

---

**How to fix your Computer**  
**Class 3 – Printers**  
**By Adam J. Richter M.S.**

---

## **Types of Printers**

### **Inkjet**

All-In-One (Copy, Scan, Fax, etc...) also known as AIO  
Photo

Inkjet printers use cartridges filled with ink. Older inkjet printers had two cartridges, one for the black and one combination cartridge with three primary colors in it. If one of the colors were to run out you had to replace the whole color cartridge. In more modern inkjet printers the cartridges are separated. They are less expensive per cartridge and if one color runs out you can simply replace that color instead of having to replace the combination cartridge (which would be more expensive \$\$\$).

### **Laser**

Black and White (AIO or just print)  
Color (AIO or just print)

Laser printers use cartridges filled with a fine ink powder called toner. These toner cartridges are usually a lot more expensive than the average ink cartridge but they also typically have a higher yield. The average toner cartridge can printer around 2000 pages. The average ink cartridge can print approximately 200 pages.

## **Types of Connections**

All printers have one of two types of connections, LPT or USB. Some printers



made during the transition from LPT to USB have both connections. LPT connections are the older style connection. LPT cables are now more expensive, slower, and slightly less



reliable than USB connections. The demand for transferring large files for scanning and printing caused the USB connection to become standard.

Note: Most new printers do not include the necessary USB cable. You will need to purchase this to connect your printer to your computer. The USB cable you need is Type A to B.

**COMPUTER**

Computer Repair, Service, & Tutoring  
Sarasota/Venice (941) 918-0300  
Manatee (941) 756-5300

<http://www.computerpros.cc/articles.php>

## **Installing Your Printer**

Read the Directions! Printers can be very temperamental during the installation. If you do not follow the exact steps outlined during the install you can cause some trouble that may make getting the printer to work difficult. Usually you can just insert and install the CD before attaching the printer to the computer. This is to make sure the software is on the computer for when the printer is connected. Sometimes midway through the install you will be prompted to attach the printer. The directions vary but the setup is usually easy if you follow the guide.

\*Note: Be sure to use the right kind of connection for your printer and be sure to connect it to the right connection on the back of your computer. If you have to force the connection, you are probably plugging the connector into the wrong hole or it may be plugged in backwards.

## **Testing**

Once your printer installation is complete you will want to print a test page. Some printer installations will print a test page for you to make sure the printer is working correctly.

To print a test page, do the following.

1. Go to Start>Control Panel
2. Go to Printers and Faxes
3. Right Click your Printer and click the 'Print Test Page' button at the bottom right corner of the box.

You can also open up one of your documents and try to print.

## **Troubleshooting**

If your printer is not working check the obvious first. Is the connection firm? Are the ink cartridges installed? Are there any error messages on your printers screen? Are any of the lights flashing on your printer? All of these things are indicators that your printer may have a jam or other problem.

If the above checks are alright you can do the following.



Computer Repair, Service, & Tutoring  
Sarasota/Venice (941) 918-0300  
Manatee (941) 756-5300  
<http://www.computerpros.cc/articles.php>

1. Print a test page from the printer, or perform a copy (Doesn't use the computer)
2. Go to 'Control Panel' and 'Printers and Faxes' and make sure your printer isn't offline, doesn't have error print jobs queued, or hasn't in anyway become disabled. Is it still your default printer?
3. Uninstall and Reinstall your printer. Go to 'Control Panel' and double click 'Add/Remove Programs', then find the printer software and uninstall it. If you have a highspeed connection, go to the printer manufacturers' webpage and download the newest drivers. Reinstall the printer using the new drivers.
  - a. HP – [www.hp.com](http://www.hp.com)
  - b. Lexmark – [www.lexmark.com](http://www.lexmark.com)
  - c. Epson – [www.epson.com](http://www.epson.com)
  - d. Brother – [www.brother.com](http://www.brother.com)

Keep in mind that it is usually less expensive to purchase a new printer than it is to get an inkjet printer repaired. Most local printer repair shops charge around \$80-\$120 for service plus parts. You can get a new inkjet printer for near that same price.

The best prices and the most reliable service I've found is from 123inkjets.com, I've put a link on the Computer Pros website. It includes slightly better discounts for using the link. Go to [www.computerpros.cc](http://www.computerpros.cc) and click the link that says "SAVE NOW on Quality Inkjet Cartridges. Up to 75% SAVINGS!" Enjoy

If you have any question on the material above please contact me  
[adam@computerpros.cc](mailto:adam@computerpros.cc)



Computer Repair, Service, & Tutoring  
Sarasota/Venice (941) 918-0300  
Manatee (941) 756-5300  
<http://www.computerpros.cc/articles.php>