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# The Complete Printer Guide:

How to choose, use and manage printers



# Introduction

Everyone needs to manage print costs whether it's for home or business

How much do you or your organisation spend on printing, scanning and document management? This doesn't just mean dollars — time and other resources consumed should also factor into your calculations.

This simple guide will provide you with some important best practices for budget-friendly print management while ensuring you have the right mix of features for your needs, from selecting and purchasing devices to managing them through the entirety of their life cycles. These practices break down into three categories:

- Selecting the right device
- Using your device correctly
- Managing your device by using productivity and governance features

Since the needs of a major company spread across multiple floors of an office building are very different from those of a small organisation consisting of home-based employees, this guide is broken into three chapters, simply click on the section that best suits your needs:

- [For your home or home office](#)
- [For your office environment](#)
- [For working from home or working remotely](#)

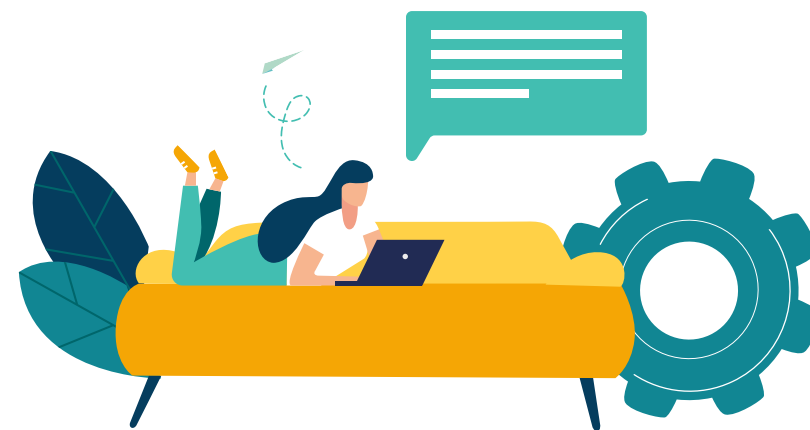


# Table of Contents

Page 4 Chapter One: For home or home office	
Pg 5	Part 1: Selecting the right device
Pg 10	Part 2: Tips on using and managing a printer or multi-function device
Pg 11	Part 3: Implementing productivity and access control policies
Page 12 Chapter Two: For your office	
Pg 13	Part 1: Selecting the right device
Pg 18	Part 2: Tips on using and managing a printer or multi-function device
Pg 19	Part 3: Implementing productivity and governance policies
Page 20 Chapter Three: For working from home or working remotely	
Pg 21	Part 1: Selecting the right device
Pg 24	Part 2: Tips on using and managing a printer or multi-function device
Pg 25	Part 3: Implementing productivity and governance policies



# For Home or Home Office



## Part 1 \ Selecting the right device

Buying a printer means planning ahead and anticipating the “must haves.” This ensures you have the right device for your home or home office, while staying within your budget.



## 1 \ How much do I expect to print?

Print volume determines how often you'll need to replace cartridges or toners in the future, which will have an impact on running costs. If you select the right device which suits the volumes you are printing, you'll be able to maximise the value of the device.



### Tip:

- Your current printer may provide reports on current print usage, helping you forecast your needs
- Another method is to understand how many reams of paper you use for printing, so you can estimate how many weeks or months it takes to go through a ream of paper (each ream of paper is 500 pages)

## 2 \ Do I need to print in colour?

This question is as fundamental as print volume because it determines whether you'll need to replace colour cartridges in the future, which will have an impact on running costs. From our experience, home users predominantly print in black but would like to have the option of printing colour as it's needed for photos or colour documents, so make sure you carefully consider your needs.



### Tip:

- It would be best to select a colour laser device as opposed to an inkjet if you predominantly print in black. This is because inkjet products require users to perform periodical maintenance on the inks if they're not used, which will deplete the cartridge over time. However, if you often print in colour, an inkjet product (such as the [Brother INKvestment Tank](#) range) will provide great value with high-capacity cartridges suitable for both work documents and photo printing
- If colour printing is not always required and you've selected a colour laser or inkjet device, make sure you set your default printer settings to mono so you don't unnecessarily use the colour consumables

## 3 \ Will I be printing items other than standard documents?

If you regularly need to print self-adhesive labels or envelopes, you'll want to make sure you select a printer that has these capabilities.



### Tip:

- If you do need to print other types of print media, look for a device which has a Multi-Purpose tray with a larger capacity and one that supports the media type you need. Or perhaps consider a product which comes with two paper trays







#### 4 \ How often do I need to scan documents?



A Multi-Function Centre with features such as an Automatic Document Feeder (ADF), 2-sided (duplex) scanning and shortcuts for one-touch scanning can save time and effort.

##### Tip:

- If you need to scan often or work with multi-page documents, seek out 2-sided (duplex) scanning capability when you're looking for a device. If you don't scan often or don't deal with longer printed documents, it's OK to select a device with only a flatbed scanner

#### 5 \ What is my chosen device's reliability record?



Once you've narrowed it down to a few devices that fit your functional needs, you can check current customer reviews to make sure other users are satisfied with its reliability.

##### Tip:

- YouTube videos or customer review sites are the best. For example, you can find genuine customer reviews on every Brother product at [brother.com.au](https://www.brother.com.au)

#### 6 \ How am I going to connect the device and do I need to print from my smartphone?



Although network connectivity is standard across most printers and multi-function devices, it's best to work out your connectivity requirements. Especially If you need to share this device with your partner or kids at home, or if you'd like to print and scan from your smartphone, make sure you've selected a device which includes built-in wireless or ethernet connectivity.

##### Tip:

- Check the Google Play Store or Apple App Store to make sure there's a mobile app compatible with the device you wish to purchase and if it's a free download. We also recommend searching on Youtube to get a sneak peak on how the app works



# Part 2 \ Tips on using and managing a printer or multi-function device

Even though the device is purchased for home or home office use, you can apply the same best practices a workplace would use to set up your printer correctly. This way you'll get the most out of your printer and better manage your printing costs.

## 1 \ Select the right default print settings

To save ink, toner and paper for environmental and budgetary reasons, defaulting to draft mode or 2-sided (duplex) printing can create efficiency that adds up over time. The idea is to always print in lower quality and with less paper unless you absolutely need that professional-looking document.

TIP

- Remember to configure your default print settings to 'draft' mode from the Devices and Printers section in the control panel (Windows) or Printers and Scanners (Mac). If you need to print in higher quality for particular documents, you can do this in the print dialogue box when you click File > Print. This won't affect the default settings

## 2 \ Use Print to PDF

Sometimes, it's not necessary to print a copy of every document. You can simplify your physical file management for home admin by ensuring you're using the Print to PDF capability, allowing you to easily create and save PDFs on your computer or device.

# Part 3 \ Implementing productivity and access control policies

Governance and productivity policies in a home or home office may at first seem unimportant compared to a large office. However, these strategies can help you control your monthly costs.

Actions you can take include:



## Setting the ground rules (a.k.a. Print Policies)

Is printing a habit or a need for you? Understandably, some industries require hard copies of documents for legal compliance, but you can shape a policy that minimises unnecessary printing, helping you to embrace digital document management and save resources. You can specify exactly which documents to print and which documents to digitised.



## Limit access to features of the device

When children use a printer, they may unwittingly use large quantities of paper, ink or toner. In these cases, Brother Function Lock and device control features help you manage your consumables budget and avoid waste.



# For Your Office



## Part 1 \ **Selecting the right device**

In recent years, the best practices of business printing have evolved, giving your organisation increased opportunities for efficiency and budget optimisation.



### 1 \ How much are you going to print?

Your company's anticipated amount of printing per month will determine whether investments in features such as high-volume consumables and additional paper trays makes more economical sense.



#### Tip:

- You don't have to figure this out yourself - a managed service provider can help you identify your print volume by performing a print assessment and recommend devices which suit your needs
- Your organisation should determine how many pages it prints every year, then select devices and consumables that match that level of output. For example, a company with a 1,000 page monthly print output should select a device which supports a 6,000 to 12,000 page high-yield consumable. This means you should only need to change cartridges every 6 - 12 months while keeping your cost per page low

### 2 \ How many devices do you need and how many people need to print?

Businesses often install one large printing device to share amongst a workgroup. Often, each department will then purchase smaller devices for their own use as it's easier and quicker to access the functions they need. This means the central device isn't cost-effective because the large central printer is only printing some of the volume and therefore not being fully utilised.



#### Tip:

- Consider installing a few smaller cost effective devices located around the office so users have quicker access to the functions they need regularly. This will disperse the print volume throughout the office and remove bottlenecks (which result in multiple people waiting to use the device)

### 3 \ Which department or workgroups need to print colour? Or is black all that's needed?

By clearly identifying which workgroups or departments require colour printing, you might be able to reduce hardware costs on colour devices and reduce printing costs overall.



#### Tip:

- Potentially distribute monochrome devices around the office for general usage and assign one or two colour printing devices in specific areas of your workplace where it's needed
- On your colour print devices, set the default setting to duplex and black printing only, to save costs and avoid unnecessary colour printing







#### 4 \ Should the company buy devices outright, or lease?



##### Tip:

- Your needs will change over time - make sure both the number of and type of devices you choose aligns with the direction of your business
- For printers, the best way to keep track of change, such as increasing print costs or print habits in your organisation, is to get periodical reports from print management tools like [PaperCut](#)

If your business has a range of printing, scanning and document management needs, Managed Print Services (MPS) may be the ideal way to get the best solution to meet your needs and budget. Full service operational rentals and leases can be advantageous to a balance sheet and the best solution for your requirements.

[The MPS quiz](#) can help you determine whether you fit this type. If your business is a good candidate for MPS, the process begins with a print assessment to identify the exact device and service your business needs.

#### 5 \ Does the organisation need its own print server?



##### Tip:

- If your organisation is using Microsoft Azure, take advantage of [Microsoft Universal Print](#) - it makes managing print devices across your organisation easier and provides driverless access to your users

As more functions move to the cloud, it may no longer be necessary to support, and have the expense of, running a print server in your company's own data centre.

#### 6 \ Which departments have printing needs beyond standard A4 documents?



##### Tip:

- If you do need to print other types of paper, think about multiple solutions, like a [multi-function device](#) for everyday printing and a separate dedicated [label printer](#) for self adhesive labels
- If you operate a business that often prints on various paper types (e.g. a medical clinic), then perhaps it's best to look for a device which has the capability of adding an additional paper tray (or selecting a device that comes with two paper trays as standard)
- If you often need to undertake a large volume of scanning, consider a desktop document scanner which has a larger paper capacity ADF compared to standard multi-function devices - this will save you a considerable amount of time

If your business will regularly need to print on self-adhesive labels, envelopes or paper sizes other than A4, make sure you select a device which can handle multiple trays. Otherwise you'll find that it's rather time consuming to continuously change paper types.





# Part 2 \ Tips on using and managing a printer or multi-function device

Optimising your print device running costs means determining how many pages your team needs to print each month across departments, then turning best practices into policies.

## 1 \ Default to cost-saving print settings

Similar to home and home office users, there are default print settings we recommend IT managers set up by default during device installation. Some examples include:

- Choosing draft mode or toner save mode by default and only using higher quality settings when needed
- Selecting 2-sided (duplex) printing by default to save paper
- On colour devices, setting the colour to mono by default and only printing in colour when needed

## 2 \ Set rules and alerts

This powerful feature is generally only available with print management software such as [PaperCut](#) or YSoft. It helps prevent accidental printing, which is the main source of print wastage. For example, printing Excel spreadsheets is often not straightforward, and you must select the sheets or cells you wish to print. Users will often accidentally print the entire Excel workbook, which could be hundreds of pages.

Rules and alerts will warn the user if a print job is over a specified number of pages to prevent them from printing a large print job by mistake, advising the user to check first.

# Part 3 \ Implementing productivity and governance policies

Policies within a corporate office should reflect the ways your employees really use their devices every day, while keeping data secure and limiting resource usage. These can be implemented as part of an overarching MPS deployment.

You can craft the ideal policy by taking actions such as the following:



## Deliver extra security via physical access control

If your office deals with sensitive information, releasing print jobs via ID card scanning or other identification methods can bolster confidentiality.



## Implement policies favouring digital sharing

Implementing policies that favour scanning and digital sharing instead of printing or photocopying can save resources and simplify workflows.



## Digital signatures

Implementing policies that allow for digital signatures, instead of printing, signing and then scanning, can save time and avoid losing documents.



# For working from home or working remotely



## Part 1 \ **Selecting the right device**

Remote work is a flexible way to operate, with the possibility of logging on from home, a cafe, a workshare site, a satellite office or a workspace in an office building. If your business operates this way, your print solutions need to provide for your employees in the office and “remotely”.



1 \ How much will each employee be printing at home or remotely?

When setting employees up with devices for home offices, be aware that smaller printers may not have the same connectivity and high-capacity features as a professional model. When shifting a worker from in-office to remote, check their usual print volume by obtaining a report from the device the employee uses in the office.



Tip:

- It might be prudent to purchase monochrome laser devices for your employees to print at home, as these are the most cost-effective devices to run (unless the employee specifically requests a colour printer)

2 \ Do employees have to scan and upload documents?

Perhaps even more important than printing remotely - scanning and uploading documents will help remote teams collaborate digitally. If this is a frequent need, workers should have Multi-Function Centres with direct, secure cloud upload features.



Tip:

- Select a device which can scan directly to a cloud service such as Onedrive, Google Drive or Dropbox

3 \ Do you have many employees working remotely?

If you manage a medium or small enterprise organisation with many remote employees, we first recommend a managed print service. It's also important to utilise the print management tools that come with this service so you have the ability to install devices across the work group, track printing costs and actively provide ongoing support for your employees. Your devices can be managed as part of one ecosystem regardless of location.

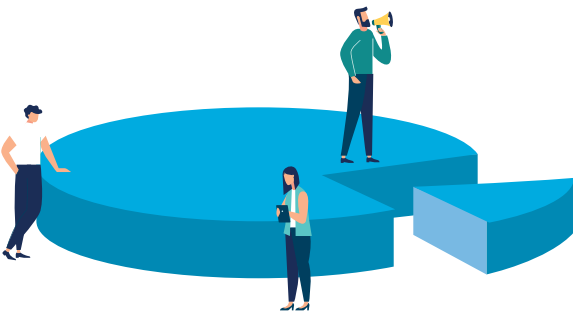


Tip:

- If your organisation is using Microsoft Azure, select print devices which are compatible with Microsoft Universal Cloud Print. It will provide you with the capability of managing print devices on your Azure platform and save you the hassle of installing print devices manually







## Part 2 \ Tips on using and managing a printer or multi-function device

Device management comes with unique considerations for a remote workforce. As the leader of such a team, you have to deal with the challenges of working with varied and often consumer-targeted devices in a professional context.

TIP

### 1 \ Have employees set up budget-friendly print settings by default?

You can help remote employees save money and protect the environment by asking them to print in draft mode by default, or use 2-sided (duplex) printing. The documents they print at home may never be seen by customers, so high-quality printing usually isn't necessary.

- Direct your remote employees to the Printers section of the control panel on Windows PCs or the printers and scanners menu on Apple devices. This is where they can choose default print settings. If they need to print one-off documents in high-quality, they can change the settings in the dialogue box that appears when they select File > Print

### 2 \ Use Print to PDF to support reduced print volume

In many cases, your remote employees will not have to print documents at all, and it will be more efficient to save the information as a PDF. This means using a print services solution with easy Print to PDF capability, so workers have a simple way to generate digital documents, which can then be uploaded to share with colleagues.

## Part 3 \ Implementing productivity and governance policies

Top-down governance and productivity policies affecting remote office environments must be extremely flexible and wide-ranging. The fact that there is no standardised workplace or set of devices is a new challenge that can be overcome with well-chosen plans.

You can do this in the following ways:



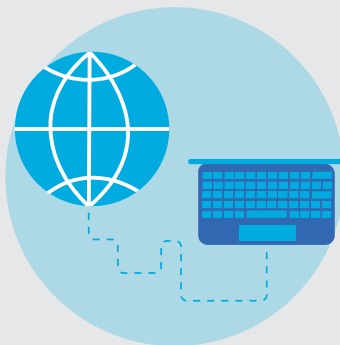
### Develop the right strategy

When employees are collaborating from afar and with the potential to move, scanning and digital document management are of paramount importance. Companies need strategies that have digitisation at the foreground, while allowing easy printing.



### Implement security at the access level

Printing, scanning and document management features should be managed by a series of protective features including access controls. These controls comprise rules for users, such as a functional block, preventing confidential documents from being printed in the less controlled home-workspace environment.



### Control device connectivity

As more Australians are living in apartments or unit complexes, wireless connections pose a significant security risk. The simple first step in securing the data of the business for employees working from home is to ensure print devices are connected using an Ethernet wired connection. This reduces the chance of data being intercepted.



### Remote print management

For advanced users, there are print management tools, such as [PaperCut](#), which offer cost-effective remote print management. This allows IT managers to manage print devices remotely by simply installing secondary servers or utilising cloud features for employees working from home. Using this method, all printer devices can effectively receive technical support if necessary and utilise managed print services to control print costs.



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