

Letterpress / Printing Books and Information:

1. Letterpress Now: A DIY Guide to New & Old Printing Methods, by Jessica White
2. Letterpress Printing, A Manual for Modern Fine Press Printers, by Paul Maravelas
3. For the Love of Letterpress: A Printing Handbook for Instructors and Students, by Cathie Ruggie Saunders
4. letterpresscommons.com

Letterpress Type Resources:

1. Metal Type
 - a. Skylinetype.com
 - b. M&H Type Foundry
 - c. The Bixler Press and Letterfoundry
 - d. eBay / Facebook Marketplace
2. Wood Type
 - a. Virgin Wood Type
 - b. Moore Wood Type
 - c. eBay / Facebook Marketplace

Ink:

You may choose between oil, water, and water miscible base inks. Please choose an ink type that works well for your own set up keeping your health and safety in mind. With any chemical, please read the labels to understand how to safely and effectively store, use, clean up, and dispose of it.

Oil based inks are usually made from linseed oil and are often cleaned with mineral spirits.

Pros: Type of ink used in most shops.

Cons: Mineral Spirits clean up requires adequate ventilation and proper chemical handling.

Brands: Cranfield, Graphic Chemical, Speedball, Gamblin, Vanson, and many more.

Water based inks are similar to acrylic paint and can be cleaned up with soap and water.

Pros: Quick drying time and clean up with soap and water.

Cons: Often dries on the palette, and some brands are not permanent (washable).

Brands: Speedball

Water miscible inks are usually made from vegetable oil, but can be cleaned up with soap and water.

Pros: Soap and water clean up.

Cons: Longer dry times, or needs additives to get the right consistency.

Brands: Cranfield Caligo, Akua

Some quick thoughts on inks:

1. Cranfield - If it is your first time printing, Cranfield inks are a good way to go because they come in smaller tubes, are good quality, and are available at dickblick and many art stores.
2. Graphic Chemical - Great quality ink (what I prefer).

Paper:

You can print on just about any paper. Text weight paper is the standard option, but you can print on heavier papers like BFK or Arches if you want a little more embossing, or thinner papers like the Asian "rice" papers. These are available in large quantities and starter packs on dickblick, or in a good art store. The only thing I would avoid would be novel papers such as ones with leaves or other objects pressed into them because they could damage your type if not printed correctly.

Lino Cut Printing:

You will need to bump up your lino to type high (.918"). Depending on the thickness of your lino, you will need to mount it on a board that is the correct thickness to bring it up to type high. I usually put my lino on a 3/4" thick piece of MDF or particle board with double stick tape to hold it in place. If you need a bit more pressure, add some paper or chipboard (cereal boxes) either underneath the board or on top of your lino while printing.

Printmakings Supplies Retailers:

1. Your local art store is a great way to get supplies and support your community.
2. McClain's Printmaking Supplies. Portland, Oregon <https://www.imclains.com>
3. Graphic Chemical. Chicago, Illinois <https://www.graphicchemical.com>
4. Takach Press. Albuquerque, New Mexico. <https://www.takachpress.com>
5. Dick Blick. Several Locations. <https://www.dickblick.com/stores/>

Laser Cutter

I own a 50w Omtech laser cutter and use lightburn as my software. <https://omtechlaser.com/>. We are able to cut up to 1/4" thick plywood and acrylic. We have found this machine takes a little more maintenance, but is a much more cost effective option than many of the other popular brands. We chose this brand because of its low entry price and its robust group of users on facebook.

Most of the shapes we use we cut out of 1/8" or 3mm plywood. Hobby stores sell a sheet that cuts really well made by Midwest Products.

<https://www.menards.com/main/doors-windows-millwork/dowels-wooden-pins-plugs/midwest-products-reg-craft-plywood-panels/5306/p-1444439593849.htm>

We cut it at 40% power and 10 mm per second. There are a number of variables that can change speed and power including the cleanliness and quality of the lens and mirrors, the age of the tube, the proper settings of the air assist, and the proper alignment of all of the previously mentioned parts.

I like to seal the plywood shapes with shellac and secure them to the base with double sided permanent tape.

LEGO printing

TILES

When looking for LEGO to print with, look for "flat tiles." You can purchase them on the LEGO website pick-a-brick section, but they are pretty expensive and take over a month to ship. The good thing about this is you can get many pieces that LEGO makes. There are also LEGO brand "Dots" packs that usually have only tile pieces in them. These tend to be a better price than the LEGO website.

The best prices can be found at physical LEGO stores in their bulk section. You can fill up a large container for ½ to ¼ the price of anywhere else. The downside here is that you can only buy what they have in stock, and that tends to rotate.

We have also had success searching for flat tiles on eBay. Many LEGO printers also like Bricklink.com.

BASE PLATES

We buy our base plates from Dollar Tree. They sell them for one dollar, which is much cheaper than the LEGO brand. They are slightly thicker than LEGO brand plates and they are 10" x 10". We cut three rows of pegs off of one end to make it fit on a Provisional Press.

PRINTING

LEGOs are a little tricky to print as they are not made to be a printing material. We find the easiest way to counteract this is to use something soft on top of your paper to give it a little extra push. A piece of felt works really well, or a sheet of chipboard also does the trick.

The tiles are also pretty slick and don't hold ink as well as a coarser material. With some trial and error you can definitely make tiles work without altering them, but some people like to lightly sand the surface with 400 grit sandpaper to give them a little bit of tooth.