



What are the key differences among the Epson ink solutions?

Key Differences	Epson Photo Ink	DURABrite® Ultra Pigment Ink	PictureMate® Photo Ink	Epson UltraChrome Hi-Gloss™ Ink	Epson UltraChrome K3™ Ink
Target Application	Advanced amateur photographers and home photo 	Home general purpose and photo—best text printing and great glossy photos in one ink set 	Home photo  	Photography, including commercial and advanced amateur; scrapbooking 	Commercial, fine art, black and white, and advanced amateur photography; pre-press proofing, posters, and signage 
Current Epson Printers	Epson Stylus® Photo R220/R300/R320/R340/1280/RX620/RX700	Epson Stylus C88/CX3800 Series/CX4200/CX4800/CX5800F/CX7800	PictureMate/Express Edition/Deluxe Viewer Edition	Epson Stylus Photo R800/R1800	Epson Stylus Photo R2400, Epson Stylus Pro 4800/7800/9800
Ink Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6-color dye-based ink—Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black plus Light Cyan and Light magenta to smooth the tonal gradations critical for photography • Wide color gamut and widest media selection • Best output quality on ink jet papers (matte, glossy, premium photo), and good quality on plain paper; also supports photo stickers, transparencies, and iron-on transfers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-color pigment-based ink: Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black • Delivers exceptional text and image quality on plain and matte papers • New formulation delivers great glossy photos even on the best Epson glossy photo papers • Water, smudge, and fade-resistant on plain, matte, and glossy papers • Only four-color all pigment ink set in its class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6-color pigment ink—CMYK plus Red and Blue inks deliver archival quality photos with quality comparable to dye-based inks • Optimized for 4x6 photo printing, producing smooth tonal gradations critical for photography • PictureMate Print Packs include paper and ink packaged together to deliver a cost per print as low as 24 cents—satisfaction guaranteed¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-fidelity ink set using Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Matte Black and Photo Black inks, plus Red and Blue inks and a Gloss Optimizer • First pigment-based ink set to deliver archival quality glossy and matte photos, with glossy quality comparable to dye-based inks • Best output quality on premium glossy papers and very good quality on matte papers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pigment-based Cyan, Light Cyan, Magenta, Light Magenta, Yellow, Photo Black or Matte Black, plus Light Black and Light Light Black • Three-level black ink technology improves overall gray balance, produces impressive midtones and highlights, and reduces metamerism • Best output quality on matte and fine art papers, with very good output on glossy papers
Permanence					
Water and smudge-resistant	Yes (Epson Premium Photo Papers)	Yes, on all supported papers	Yes, on all supported papers	Yes, on all supported papers	Yes, on all supported papers
Fade resistance—under glass ²	Up to 36 years	Up to 100 years ³	Up to 104 years	Up to 200 years	Up to 108 years (color), over 200 years (B&W)
Fade resistance—dark storage ²	Over 300 years	Over 300 years ³	Up to 200 years	Over 300 years	Over 200 years

¹ Price of 24 cents per print based on MSRP of \$64.99 for Print Pack with 270 sheets of glossy photo paper. Satisfaction Guarantee: If a customer receives fewer prints than the number of sheets in the Print Pack, he/she can return the remaining sheets for a refund of the difference. For more details visit www.MyPictureMate.com/SatisfactionGuarantee.

² Fade resistance ratings on specific combinations of ink and papers, based on accelerated testing of prints displayed indoors, framed under glass, or kept in dark storage. See www.wilhelm-research.com for test details and ratings on specific papers. Actual print stability will vary according to display conditions, light intensity, humidity, and atmospheric conditions. Epson does not guarantee longevity of prints. For maximum print life, display all prints under glass or properly store them.

³ Testing for DURABrite Ultra pigment ink is currently being finalized by Wilhelm Imaging Research, Inc. Initial results indicate it has comparable light resistance to DURABrite Ink (up to 100 years when used with Epson Matte Paper Heavyweight) and comparable dark storage (up to 300 years on Premium Glossy Photo Paper and PremierArt™ Matte Scrapbook Paper).

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Frequently Asked Questions about the Epson Ink Solutions

Q: If the DURABrite Ultra pigment ink, PictureMate Photo Ink, Epson UltraChrome K3 Ink, and Epson UltraChrome Hi-Gloss Ink all have higher light-resistance, then why does Epson offer six-color dye printers (using Epson Photo Inks) for photo applications?

A: The dye-based Epson Photo Inks produce smooth gradations critical for photography and are compatible with premium photo papers and many matte papers, but also support many papers not compatible with the pigment ink systems, including iron-on transfers, photo stickers, glossy photo greeting cards, and other glossy papers. The six-color dye-based ink set is designed for the photo enthusiast who is looking for premium photo quality, rich feature set, and flexibility. Prints produced with these inks will last for generations when stored in an album (using Epson Premium Photo Papers or Epson ColorLife® Photo Paper) and are ideal for framing and sharing with friends.

Q: What are the main differences among the pigment ink technologies offered by Epson?

A: The main differences are:

- DURABrite Ultra pigment inks are featured on Epson printers and all-in-one printers designed for general consumer and small office/home office customers. This customer wants the best of both worlds in one printer: great text on plain paper and great photos on glossy paper; and the DURABrite Ultra pigment ink delivers. Prints are also smudge-, fade-, and light-resistant on plain, matte, and glossy papers.
- PictureMate Photo Ink is featured on the PictureMate personal photo lab family of products, and is designed specifically for printing photos that match the expectations customers have about printing their photos at a lab: Lab quality prints that are water-, smudge-, and fade-resistant. In fact, PictureMate prints exceed customer expectations—these prints last as much as four times longer than prints from the photo lab.
- Epson UltraChrome Hi-Gloss Ink is designed for photography and scrapbooking, and delivers archival quality glossy and matte photos. With an ink set that includes Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Photo Black, Matte Black, Red, and Blue inks, plus a Gloss Optimizer, the Epson UltraChrome Hi-Gloss Ink produces a large color gamut and is ideal for commercial and advanced amateur photography. This ink set excels at producing uniform glossy prints similar to traditional photo labs but with more vivid colors.
- Epson UltraChrome K3 Ink is designed for photography and pre-press proofing, offering both a large color gamut and neutral black and white prints using the new Advanced Black and White Print Mode. With an 8-color pigment-based ink system, including three-level black ink technology, the ink produces significantly improved gray balance, impressive midtones and highlights for smoother tonal range. It also provides reduced metamerism and reduced gloss differential. The ink further offers improved scratch resistance with professional print permanence ratings for truly sellable quality prints and gallery displays.

Q: Why don't the Epson pigment ink solutions support the same papers?

A: Because the formulation of inks in all the pigment-based inks is different, they are optimized for different papers:

- DURABrite Ultra pigment ink uses a high-density, super-penetrating formula optimized for printing on plain and matte papers. The new ink formulation now produces great output quality on glossy papers, including Epson Glossy Photo Paper, Epson Premium Glossy Photo Paper, and even the new Epson Ultra Premium Glossy Photo Paper.
- PictureMate Photo Ink is designed for use on the PictureMate family of products. These 4x6 personal photo labs use the PictureMate Print Pack, which includes a photo cartridge and glossy paper sold together in one box. Because most home photo customers want glossy prints that look like lab prints, the PictureMate Print Pack currently includes 100 sheets of glossy 4x6 PictureMate Photo Paper.
- Epson UltraChrome Hi-Gloss Ink is compatible with a wide variety of Epson glossy and matte and fine art papers. Because the print driver selects the Black ink (Photo or Matte) based on the paper selected in the printer driver, maximizing both color and density is automatic and often transparent to the user. Additionally, with the Gloss Optimizer, prints on glossy papers have uniform gloss level. This ink set produces its best output quality on premium glossy papers and very good quality on matte and fine art papers.
- Epson UltraChrome K3 Ink features user-interchangeable Matte Black and Photo Black inks. The Matte Black ink produces a higher optical density and the best quality prints on matte papers, including Fine Art papers. The Photo Black ink is encapsulated in a resin, allowing it to bond onto glossy and semi-glossy Photo Papers. The Photo Black is best for printing on glossy media, producing its best print quality when used with the Epson Premium Luster Photo Paper. Epson UltraChrome K3 Ink produces its best output quality on matte and Fine Art papers, with very good output on glossy papers.

Q: How does DURABrite Ultra pigment ink compare to the pigment black / dye color ink system used in many competitive printers?

A: Some competitive printers use pigment ink for black and dye ink for color. Because DURABrite Ultra pigment ink uses pigment ink for both black and color, you get water-, light-, and smudge-resistant benefits for everything you print. Additionally, with DURABrite Ultra pigment ink, you get the benefit of crisper text and graphics for both black and color printing.