

Title:

Laser Printers or Inkjet Printers? A Buyers Guide

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427

Summary:

Often people buying a new printer are confused about whether to buy a laser printer or inkjet printer. This article helps answer that question by highlighting the pros and cons of each.

Keywords:

laser printers, inkjet printers, printer cartridges, toner cartridges

Article Body:

Should you buy an inkjet or a laser printer? Often people buying a new printer are confused about whether to buy a laser printer or inkjet printer. The short answer is it depends on what you'll be using it for, and how much you'll be using it.

Inkjet printers have a lower initial purchase cost but cost more to run because the ink is more expensive when measured on a per page basis. Laser printers cost more but their running costs are lower and they have a better print quality because in general they have a higher resolution (expressed in dots per inch - dpi).

If you want to print photos at home however, you are best to choose a photo quality inkjet printer.

Inkjets are great for home use and for photo printing. Lasers are good for high-volume applications, like offices, or for applications that need high print quality.

Inkjet printers transfer tiny droplets of ink directly to the page. A laser printer creates an electrostatic pattern on a drum that attracts ink powder that is subsequently fused onto the paper. This is more complex technology so means a higher price than for an inkjet printer.

If you examine the same page printed on both a laser printer and an inkjet, you will be able to see that the characters on the laser printer produced page are sharper. That said however, inkjet printers are getting better all the time in

terms of the sharpness of printed characters.

Another aspect to consider is how heavily you will be using a printer. Printer manufacturers express the durability of a printer in terms of duty cycle in pages per month.

For example, a typical laser printer will be capable of a duty cycle up to 7,000 pages a month while a typical entry level inkjet printer is capable of up to 500 pages per month.

Some of the more recent inkjets provide excellent color clarity and brightness, and are very well suited for printing photographs.

While inkjet printers themselves are cheaper, their ink is more expensive per page printed. Ink cartridges need to be replaced fairly often if you print a lot, especially if you're printing pictures or photos.

The manufacturer's stated pages per cartridge measurements are very much dependent on what you printing. They are based on only a small percentage of the page actually being covered in ink.

Toner cartridges for laser printers have a higher unit price than inkjet cartridges, but have a higher capacity so that the cost per page is lower for lasers.