

Essential Need-to-Know Tips for the Ri 4000

As part of our commitment to your success, we want to make sure that you are getting optimal performance out of your RICOH Ri 4000. In this article, we're offering some great tips and knowledge to guarantee the best possible experience with DTG



1. Always leave your printer on to allow automated maintenance procedures to run. While shutting down the machine after a long day of printing may seem harmless, DTG experts understand that doing so without the proper preparation is dangerous.

The printer doesn't just sit idle when not in use, it follows a strict and optimized schedule of self-cleaning to stay in peak condition and ready for use at a moment's notice. Of course, the machine can be shut off when the need arises, but the proper steps must be taken- especially for moving or long-term storage.

If you need to turn the printer off for a while - then flush the printer with cleaning fluid and cap the ink carriage. (refer to the user manual for instructions)

2. Always shake new white ink cartridges for about a minute before installing them in your printer. Ink works best when it's circulating and mixed evenly; this is especially important for white ink since a smooth and bright under base makes the colors stand out. **ALSO, shake your white inks daily as the printer will remind you to do.**

Shaking the white cartridges daily is a great practice with multiple benefits- not only does it improve the quality of the prints, but it also extends the lifetime of open cartridges and reduces ink build-up. Refer to the User Manual, page 18, for more information.

3. Make sure your white ink is at 5% or above when you are done printing for the day or plan to leave your printer idle for longer than a few hours.

The Ri 4000 needs to conduct automated maintenance procedures on the white printheads every three hours, which is necessary to keep the nozzles clean and functional.

During the maintenance cycle, the printer pushes out dried ink that has been sitting on the surface of the printhead and puts fresh ink in its place, the leftover residue is then wiped off. While this reduces user maintenance requirements and increases part life, it will no longer operate when running out of ink.

Your printer will prompt you when a cartridge becomes low on ink, this is a reminder to make sure you have replacement ink available to continue operation.

If you do not have replacement ink available, you can fill your printer with cleaning fluid. Refer to the user manual.

4. Perform a nozzle check daily to spot and quickly address potential issues with the printer. Nozzle checks are quick, easy, and will save you much trouble in the long run.

If your nozzle check isn't perfect, there's no need to panic. Just run an automated head clean or two to see if you can clear them. It's a lot easier to recover nozzles if you catch them early.

Making sure that you aren't missing nozzles before starting each set of prints will guarantee the best output and prevent wasting materials and time troubleshooting.

5. Perform maintenance as instructed by the printer prompts and maintenance guide. While your needs will vary depending on your print volume, environment, and preventative habits, there are three general categories of maintenance: daily, three-day, and monthly.

Your daily maintenance is simple and takes less than five minutes-- shake your white cartridges, run a nozzle check (and clean, if needed), and check the cleaning fluid reservoir at the left front of your printer. and make sure the machine is in its 'Ready' state. Check the status menu for any messages: make sure the cartridges are above 5%, the waste ink is below 100%, and you're all set.

You can always access the daily maintenance video by going to options on the control panel, selecting videos, and then selecting daily maintenance. The QR code that takes you to the video will pop up and you can access this with any mobile device.

Three-day maintenance is a little more involved, taking around 10 minutes. Just release the ink-side printhead thoroughly clean off the front ink maintenance station and perform jig-head maintenance. **IMPORTANT - There is no need to perform this maintenance on the enhancer carriage.**

You can always access the three-day maintenance video by going to options on the control panel, selecting videos, and then selecting three-day maintenance. The QR code that takes you to the video will pop up and you can access this with any mobile device.

Monthly maintenance also takes around 15 minutes and involves cleaning and greasing the rods supporting the front ink carriage. Simply release both printheads and shut down the printer, then wipe any excess grease off the rods and apply a new thin coat. Make sure it is distributed evenly. While here, check the fan filters to see if they need a replacement. You will then cap the ink carriage with the jig head maintenance jig overnight.

You can always access the monthly maintenance video by going to options on the control panel, selecting videos, and then selecting monthly maintenance. The QR code that takes you to the video will pop up and you can access this with any mobile device.

Failure to perform maintenance will reduce the effectiveness of autocleaning procedures, leading to printer damage, so the time investment is well worth it.

6. Visit the [downloads page](#) regularly to ensure that you're up to date with the latest firmware, user manual, and RIP software. Improvements are always being made and we want to make sure that everyone benefits; if you want the best from your printer, don't let outdated software hold you back.

7. Always perform auto height adjustment when changing substrates that you are printing on. If you're printing on a thick fabric like a sweatshirt and then switching to a regular T-shirt, recalibrating the height will keep the platen at the optimal distance from the printheads to produce the best quality prints.

If the height isn't readjusted, the printhead could be too far from the fabric causing blurry images, or too close to the fabric causing a collision. Improper height settings may also lead to overspray which could damage the printer over time.

8. Avoid ALL cross-contamination of the ink and enhancer fluid. These two agents are chemically designed to solidify when combined to produce sharp and durable images on garments. However, if this reaction occurs outside of its intended use- on components such as the printhead or maintenance station, it may result in clogging or malfunctions.

- Do not use any cleaning sticks or wipes used on the front ink carriage maintenance station, carriage, or other components on the back enhancer carriage or maintenance station.
- The back enhancer section of the printer does not require user maintenance (Daily/Three-day/Monthly) as the auto-cleaning sequences are all that is needed.

- Do not use the carriage cap labeled 'INK' on the enhancer side carriage, or the carriage cap labeled 'ENHANCER' on the ink side carriage.

9. Make sure there are no wrinkles on the garment when heat pressing. If there are wrinkles on the garment while heat pressing- there is a possibility that the uncured ink will stick together and cause blemishes on the fabric.

BONUS TIP: Contact our Technical Support team whenever you have questions about your machine, we're here to help!

Technical Support can be reached by phone at [1-877-626-2538 Ext. 2](tel:1-877-626-2538), or by email at Tech1@ricohdtg.com.

Business hours are Monday - Friday, 6:00 AM - 5:00 PM Pacific