

DTG APPLICATION PROCESS – T Shirts

Step One – Creating Your Graphics

All garment decoration has to start somewhere and with direct to garment printing the work usually starts on the computer. All DTG businesses have the need for good, clean artwork to produce the best prints on the garment. Most users opt to use graphics software like Corel DRAW, Photoshop or Adobe Illustrator or will “buy in” ready-made graphics.

The quality of the image you start with can make a big impact on the end result and there are a few basic guidelines in regards to resolution and background that will help you to design or tailor artwork to produce high quality images.

If you are not artistically inclined there are a number of clipart and template programs on the marketplace that will streamline the process for you. A general rule of thumb for DTG printing is that if the image looks good printed from your desktop inkjet printer (at the same resolution etc) then the image will look good on the textile application.

Step Two - Preparing your shirt to Print with DTG

To pretreat or not to pretreat? that is the question

Pre-treatment is like adding a primer before you paint, that helps the ink to adhere better to the textile or other applications such as canvas, denim jeans, etc. The use of pre-treatment is required for dark fabrics to allow the white ink to bond properly to it and remain wash after wash. When printing to non-textile items it is recommended to use a primer and sealant (dependent on material).

Printing on a white (light coloured) t-shirt or fabric requires little preparation of the garment in advance apart from a light press to flatten the fibres. However some users will still pretreat if they are looking for a stronger, vibrant, bold colour (especially black) and the customer has specific requirements. They have to balance the extra cost and application time to the size of order and profit to be made.

Pre-treat Machine – an automatic pre-treatment machine is an enclosed device that you load your shirt into and then press a button to have the pre-treat sprayed onto it. They tend to have settings available to adjust the volume of spray and field area from the whole bed down to a specific area. Rather than spraying the bed area all the time this means you can reduce the amount of pre-treat being used and therefore reduce the costs accordingly.

The process only takes a moment and is consistent every time and is not so easy to achieve with a hand sprayer.



EZ- Treat Pro

Pre-treating by hand – a manual application method which works well once you understand the volumes needed in the application. The most important thing to note when using a spray gun is that **you must be more than 5 meters away from the machine** or in another room where as the machine method can be sited at the side of the printer.

Otherwise particles can drift on to the print head and clog the ink inside.

A pretreat unit that is completely enclosed means you can pre-treat shirts inside a house, retail location or an office. Even right next to your DTG Printer!



Wagner spray gun

HOW TO 'STEP BY STEP' GUIDE



Step Three – Printing on a DTG Printer

Serious DTG businesses need to consider using specialised RIP software (Raster Image Processor) to output their work properly. The RIP converts the image into a format that allows you to manipulate the image and have a better control over the end result. A RIP uses ICC profiles and some also have ink calculation capabilities to predict the cost before printing. With Kothari Print pro you can also adjust the ink volumes (up or down) to suit the customers' expectations and maximise profit.

It comes with various platens and default settings ready for you to use straight out of the box.



Step Four – Finishing your Garment

The process isn't quite finished as you will need to cure the garment to set the inks to ensure maximum washability. Typical cure times range from 1-2 minutes and some garments may allow you to cure for slightly shorter periods of time – but you will need to test them individually. It's important to remember that the way a shirt looks after the first few washes will often impact on future sales.

Not all presses are the same and quite often the cheaper ones are a false economy as they are designed for vinyl/dye sub transfer and may not cure the inks properly using the standard instructions.

DTG 4s press



You will learn in your DTG training about different finishes you can get on your prints based on the type of curing sheet you use – Teflon, parchment, release sheets, even embroidery backing material will all give different results.

DTG Digital Partners



DTG Digital works in partnership with Download DTG Designs. They source leading street wear graphics from a host of designers globally and are available for download and prepared ready for DTG printing giving your new start business a kick start.



DecoNetwork provide invaluable tools for those wanting to cash in on the online garment trading boom by providing over 15,000 webstores designed specifically for online trading.

The possibilities are endless!

DTG Digital delivers the industry's most advanced, user friendly and precise print platform specifically designed for textile applications and can operate using Aqueous, Sublimation or even Reactive ink sets to fit your personal needs.

- T - shirts
- Baby wear
- Sweat shirts
- Sports Tops
- Tote bags
- Childrens Wear
- Fashion Wear
- Denim Jeans
- Handicrafts
- Hats & Caps
- Aprons
- Hi Vis Vests
- Cushions
- Ties
- Fabric panels
- Wall Tapestry
- Deck Chairs
- Hoodies
- Leather

It is not just a T-shirt printer!