

Screen printing vs. Digital printing

Screen printing involves creating a stencil (printers call this a "screen"), and then using that stencil to apply layers of ink on the printing surface. Each color is applied using a different stencil, one at a time, combined to achieve the final look.

Digital printing is a much newer process that involves your artwork being processed by a computer, and then printed directly onto the surface of your product. Digital printing is not a heat transfer or applique, as the ink is directly adhered to the fabric of your shirt. Each printing process has its strengths, and our artwork team will weigh these when deciding which to use for your design.

Screen printing is the best option for designs that require a high level of vibrancy, when printing on dark shirts, or specialty products. The ink in screen printing is applied thicker than digital printing, which results in brighter colors even on darker shirts.

The fact that these products are printed by hand also allows for unique products like water bottles, koozies and mugs, as the printer can manually handle curved or uneven surfaces. The minimum order quantity on screen printed items is because of the extra materials and labor time associated with this printing method.

Digital printing is best used for items that required high amounts of detail, and orders of a smaller quantity. The fact that the digital printer does not use screens allows for a photographic print, with much more detail than traditional screen printing. As the ink is applied thinner (to achieve such detail), digital printing is best used on lighter colored shirts to allow the design to shine through. The fact that the design is processed and printed digitally allows for a quantity of one, since there are no screens or physical setup.