

HP, Canon, Epson & Brother printers | Medium | 2 min read

Epson printer streaky or faded: head cleaning and nozzle check

Please note: independent guidance. Vision Tech is not affiliated with the maker. Menus differ between models and software versions, so check the manual or on-screen help.

Streaks, missing lines or faded colours on an Epson inkjet usually mean the print head is blocked or a tank is low. Epson printers have a built-in nozzle check and cleaning routine.

Check the easy things first

- Look at the ink level. On an EcoTank, check the tank window, as the on-screen level is an estimate.
- Use the right paper and the right paper type in the print settings.
- Try a normal quality setting rather than draft.

Print a nozzle check

1. Load plain A4 paper.
2. Find the maintenance area. On many models you can do this from the printer menu, or from **Printing Preferences** on Windows. On a Mac, check printer options in the print dialogue. Your model may differ; check the display or the maker's manual.
3. Choose **Nozzle Check** and print.
4. Look at the pattern. A good pattern shows complete lines. Gaps mean blocked nozzles.

Clean the print head

1. Choose **Head Cleaning** from the same menu.
2. Wait until it finishes. Do not switch the printer off during cleaning.
3. Print the nozzle check again.
4. If it is still poor, repeat a few times, but not many times in a row.

Cleaning uses ink. If several cleaning cycles bring no improvement, switch the printer off and leave it overnight. Dried ink can soften, and a further clean may then work.

Align the print head

If lines are doubled or edges look soft, use **Print Head Alignment** in the same maintenance area.

Prevent blockages

Use the printer regularly, and switch it off with its own power button so the head parks properly.

Ink stains skin and clothes. Do not touch the print head or inside parts.

When to get more help

Get help if cleaning does not work, if there are ink leaks, or if the printer displays an error. Do not open the casing.

Still stuck? Email admin@visiontech336.com and tell us what you can see on the screen. Menus and button names can differ slightly between versions and makes. If something does not match, stop and ask rather than guess. Please never send passwords or card details.