

Paper Guide

Papers continue to evolve for pigment ink printing. New developments provide greater image quality, durability, and character. This can be a problem if an artist wants to create the same print several years after an original edition was printed. We can help an artist create as close a match as possible, but as printers we are compelled to support improvements in the materials we use.

We continue to test new papers, deal with manufacturing issues, and revise our list, so keep an eye on the date of the review and expect this list to continue to change.

Most Common Papers at KAS

Epson

Hot Press Bright and Natural

A significant advancement in smooth matte papers, it prints beautifully, resists scuffing, and renders shadow details better than any other paper we've tested. This paper is the most selected in side-by-side print comparisons. Bright and Natural offers two brightness levels.

Cold Press Bright and Natural

A significant advancement in textured matte papers, it prints beautifully, resists scuffing, and renders shadow details better than any other paper we've tested. Although this paper mostly replaces the popular Epson Somerset Velvet paper, a much older paper, the coating technology has been vastly improved. The Cold Press Bright and Natural also comes in two brightness levels.

Premium Luster

The standard RC paper. Consistent and reliably good quality, though it lacks character and surface texture and is optimized for the general consumer. Our clients rarely choose this paper.

Ilford

Ilford Gallerie Smooth Pearl

This is our studios standard RC paper, which has a smoother texture than the Epson Luster and is very popular among photographers looking for that traditional "N" surface c-print look.

Hahnemühle Fine Art

Photo Rag 308 GSM and 500 GSM

Once a market leader in smooth matte papers, known for their subtle tonality and rich blacks. This paper is in need of an update as the Epson smooth matte paper is now a better option. The 500 GSM version is still unique in its thickness and is very popular. For cut sheet and unbound portfolios, it does have great presence.

Photo Rag Baryta

A beautiful semi-gloss fine art paper with a baryta coating that improves the surface of the print. The images look impressive, but the paper is burdened by blemishes that make it unreliable for large prints. We offer large format printing on this paper only on a time-and-materials basis and when the client is willing to take the risk of increased production costs due to material defects.

Bamboo

Featuring a newer coating technology from HFA, this paper is warm toned, smooth, durable, and subtle. It is great for printing full tone images that may look gray or flat on other, brighter papers. This paper is at its best with subtle black and white and soft color prints.

Awagami

Bizan

A truly unique hand-made paper. For the right project this paper cannot be matched. It has a soft textured surface, but its usage requires advanced planning and your budget must be considered before starting any project greater than a few prints.

Inbe

Made from Kozo and hemp fibers this is an unusual paper with some translucency and a completely different feel, making it a wonderful choice for books and other tactile projects.

Innova

FibaPrint Warm Cotton Gloss IFA-45

An exact match to the original Crane Museo Silver Rag. After the that paper was sold to another manufacturer, the manager joined Innova to produce this FibaPrint paper. It is natural warm paper base which can look a little soft when to a brightened paper. But once this print is hanging on a gallery wall, it will only impress.

Velvet ES IFA-94 (for fine art large eco-solvent prints)

A bright white inkjet coated slightly textured paper. The surface emulates the traditional smooth velvety surface of an etching paper. The paper is produced to archival standards. A favorite for large matte exhibition prints.

LexJet (OEM brands)

Lexjet puts their name on papers made for OEM resale from large paper manufactures. With some products you might be cutting corners, but it seems in LexJet's case, we often get papers of very high quality and consistency compared to some of the name brands.

Sunset Fine Art Satin SUV by Hahnemuhle (for fine art large eco-solvent prints)

LexJet teamed up with Hahnemuhle (one of the most revered manufacturers of art papers) to create a revolutionary fibre-based photo paper. The paper combines the luxurious weight and feel of a fine, alpha-

cellulose art paper with the smooth, reflective surface. Because the paper doesn't have any optical brighteners, it has the warm, natural look associated with heirloom art. The satin finish is ideal for a wide range of color and black-and-white images.

Types

Smooth Matte (Hot Press)

A smooth truly matte paper that does not overstate its presence, allowing the photograph to be the subject matter. This is the most popular category of paper that we print on. We search for the highest quality, technical paper to enable the print to quietly impress.

Textured Matte (Cold Press)

When a little more paper character is desired, texture can add to the aesthetic. Traditionally known for its soft printing characteristics, the newest breeds are excellent at expressing rich, deep contrasts and colors.

Cotton Rag (Rag)

Made from 100% cotton fibers and historically considered to be the highest quality fine art paper support, manufacturing advances have helped other fibers match cotton's quality and longevity.

Fiber Based (FB)

Made from wood pulp, this paper can be made into high quality support, but is also often used in low quality, acidic papers.

Resin Coated (RC)

Most comparable to traditional photo lab color papers, these polyethylene coated papers offer very good qualities but its plastic appearance does not appeal to all. It comes in smooth (glossy) and varying levels of textured surfaces (luster, pearl and matte), but since the polyethylene is naturally shiny, it will always have some reflectance versus cotton rag's matte potential.

Semigloss Fine Art Papers

A new category initiated in 2004 by Crane papers with the release of their Crane Museo Silver Rag. It was designed to match the papers used for an extinct, but beautiful color printing process made famous when the MoMA exhibited the dye-transfer prints from William Eggleston in 1976. The papers are cotton rag or high-quality fiber-based papers with a semi-gloss ink receiving layer.

Baryta papers

A subcategory of the semi-gloss fine art papers. This type of paper has an additional coating to improve brightness and smooth the coating. While we love the look, there are recurring production issues with these papers and it is proving to be nearly impossible to obtain a blemish-free large print. Small prints do not have the same challenges.

Eco-solvent papers

The Epson eco-solvent printer is designed for the larger production jobs, lots of large prints. The papers are not compatible with the aqueous printers. One advantage is the cured prints are more durable than the

aqueous prints and the print maker has more control over the technical aspects of how the printer applies the ink. The downside is that small prints may like the superfine details you can achieve on an aqueous printer.