



# Black & white Printing

Inkjet printers are designed with colour printing in mind – here are some tips on how to deal with adapting them to black & white



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Photoshop, stunning black & white images with tonal gradation to match traditional silver halide printing can be produced.

If you're interested in toning, then check the Lyson Small Gamut range, which enables you to produce monochrome inkjet prints with an almost limitless range of monochrome effects – from absolute neutrality to duotones to split-tones. And all under the accurate and repeatable control of a supplied ICC generic profile.

## Two is better than one

If you regularly print both colour and black & white, swapping from one set of cartridges to another can be a real pain, since every time you do so you need to flush the printer heads with special cleaning fluid. And unless you have money to burn, it means waiting until your mono cartridges run out before switching back to colour, and vice versa. Re-installing part-used cartridges is a recipe for problems, as you can easily get air into the system or clog the print heads.

The best solution for monochrome enthusiasts is to invest in a second printer that's dedicated to black & white – in the same way that film photographers used to have a separate camera body to use for mono work.

In colour, this child would still have looked pink and cuddly, despite the tattoo



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**ABOVE** Reflections can be particularly dramatic in black & white

**ABOVE RIGHT** The monochrome treatment enables us to concentrate on the shapes in this image, rather than the feet themselves

**EXPERT TIP**  
**STEVE BAVISTER'S PRO ADVICE**

**REMOVE ANY DUST**  
 Make sure there's no dust on the front of the paper when it goes into the printer – when it comes off later it will leave white marks on the surface of the print.

**PHOTOSHOP SAMPLES**  
 Photoshop provides a number of relatively subtle Duotone, Tritone and Quadtone samples to get you started.

**T**hanks to advances in technology over recent years, it's possible to produce prints that are virtually indistinguishable from photographs on a relatively inexpensive machine at home. But when it comes to working in black & white there's a problem: inkjet printers are generally designed to print in colour, and it can be a challenge to get hard copy from a mono image that matches the standard of what you see on your monitor.

If you have converted an image to greyscale or desaturated the colour, you should, in theory, get a black & white print. But you probably won't. If you print as normal, using the full ink set, the printer will try manfully to combine its CMYK colours to produce a mono print with a neutral tone. These days the results are pretty good, but even so there's usually a slight colour cast of some kind, often magenta or cyan. Tweaking the printer settings can sometimes help, but this tends to be fiddly, especially when the colouration is minimal.

Many people will find these variations perfectly acceptable but, if you don't, you can have a custom profile written for your specific printer/ink/paper combination. These can be supplied via email for little more than the cost of a replacement cartridge. One company that offers this service is [www.imagetune.co.uk](http://www.imagetune.co.uk)

Sometimes the colour cast problem is worse under certain lighting conditions, with prints looking brown under tungsten household lamps, green in daylight and

magenta under fluorescent tubing – an effect known as metamerism. Things are further complicated by the fact that not all papers are a clean white, and that some media change in colour as they dry.

## Correcting colour cast

One option that handily gets around all these problems is to go for black-only printing. A number of digital mono aficionados strongly advocate black-only printing, so you might find it works for you. It also works out a lot cheaper because no colour ink is used and the prints are less prone to fading. However, since only black is applied, the only way to create tonality is by varying the amount of ink – and on some of the lighter areas this may be sparse, with the dots that make up the image being visible.

There is another option you should consider, which is to use special replacement cartridges that give you improved control and quality. Lysonic Quad and Imagelife VI Blax cartridges, for instance, contain different intensities of black ink in place of the normal CMYK colours. By using simple colour curve adjustments in image-editing software such as Adobe

The Walker Studio