

CALIGO SAFE WASH
RELIEF INKS

Cranfield™
COLOUR LIKE NO OTHER

Caligo Safe Wash Relief Printmaking Inks Product Information

Linseed Oil based RELIEF inks that can be cleaned with soap and water.

Applications:

All types of relief printing. (Linocut, woodcut, wood engraving, photopolymer & letterpress)



Product Description:

Caligo inks are oil-based and will therefore handle and print like traditional oil-based printing inks. However, Caligo Safe Wash Relief inks will safely and easily wash away with liquid soap and COLD water alone, without the need for solvents. These inks have good lightfast ratings (Blue Wool Scale 6 or higher) and are highly pigmented.

Modifying and Mixing:

As the inks are highly pigmented, the strength of colours can be modified by the addition of Caligo Safe Wash Transparent Extender (WTC 83405). The majority of the colours are made from single pigments, so the inks make excellent bases for creating vibrant colour mixtures. Or, starting with just the four process colours, mixed in varying proportions, a range of blues, purples, greens, reds and oranges are achievable. Colour mixing guides can be downloaded from the Cranfield website.

The inks can be thinned with a small addition of Caligo Safe Wash Oil (WTCI 83948).

Printing:

Caligo Safe Wash Relief inks behave in the same way as traditional oil-based relief inks. They are suitable for printing on dry or damp paper, however it is recommended that paper is kept fairly dry and there is no surface water on the paper or plate. Damping just the back of the paper with a damp sponge works well.

Paper Choice:

It is important to use dedicated Printmaking papers.

The term that a paper is suitable for 'ink', generally refers to liquid pen and water-based inks rather than oil based. Papers that are designed for water colour (for example) have an invisible impervious surface coating (called a size) making it unabsorbent for oil-based inks. Some Japanese papers can be somewhat 'greasy' and as a consequence, ink benefits from additional wax driers.

Printmakers should be aware that coloured paper, especially black paper is associated with very slow ink drying and ink driers are therefore required.

Paper with a high recycled content will contain short and damaged fibres which are not conducive to even absorption or steady drying of oil-based inks.

Oil based inks are slow to dry in an acidic environment so acid free papers are preferable. Some pulp boards and recycled materials can be acidic.

Ink Drying advice:

Caligo Safe Wash Relief Inks will dry in the same way as traditional oil-based inks. (by absorption into paper, surface oxidation and slow polymerisation of the remainder of the printed ink film).



The printmaker should apply minimal thickness of ink (it's tempting to apply thicker layers especially if trying to create a strong colour or to hide overlapped layers). Due to the high pigment loading, only little ink is required to achieve a strong colour. If opacity is an issue, light colours are improved by adding a little opaque white, and dark colours by adding a little carbon black.

Plenty of warm, dry, moving air and daylight over the surface of the print will speed up the drying process. If it's been raining or in a high humidity building, keeping the prints warm AND DRY once printed will be important. Printmakers who are producing large numbers of prints may consider constructing a print drying box containing drying rack, a low-level heat source and a fan to initiate air movement.

It is problematic to wait a long time before overprinting, as the first layers once dry will be almost impenetrable meaning subsequent overprinted ink will not absorb, and the drying process will be indefinitely interrupted.

When printmakers have used unsuitable paper or employed challenging methods, technical help is available from hello@cranfield-colours.co.uk including the old-printmaker's trick of shaking a little talcum powder over the surface of the print, leaving for 5 minutes after which the talc is shaken off. Any remnants are brushed off with a very soft bristle brush. The talc absorbs any surface oil and gives oxidation a re-boot.

Slow drying prints may also in some circumstances be 'salvaged' by a light spray of an aerosol fixative normally used to protect a watercolour or charcoal picture.

Caligo inks already contain a small quantity of driers but the speed of the drying process can be easily increased by the addition of Printmaker's wax drier. (WTCN 84356). This easy-to-mix blend increases drying speed AND provides greater rub and scuff resistance to the finished print.

Alternatively, the addition of liquid Cobalt or Manganese Driers can be used depending on local restrictions.



Ink Storage:

All oil-based Inks will eventually dry and form a skin when exposed to the oxygen in the air. To stop ink from drying and forming a skin in the tin, pockets of air in the ink surface are smoothed with a knife and exposed surfaces of the ink are re-covered with the protective disc. The lid should be replaced securely and the tape reapplied.

The thread of an ink tube should be clean with a rag so that the cap can be easily replaced.

Unlike the acrylic system, oil-based inks are generally resilient to colder conditions but should be kept out of direct sunlight and high temperatures which can instigate drying.

Ink Removal/Wash Up:

Caligo Safe Wash Relief inks are designed to wash away with soap and water alone without the need for harmful solvents. For best results, use liquid hand soap or detergent or a laundry liquid (most brands work well) and COLD water.

Excess ink is removed with a knife or a dry rag and newsprint is used to remove as much ink as possible from plate and roller / brayer before washing up. Next, liquid soap / detergent is squeezed directly onto the inky surfaces and worked with a clean brush or a soft sponge.

Hot water should NOT be used when cleaning as it opens not only the pores of the skin but also the surface structure of rollers, lino etc and can make the emulsified ink turn into an unpleasant goo.

Finally, the ink-soap mixture is wiped away with a damp sponge or a paper towel. Carefully drying all surfaces before storage.

If any stubborn patches of ink remain, liquid soap should be reapplied and worked into the ink until it starts to lift away. Cleaning rags can be washed out and reused many times.

There is a temptation to use too much soapy water. It is helpful to have the rag relatively dry to provide 'tooth' to mechanically loosen the ink. Lots of coloured soapy water is difficult to keep on the slab. A window squeegee is a useful way to clear the remaining soapy water from the glass slab.



CALIGO SAFE WASH
RELIEF INKS

Oil based and washable - For non toxic
prepressing and solvent free cleaning
www.cranfield-colours.co.uk

For current colour range, consult www.cranfield-colours.co.uk

