

How to create an Eco Image Transfer Print

By Neil Robinson



What is Eco Image Transfer?

Eco Image Transfer is a type of Monotype Image Transfer (Paper Lithography) that lifts laser toner off one surface and onto another to create intricate collages combining hand-drawn and photographic elements. The method described uses more environmentally conscious alternatives as opposed to Acetone or other solvents which are environmentally hazardous. This technique can be used to transfer images onto an array of surfaces, from wood to paper, to achieve a grainy, vintage or 'zine' aesthetic to the finished artwork.

Materials you will need

- Citra Solv natural cleaner degreaser 256ml (Can be purchased online such as Amazon)
- Medium sized syringe for extracting Citra Solv from the bottle
- Various sample images, collages and montages of high contrast black and white laser prints on recycle A4 paper. You can also use colour laser printed images
- Cartridge paper at least 150 gsm A4 or A3 in size (You can also use a sketch book)
- Fabriano paper (optional)
- Sheets of thin wood such as Balsa or Bamboo (optional)
- Paint brushes: Small, medium and large
- Plastic post pot to hold Citra Solv
- Nitrile disposable gloves
- HB pencils or better and old toothbrush
- Coloured pencils
- Coloured watercolour pencils
- Water for watercolour pencils + pot
- Pencil sharpener
- Masking tape
- Scalpel and cutting mat or a pair of scissors
- Paper towelling or soft cloth

Method

Take your prepared high contrast images printed in black and white on a laser printer or photocopier ideally using white A4 office paper (This gives the best results). You can also use colour laser prints.

Tip: Ensure the image is reversed if there is any lettering or wording on the image or if the landmark needs to be orientated so it prints out correctly. You can use software like Adobe Photoshop or Microsoft Office Power Point to reverse the image.

If you don't have access to paid software, I recommend a free online imaging tool called **Img2Go**.

To create a mirror image or rotate the image go to: <https://www.img2go.com/rotate-image>

Then cut out the images from the laser print using a scalpel and cutting mat or a pair of scissors.

Hint: You may want to create pre-prepared collages so you don't need to cut out any of the images. You can use photo editing software to manipulate images such as using copyright free images or best of all use your own sketches or artwork. Try this free online image resource: <https://www.freepik.com>

You can search for example 'Victorian clipart'. Select the 'Illustrations' filter and 'Black' filter in the search settings.

Turn over the laser print face down onto the cartridge paper, Fabriano or wood depending on what you're printing onto.

Apply a small piece of masking tape to one corner of the laser print to hold the print in place and ensure it is clear of the image you're going to transfer.

Using a paint brush, apply the Citra Solv cleaner (concentrate) to the back of the laser print in short strokes. If covering a larger area, use a large paintbrush and light spread the Citra Solv over the print.

Wipe off any excess Citra Solv using paper towelling or a soft cloth.

Using a HB pencil, rub the back of the laser print in the same diagonal direction with firm pressure or vary the pressure if you want an uneven grainy effect. I also found using the round end of an old toothbrush works just as well if not better.

Once you have rubbed over the image, check by lifting one edge of the paper to see if the transfer has worked. If there are gaps, add more Citra Solve with brush and rub further. Once you are happy, remove the laser print and tape. The image will have been transferred to the paper or wood.

Once the print has dried for 5-10 minutes at room temperature, you can then think about adding colour to the print using coloured pencils or watercolour pencils. Apply watercolour pencils by dipping the nib of the pencil into the water and then apply to the paper or wood in small areas. Use a paint brush to spread the watercolour if required. You can also use coloured paper or prepared Gelli print backgrounds to overlay the transfers.

Tip: You can use the Eco Image Transfer technique to transfer tracings onto Lino sheets.

Finally, once your print is fully dried, you can preserve the print by applying a coat of acrylic medium clear varnish.

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