

## From Computer to Textile

Be aware that some techniques are quick and easy while others take more preparation. Similarly, some need cheap, readily available materials while others are more costly. Obviously all of these variables affect the quality of what is printed, how it can be used and whether it will have a long lifespan.

## Images from Inkjet Printers

**NOTE:** Using your inkjet printer for printing on fabric is done entirely at your own risk. If you have an older printer you no longer use, that one might be best until you are more familiar with the process. It is **vital** that fabric is trimmed slightly smaller than A4 and that there are no trailing threads that could get jammed in the printer mechanism. If you buy ready-to-use fabric you don't need to do anything to it.

### Acetate Prints

The quickest and simplest way to get an image on fabric is to print onto any non-porous surface such as acetate sheets. Boost the quality of the print so that lots of ink sits on the surface of the acetate. As soon as it has printed press it face down onto fabric and rub firmly over the back of the image. These prints work best if printed onto a smooth, finely woven fabric.

### Using Freezer Paper

One way to carry fabric through an inkjet printer is to iron it onto the shiny side of an A4 sheet of freezer paper. Stick tape across the leading edge as this gives the printer wheels something to grab when starting to print. Available from various places including Amazon, Cotton Patch, Rainbow Silks and many other places. Easy to find if you Google it.

### Alternatives to Freezer Paper

There are other ways to carry a piece of fabric through the printer. A sheet of A4 paper works well by putting a strip of double-sided tape on each of the long edges and sticking the fabric to it. Make sure there are no trailing threads then put tape along the leading edge before printing. Try using a glue stick – run the glue stick round the edge of a sheet of A4 paper then press the fabric down. Cut off any trailing threads and put tape along the leading edge.

### Bubble Jet Set 2000

Available in 2 sizes, pour some Bubble Jet Set into a tray and soak the fabric for 5 minutes. Allow to dry then iron onto freezer paper. Put tape along the leading edge to make sure the printer grabs the edge without mangling it then print as normal. Allow to dry for 30 minutes and the fabric is wash fast. The colours are not as vivid as commercial printable fabrics but this is a very economical alternative.

### Printable Fabrics

A good range of fabrics ready prepared for printing are widely available. Cotton, silk, organza and others are supplied with a backing that enables them to be put straight through a printer. Best results come from printers that feed straight through from top to bottom without flipping the paper over. The better quality ink used the longer the print will last without fading. Print your own photographs or scan and print your drawings or paintings.

Suppliers:

Crafty Computer Paper ([www.craftycomputerpaper.co.uk](http://www.craftycomputerpaper.co.uk))

Art van Go ([www.artvango.co.uk](http://www.artvango.co.uk))

Rainbow Silks ([www.rainbowsilks.co.uk](http://www.rainbowsilks.co.uk))

Cotton Patch ([http://www.cottonpatch.co.uk/acatalog/Supplies\\_Printing\\_Fabric.html](http://www.cottonpatch.co.uk/acatalog/Supplies_Printing_Fabric.html))

A web search will bring up many other suppliers.

### Wet Gel Transfer

Print an image on an inkjet transparency. Black and white images with lots of strong contrast work best. Paint a little acrylic gel onto fabric where the image is to be placed then lay the transparency on top of the gel, print side down. Burnish with the back of a spoon applying lots of pressure. Check progress by lifting up the corner of the image. **NOTE:** This method can produce fragmented, incomplete images sometimes. It is also possible to, occasionally, produce more than one transfer from the transparency.

### Images on Tissue Paper

If you don't want to risk putting fabric through your printer try using tissue paper instead. Run a line of glue stick round the edge of a sheet of A4 paper then tape the leading edge. Print as normal then cut the glued edge off the sheet. The image must be smaller than A4 otherwise some of it will be lost when it is trimmed.

### Digital Grounds

Golden produce a range of digital grounds that can be used to prepare the fabric for an inkjet print. I have no personal experience of these but understand that they are very good. Available from numerous suppliers including Rainbow Silks and Art van Go.

### Images from Photocopies or Laser Printers

#### Oil of Wintergreen

Oil of wintergreen is an aromatherapy oil and is applied to the back of a photocopy or laser print. Don't use too much - wait until the image can be seen. Place the image print side down on fabric then burnish with the back of a spoon.

The fumes are not hazardous although it does smell strongly and prolonged usage could cause a headache if you are susceptible to strong smells.



Oil of Wintergreen should not be applied neat to the skin for prolonged periods. It is not dangerous in small quantities but if you are doing a lot or for a long time it would be useful to wear gloves. Always wash hands after use.

#### Suppliers:

I bought my oil of wintergreen from Calmer Solutions Ltd Tel: 01342 844658

They also sell via Amazon. Price 99p for 10ml or £3.99 for 100ml + P&P 50ml bottles are also available

There are other suppliers.

### Useful Books

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Publisher</b>	<b>ISBN</b>
Altered Photo Artistry	Beth Wheeler with Lori Marquette	C&T Publishing	978-1-57120-440-0
Image Transfer Workshop	Darlene Olivia McElroy & Sandra Duran Wilson	North Light Books	978-1-60061-160-5
From Image to Stitch	Maggie Grey	Batsford	978-1-906388-02-7