

Troubleshooting Guide for screenprinting with waterbased inks.

Problem	Cause	Solution
Ink is patchy and missing in some areas	Not enough ink, or not enough pressure on the screen. If you've left more than 2 minutes between prints, the screen may have dried out.	Hinge screen back down (if it has not moved too much. Re-ink just the problem area OR Touch up area later with a paintbrush (Not as easy as it sounds) AND Make sure next time, you use more ink and more pressure.
- Subsequent prints are still patchy , even with more pressure and more ink	Your screen is definitely too dry.	Remove stencil, clean screen immediately to preserve it and wait until it's dry before commencing. If it has blocked areas, clean with a paintbrush-cleaner solvent and rinse well. Do a test print before using in case of residue.
Fuzzy outlines on design	You may have fluff, dust or excess ink build up on the stencil.	When the ink is dry, this can be peeled off. Doing so when wet is very difficult if you have an intricate stencil.
Ink bleeds under stencil, making a fuzzy outline	Too much ink, too much pressure, or ink is too runny OR Your fabric is not porous enough/high synthetic fibre content in fabric	Get a tissue and carefully wipe the back of the screen to remove excess ink bleed behind stencil. Use fewer passes on the next print. Runny ink is very hard to remedy. You could try a screen with a higher mesh count.
Ink bleeds under screen, appearing watery	Wet screen, wet squeegee or spoon.	Stop printing, and clean back of screen. Use all dry equipment, or the problem will continue.
Spotty areas of dense, thick ink on print	Ink left too thickly on the screen. Too much ink remaining on screen.	Can be carefully removed with a paintbrush while wet. On subsequent prints, cut more ink off by raising the angle of the squeegee and pressing harder.
Ink appears too transparent	Ink may not be a Supercolor (opaque) ink.	Apply more ink in a thicker manner by lowering the angle of the squeegee. This balance can be difficult to find. OR Try using a different, more opaque ink.
Double outline on one side of the print	Silkscreen frame has moved either while placing it down, or while printing.	DO clean the back of the screen with a tissue, as you probably have some excess ink on there. Fixing the print is unlikely. Call it a one-off and charge more!
Smudges on back or surrounds of garment	Dirty hands when handling item, OR Unclean table/workspace	Always keep a pack of tissues handy when printing, and clean hands and work area before commencing.
Reversed image	Stencil is upside down!	Wait for stencil to dry, before turning over and reprinting.