

Different Printers

Printers allow you to transfer images/text from your PC to paper, and can do so, using a variety of colour. In general, there are three different types of printers, two of which we are going to review. The three different types of printer are: a Dot Matrix Printer, an Ink Jet Printer, and a Laser printer.

Laser Printers:

The way laser printers work, is by using a print engine. This works by shining a very thin pattern of light, on to a type of metal drum. Black ink (toner), will stick to the parts of the drum that has been exposed to the light. The paper then rolls over the drum, and the image is transferred from the drum to the paper, but before the paper leaves the printer, it is heated to join the toner to the paper. Like the dot-matrix printer, the laser printer still prints using dots, however the dots are packed closely together, so they are almost impossible to distinguish.

The quality of laser prints is very high, this is because the resolution of all laser printers is at least 600 dots per inch (DPI) and the prints are very fast. They can print at least 10 pages per minute (PPM), but some can print as fast as 24 PPM. The set back is, that they are expensive to buy, and very expensive to run, as toner cartridges expire after about 6000 prints. Most laser printers are used for printing text and pictures in black and white, because although the colour cartridges give excellent quality, they are VERY expensive. This printer could be very useful when doing my future fashions project. The high-quality prints could be used to make leaflets/flyers, which could be used for advertisement purposes.

Dot Matrix Printers

A dot matrix printer is quite a contrast from a laser printer, as it uses simple technology, to that of a laser. The dot matrix printers have a head, which moves backwards and forwards across the paper. On the head there could be either nine or 24 steel pins, that imprint the image/text onto the paper, using an ink ribbon between the two.

Dot matrix printers are quite cheap to buy, because they were the first types of printer to be invented. When the ink ribbon needs changing, they are cheap to purchase, making them cheap to run. These printers also allow you to make a carbon copy. When the steel pins hit the paper on the top, the pressure made, imprints a replica on the page below. The disadvantages of the dot matrix printer are that they can be very noisy. The qualities of the dot matrix printers are also very poor, which can be a problem if you want to print a detailed image.

Dot matrix printers are often found producing the lottery tickets, in your local paper shop. Doctors also use dot matrix printers, for printing prescriptions, as one copy is given to the patient, and the doctor keeps the carbon copy. The dot matrix printers would be useful for my future fashions project, as the dot matrix could be used to print out receipts, and with the use of the carbon copy, one could be kept, and the other given to the customer.

Each of the printers has its specific qualities, but one is better at performing certain tasks than the other. For example, laser printers have a higher PPM rate than the dot matrix, however, the dot matrix can produce a carbon copy. Also the laser printer has a much higher quality print than the dot matrix but is very expensive. The dot matrixes are quite cheap, but give a lower quality print. Dot matrix printers can be very noisy when printing compared to the laser printer's silent print.