

How Often Do You Replace Your Printer?

I am wondering if there is some standard. How often do you replace your printer?

When it dies or needs a part that costs more than a new one.

Shell Bleiweiss, Illinois

I have a two drawer Brother printer with letterhead in one drawer and second pages in the second that I've used since 2005.

Deborah Matthews, Virginia

My personal rule is that when the cost of a repair approaches 50% of the cost of buying a new one I buy a new one.

Jim Winiarski

Agreed. I'll add to that--when you can't find printer cartridges for it any more. I seldom use my printer--think I got mine in 2012 or so--but it's an HP All in One, and I wouldn't hesitate to junk it rather than bothering to repair it. Printers--especially inkjet printers--are really cheap these days.

Kevin Grierson, Virginia

I had a HP Laserjet 1320n from some time around 2003-2005 and tossed it when I closed my practice last year. It worked great so no need to replace it. It had an extra 250 page tray that I used for legal size documents when I did RE closings.

Dennis Chen

I have a HP4100n from 2001. Paper Count of 200,000. Its a workhorse. Toner is still cheap and available. Only thing I have replaced otherwise is upgrading the network cable and JetDirect Card. Both together cost me \$25.

Cassette holds a full ream, so no half loading paper when I run out.

Jim Bowman

I ran an estate planning / probate solo practice on a shoestring, so I never had a replacement schedule for any of my office equipment. Replacement was made upon the occurrence of the one or more of the following contingencies:

1. When it dies
2. When the cost of repair exceeds the cost of a new one.
3. When the cost of repair is significant enough that the money could be better spent toward a new one
4. When the cost of purchase and installation of a driver to make the old compatible with the new could be better spent toward a new one I had my computer tech guy give my equipment an annual checkup / clean-up at a very reasonable cost, and kept an HP laptop and printer going for 10 years before replacing them with a Lenovo laptop and an HP MFP.

Rod Klafehn, New York

On average, about ten years here. There is no standard. I look at how well the unit is performing, print costs and compare that with a suitable replacement.

Early this year my large Ricoh printer kicked a maintenance message. It would have cost about \$800 to get it back up and running, after which it should have performed well. I ended up getting a new Ricoh color laser printer instead. It was a 50/50 game where I just made a choice.

Generally, I will look at replacing a printer when I am having problems with it too often, the quality of printing becomes an issue, or based on the cost of a repair. There is no hard and fast guideline.

I never purchase an inkjet, due to the cost of ownership. Page costs to print, required maintenance and purchase price lead to a total cost of ownership. Laser printers, with an appropriate duty use, are superior.

One of the sites I look at for analysis is printershowcase.com. I have also purchased several printers from them.

Darrell G. Stewart, Texas

Seems like I have to update printers when I update computers, because the old drivers often are not compatible with the new operating system, and the printer manufacturers are not updating the drivers for the old printers.

Michael A. Blake, Connecticut

It's a conspiracy! ;) But you correct about that.

Bobby Lott, Jr., Alabama

HP1200 from around 2002

Nicholas I. Fuerst, Arizona

I agree with the above, but I think there is a hassle factor/stress level consideration that often exceeds other factors. If I have a printer that has any issue other than regular maintenance, it becomes a backup.

I have owned Brother and HP but there is NOTHING like a high-volume HP LaserJet, IMHO (e.g. the equivalent of the old 4000 series and above), that compares in a high-volume office. I had an HP4345 that went flawlessly from 2004 to 2015 or so. I replaced the fuser at least 8 times, so a LOT of prints. But the little things started happening with the scanner (printer continued to work fine). I bought a used one, worked great for three years, then the same. So, I bought a lightly used newer version (HP M630 MFP).

That has run flawlessly for about two years now. And by that, I mean "replace the paper and toner" flawless. And it does well with aftermarket toner.

In hindsight, even the little distraction from my HP 4345 was too much towards the end. I'm going to cycle this one out in three years to backup (so five years in service) and get another before any problems start happening.

Bret Cook, California

Too often. They are built to be disposable and it angers me to no end.

Jeena R. Belil, Mew York

When it breaks.

I'm still using the same HP5160 I got well before 2007. It's so old, I can't remember the year I bought it.

I'm just now seriously considering replacing it because I need something faster, not because it's broken.

AnnMichelle G Hart

I think "how often do you replace your printer" is really a question of pages printed as much as, if not more than, physical age (provided you can still get toner/printer ink). I print MAYBE 20 pages a month. I've actually had ink cartridges dry out on me before they ran out of ink. On the other hand, if you have a paper intensive practice, an inkjet makes no sense. My old firm actually had a contract with a company that maintained several laser printers for us and just swapped them out if they needed repairs.

Kevin Grierson

My current HP LaserJet 2100TN purports to have a firmware date code of 19991018, so it's coming up on a birthday! My printer is almost old enough to drink. If I'm reading the status log information correctly, the last status entry was related to the printing of page 72,502, so I suppose it may be entitled to a drink.

I'm not sure there's a standard, per se; I suppose it depends on what you use it for, the quality you need, etc. At this point, in my case, it's getting harder to find toner cartridges; HP stopped making them years ago.

My general rule, owing perhaps in part to my Scots heritage, is "She's a-broke; she's a-no-fix."

Richard J. Rutledge, Jr., North Carolina