
Below are answers to some commonly asked questions about switching your printer(s) from thermal transfer to use Direct Thermal.

1) How easily can I change my existing printer(s) to Direct Thermal instead of thermal transfer?

As virtually every thermal printer is designed to be dual-function, switching from thermal transfer to Direct Thermal is a quick and painless process. In most cases the change simply involves:

- a. **Removing the thermal transfer ribbon and label stock then installing Direct Thermal stock.**
Your existing label supplier will certainly have Direct Thermal labels in stock to meet your needs. Remember you will not need to buy or use cumbersome thermal transfer ribbons.
- b. **Changing the printer and/or software settings for Direct Thermal** (See Question 2 below.)
- c. **Printing your Direct Thermal labels.**

See how easily your printer can be switched to Direct Thermal by viewing our [Demo Video](#).

NOTE: Printers utilizing other technologies to create a print, (e.g., inkjet, laser impact), cannot be changed to utilize Direct Thermal.

2) Can I use the same software for Direct Thermal as I used for thermal transfer?

In most cases the software will require a simple default-check change from thermal transfer to Direct Thermal and can be carried out by your qualified IS staff. Please consult your [printer manual](#) or service agent for specific information. In situations where the printer set up is driven by your system language, it may be necessary to make some program changes. In such cases you should consult your software vendor for specific configuration information.

3) Does my printer warranty cover Direct Thermal use?

In virtually all situations the printer manufacturer's warranty is valid for Direct Thermal or thermal transfer—provided your thermal printer supports both configurations. Please consult your printer manual or service agent for specific information.

4) What printers can be used for Direct Thermal printing?

Direct Thermal printers are available from most leading printer manufacturers, including Citizen, Cognitive, Datamax, Eltron, Intermec, Sato, Wasp, Zebra, Paxar, Printronix, TEC and others. Your regular hardware or systems supplier will have access to a variety of printers to suit your needs.

5) Do settings need to be made based on the Direct Thermal label/paper grade I use?

Sometimes. Since some label/paper grades are more sensitive than others, you may need to adjust the head energy/contrast setting on the printer so that it produces optimum performance between the printer and Direct Thermal paper. For some printers, such a change may be implemented by a user directly adjusting a control on the printer. For other printers, change to the print driver language could be needed. You should consult your printer manual for detailed information.

6) What grades of Direct Thermal paper will work for my warehouse/supply chain application?

Keep in mind that many grades of thermal paper are available, including ones for standard-speed printers and high-speed printers, ones designed for infrared and near infrared scanning, ones for short-life applications, ones that are highly heat-resistant and ones that are UV light resistant. So, when selecting thermal paper, choose one that is appropriate for your printer as well as the application for which the paper will be used. To learn about the range of Appleton's label face stocks available for your application, visit our warehouse/supply chain [product portfolio](#).

For more information about switching to Direct Thermal, contact your label stock supplier and/or your printer manufacturer. Appleton is also a willing resource that can help you prepare for a Direct Thermal trial. Just contact us at tatp@appletonideas.com.