

teach me how to ríso

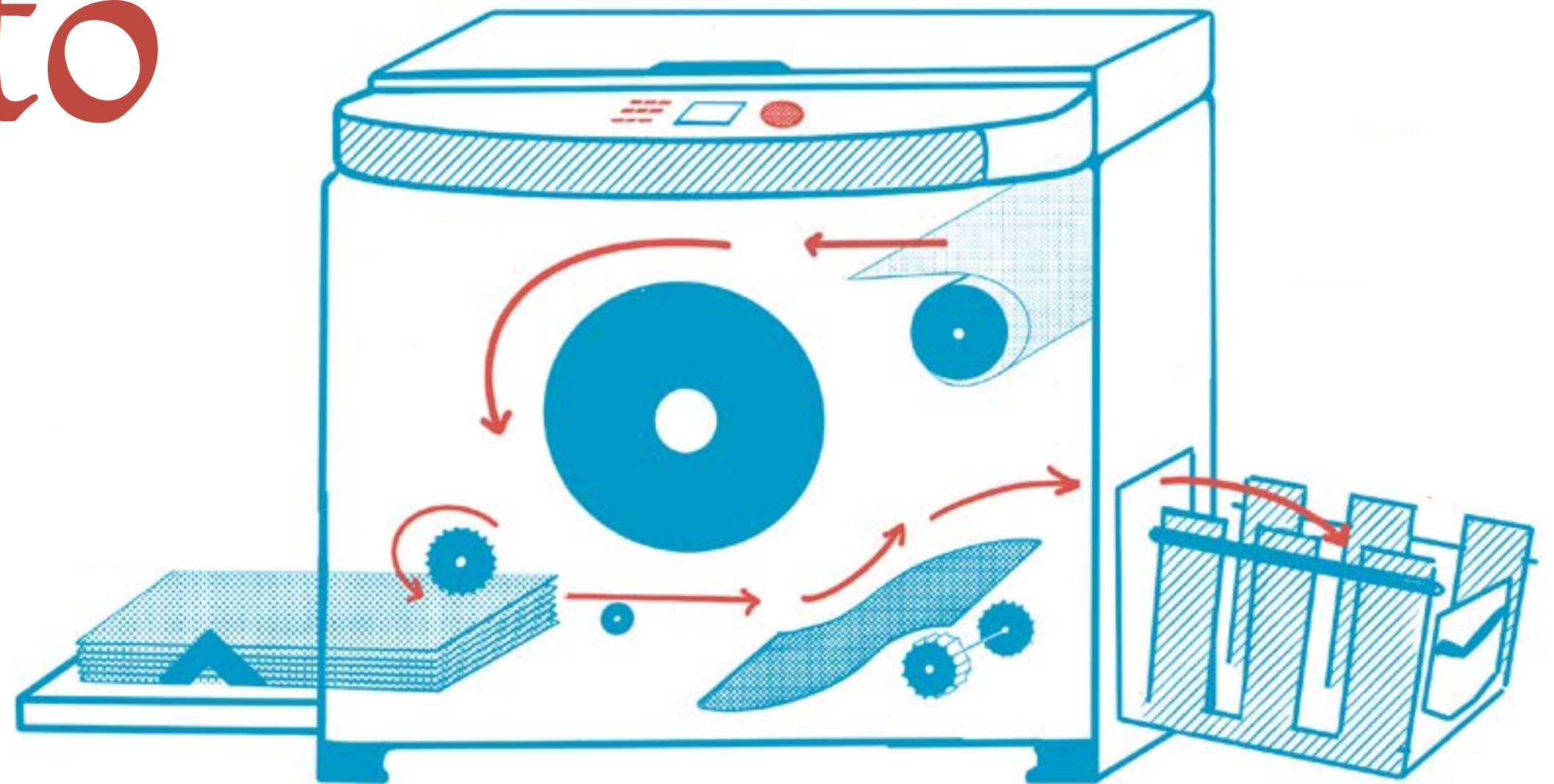
A Risograph printer is a stencil duplicator that operates in a similar fashion as the Mimeograph. Roughly the same size and shape of a standard Xerox copier, the Risograph creates fast, inexpensive copies using environmentally friendly and highly saturated soy-based inks. Historically, the Risograph has been used by institutions such as churches and schools to produce fliers and other documents at high-volume and low-cost, but the process has been appropriated by artists, designers, and publishers to create economical, unique, and tactile prints.

The Risograph creates copies by burning a stencil master onto a wax paper-like material, which is then placed on a color drum. The process can be broken down into three steps: Staging, Master-Making, and Printing.

1. STAGING - The operator selects the drum of the desired color (each color is printed separately!) and installs it in the printer. Paper is placed in the paper feed tray on the left side of the duplicator.

2. MASTER-MAKING - The design is sent to the Riso via a USB input or via the scanning bed. Then, the printer burns the master stencil and places it on the drum.

3. PRINTING - The paper moves through the printer guided by a series of rubber rollers. The paper makes contact with the drum via the pressure roller, and is then ejected from the printer, landing in the exit tray.



prepping your design for print

keep in mind...

COLORS

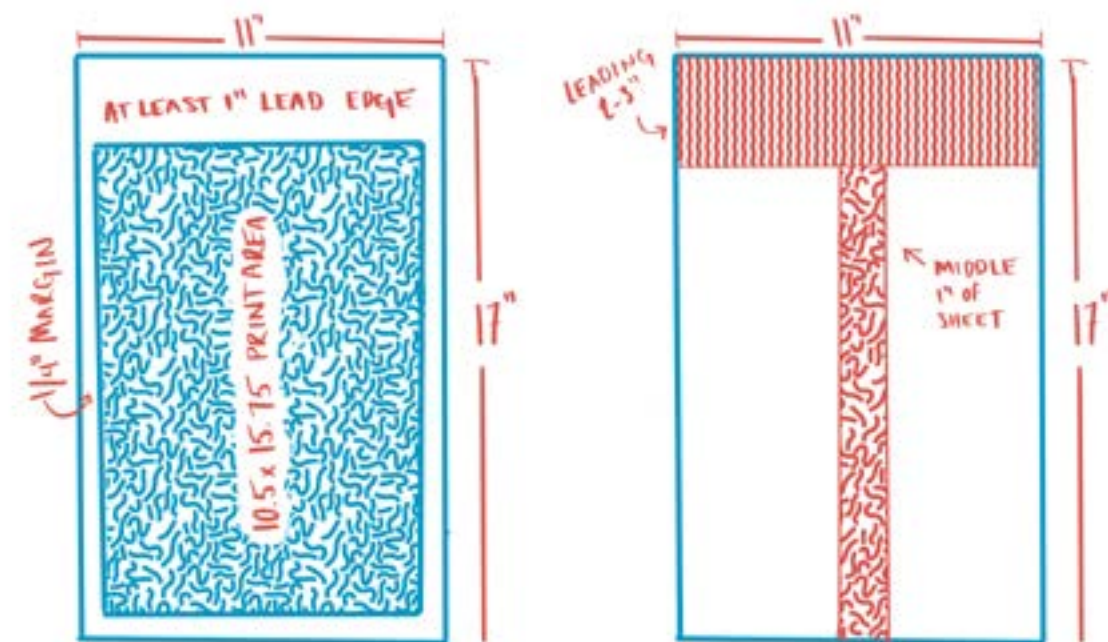
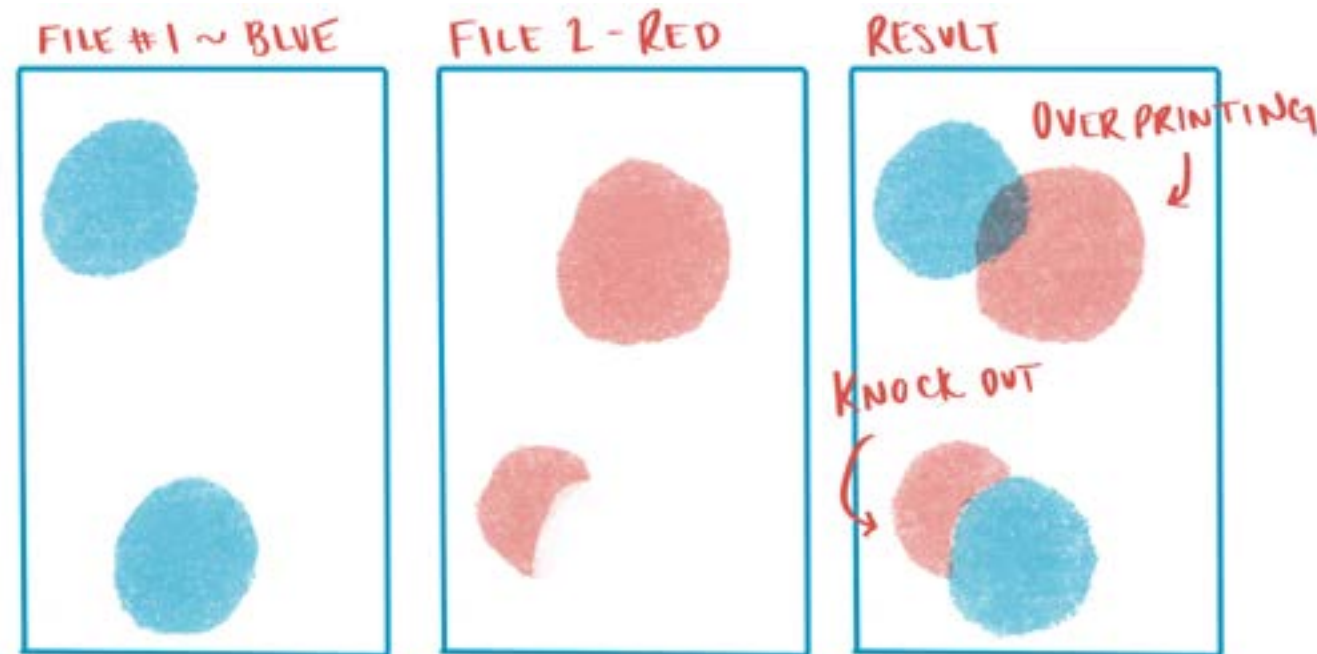
Risograph inks are environmentally friendly, as they are made from soy and even rice. Each is slightly transparent, which provides rich territory for experimentation. Overlapping various inks often produces exciting new hues! For a list of SoP available colors, visit www.senseofpress.info/resources.

ILLUSTRATIONS

As you develop your file in Photoshop, Illustrator, or Procreate, keep your colors organized in separate layers, labeled with the corresponding Riso ink. You may choose to use the RGB, CMYK, or HEX color codes (visit senseofpress.info/resources for the codes) to best approximate the look of each color. Keep in mind that layering Riso inks often produces unique results, so you may consider strategically using overprinting and/or knockout color fields to blend or distinguish shapes.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Images reproduced using a Risograph printer will always undergo a significant color shift. Many artists and designers opt to lean into this effect, and will reproduce a standard CMYK image with just two to three colors (for instance, a red/black image, orange/teal, etc.). Often, it is the most useful to start by investigating the CMYK channels, and replacing any number of them with a specific Riso ink. The possibilities here are endless! For artists who are interested in pursuing this further, <https://colorlibrary.ch/> is a wonderful resource for exploring the possibilities of color shift using unique color profiles. Sense of Press is able to provide free digital approximations for red/black, orange/teal, cornflower/orange, yellow/fluo pink/cornflower, and yellow/fluo pink/black photographs. Email nicole@senseofpress.info for inquiries!



ALL FILES

should have a 1/4" margin on each side, and a 1" leading edge (top margin). The leading 2-3" and center 1" of a tabloid sheet are likely culprits for smearing, so we recommend avoiding large color blocks in either of those places. All large filled areas should be reduced to 70-80% opacity. All final print files should be separated into individual grayscale PDFs for each color that is to be printed. We'll also accept PSD documents with each color separated into a unique layer.

SMUDGING

Because Riso ink contains fewer solvents than its traditional inkjet counterparts, its texture and absorbency varies and is often easily smudged. As a print exits the printer and lands on the previous copy, a "ghost image" can transfer onto the back. This effect occurs when printing high-density or ink-heavy designs.

TIRE MARKS

The Riso grabs each sheet of paper using Paper Feed Tires located at the center of the paper feed unit (see the small gear near the paper feed tray in the diagram). When printing multiple colors, often the feed tires will create slight smear marks in the middle 1" of the printed sheet, but can be easily erased using a rubber eraser.

MISREGISTRATION

Although many Riso prints are designed using digital tools such as Procreate, Photoshop, or InDesign, the resulting prints always contain slight variations. Registration often varies from 1/32" - 1/4," generating imperfect — but always unique — results.