



Newsletter Sign Up: Getting Started W/ Heat Transfers

Hello and Thank You for signing up for the T-ShirtSupplies.com Newsletter,

This article is meant to provide some answers to questions that commonly arise among individuals who are getting starting in using Heat Transfer Paper applications. It is our plan to have many additional articles, how-to guides and customer interaction in our upcoming Newsletters and website. If you have a specific question/need, please submit the question and we will do our best to provide an answer and/or video.

Periodically, T-ShirtSupplies.com will be holding contests (more on that in upcoming Newsletters) to win fabulous prizes, but not all of these awards will be announced – some awards will be sent based on customer interaction w/ TSS by either being a Newsletter subscriber or have an active TSS account.

What does that mean?

We want our customers to INTERACT with TSS...tell us how we can improve our customer service, provide additional products, website improvements to make your business activities easier and more profitable, etc. (*TSS has access to many additional products in the Industry, but we want to control overhead and provide the best prices for what we offer, but if there are many requests for certain products, we will acquire them to allow for a single source to purchase all your needs – but we need your input...)

Every once in awhile, TSS will choose an exceptional submission and send some free products...we only ask that you be part of our ever-growing community and share some of your experiences with us and all the others in the Heat Transfer Industry...this will: 1.) provide exposure for your organization, 2.) introduce you to the rest of the community, 3.) allow for a link to your website from our highly-trafficked site....and much more!

Well, if you are just thinking about getting into the Heat Transfer Industry – you made the right choice! The following is a primer to help aide in your decisions. If you have any questions, please let us know – we can be reached at info@tshirtsupplies.com, which we welcome any pre-sales questions and are always there to provide any support and assistance.

If any of your questions are not answered in this primer or any of the material on T-ShirtSupplies.com, we are only an email away....

Advice and definition for new t-shirt shops:

Einstein said its better to have imagination than knowledge, and that's certainly true for a successful t-shirt business, but if you're just getting started, some knowledge goes a long way. Following is some technical information and suggestions, but we have no help on addressing the imagination and creativity that makes your shirts a must have item...we leave that up to you, but rather reduce your potential profits in using a fulfillment options (such as, CafePress, Zazzle, SpreadShirt, etc.) why not DIY (Do It Yourself)? You will make more profits, and best of all, it is pretty simple after some practice and experience.

Which side to print on?:

The side with a line or a logo is the ironing side. If there is no pre-print marking the back side, you can check by scratching the corner and the coating will come off under your nail. If you don't have fingernails compare color. The coating adds a creamy color and the back is whiter. Once you know this mark all of the backs with a light pencil mark.

Hint: Buy products with the back labeled (All of T-ShirtSupplies.com Heat Transfer Papers have a backprint, which eliminates the potential of error in production.)

How to always print on the correct side:

Put a label in your printer tray, noting which side is up. This is especially important in laser printers because the coating can melt to the fuser roll. No fun to clean.

Keep the printer clean:

Removing dust and debris keeps the print clean on the transfer. Always take the heat transfer paper out of the printer and store it so it doesn't get used to print homework or business letters. Storing it in a plastic zip lock bag keeps the paper from absorbing moisture, which will reduce curl in the printing process.

Using a Laser printer:

Determine if your printer is ink jet or laser. The transfer you have selected might work in either printer. But laser papers are created not to melt in the high temperature laser printers and color laser copiers. There are also fuser and non-fuser Laser Printers, please check out T-ShirtSupplies.com guide for picking the correct paper based on your printer. It is also very important to use OEM toners

and drums with your laser printer because that is what is used in the strict testing prior to release for heat transfer applications. If you are uncertain, please email us to determine the best papers for your printer.

Black printing:

A black printing laser copier or printer doesn't usually work even for laser papers. If you want black print only use a laser color copier and printer.

Reversing the Image:

If there are words and the transfer is a one step process the image or at least the words must be reversed. This is true with almost all of the light transfer products. Dark transfer products do not need to be reversed. IMAGE-CLIP® Paper which removes all of the plastic windows is the only light product we know of that does not need to be reversed.

Improving the look:

One of the most important things is to remove all of the white around the image. If the image is a simple figure, square, circle, etc it can be trimmed right up to the edge with a guillotine cutter or rotary cutter. (Worth the investment)

Using a plotter cutter to remove plastic windows results in a professional look, IMAGE-CLIP® also removes all of the plastic for a more professional look especially around letters and numbers.

Hand ironing:

There are several products made for the hand iron: these products are great for the non professional home user or those just getting started. The hand ironing time is 3 or more minutes the iron must have a high heat setting and be able to maintain that high temperature. Some of the new safer irons reduce the temperature to protect the user. If the hand iron transfer feels plasticity or you can see bubbles or loose edges, there was not enough heat.

The other important point is that an ironing board with an ironing pad will not result in a good transfer. Use a piece of MDF (plywood) covered with a pillow case on a table where you can add some pressure. Remember, hand-irons vary greatly in temperature and due to the differences in our size, people generate different amounts of pressure based on size and strength. When doing a heat transfer, the most important aspects of a successful transfer are consistent heat and pressure.

Heat presses:

Best advice is buying the best one you can afford. Temperature control is important as is ease of use and safety. A hand held thermometer can be helpful in determining the actual temperature of your press. We suggest a chart with time temperature and pressure for each transfer you use. If you don't have enough heat, increase time or pressure, or to speed up the operation increase temperature and pressure. Keep the heat press instructions handy.

Hot Peel:

Really means peel off the transfer as soon as you get it out of the press. You'll need a finger nail or you can create a little tear. No need to rush and rip it off fast, keep a steady pressure and peel quickly. If you go too fast or too slow you can tell by the feel of the transfer, it feels rough. (You can add a pressing sheet and very lightly smooth it back with a hand iron or heat press)

Cold Peel:

You can wait till they are really cool, but at a minimum wait until they are only warm to the touch. When you start for the day, take the first shirt to completion and check the process before you create a pile to pull off later.

Start up cost savings:

If the color doesn't seem right, try and print on a sheet of good quality copy paper first and this will provide a good representation of how it will appear on the transfer. Don't keep wasting heat transfer papers or shirts until the color is right. Keep any practice shirts and practice again on them, using the back of a t-shirt or any area left on the actual transfer sheet, etc.

Dark color shirts:

The dye in some dark shirts can come through the transfer, you can anticipate this occurring if the color rubs off when you rub it medium hard with a paper towel. You can either wash out the dye, or adjust your transfer to account for this. Be sure to use a transfer for dark shirts. When you find a brand of dark shirts that perform well, use those in the future – a majority of TSS testing is done on all of the major brands of t-shirts, such as Gildan, Hanes, Fruit of the Loom, etc. (*TSS plans to offer substrates in the near-future, all the products that we plan to offer will undergo rigorous testing and are definitely suitable for all of our recommended products. But, if you have any questions prior to using our products, always contact us 1st and we will assist you in determining the best substrate for your project.)

Printing on Canvas and other fabrics:

The heavier the fabric, the more heat pressure and time are required. Practice and keep records of the temperature pressure and time for the next time. There are so many different varieties of these products available, it is necessary to test prior to committing to a large order, unless you can return the products for an alternate substrate. Once you find a substrate that works, just like with the t-shirts, and keep records so you know how you produced a successful finished good.

When bad things happen:

If you melt the plastic handles from a canvas bag in your heat press, wait till it cools and scrape with a paint scraper. Cleaning the transfer plastic off your press can usually be done with a Teflon "scatchie" after it is cool.

Getting help:

Use the online forums; TSS is planning on partnering with TransferDepot.com, Tshirtforums.com and others. One good thing about the forums is that there is always someone available to help 24 hours a day. You'll at least get sympathy. Or, of course, you can email us at info@tshirtsupplies.com to get personal and direct attention for your specific needs.

Again, thank you for signing up for the T-ShirtSupplies.com Newsletter; we hope to provide the best Heat-Transfer Solutions to make your business or project successful.

Regards,
T-ShirtSupplies.com
Customer Service