



AIS GUIDE TO MAINTAINING YOUR BARCODE LABEL PRINTERS

Continue reading for some useful hints and tips on how to ensure your barcode label printers last longer, saving you money, time and unnecessary downtime.

If you use [barcode label printers](#) then you know that downtime can be very costly. To help you avoid this, we have come up with our top tips to ensure your barcode printers last longer. If you want to keep your printer in good condition, this is how you can do it.

Top Tips For Ensuring Barcode Label Printers Last Longer

Below are our top tips for extending the life of barcode printers. By following these you can ensure the longevity of your device and save a lot of money.

- **Choose The Right Printer:** The first of our top tips is to make sure you have the right label printer. You want one that is durable and designed to handle the volume of printing you need. Barcode printers with proper maintenance can work for up to ten years or more. We have a wide range of label printers available from our partners Zebra and Cab.
- **Keep Your Barcode Printers Clean:** This is something that is often overlooked especially in a busy company. The truth is, your barcode printer will work best if you clean the print head and platen roller every time you install a new ribbon in your thermal printer. If you are using direct thermal printing you need to clean after every two rolls of labels.
- **Maintain Your Print Heads:** As well as cleaning, you need to protect the print heads in your label printers by using the right labels and ribbons. You should avoid messing with the darkness settings, and only use [certified replacement parts](#), which are available from AIS. Make sure you follow the manufacturers cleaning and maintenance protocols.
- **Use the Right Labels:** You need to make sure you are using the right label and adhesive combination in your barcode printer. This will help to ensure quality label printing as well as letting you run your thermal printer at a lower energy setting. Cheap labels and products can cause dust or debris to build up and this can damage the heating elements in your printer.
- **Keep an Eye on Print Head Pressure and Speed Settings:** Barcode label printers come with darkness and pressure settings. You should avoid increasing this as this can lead to a shorter life span for your print head. Don't use the fastest print speeds unless they are necessary. Lowering your speed, contrast, and pressure settings to as low as possible whilst still printing quality labels is a great way to extend the life of your print head.
- **Change Your Labels Carefully:** Never use sharp objects to remove labels from the roller or ribbons from the spindle. You might cut the rubber on the roller and this will affect the quality of your label printing and reduce the lifespan of your barcode printer.

- **Keep the Media Sensor Clean:** The media sensor or label sensor is what keeps the space between the label and the printhead constant. If dust gets on this it can stop your printer. We recommend using air dusters to keep this clean. You should do this before you put a new roll in.
- **Use Quality Ribbons:** Low quality ribbons can cause wax build-up on the platen rollers and assemblies which will lower your printing quality. This can cause barcode and label issues.
- **Use Only Certified Parts:** You should only use manufacturer's certified parts for your label printer if you want it to last. Contact us if you require any parts for your printer, our team will be happy to help.

Now that you know what our top tips are, with proper maintenance and by following the manufacturers guidelines for cleaning and changing your media, as well as monitoring your print quality, will all help you address any problems you might have with your barcode printers before they become costly. Barcode printers should last for years with minimal maintenance costs if you adhere to our top tips and use the correct products.

How to clean your thermal label printers.

Knowing how to properly clean your thermal label printer is important and has many benefits too. Proper cleaning will not only prolong the life of your machine, it will also save you money on replacement parts, and help to avoid any unnecessary printing errors. Below you will find our expert cleaning guide for thermal label printers.



Thermal Label Printer Cleaning

Before we explain the cleaning method, let's first look at some of the elements you need to be familiar with. Every label printer has a printhead and a platen roller. These are in constant use when your printer is running. When labels pass through your printer, paper dust can accumulate and this is what causes errors to occur. With thermal transfer label printers, the ribbon wax or resin that is used can build up on the printhead and this in turn leads to problems. If you have a direct thermal printer, it won't have a ribbon so you avoid this issue.

If your printer is dirty and needs to be cleaned you will find errors such as streaks, printing will be of a lower quality than normal, or you may find that you are dealing with an abundance of paper jams.

Proper cleaning of your label printer will be required. To do this you will need a compressed gas duster and thermal label printer cleaning wipes. These are special wipes that have been

soaked in a solution that has been designed for printers. Using these will help to prolong the life of the printhead and the platen roller.

It is vital that you do not use any other cleaning products as these can damage your label printer.

Here are the steps to follow:

1. Remove any labels or ribbons from your label printer.
2. Starting at the front of the machine, use the gas duster to blow any paper dust around the platen roller and printhead. You should work your way towards the back of the machine and use the compressed gas to blow out the rest of the printer too.
3. Take one of the thermal cleaning wipes and gently wipe the platen roller. It is important to make sure that you roll it around. After this carefully wipe the printhead.
4. The solution on the thermal wipes dries very quickly, meaning you are ready to use your label printer more or less straight away.

Our experts at AIS Ltd., recommend cleaning your thermal label printer after every roll of labels has been used or if you find that a lot of paper dust accumulates in your machine. Doing this on a regular basis will save you money in the long term as you won't have to fork out for replacement parts.

For more information be sure to visit our label printers and consumables page. We offer a range of industrial label printers, desktop, and mobile printers. We also have a range of printer supplies too. Should you have any questions or need to get advice, our live chat agents and customer support team are always on hand to help. Visit www.aisltd.ie to find out more.

