Toner Gauge

- may not be reliable with non-hp cartridges

- more accurate at the end of the cartridge's life

- it is possible to force a toner level recheck

Getting an Accurate Reading from the Toner Gauge

Many laser printers have a "toner gauge" to show the approximate remaining toner life in both graphic and numerical form. It can appear either on the configuration or the supply status page. This article will show how to why the toner gauge is often inaccurate and how to get a good reading.

Why the gauge may be inaccurate

Early in the life of the cartridge, the gauge is based mostly on page counts, which can be inherently inaccurate, particularly if your toner coverage is significantly different than the 5 percent anticipated by the . The gauge becomes more accurate as the cartridge nears the end of its life, because the printer relies less on page counts and more on the electromagnetic and optical methods described in the Toner Sensing article.

Also, you cannot always trust the gauge when using a non-HP cartridge, because of possible memory tag issues. HP even goes so far as to say that "smart cartridge features (cartridge out/low) are not available" with a non-HP cartridge.

Getting a better reading

Since the printer checks the toner level and resets the gauge only at certain times, it is useful to power up with no toner cartridge(s) installed, wait for the printer to complain about this, and then install the cartridge(s). This forces the printer to check the toner level and reset the gauge.

Some printers do not automatically reset the gauge when a different cartridge is used, so you may be prompted for this information or have to go into a menu and select "New Cartridge = Yes."

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