How to print on wood

This document will explain how to print on different types of wood including: melamine, raw wood, MDF, OSB, and balsa.

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What you will need

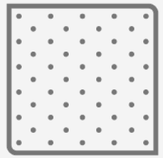
Before printing
- What you will need
- Preparing the substrate
- Preparing the job

Printing
- The printing process

After printing
- Post-print finishing

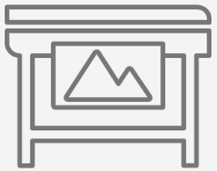
Wood panel

Wood panel cutting device



Clean cloth

SW tools (RIP, edition, etc.)



Printer

Precision ruler

Compressed air and air pistol (optional)

Sealer (optional)

Varnish (optional)

Wood finishing tools. Sandpaper, drill, etc. (optional)

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1. Ensure flatness

Due to its nature, wood may warp under different environmental conditions and may not be able to feed into the printer.

TIP: **Store media flat**, in a clean environment with the **same or similar temperature and humidity** as the printer.

2. Cut

Cut the sample using a cutting device (e.g., table saw, circular saw, cutting table) using recommended settings provided by the manufacturer.

NOTE: This process can also be done at the **end of the job**.

3. Sand

If required, smooth the edges with sandpaper.

4. Clean

Clean the cut sample using an air compressor and a cloth. Using clean boards is important. Ink applied to saw dust will fail to adhere to the wood.

5. Apply wood sealer

Certain porous woods may absorb ink and produce faded colors. Applying a thin layer of clear wood sealer may help to boost colors. Perform a small test to check sealer and ink compatibility.

TIP: If you are using a **white background** you may want to use a white sealer.

6. Dry

Let the sealer dry in a clean and protected environment to prevent dust from settling onto the wet sealer. Respect the drying time recommended by the manufacturer.

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Preparing the job

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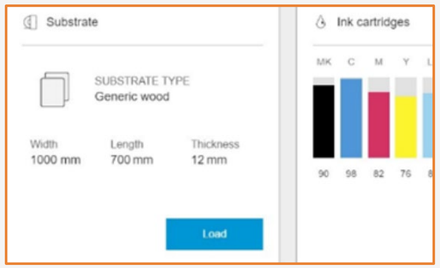
Make your decision based on the type of wood being used.

White (underflood) mode

Color mode

TIP: White (underflood) modes provide the best way to get **good color accuracy** but wood textures will be less evident than when using only color modes.



Generic Wood media preset

Due to the nature of wood, there are no specific media presets for this material. Use the “Generic Wood” media preset on the printer and select the appropriate print mode for White or Color mode.

NOTE: To **work with white**, please refer to the cookbook *How to print on white. (2 RIPs: Onyx and Caldera).*

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The printing process

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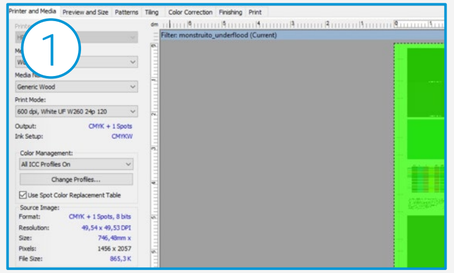
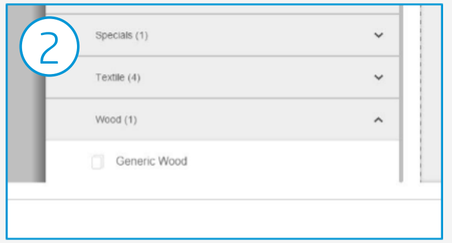
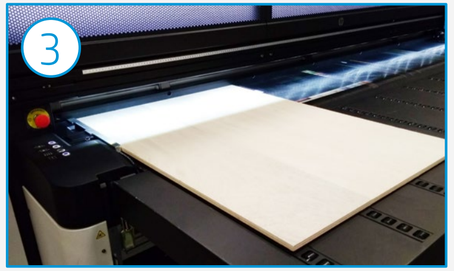
1. RIP the artwork selecting the right media preset and print mode for wood and send the output to the printer nest.



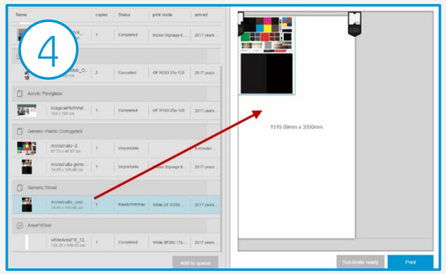
2. Load the substrate on the printer as *Wood > Generic Wood*.



3. Follow the loading process.

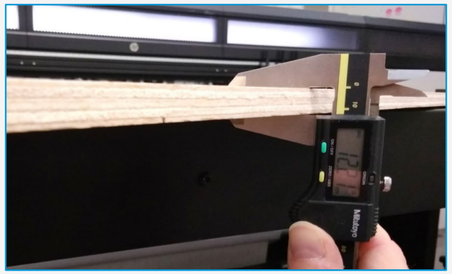


4. Select the ripped job and drag it to the printer queue.



NOTE:
Regarding the **thickness measurement**, it is recommended to use:

- **Automatic** on flat sheets only.
- **Manual** if loading a non-regular sheet, to avoid head strikes.



Press print

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1. Cut

Cut the sample to its final dimensions if you have not already done it previously.

TIP: It's possible to process the ink right after printing as there's low risk to ink chipping on wood during cutting process.

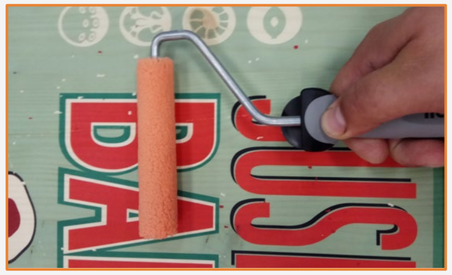
2. Finish edges

Finish edges with sand paper if needed.

NOTE: Ink will be removed on these zones.

3. Clean

Clean the Surface from saw dust.



4. Protect the sample

Varnish the artwork with a commercial varnish for wood.

TIP: It's recommended to perform a **compatibility test** before doing a large job.

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Additional processes

Any additional processes, like drilling, assembling, and others, should be performed using wood tools, with finishing and mounting techniques. Treat the printed sample with care.

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Remarks

Exact printing results may vary when using unvarnished substrates, especially if they are old or cracked. In these cases, it is recommended to sand the surface prior to printing.

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