

Printing at the Resource Centre: FAQ

The Resource Centre has a well-equipped print room for use by community and voluntary groups. If you do your printing here it will be cheap and quick, but there are some limitations. This information sheet aims to answer some frequently asked questions about what it is possible to do at the Centre, and how to get the best results.

I've heard that I have to do the printing myself at the Resource Centre. Is that difficult?

The cheapest - and quickest - way to get your job done is to come in and print it yourself. We can show you how to use the equipment, and give support while you are printing. It is not difficult, and we are used to teaching people who have never done it before.

If you are printing more than 60 copies from one original, you need to use our copyprinters.

If you are printing in full colour, or less than 60 copies from each original, use the photocopier.

You will need to contact us to book a machine. We don't keep huge stocks of paper, so if you are planning to print thousands of leaflets let us know in advance so we can order more paper.

What if nobody in our group has time to do the printing?

If time is more of a problem than money, we can do your printing for you. We charge for this, so it does work out to be more expensive. You need to book the print job in at least a week in advance, and allow a few days for the job to be done.

What is the quality of the printing like?

Our copyprinters are excellent for large amounts of newsletters, leaflets, posters or cards.

While the quality is good, it is not the same standard as more expensive off-set litho or digital printing.

Text, line drawings and clip-art reproduce well on all our copyprinters. If you have photos in your artwork, ask for machine 1 or 2 when you book as this gives the best quality. See below for more information on printing photos.

We can't print on glossy paper with the copyprinters, but we have silk finish paper for the photocopier.

The largest size we can print or photocopy is A3.

Can I print in colour?

We can't do full colour printing on our copyprinters, but we do have a colour photocopier. This is cost-effective for up to about 100 copies. For more copies than that, you may find it is cheaper to use a commercial print service for colour copying.

On our copyprinters, we can do spot colour printing in red, green, purple, maroon or blue as well as black. For example you could have a blue heading or a red box. If you want purple or maroon ink, let us know when you book, as these are not available on all the machines. See the next section for more information about printing in spot colour.

COMMUNITY PRINT ROOM AT THE RESOURCE CENTRE

How to get the most out of the Resource Centre print facilities

information sheet 2 continued

What does spot colour printing mean?

If you want to add a bit of red, green, purple, maroon or blue to your newsletter or leaflet you can do this fairly simply and cheaply. This can really brighten it up, but requires some extra work, planning and thought.

Colour separation

Our copyprinters work by cutting a stencil which wraps round the ink drum. If you are printing in two colours, eg red and black, you have to cut two stencils and put everything through the machine twice.

The first run will have everything you want to print in black on it.

The second run will have everything you want to print in red on it.

You repeat this process for every additional colour you use.

Your artwork must be 'colour separated'. One sheet of original artwork will contain everything to print in black, and another will have everything to print in red (or green, blue, maroon or purple). A lot of computer programs will do this for you automatically.

The original artwork for all sheets must be printed out in black, even if you are reproducing it in a colour.

For example, to print this:



you would supply two separate sheets of artwork like this:

Not too close!

Our machines are not accurate enough to deal with colours that are right next to each other - for example, a red square with a black line around it. The machine jigs things around slightly, so the black line or red box moves a couple of millimetres. The end result is messy - a red square with a black line that doesn't fit snugly, but sometimes overlaps and sometimes leaves a slight margin.

To avoid this only use colour for distinct headings, boxes or pictures. Make sure there are a couple of millimetres of space around them, so a small amount of jiggling won't spoil the overall effect.

Additional work and cost

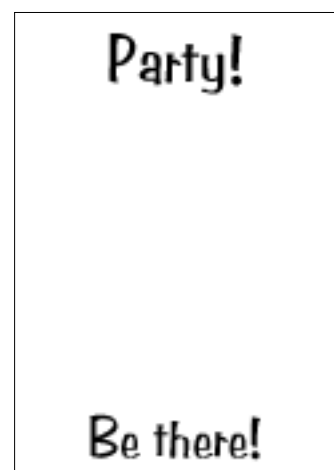
It will cost you more to print in two colours, as there are two stencils and everything goes through the machine twice. This is true for each additional colour you use.

For the same reasons it will take you longer to run the print job if you are using two or more colours.

What if I need to cut or fold my printing, or make a booklet or newsletter?

You can use our booklet maker to collate, fold and staple booklets. There is a small charge of 3p per 10 stapled documents, to cover the cost of the staples.

We also have an electric guillotine, folding machine, electric stapler, laminator and comb binding machine.



COMMUNITY PRINT ROOM AT THE RESOURCE CENTRE

How to get the most out of the Resource Centre print facilities

information sheet 2 continued

What format should the artwork be in?

You will need to either:

- n bring in a printed out copy of your original artwork. The better the quality of the original, the better it will reproduce.
- n bring your artwork in on a memory stick, CD or disk, or email it to us. You will need to make sure we have the fonts and program you used, or that it is a PDF file.

For best results with photographs

You will get the best result with photographs and shading if you print direct from a computer to our high quality copyprinter (machine no. 1 or 2). Photographs with good contrast will reproduce best - different colours with a similar tone will all look the same shade of grey when printed in black and white.

Are there other tips about preparing artwork for the Resource Centre's print machines?

One of the most common problems we have with printing is that the artwork just isn't suitable for our digital printers. Complicated graphics that look fantastic in full colour on your computer screen can be very disappointing printed out in black and white.

Think about how you are going to reproduce your artwork, and how much you want to spend on this, before you design it.

Artwork rules

If you decide to print at the Resource Centre there are a few basic artwork rules:

- n ALWAYS leave a margin of at least a centimetre around all the outside edges of your image.
- n Don't have huge areas of black or very dense images. These will come out grey rather than solid black, and won't go through the machine easily.
- n You will lose some contrast and resolution when you print. A complicated graphic with lots of photo images and overwriting can end up looking messy. Clear, fairly simple artwork reproduces best.
- n Make sure your original artwork is black - even if you are planning to reproduce it in blue ink.
- n Make sure your original artwork is on a white background.
- n If you are using photos make sure they are sharp and clear, with good contrast. Murky or very dark photos will not reproduce well. Take into account the fact that colour photos will look quite different in black and white.
- n Make sure your original artwork has not been folded or creased if it is on paper.
- n If your original artwork is on paper, make sure it is only printed on one side of the paper, even if the final copy will be printed on both sides.
- n Remember that the quality of your original determines the quality of the reproduction.

Can I talk to you about my printing?

If you are in any doubt about how to prepare your artwork, or how it will look when it's been printed, come in and talk to us and have a look at examples. You can also email us examples of the kind of thing you would like to print, to see if it will be suitable for our machines. We are very happy to give advice.