

Everything You Need to Know About Inks for Paper Crafting

Ink is a liquid that appears in a variety of colors. It is used for a various needs, including writing, drawing, and printing. Different types of ink may be used for different purposes, not only limited to the crafting world, but also for paper, clothing, and other industries. Ink has been used for so long that it has integrated itself into almost every area of life today.

Brief Ink History

In ancient societies, ink was used primarily for writing and drawing. Certain civilizations were thought to have created ink from fire soot, lamp oil, graphite, or other minerals. Various plants were used to dye ink in different colors and forms. Once papyrus was invented, societies were able to make well use of their ink for recording information. The recipes for inks varied across civilizations and across time, as people came up with new and improved methods to develop their ink.

Manufacturing

Today, there are a few standard methods for ink manufacturing. Ink ingredients typically include linseed oil, petroleum distillate solvent, and soybean oil. The primary ingredients are dye and pigment. The dye dissolves in the ink and the pigment is ground into a fine powder before being added to the mixture. Depending on how the ink will be used, this dye and pigment mixture will be added to water, alcohol, or some type of oil. The entire mixture is well-heated until the ink achieves the required liquid consistency.



How is ink manufactured?

The primary ingredients required to prepare ink are dyes and pigments. Dyes are soluble. This is why, when they are associated with ink, they produce color with the help of chemicals.

On the contrary, pigments can be obtained artificially as well as organically. Pigments are insoluble, and hence, are unaffected by the presence of any chemicals. However, pigments tend to absorb only the selective areas.

Linseed oil, petroleum distillate solvent, soybean oil, and some organic pigments are usually used to make colorful ink. Inorganic pigments are rarely used to prepare ink. Usually, to prepare **black ink**, makers use white pigments. This white pigment is easily acquired from titanium dioxide combined with carbon black.

Irrespective of which type of ink you are manufacturing, you can use additives such as oils, wax, and some sort of drying agent. This will make your printing process easier and you can use customized designs of your choice. **Alcohol ink** dries through evaporation while ink with a linseed oil base dries through oxidation.



Apart from this, you also have to be mindful of the ink's equipment, formulation, and manufacturing process. There are various processes to manufacture inks. However, when you intend to produce good quality ink, either flushed color pigment or the dry pigment process is applied.

The manufacturing process begins with the segregation of the pigment in a vehicle. This vehicle can carry the pigment on to the paper. Usually, soybean oil, petroleum oil, and water are the carriers for the black inks. Resins help to disperse the pigment and bind it to the paper once printed. Agglomerates and aggregates pigment particles that are formed. The segregation process helps to dissolve these aggregates and agglomerates into the particular size. Manufacturers use a premix to wet the carbon to release all the trapped air in the vehicle. The pigment is introduced in the oil during the premixing. Premixing stage can be an exhaustive part of the entire manufacturing process. Dispensers are used for premixing and pre-dispersion. These dispensers work at a fixed speed. All the ingredients are combined together into a heated vessel. They are constantly dispersed until they turn into a smooth liquid. At times, the manufacturers filter this mixture to get rid of any sediments.



How are inks used?

A lot of artists create and design artwork with the help of ink. There are a few artists that make watercolor paintings with inks. You can use [watercolor inks](#) to make such designs. Search online for these inks as they are available in different vibrant colors.

It has been observed that [dye inks](#) are the favorite stamping inks of artists. Some artists also prefer alcohol ink canvas and tumblers. Altenew stamping inks are popular for card makers and scrapbook enthusiasts. These stamping inks are available in two kinds: large dye inks and mini dye inks.

You can also refer to [alcohol ink techniques](#) and learn how to use [alcohol ink](#). [Altenew Academy](#) offers many classes around ink techniques. This will help you to design and create beautiful alcohol ink paintings and or projects of your choice.



[Find the Best Inks For Crafts Here!](#)

Inks in Paper Crafting and Card Making

From ancient seals and signet rings to woodblock printing, inks have been a crucial part of paper crafting through the years. Before the use of modern rubber stamps, there was woodblock printing. This process involves carving an image into a wood block surface and adding ink onto it. The inked wood block would then be applied to paper or fabric to transfer the carved image.

The use of dye ink in modern paper crafting and card making has opened up a world of possibilities. A variety of card making techniques using different types of stamping inks are now easily accessible to paper crafters and card makers. From simple stamping and layered stamping to using stamping ink pads for faux watercoloring, heat-embossing, and other mixed media art techniques - stamping ink is now a must-have in every paper crafter's tool kit. While dye ink is the most popular and preferred ink for card makers, a few techniques require the use of alcohol ink, watercolor ink, and pigment ink. With different techniques, come different ink colors for stamps. Arts and crafts stores now offer a wide range of stamping ink colors - from plain and basic colors like black, blue, red, green, and yellow to metallic ink colors. The sky's the limit when it comes to ink colors for stamps.

Printers

Most modern printers use varied ink colors to take colorful printouts. A pigment ink print is highly recommended by users. People who have to take regular prints of good-quality images and fonts opt for [pigment ink](#) as it is highly reliable and provides smudge-free output.

Markers and Calligraphy

Today, you can easily find [alcohol ink markers](#) that are easy to use. You can order them online as well. Copic Markers and [Altenew Alcohol Ink Markers](#) are used by many crafters.

It is easier to use alcohol ink on glass, tile, and many other surfaces. You can also search some inspiration online on how to make alcohol ink art. There are several artists that make use of white alcohol ink in their rare and contemporary calligraphy writings.

[Alcohol ink tutorials](#) on YouTube provide a lot of inspiration for crafters all over the world. You'll be surprised by the endless possibilities and inspiration when it comes to making [alcohol ink projects](#)!

Type of Inks

There are many different types of inks available in the market. Not all of them are geared towards [stamping](#) or crafts. We will discuss some of the most popular paper crafting and [stamping inks](#). Some high level advantages of different types of inks are listed below first and more details are listed after this section. If you're curious about the difference between [pigment vs. dye ink](#), then keep reading!

[Dye inks](#) (Large Dye Inks and Mini Dye Inks)

- Dry easily
- Quite resistant against oil and paper
- Better output for printing text

[Pigment Inks](#)

- Water and smudge resistant
- Resistant to fading under sunlight
- Long lasting print
- Better color stability

[Alcohol inks](#)

- Easier to use on slick surfaces
- You can easily apply and remove this ink

Chalk inks

- Wide range of color options
- Quick drying
- Easy to use for arts and crafts
- Elegant Finish

Dye Inks

Dye Inks are some of the most common inks available to stampers. These are some of the easiest to use and most readily available. These too, come in many different forms and sizes. As the name suggests, these inks sink in and 'dye' the **cardstock** they are stamped onto.

Dye inks pads are mostly seen in a water-based form and have many advantages when it comes to stamping and **layered stamping**. They are easy to apply to stamps and dry quickly when stamped onto porous surfaces. As they dry quickly and the risk of smudging is low, they are great for beginner stampers.



These inks can be found in different sizes: large dye inks or mini dye inks. The **large ink pads** are great for stamping larger areas or when stamping a lot. The **small ink pads** are good for traveling or when storage space is at a premium. Dye inks can also be found in different pad materials, such as foam and felt. The type of pad does not change the overall effect of stamping but does slightly change the technique of inking onto a stamp.

Water-based Dye Inks

As water-based dye inks originate from water, they will react with water. This gives another advantage, as they can be used as watercolors or in other ways to give different looks. They blend easily with each other when ink blending and can easily be cleaned from stamps.

Here's a fun and easy video tutorial on how to use dye inks for watercoloring!

One of the disadvantages of water-based dye inks is that they are not lightfast. This means that after a while in direct sunlight, the color of the ink will fade.

Water-based dye inks are transparent and are therefore great for layered or over stamping. They stamp best onto light cardstock because of this. The ink works best stamped onto cardstock and porous surfaces and does not dry on non-porous surfaces.

Waterproof Dye Inks

Waterproof ink holds many of the same qualities of water-based dye inks, but there are some differences.

These inks dry quite quickly, but when dry, they will not react with water. This means this type of ink is great for stamping outline images that can then be colored using watercolor paints. As they are waterproof, the stamped image will not bleed or run.



Pigment Ink

The main difference between **dye inks** and **pigment inks**, other than the formula, is that while dye inks 'dye' the surface, pigment inks sit on top of it.

Pigment ink tends to be of thicker consistency. This has advantages and some disadvantages over dye ink. As they are thicker, this may mean that ink pads dry out faster, and tend to require re-inking more often. It also means that it takes longer to dry when stamped. This may also serve as a benefit for heat embossing as the **embossing powder** will stick to the ink longer.

Pigment inks tend to be opaque. This means they work well on both light and dark-colored surfaces. Also these can be heat set onto some non-porous surfaces. This type of ink also tends to be more fade resistant than dye inks.

Get Your Pigment Inks Here!

Hybrid Ink

Hybrid ink is relatively new to the stamping market. It has properties of both dye inks and pigment inks. This type of ink tends to be less reactive with water because of this. However, it is fast drying and can be used for many different stamping techniques.

Solvent Inks

Solvent inks work in many of the same ways as pigment inks. This type of ink sits on top of the surface instead of dyeing it. The ink is quite thick and is usually oil or alcohol-based. This means there are advantages and disadvantages. These inks do not work well with other alcohol-based mediums. For example, when used with alcohol markers, they will bleed and run.



Solvent inks can be used on non-porous surfaces, eg. glass/metal, and will dry. They come in transparent and opaque forms, so they can be used in a variety of ways. Solvent inks are permanent and tend to be quite light-fast.

Chalk Ink

These are very much like pigment inks. Chalk ink sits on top of the surface, but as the name suggests, these have a chalk-like finish when dry. They are opaque, and therefore, work on both **light** and **dark-colored cardstock**.

Embossing Ink

Embossing ink seems to be in a category of its very own. This ink is made especially for heat embossing. It is a thick, sticky ink that stays wet for a long time unless it is heat set. It is usually clear but can be found in other colors, as well.



Fabric Ink (Mixed Media Ink)

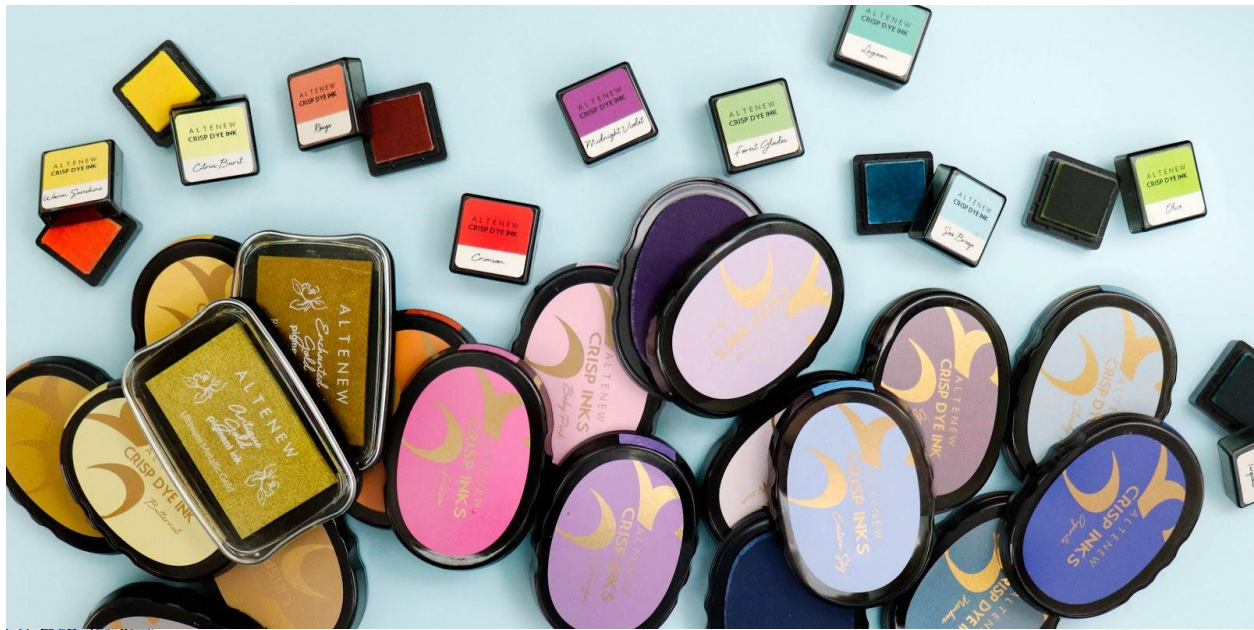
Fabric Ink holds many of the qualities of pigment ink, but can also be dye-based. It tends to be thicker and opaque. It also sits on top of the stamped surface rather than dyeing it.

This ink works well on other porous surfaces, such as fabric and wood, as well as **cardstock**. When heat is set onto fabric, this can then be washed. The ink can then be stamped on to clothes or even soft furnishings.


Ink Storage

Here are some quick tips on how to store your inks properly.

- Try to keep your **ink pads** and **ink refills** in a cool, dry place and out of direct sunlight, as this may change the intended color.
- Always replace the lid after stamping to keep the ink from drying out.
- **Reinkers** are readily available for many inks. These can be used to re-ink a dry ink pad, and so, greatly lengthen the ink pad's life.
- **Altenew inks** are less likely to dry if stored properly.



CRAFTING 101
Inks

 ERIN THOMPSON

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Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Q1 - Which inks to use for stamping?

You can use many different inks for stamping depending on the look you want or what surface you will be stamping onto. The most popular type of ink for everyday stamping is dye ink. These are fast drying and work well on light colored cardstock. Pigment inks can be used on darker cardstock. They are opaque in nature so work better than dye inks for this task. If stamping onto fabric a special ink will need to be used. Our **Mixed Media Inks** are perfect for this.

Q2 - How do you use ink on paper?

There are a few different ways you can add to paper. The most popular is stamping onto it or you can use your ink pad directly to paper to color it. You can also add ink to paper using an **ink blending tool** to add a softer effect.

Q3 - How do you blend ink?

Ink blending is a great way to add soft looking backgrounds to your handmade projects. To do this you will need some sort of **ink blending tool**. This can be a tool specially made for the task, a make-up brush, or even a piece of sponge or foam. Ink up your chosen blending tool using your ink and then blend the ink onto your project. It's always best to

start off your project and then using small circular motions move onto your cardstock. Use a light hand when doing this to help reduce the amount of marks.

Q4 - How do you keep stamp ink from smearing?

This is dependent on the type of ink you use. Dye inks tend not to smear as they sink into the cardstock and dry quickly. Pigment inks on the other hand sit on the surface of the cardstock and tend to dry much slower than dye inks. It's always best practice to leave inks to dry but you can use a heat tool to speed up the drying process.

Q5 - Can you blend pigment ink?

Yes you can! You can do this in the same way as you would do with dye inks with an ink blending tool.

[Ready to Get Inky? Click here!](#)