

Stamping 101: 5 Basic Types of Ink For Rubber Stamping

By [Kimberly Skinner](#)



There are 5 basic types of ink pads that you have available when you are rubber stamping. Here is a rundown of each type of ink, their uses and tips on selecting the right ink for our project.

1. **Dye Ink:** Dye ink is fabulous because it dries quickly on all types of paper and they work well on glossy card stock and vellum. Because they dry quickly, you can stamp one image and then immediately stamp another or add an embellishment to your project without smudging the ink. These are great ink pads to use when stamping with children because they are washable and non-toxic. A little soapy water will take the ink off your table and off small hands! Dye inks do tend to fade over time, so you should not use them for scrapbook projects unless they specifically say they are archival dye ink pads. You would also avoid using a dye ink pad when embossing because they dry too quickly to hold embossing powder. I would also not recommend using them if you plan to color in your image with markers or watercolors because the images tend to smear if they get wet. **Tip:** Store dye ink pads upside down so the dye flows to the top of the foam or felt of the pad.
2. **Pigment Ink:** These are thick, slow drying inks. They are color-fast and do not fade when exposed to light. They tend to hold their vivid colors and resist fading so they are great for scrapbook projects. These are great for embossing because they stay wet long enough to hold the powders. They won't dry on glossy paper or vellum unless you emboss and heat set them. These are perfect inks for tile, glass and wood projects. You can heat set them with a heat gun for faster drying.
3. **Permanent solvent inks:** Solvent inks are opaque and quick-drying. They are great for use on plastics, metal, glass, ceramics, laminated or coated paper and leather. They are not recommended for fabric. These inks will stain clothing and furniture. They should be

used in a well ventilated room and are not recommended for use with children. These are fabulous inks for stamping on tiles. They also work great for water coloring or coloring with markers since they do not smudge when they get wet. They do stain your stamp, so you will want to purchase a stamp cleaner made just for solvent inks.

4. **Embossing Ink or Watermark Ink:** These create a translucent image excellent for background designs on any color paper! They are child-safe and acid free so they are great for archival projects like scrapbooks. They are also perfect for embossing because they stay wet long enough to hold the embossing powder to be heat set to the paper. They are slow drying inks.

5. **Fabric Dyes:** These are specific for fabrics. Check the label to make sure that you get one that is non-toxic. You can stamp the fabric and then heat set the ink in the dryer or with a dry hot iron. They also work well on acetate and shrink plastics.

Most inks are available in a wide variety of colors, with the exception of permanent inks. There are a variety of different sizes of ink pads. Larger ink pads tend to give your rubber stamp better ink coverage with less effort on your part. Most ink pads come as a single color pad, but there are palette pads available that come with several colors of ink on one pad.

If you are just starting out, I recommend that you get one or two ink pads in good basic colors like black, gray or dark brown. You can add color to your images with markers, chalks, and colored pencils! Overall, the project you are working on should determine the kind of ink pad you choose to use.

Kimberly Skinner is trying to get you hooked on rubber stamping and paper crafting. You can learn more by visiting her blog at <http://stampingimperfection.com>. Sign up for the mailing list to get more tips and tutorials. You will find video and printable tutorials just for beginning stampers, as well as tutorials on more advanced stamping projects and techniques. It's all free! Get inspired and find great card making and scrapbook project ideas on her blog. You can also purchase stamping and paper crafting supplies through her online Stampin' Up! store at <http://stampingimperfection.stampinup.net>.