

# 6 COMMON COPY MACHINE & PRINTER PROBLEMS AND THE PATH TO RESOLUTION

Anyone who has worked in an office knows the frustrations of copy machine and printer problems – for an extreme dramatization of some of these frustrations, and a good laugh, check out the film '[Office Space](#)'.

Although built to perform the simple task of copying words and images from one page to another, the copy machine has an incredible knack for causing frustrations for office workers everywhere. Listed below are some of the most common printer problems and, better yet, some solution tips.

## 1 - PAPER JAMS

The paper jam is the most common copy machine error encountered. The reasons for occurrence vary from the wrong paper size to plain old improper paper loading. These issues cause the copier to pull paper through incorrectly, resulting in a jam that delays your copy or print. Fixing these types of issues require you to remove the jammed paper manually and reload the proper paper size or correcting the paper alignment.



Additionally, paper dust does exist, believe it or not, and has a tendency to clog the machine and lead to paper jams. The best way to avoid this problem is to periodically wipe the feed tires clean and from time to time, vacuum away dust build up inside the copier.

## 2 - LINES ON PAPER

When you copy a piece of paper with simple text and/or images, but your finished copy contains streaks, lines or other deformities in the reproduction, you become frustrated. There are multiple sources for this potential copy machine problem and they include:

- Foreign substances on the scanner glass or mirrors
- Drum or developer unit malfunction (only applies to multi-component copier systems)
- Drum blade malfunction resulting in large lines vertically down the page
- Issue with fusers

The first issue is resolved through removing interferences and cleaning the scanner glass and mirrors (see your user's manual for proper cleaning instructions). The remaining issues should be remedied by replacing the unit causing the issue; most often these should be addressed by contacting your service provider.

### **3 - CARTRIDGE OR TONER ISSUE**

Low, empty or malfunctioning [toner issues](#) can occur within your copy machine. If they are low or empty, simple replacement should repair the issue. If it is malfunctioning, there could be one of two things going on:

1. Manufacturer Error – bring a copy of the poor quality copies and the cartridge to the place of purchase and request a replacement.
2. Incompatibility Issues – most copy machines require specific toner; if you try and use an incompatible cartridge, your print quality will suffer.

### **4 - WRINKLED PAGES**

There is nothing professional about copy pages that come out of the machine crinkled. Rather than looking like a consummate business professional, your employees show up for meetings or submit paperwork for reports that look like they were dug out of a student's backpack.

Wrinkled pages are often the result of worn out feed and exit rollers that cause sticking or jamming. But, worn out paper trays, moisture caused by humidity and fuser assemblies can also lead to wrinkled pages. If paper is noticeably damaged for any reason, do not use it. For issues with paper trays, you can purchase replacements. However, fixing the fuser assembly and feed rollers requires the assistance of a technician.

## 5 - COPIES ARE TOO LIGHT OR TOO DARK

The majority of the time, issues with light and dark on copy pages is going to be the result of an imbalance in the density controls on the copier. Someone may have inadvertently altered the settings previously, making subsequent images copied too light or too dark. In this case, resetting the density levels is the best solution.

It is also possible however that the drum could be reaching the end of its work life or that the toner in the machine is bad. Some aftermarket toners are not up to manufacturer codes and can result in light density issues. Replacements should be purchased and installed.

## 6 - SPOTS ON THE PAGE

As the name suggests, this copy machine problem consists of random arrays of dots marring an otherwise perfect copy. If you notice the dots in the same place every time, it is likely an issue of smudges or debris on the copy mirror or glass. Once again, this can be remedied by properly cleaning off the glass and mirrors.

A more random array of spots repeated throughout the document could be a defect in the drum. Replacing drums should fix the issue.

## BEST SOLUTIONS

In addition to the solutions mentioned above, there are a few steps that you can take in your office place to ensure that these common copy machine problems are reduced. First and foremost, never be forceful when it comes to loading and unloading paper from the machine. Second, make sure to follow the replacement timelines for vital parts and fixtures on the copy machine to avoid wear and tear issues.

Last but not least, have the copy machine cleaned professionally from time to time. The buildup of dust and debris inside the machine can lead to many of the problems discussed above.