

WHAT TO PRINT AND HOW TO PRINT IT



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The Printer's HELPER

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Half-Tones on Bond Paper

A reader submits his letterhead on which he has placed a half-tone cut over five inches long and somewhat over an inch wide. He asks why the half-tone seems to be somewhat speckled. Our answer is as follows:

"The paper you are using is bond paper and that, of course, is suitable for letterheads. Such a hard surface paper, however, is difficult to use for half-tones because half-tones and other similar cuts from photographs are made to print on book surface paper rather than writing paper.

"As far as the impression goes, we think you have done a very creditable job. Probably where the difficulty lies is in the minute particles of dust, dirt, or hardened ink on the roller which have transferred themselves to the half-tone causing the spotty appearance. If you make sure your ink plate and rollers are absolutely free from lint or dust or any other contamination and start with fresh ink, making sure that there is no skin in the part you put on the plate, we think you will be able to clear up the picture."

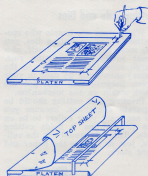
Use of Colored Pencils for Typesetting Instructions

The use of colored pencils for marking instructions to line-casting operators can prevent a great deal of confusion and save considerable time. Indications of type size, type face, and line length are easy to distinguish and seldom mixed when a brilliant red pencil is used. The color scheme can be extended to simplify separation of type sizes where the large mass of copy is to be set in one size with headings in a larger size, and explanatory notes and similar material in smaller size. Also, indications for caps, italics, bold face, etc., are seldom overlooked when marked with color.

Bringing Out Half-Tones Satisfactorily

While as a matter of theory every half-tone cut—every other cut—ought to be so perfectly level that an impression taken on your press should be of equal strength all over, assuming that the press is true in every particular, in actual experience it will be found that the stresses and strains set up by the impression throw the pressure here and there in such a manner that light spots occur. To make the cut print perfectly and get rid of such spots, there is overlay, which has been described previously, but possibly not in the detail which will help on nice cut work.

The diagram shows the use of the top sheet of the tympan or pad



ing as the part on which the overlays are being put. Still another way is to take a proof of the cut, preferably on thin, hard paper, such as our Manifold. Lay this printed sheet on the ink plate of your press, face up, so that you can mark the



FRONT OF MAKEREADY SHEET

light spots with a pencil, tracing all around them, so that the weight of the pencil will cause ink to stick to the marks on the other side of

the sheet.

The marked spots may then be identified on the other side, and patches of thin paper or tissue paper used on them. When finished, the complete sheet must be very carefully placed under the top sheet of the tympan, so that when you make your impression, it will come exactly on the same spot. If necessary, another set of patches or overlays can be put on the same spots, but they will probably need



BACK OF MAKEREADY SHEET



The Finished Job

to be smaller than the first.

Good half-tone work depends on careful preparation, and experience as you go along will enable you to make-ready much faster as time goes on.

Getting Spots Off Half-Tones

From an old reader:

I had considerable difficulty in getting all lint and foreign particles off halftones. I finally hit on the idea of using masking tape (similar to so-called Scotch or cellulose tape). By pressing the sticky side of the tape against the face of the halftone, then raising it off and moving it to another place on the cut, and repeating, I got all the bothersome spots and particles off the plate without any of the sticky part of the tape coming off on the halftone.

WITH OUR READERS

Helpful Hints

A Trick With Traction

Where considerable force is required to pull slippery paper from a heavy form, we attach a small piece of carborundum paper to the grippers. This provides enough extra traction to do the trick.

Save the Label

Frequently a few sheets only are withdrawn from packaged paper. Without the label, which usually is destroyed, it's difficult to remember what each package contains. Here's the simple solution: With the label end of the package facing you, slit the bottom edge and the two sides of the package with a razor blade or knife. This leaves the label intact, and you have a protective flap on the front edge of the opened package.

Eliminate Offset

Here's a suggestion to help eliminate the offsetting problem for small printers. Build a box (wood bottom and cardboard sides will do) just barely large enough to hold the sheets. Place the box on the delivery table. Now with careful make-ready and a gas heater, the sheets will "float" into the box, cushioned by a layer of warm air which also helps set the ink. If you don't have a gas heater, use one or more infrared heat reflector lamps suspended above the delivery table, at the side, or face up under the table.

Roller Trucks Slipping?

This idea works well on Kluge or C & P presses when the roller trucks slip. Just sprinkle a little Thermograph (raised letter compound) and in just a few minutes the rollers are rolling as smoothly as they should be. Even compound that is too old to raise type will work well for this purpose. Other results are better inking plus quieter vibrators.

Numbering Machine Hint

Sometimes oil on the numbers results in failure of the machine to operate properly. We ink the numbers before the rollers touch them by tapping out some of the ink and applying a good film of it by fingertip to the numbers. We roll the wheels over until they are all covered. This way the wheels do not have to depend on a single passage of the rollers for their ink supply. All numbers print sharply.

Printing For Fraternities

A reader who has also been the secretary of a fraternity chapter says that from his own experience with a printing press, there are dozens of bulletins, notices, papers, football announcements, homecoming notices, postal cards, and the like which every chapter needs, and which can best be taken care of with a press.

Those who live in college towns should not overlook the opportunity to quote and get business which these organizations present. Many printers hastily jump to the conclusion that such work is all being done on duplicators, and never check up to find out or, even if some other means is now being employed, to give a few prices.

Aside from this, all the students are good prospects for stationary. Considerable business can be picked up around the campus if you look for it.

Cutting Rule and Dies

While there are people who specialize in making cutting dies, you can make small ones yourself, at a great saving, with cutting rule. Large ones (in proportion to the chase) should not be used in your press because they will put too much strain on the mechanism.

Printing and cutting should be separate operations, because you do not want your rollers to be on the press when it holds cutting rule. The rule would cut the rollers, just as it does the paper and card stock.



Cutting rule may be bent into the shape desired, and held in place in the chase with furniture or wood blocks cut to shape. For straight work it needs only to be cut, and carefully joined. For curved or circular work, the rule should be heated to remove the temper, bent, and hardened again by dipping when hot into water or oil.

The die can be made permanent if desired by melting lead or type metal, and pouring round the rule.

Some work which requires cutting may call for folding also. Creasing rule may be used for marking and speeding up the folding, and put in the form with the cutting rule.

Experimenting with small jobs will give you an idea of the possibilities of this work.

Using an Engraver's Die In a Platen Press

As readers know, the die used by engravers for engraved card printing, letterheads, etc., is the exact opposite in its printing face from that used by ordinary printers. Their dies have cut or recessed letters and characters, as contrasted with the printer's raised surface for making the impression. Because of this, the accepted method of printing from such dies is to force the ink in the depressions or crevices, wiping the excess off the face of the plate before laying on the sheet or card to be printed. Pressure is then applied. More ink is used than in ordinary letterpress printing and this, combined with the embossed effect which often occurs from pressing the paper into the lines of the plate, gives the work a rough and often slightly raised impression.

Regular (letterpress) printers are able to simulate this through raised printing or embossing as described in the catalog under the outfit of that name. However, that doesn't help the printer who is offered a die of a seal or some other kind of insignia, with the request that he use it.

This is how one reader does it:

Remove all the padding on the platen except the tympan sheet itself, and cut a hole in it slightly larger than the steel die. Place the die in the chase, blocked up type high. (By the way, scotch tape which is sticky on both sides is excellent for making plates adhere to wood blocks. It can be used for all kinds of cut or electro blocking. Eliminates the need for tacking.)

Take the rollers off the press, and use a hand roller or brayer on the ink plate. Cut a piece of tar-board (heavy coarse cardboard $\frac{3}{8}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick), soak it thoroughly in gasoline until it softens, and place under the tympan sheet. Without ink, close the press, and leave it several hours or over night. The tarboard dries out hard, and leaves a perfect bottom die.

Set pins as usual. Use more ink than for regular printing. Ink the die heavily with the brayer, then wipe the surface with standard, lint free tissue, or regular engraver's paper. Print one copy. Ink and wipe for each succeeding copy. Use good ink. Kelsey Many Purpose is satisfactory, but many softer inks won't work or are too messy. Don't forget to clean the die thoroughly with a brush when you are finished.

Padding Compound

Pad-Ezy, applied cold, red or white, pint jar, 3.40, quart jar, 5.20