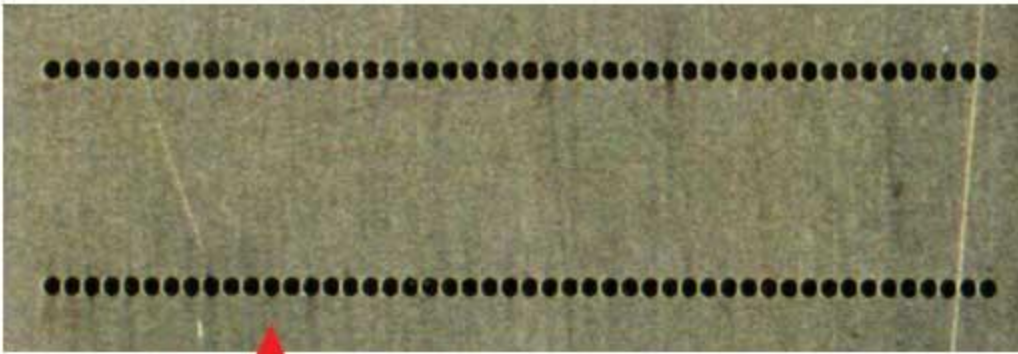




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Head Cleaning Tips

Harvey is great for keeping nozzles clean, but what do you do if your nozzle is already clogged? There are a few methods for removing already existing clogs from your printer. Some of these require you to purchase a kit while others are more Do-It-Yourself. **NOTE: Cleaning inkjets yourself can result in irreparable damage to the printer, the cartridges, and whatever media you are printing on.** If your printer is already non-functional, then it might be worth a shot. These tips are gathered from Internet research on the topic and are provided for informational purposes. Orange Marley, Inc. is not responsible for any damage done using these methods.



Magnified



First, a view of what we're actually talking about, the print head and nozzles:

This image shows the print head (bottom) and the magnified nozzles themselves (top). Those tiny nozzles are what become clogged with ink over time. Some print heads are part of the cartridge itself, like in many HPs. Epsoms, however, which are the primary focus of these tips, house the print head in the printer itself.

Is My Head Clogged?

If white lines show up in your prints

If the printer's nozzle check seems faint or broken

If ink doesn't come out while you're printing

If you haven't used your printer in a long time

If your printer requires more cleaning cycles than usual

You May Have a Clogged Print Head

The first step in cleaning your print head is to use the printer's built in head cleaning function. Often this is enough to push a clog out of the nozzles, but unfortunately, it uses a lot of ink. After about four runs of cleaning, if your print output hasn't improved, it's time to stop wasting ink and move on to the more serious methods.

Commercial cleaners provide one option. These are typically cleaning solutions packaged in an ink cartridge that you place into the printer and run the normal cleaning cycle, flushing the nozzles with the cleaning solution instead of ink. These vary greatly in price and effectiveness.

Solvents

To get all this dried ink out of your nozzles, you need some sort of solvent. Some household products work well for this, such as Windex (key ingredient: Ammonia). Isopropyl alcohol at 91% or higher also works to dissolve dried ink.

Methods

Some people recommend that you take a discarded ink cartridge, open it up, fill it with your solvent (preferably alcohol in this case) and then run head cleanings. This is a bit complicated and messy. Another option is just to remove the cartridge and put 7-10 drops of solvent directly into the ink receptacle where the cartridge normally sits and then run head cleanings. If your print heads are in the cartridge you can just remove them and soak the print head in your solvent of choice.

For a less invasive method, you can apply solvent to the pad that the print heads rest on. To do this you need to release the cartridge carriage so you can move it freely by hand. How to do this varies from printer to printer, please consult your manual. After it's free, move it to side so you can access the pad, apply enough solvent to moisten it. I usually use my fingers to do this. Then, just slide the cartridge carriage gently back and forth over the pad. After five to ten minutes of this run a head cleaning and then a nozzle check. If it needs more work still, repeat. Keep paper towels on hand because your hands are very likely to end up covered in ink.

If a single color/ink is malfunctioning, you can try creating an A3 size solid block of the trouble color and printing it 10-12 times to attempt to force ink through the problem nozzle. This is very wasteful of ink and probably not a good idea if you're using specialty inks. If your ink is cheap and you'd rather not go through the methods listed up, this is always an option.

Tips

Prevention is the best method for dealing with clogs and it's here that Harvey Head Cleaner excels. The key to keeping printers in top function order is to use at least a little bit of each type of ink every day. Harvey does this by using the printer's built in nozzle check function, so you're sure ink is moving through every nozzle. This pattern is also very small and uses little ink, so it's not wasteful. Even better, Harvey knows if you've already used the printer for that day and won't run its nozzle check pattern unless it's gone unused.