

Original vs Compatible vs Remanufactured

Which Type of Cartridge Is Right For You And Your Customers?

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Original (OEM, Genuine)

OEM toners are manufactured by the Original manufacturer, who hold the patents for the cartridge. The OEM printer manufacturers will always recommend that you use their toner cartridges as they claim that the printer functions will be affected by any other type of cartridge. They also suggest that the life of the printer is shortened by usage of unbranded toner cartridges, however, this is total fiction.

The main disadvantage of buying OEM branded toner cartridges is the high cost relative to the prices of compatible and remanufactured alternatives. The initial cost of photocopiers and laser printers has decreased over time, however, manufacturers make up for this through the high margin of their consumables.

The main issue with OEM toner cartridges is that once they're used, their destination historically is to landfill. Roughly 85% of OEM toner cartridges that are manufactured suffer this same fate. Taking into account that the average toner cartridge can take approximately 1000 years to decompose, this poses an enormous negative impact on the environment.

Of course, these cartridges can be remanufactured and recycled, however, OEM manufacturers are making this process increasingly difficult. With each new product added to the market, one of the OEM manufacturers main focus is innovation, and preventing recycling and remanufacturing to ensure that their products are the only ones available. They do this in many different ways:

- Embedded software preventing the reuse of the cartridge
- Non-eco design: cartridges aren't designed to be reused
- No sharing of information on how to remanufacture
- Printer firmware updates locking out non-OEM cartridges
- Limited printer functionality when non-OEM cartridges are used
- Obliging customers to not sell remanufactured cartridges
- Denial of honouring warranties
- Closed-shop customer supply programmes
- Closed-shop collection programmes for used cartridges



Unfortunately, a large majority of OEM cartridges will end up in a landfill, just like this one

Compatible (Clones, Newbuild)

Compatible cartridges are new cartridges which have been made by a different company to the printer manufacturer and sold under that company's name. IPR-free compatible toner cartridges are engineered to deliver the exact same performance and results as the OEM counterpart, even though the OEM has not manufactured it.

An IPR-free compatible cartridge uses quality compatible parts which can be recycled once the product has reached the end of its life. In comparison with the OEM, an IPR-free compatible cartridge can be bought at a more cost-effective price without compromising on quality.

ECS ensure that all compatible products qualify as IPR-free compatibles. All cartridges are tested for compliance by benchmarking them against the following criteria:

- No OEM look
- No OEM brands used
- No OEM patents used
- Functional Solutions



Compatible cartridges can be difficult to distinguish between OEM and remanufactured products

ECS compatible cartridges are clearly labelled as such and are never falsely advertised as the OEM. IPR-free compatible OEM alternative cartridges do not infringe on OEM patents.

While all of the above is true for ECS compatible products, not all compatible products meet the same standards and levels of quality. Data from recent reports and tests also show that a large majority of newbuild cartridges that are sourced from Europe have failed LGA emissions tests for multiple reasons, which leads us to question their safety. A large majority of compatible cartridges that are tested show excessive levels of cobalt, benzene, naphthalene and Bis(2-methoxyethyl) ether. All of which can cause long-term effects to aquatic life, as well as skin reactions, allergies and/or asthmatic symptoms/ breathing difficulties if inhaled.

EPRO Remanufactured

EPRO remanufactured cartridges make use of a used original cartridge shell in order to produce a high quality OEM alternative remanufactured product. Environmentally superior EPRO remanufactured toners are disassembled each time we receive an empty cartridge via The Greener Side recycling scheme, where each part is then individually inspected.

Any components that do not meet ECS accredited ISO 9001 quality control standards are completely replaced by components that are sourced from some of the leading manufacturers in the world, enabling us to produce a vast, high quality product range with leading edge development. Each part is then meticulously cleaned, reassembled and the cartridge refilled in line with OEM specifications.

Prior to release, each of these products and parts also pass through multiple quality control stations and are approved by a Technical Director to ensure that EPRO products comply with mandatory environmental legislation (REACH, COSHH, RoHS). Each and every component, part and product are free of any materials or chemical substances that are not detrimental to the environment or public health and each product is supported by a Material Safety Data Sheet.



An EPRO Remanufactured Kyocera TK8335 Toner Cartridge

EPRO remanufactured toner cartridges are the most environmentally-friendly and cost-effective option available to you in comparison with an OEM product WITHOUT losing out on the level of quality, performance, reliability and consistency that OEM products are associated with.

The largest environmental impact in our industry comes from the sheer amount of cartridges that are used and never remanufactured, causing significant negative impacts on the environment over the long-term as well as using a monumental amount of raw materials to replace the cartridges that have been used.

Using EPRO remanufactured toners can help you to reduce CO2 emissions by 40%-60% while saving a significant amount of waste that would otherwise end up in a landfill site. Each EPRO remanufactured cartridge that is used instead of an OEM cartridge prevents a significant amount of plastic and aluminium from being used to manufacture a brand new cartridge in place of a used one.

It's important to note that while EPRO products provide all of these benefits, not all remanufactured products on the market meet ISO remanufacturer or environmental standards. A large majority of remanufactured products are of low quality, produced by manufacturers known as 'drill and fill' merchants, who neglect inspecting the integrity of each empty cartridge and their ability to be successfully remanufactured.

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