



PRINTING on TEXTILES

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a Spandex Group Company

PRINTING

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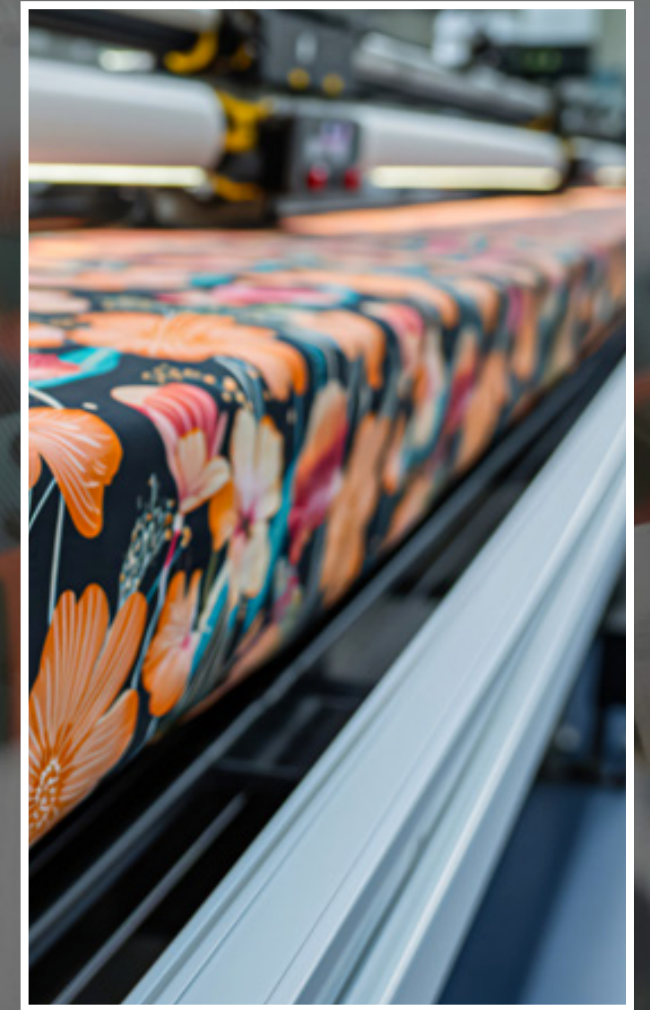
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on TEXTILES

Printing on Textiles

Print media made from textiles has become increasingly popular in large-format printing (LFP) over the past decade. To perform successfully, textile media must be designed to meet the requirements of the final application. Much like a freshly washed bed sheet can easily wrinkle during handling, textiles used in printing require special care throughout production, transport, printing, and installation. A seamless 5 m × 50 m textile must remain smooth, crease-free, and dimensionally stable at every stage of the process. Historically, not all printing equipment was designed to handle delicate textile substrates efficiently. To ensure reliable processing across a wide range of printers, we have developed our textiles to meet exceptionally tight manufacturing tolerances, even though such precision is not traditionally associated with textile production.



Understanding these challenges helps explain why textile media requires careful handling. Fortunately, modern textile print media is engineered to simplify processing while delivering reliable and consistent results.

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To ensure textile media arrives in perfect condition, packaging is carefully designed to protect the material throughout transport and storage.

Heavier coated textiles are typically supplied in robust cardboard tubes. While this packaging may require more effort to unpack, it provides the best protection against wrinkles, pressure marks, and surface impressions that could affect print quality.

This is particularly important for knife-coated materials, where impression marks can remain visible even after unrolling or tensioning.

Media Packaging

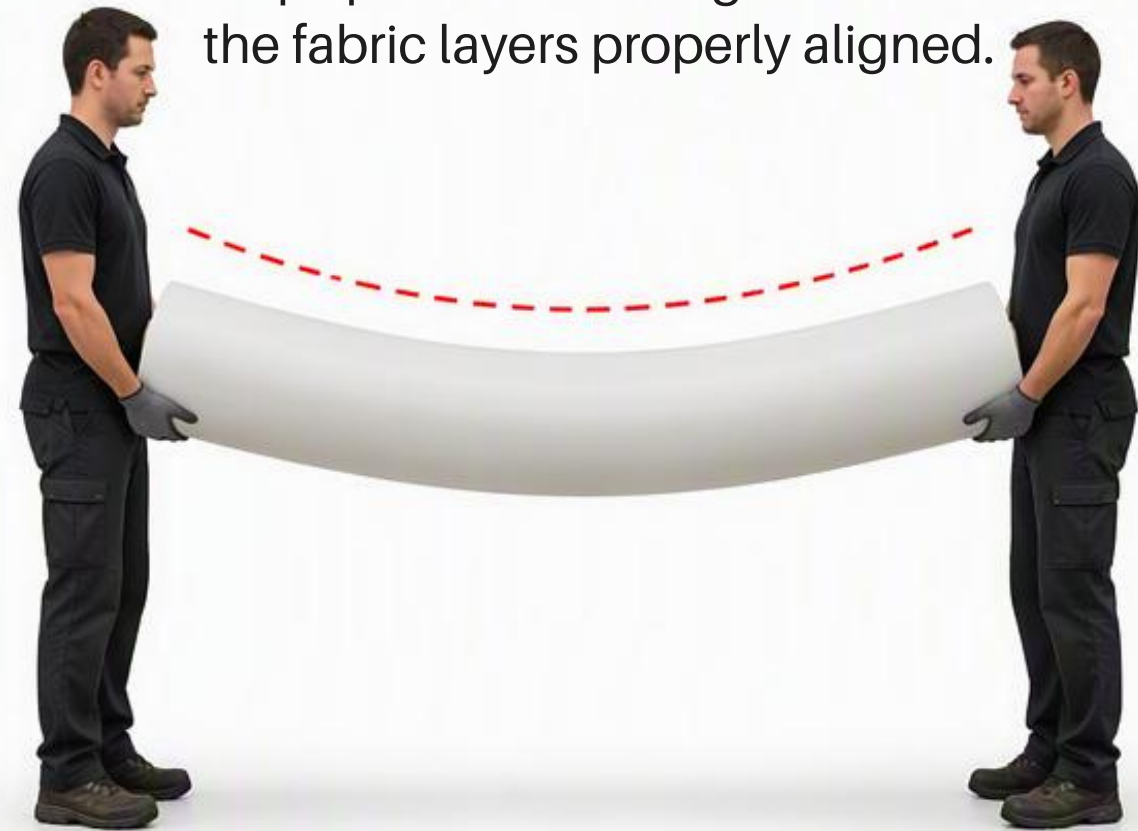


Lightweight dip-coated textiles, such as flags and display fabrics, are generally packed in protective foil. These materials are less sensitive to mechanical pressure but require effective protection against dust and contamination. In the unlikely event that minor creases occur during transit, these textiles can often be restored by rewinding the roll or applying gentle heat during finishing.

Media Handling

Manufacturers carefully consider media handling beyond packaging. Wide-format textiles, especially 5 m rolls, are often wound onto extra-strong cores to minimise roll deflection during transport, storage, and printer loading.

(03) Even with these precautions, heavy rolls should be handled using a dedicated roll lifter rather than being carried from the ends. A lifter with adequate support helps prevent bending and distortion while keeping the fabric layers properly aligned.



This is a worthwhile investment, as a 5 m × 50 m roll can easily weigh over 150 kg. Proper handling equipment not only protects the media from damage but also improves workplace safety and reduces the risk of injury.

For optimal results, the working area should always be kept clean, organised, and free from dust and obstacles.



Media Storage

To prevent contamination and damage, media rolls should never be stored directly on the floor. When a partially used roll is removed from the printer, it should be stored fully supported on a clean, flat surface, such as a pallet covered with cardboard, to avoid distortion, pressure marks, or other handling damage.

Proper storage also helps keep dust and debris away from the media, reducing the risk of contamination and protecting printer components, including print heads.



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Media Loading

Although many printers are designed for single-operator use, loading and unloading wide-format textile media often requires additional support. For large, stretchable fabrics, particularly 5 m rolls, two or more operators may be needed to ensure proper alignment.

Stretch textiles should be loaded as straight as possible and checked before the pinch rollers are engaged. Even a slight offset can cause skewing, wrinkles, print defects, or job interruptions.

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For heavy, elastic media, shaft loading is recommended whenever possible. Avoid systems where the roll rests on loading rollers, as the winding can gradually loosen during unwinding, increasing the risk of creases and handling issues.

Tip: Always check the media position throughout the media path to ensure smooth, trouble-free printing.

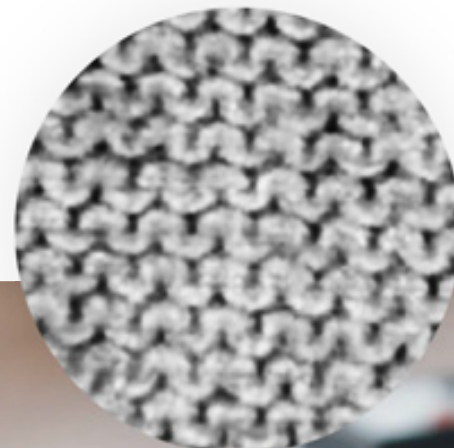
Print Side Identification

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Textile media is available with different coatings depending on the printing technology and application. For UV and Latex printing, coatings are used to improve ink adhesion, reduce ink consumption, and ensure consistent print quality. Blockout textiles feature an opaque knife coating on the reverse side, typically black or white, making the opposite side the print surface. For display textiles without a blockout layer, identifying the print side can be less obvious. To protect the printable surface from contamination, all Berger Textiles products are wound with the print side facing inward. While some dye-sublimation fabrics can be printed on either side, each surface has different characteristics and may require a dedicated colour profile to achieve accurate colour reproduction.



Right Side /Front Side



Left Side/Back Side

If the print side is unclear, a magnifier can help identify the fabric structure. Depending on the media, the print side may differ. For many knitted textiles, especially flag fabrics, the loop side is typically used for printing, while the smoother, more closed surface can sometimes offer better print uniformity.

Printing on the correct side ensures optimal ink utilisation, colour performance, and print quality while minimizing ink penetration, drying issues, and fabric stiffness.



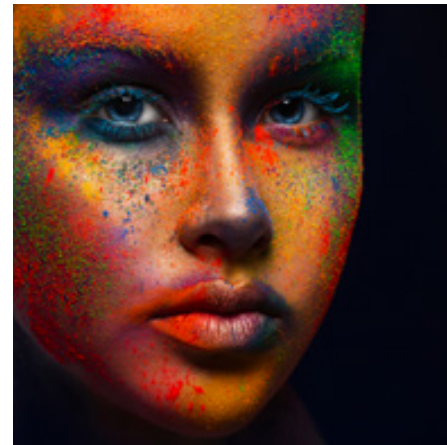
Troubleshooting

If a roll shows defects such as uneven winding, wrinkles, or other visible imperfections, do not use the material. Instead, contact Berger Textiles to discuss corrective action or replacement.

If wrinkles occur during printing, first identify their source. When tension differs across the width of the media after unwinding, a dancer bar can help balance the tension. If available, adjust the dancer bar rather than increasing tension in the print zone, as excessive tension may cause edge curling, media narrowing, print distortion, or carriage strikes. Diagonal wrinkles are often caused by media misalignment. In this case, release the pinch rollers and reload the material correctly.

If the media sags in the centre despite even tension at the edges, the issue is likely related to media transport. Some printers use a banana roller to apply pre-tension across the web, but insufficient grip in the centre can also be the cause. On machines with adjustable pinch pressure, increasing or reducing pressure in specific areas may improve media tracking, particularly with lightweight textiles. For heavy, soft materials such as Black Back and other knife-coated textiles, shaft unwinding is recommended whenever supported by the printer.

Best Practices



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- Never load a media roll with visible defects into the printer.
- Check media alignment and tracking after every roller in the media path.
- Use as many operators as needed to ensure even tension across the full width of the media.
- Before engaging the pinch rollers, perform a final alignment check.
- Keep tension in the print zone as low as possible to avoid stretching, edge curling, and print distortion.
- Use the lowest vacuum setting that still ensures stable media transport, especially when printing knife-coated textiles.



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Contact
Information (09)