Maintenance and Tech Support

Like all bakery machinery, your PhotoCake printer needs regular maintenance and occasional troubleshooting. The following pages will walk you through maintaining your printer, working through ink flow issues (the most common printer issue), and some helpful tips to keep your printer in great shape!

Calling Tech Support Tips

When calling DecoPac Tech Support at 1-800-DECOPAC, there are a few things they may ask for. Save yourself time by having them ready before you call.

Physical Items:
- Paper
- A thin sheet of cardboard
- Cleaning cartridges
- PhotoCake Cleaning Swabs and Solution

Information:
- Customer number
- What happened when the issue popped up? (When you have more detail, the problem can be resolved quicker)
- PhotoCake System ID*

*Finding your System ID

1. Press the PhotoCake button on the Home Page.

2. Your System ID will be in the information box on the left.

Installing Printer Ink for Epson 4100/4105 Models

1. Press the right arrow until the "Maintenance" icon, then press OK.

2. Press the down arrow until the "Ink Cartridge Replacement" icon, then press OK.

3. Press OK at the warning.

4. Lift the top of the printer and wait for the printhead to stop moving.

5. Remove cartridge from its packaging, then remove the yellow tab.

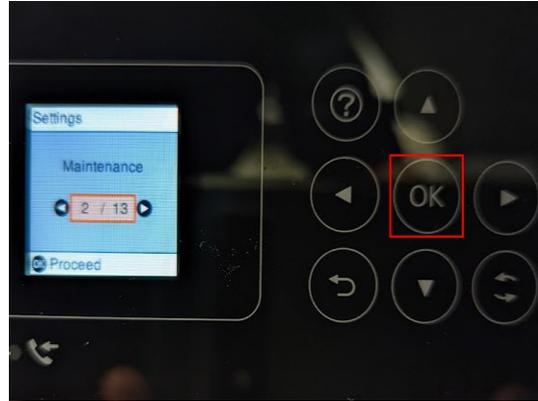6. Insert the cartridge with the label facing left.

7. When finished, shut the top and press ok. The printer will initialize the cartridge, which may take a few minutes.

*A video walkthrough of this process is available at https://www.decopac.com/photocake-ink-cartridge-replacement-epson-xp-4100-video
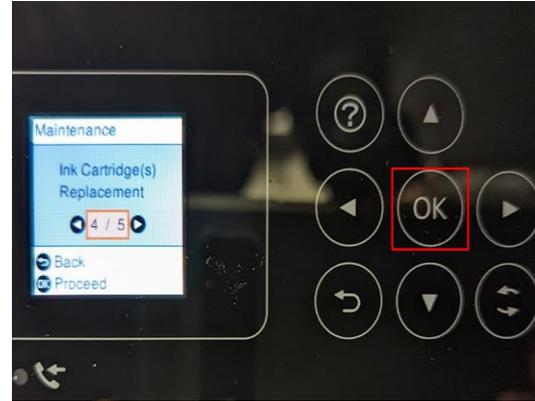
Installing Printer Ink for Epson 2830/2850 Models

1. Press the right arrow until the "Settings" icon, then press OK.

2. Press the right arrow until it says "Maintenance", then press OK.

3. Press the right arrow until it says "Ink Cartridge Replacement", then press OK.

4. When the screen says, "Replace ink cartridges", lift the top of the printer.

5. Press the diamond shaped button. Wait for the print head to stop moving.

6. Remove the new cartridge from its packaging, then remove the yellow tab.

7. Insert the cartridge with the label facing left, then gently press down until it clicks.

8. Shut the top and press OK. The printer will initialize the cartridges, which may take a few minutes.

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# Critical Preventative Maintenance – Color Test

Running a Color Test helps to keep print nozzles clear and will help to identify clogs. Doing this quick process will help your printer to have a longer life and have fewer printing issues. A great best practice is to include the Color Test in your bakery's daily checklist.
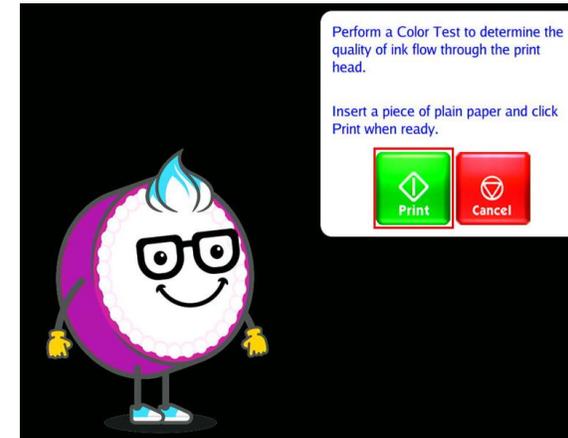
What you'll need: A sheet of paper
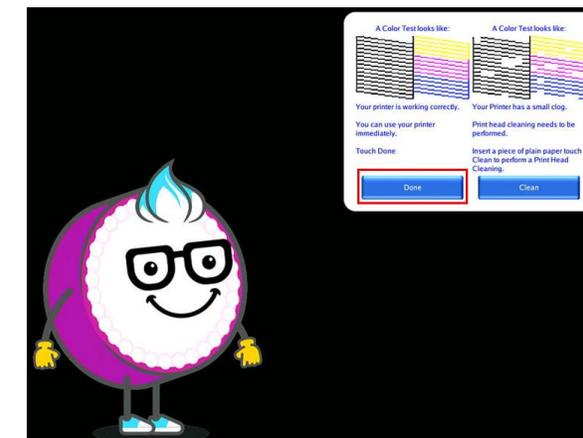
Required time: About 30 seconds

1. On the Home Screen, press the Maintenance button.
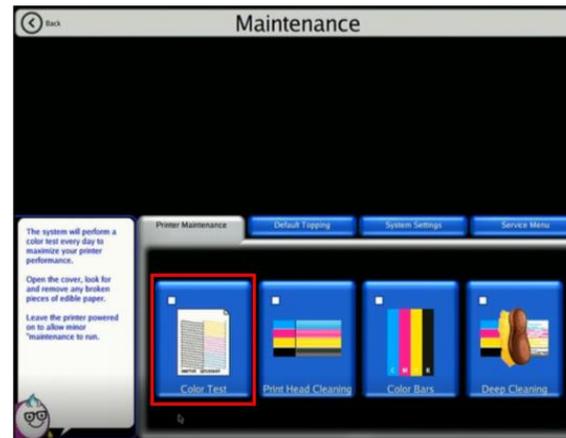
2. Press the Color Test button.

3. Place a piece of paper into the printer, then press the Print button.

4. Press Done when completed.

Troubleshooting:

Color Tests help to keep your printer working well, but they also tell you about problems that your printer may have.

On the Color Test to the right, the gaps in the Yellow, Magenta, and Cyan lines tell you that clogging is happening. We suggest trying one more Color Test, which can often clear up the problem. If it doesn't, move on to our Troubleshooting section starting on the next page.
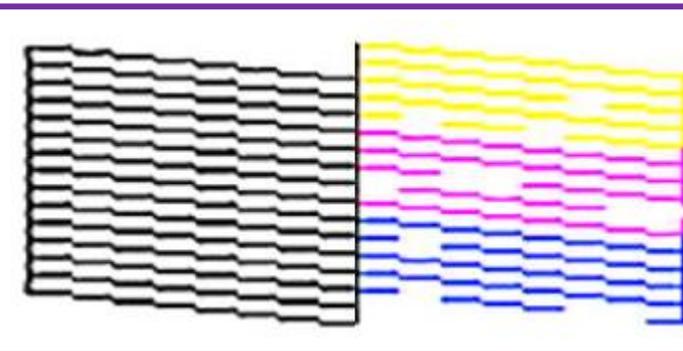
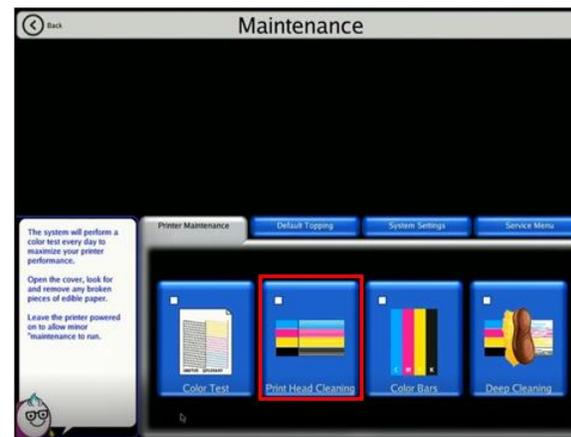# Print Issues Troubleshooting Step 1 – Print Head Cleaning

Print Head Cleanings are an internal process in which the printer physically attempts to scrape and sponge the print head to eliminate accumulated ink. When the process is completed, it will automatically do a Color Test.

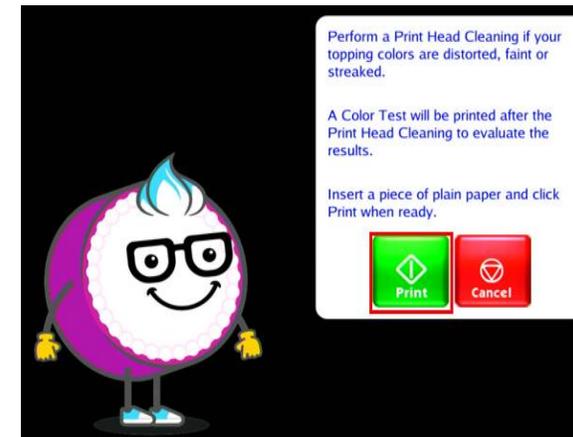What you'll need: A few sheets of paper
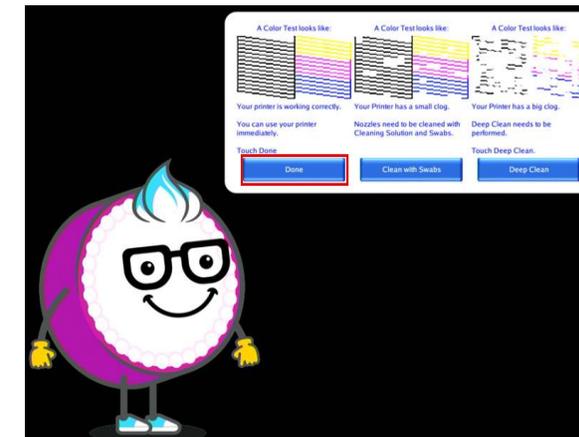
Required time: 3-4 minutes

1. On the Home Screen, press the Maintenance button.

2. Press the Print Head Cleaning button.

3. Insert a sheet of paper, then press the Print button.

4. Once the print is complete, press the Done button.

Troubleshooting:

Before trying this step, you should print a Color Test first. The results of that test will tell you if the printer is having ink flow problems and which color/s are having the issue.

With bigger clogs, a best practice is to try doing Print Head Cleanings up to 4 times in a row. If the post cleaning Color Test shows gaps after the 4th cleaning, then move on to the next step.

Print Issues Troubleshooting Step 2 – Color Bars

Printing Color Bars is very effecting at forcing ink through a clogged printhead. Be sure to only print the colors that are having clogging issues to save ink.
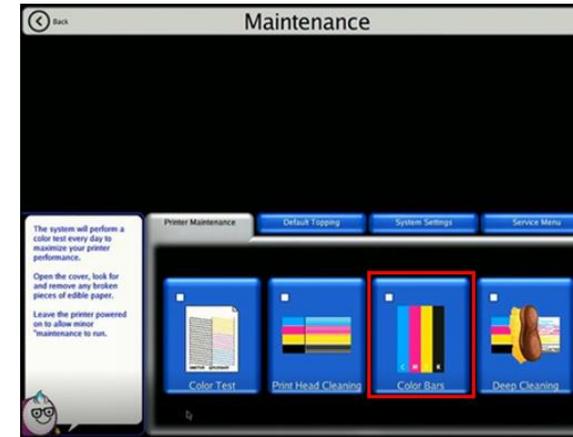
What you'll need: A few sheets of paper

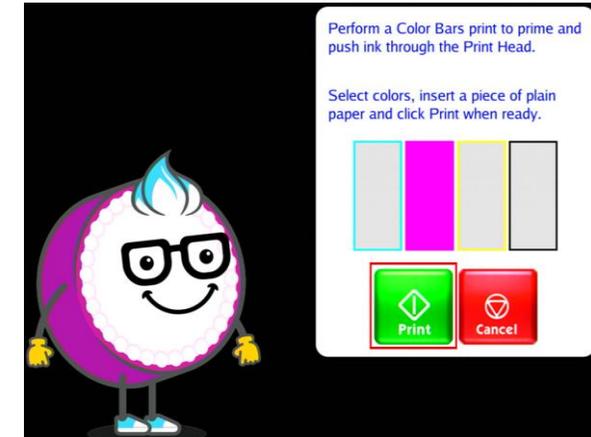Required time: About 5 minutes
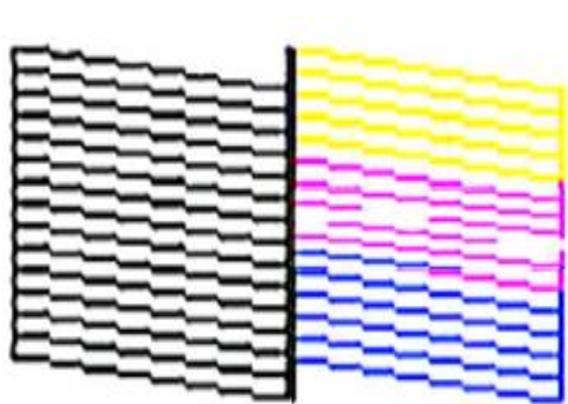
1. This Color Test shows gaps in the Magenta lines, so we know that is the color that is having problems.

2. On the Home Screen, press the Maintenance button.

3. Press the Color Bars button.

4. To save ink, only select the color/colors that are having issues. In the example above, Cyan, Yellow, and Black were pressed to make them blank because they weren't having problems. This screen shows that only Magenta will print a Color Bar.

5. Your PhotoCake machine will return to the Maintenance screen as the Color Bar print is being completed.

Troubleshooting:

If you see one of the following, your printer still has a problem:

- Fine white lines going horizontally through the bands of color
- Fading from the beginning to the end of the bar
- Discoloration from other colors bleeding into the bar

Try one more Print Head Cleaning, and if that doesn't resolve the problem, move to the next step.

Print Issues Troubleshooting Step 3 – Deep Cleaning

The final troubleshooting step, the Deep Cleaning, should only be done after following all the previous steps.

What you'll need: Cleaning Cartridges and a few sheets of paper

Required time: 30-45 minutes

If the edible ink flow is still unsatisfactory after the deep cleaning, please reach out to DecoPac Technical Support or visit DecoPac.com for more training materials.
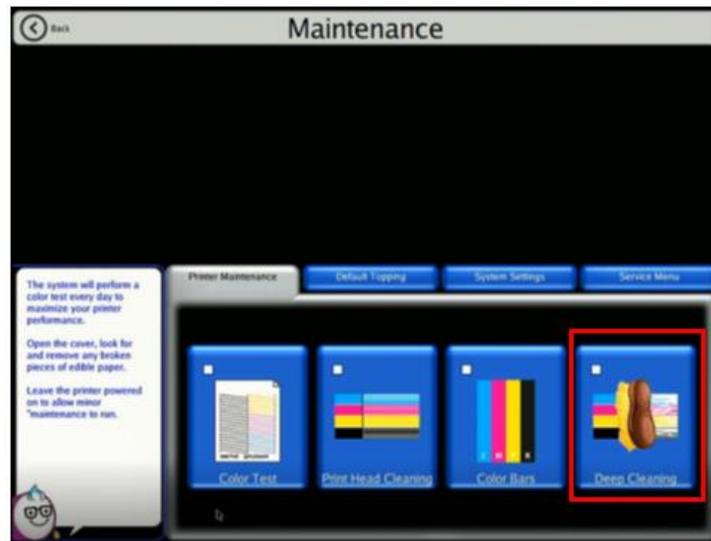
Common Issues and Solutions

If the media is printing at a slant, rather than straight up and down, check your paper guide (image below).

The paper guide should be snug against the media, without squishing it. If you see the media bending, you have it too tight.
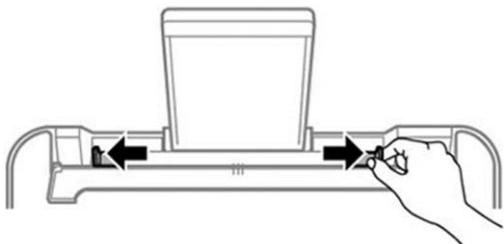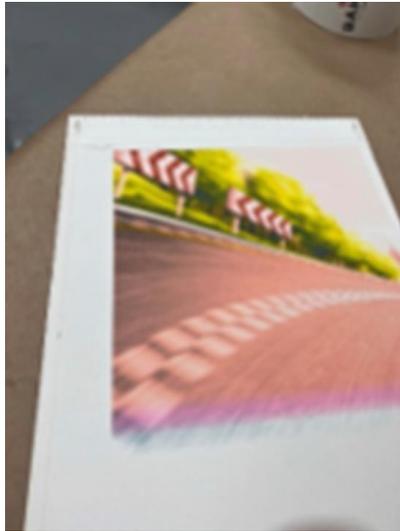

If you see black marks on the end of your prints, there are two things that are typically the cause:

1. The additional output tray (circled below) is missing or incorrectly installed. If you need a new tray, contact our Technical Support at 1-800-DECOPAC.

2. If you leave the print on the tray too long, the rollers may grab the sheet. Remove your finished prints as soon as they are done.

If your printing is off from pre-cut circles, check:

1. The media type and item number on your package match what was chosen on the media selection screen (circled below).

2. The arrows on your media are pointing into the printer.

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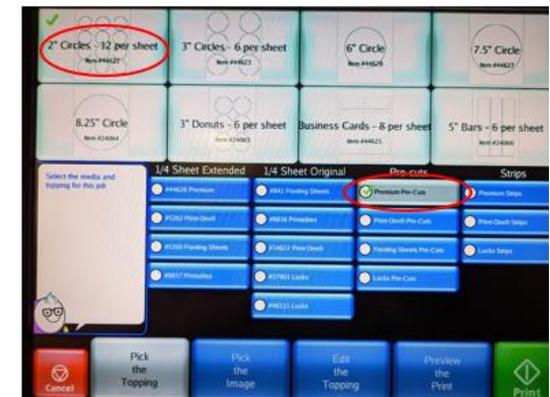
Common Issues and Solutions

- **Media won't peel easily from backing sheet:**
  - Options include:
    - Before printing, leave the media out of the package in normal room conditions for 5-15 (ideal time depends on humidity in the room, with longer wait times for higher humidity)
    - Place a printed piece of media in a dry freezer for 10-15 seconds
    - Use a blower-type hair dryer on the front and back sides of the of a printed piece of media
- **Media is bubbling up after being applied to a cake:**
  - There could be a few issues that could cause this:
    - The media being placed after the icing as started to form a crust. Place the media immediately after icing to avoid bubbling.
    - Air bubbles in the icing can make their way to the surface and get stuck under the media. Kneading the icing before putting it on the cake can get ride of excess air.
    - A helpful tip is to use a gloved hand to gently smooth down the media immediately after it was applied to a freshly iced cake.

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Helpful Reminders

- **Power sharing:** PhotoCake IV machines come with a 3 slot surge protector. You should always use that device and only plug in the PhotoCake controller, monitor, and printer into that surge protector.

- **Seasonal stores:** If you store your PhotoCake printer for a long period of time, it is **critical** that you do a Deep Cleaning before putting the printer away. This will keep excess ink from creating a clog over the winter. Contact our Tech Support, which can walk you through the steps. You'll need cleaning cartridges and some plain printer paper.

- **Missing images:** With every update, we both add and discontinue images. You can find the latest list of what has changed in our Image Guides on DecoPac.com/publications/PhotoCake or on your PhotoCake system in the Documents section.

- **Touch screen issues:** If the touch screen isn't being as responsive as usual, you can recalibrate it. That option is in the Maintenance menu on the System Settings tab.

- **Ink Cartridges:** Treat them gently and do not shake them. This can introduce air bubbles that could cause printing issues.

Helpful Reminders

Printer Firmware: Our printers are shipped with a specific version of firmware that will deliver excellent results. Changes to this firmware can cause problems that will result in long calls to Tech Support. To avoid this, follow these three easy bits of advice:

- Connect the printer using the provided printer cable, DO NOT connect through Wi-Fi.

- If you see a message on your printer asking if you want to update the firmware, select No.

- PhotoCake Online users need to ensure that automatic firmware updates are turned off on the computer. The steps to do that can be found below.
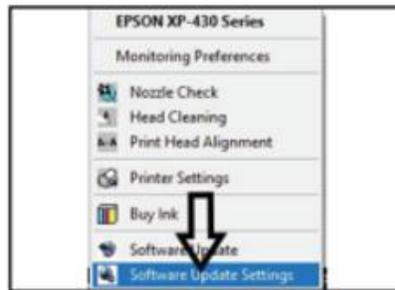

FIRMWARE UPDATES

Disable Automatic Firmware Updates

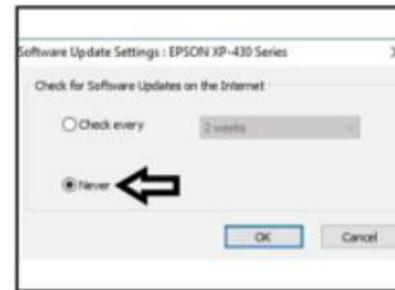1. On the task bar, click on the arrow pointing up and you should see the Printer's icon.

2. Right click the Printer icon and select 'Software Update Settings'.

3. Select 'Never', then click 'OK'.