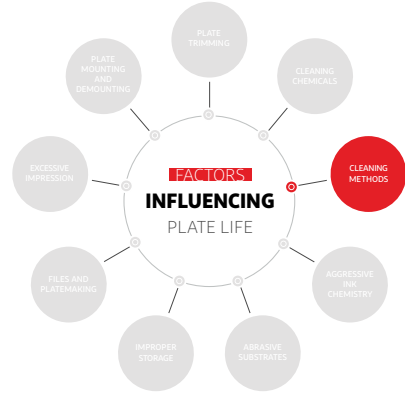


# Cleaning Methods



## Plate Cleaning - A huge factor

It is important to clean plates after use before ink can cure on the plate surfaces. If ink dries onto the surface, it can be removed using proper cleaners, but if ink cures on the surface, it is very difficult to remove without damaging the plate.

Plates that are not cleaned can:

- Stick Together when put in storage.
- Develop Surface Cracks.
- Even Be More Difficult To Clean Upon Reuse.

Plates are more sensitive to ozone damage if not cleaned before storage. Cracks always develop first where the ink is present on the plate. These cracks can be seen by flexing the plate which opens up the microcracks.



It is important to clean the plate immediately after use. Not doing so will result in inks drying on the plate –making the plates harder to clean and inducing unnecessary stresses on the surface of the plate.

Automatic plate cleaners are the best in terms of consistency, but make sure that the plate is dried thoroughly after use and before stacking. Not drying the plates will result in trapped cleaning solution, which could create issues when reusing the plates.



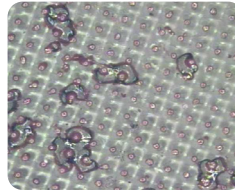
Don't use Nylon Stockings or Rags



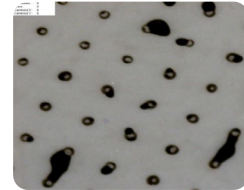
Recommended soft sponge - similar to a typical grout sponge used in home tiling projects

If you have to handwash the plate,

- Use a soft sponge/brush with a lint free rag to blot dry.
- Appropriate cleaner for ink and plate compatibility. Allow time for the cleaner to soak into dried ink and break it down.
- Avoid nylon cloths –these could damage the plates. The webbing traps the dots and could shear them off.
- Avoid shop rags –these are typically reused, and you have no way of determining if there is any foreign material/ residue on them.
- Always wipe with Alcohol before reusing to remove cleaner residue.



Waxes and oils are retained on the plate hindering ink transfer leading to over impression



Ink no longer stays on the top of the dots (dirty printing)

## How Plate Coatings and Waxes impact Plate Life

People have developed a bad habit of applying plate coatings on plates as they are mounted, even if there is no need for it. Plate coatings are a band aid that mask other inherent issues that result in print problems. These sprays inhibit ink transfer, and they contain certain oils which impede the ink transfer characteristics of the photopolymer. Using plate sprays or coatings will normally introduce new problems on press such as poor ink transfer, dirty printing and contaminated inks



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