Low-capacity paper trays of 50 to 100 sheets, which can be frustrating for a user who prints a lot.
- Low monthly duty cycle (the maximum amount of prints possible in a given month without causing damage to the printer).

Laser Printers

PROS:

- Most laser printers print much faster than inkjet printers. This isn't and shouldn't be a strong selling point for casual printers, but high volume users will notice a huge difference.
- Laser printers produce sharp text. If you're a high volume printer that only requires text documents, laser is the way to go.
- Higher monthly duty cycle means they are better prepared to handle high-volume jobs.
- A price-by-price comparison favors laser printers over inkjet printers if you print on a frequent basis and aren't producing documents that are graphically complex.

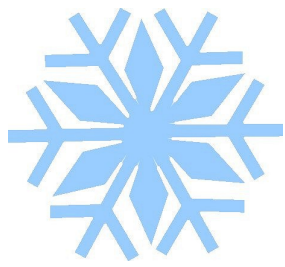
CONS:

- Can handle simple graphics, but complex images and photos are a challenge.
- Although there are some compact laser printers on the market, they are generally bigger and heavier than inkjet printers.
- Laser printers can't handle the same variety of paper that inkjets can.
- The upfront cost of a laser printer is usually more than your average inkjet printer.



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2017 was a big year for CNT! We celebrated our 20th Anniversary, and we would like to thank you for making it happen! We also want to thank everyone who attended our after hour party with the Van Wert Area Chamber of Commerce! A big congratulations to our winners! Marylou Smith- 32GB USB Flash Drive, Tim Slusher- 32GB USB Flash Drive, Debby Compton- Logitech Wireless mouse, Marci Martz- Logitech Wireless Mouse & Keyboard, and our big Prize of the month was a Brand New Lenovo Laptop– the winner was Marsha Owens! We can't wait to see what 2018 has to offer for us! CNT wants to wish everyone a Happy New Year.

