



Pantone Colour Matching & textile screen printing.

How screen printing inks relate to Pantone colours...

Colour is very subjective, which is why the PANTONE MATCHING SYSTEM® works so well. It takes all the guess work out of colour identification. When you place a printing order & you just quote RED as the print colour-way, you could mean any number different shades. However, when you quote quote Red PMS 186c, you are matching to a very specific shade of red.

When it comes to screenprinting, pantone® colours are used to select colours to be used in the printing process.

We use an ink mixing system that corresponds with the Pantone® Matching System. However, despite the exact nature of Pantone® colours, what you see is not always what you will get when it comes to textile screen printing.



Coated & Uncoated Pantone Colours:

Pantone® guides for printing, for come in coated and uncoated versions.

Unlike paper though, garments & textiles don't come in coated & uncoated versions, so what does that mean for screen print ink colours?

Generally, C or coated colours are best for use in screen printing. By nature, standard plastisol inks have a little shine and tend to look most closely like the coated Pantone® fan.

There are also formulas for the uncoated Pantone® colours.

The uncoated formulas tend to duller and more opaque than the coated colours when printed, & are often more appropriate for waterbase inks.

The effect of an under-base on Pantone Colours:

Screen printing on dark or coloured garments generally requires an under-base.

An under base is a layer of white ink printed onto dark coloured garments over which the design colours are printed. Without an under-base, ink colours can be absorbed by the garment or noticeably altered by the garment colour itself.

All screen printing inks have a degree of transparency. A white under-base may have a tendency to lighten the ink printed over it, thus sometimes altering the PMS colours slightly.

The more transparent an ink colour is, the colour, the more it will lighten when printed on an under base. Some Pantone® colours can be printed with no under base.

Depending on the colour of the garment and the ink colour, the Pantone® may remain true.

In most cases, however, the garment colour will affect the ink colour.

Transparent Inks

Middle to dark blues and purples, & some yellows are particularly transparent.

Process colours and fluorescent colours are also very transparent.

When printed on top of an under-base, these inks can lighten up a full shade from the target Pantone® colours.

In some cases, you may need to select a shade darker and it will lighten up to near the target PMS shade once printed over the base.

