

Etching Presses

Cautions

- Wear thick-soled shoes that completely cover the top of the foot (steel toed boots are recommended).
- Ensure that long hair is tied up, and loose clothing is confined or removed.
- Keep hands and fingers away from moving parts and pinch points.
- Only the operator may stand near the press during use. All other persons are to stand clear.
- Only operators trained in the safe operation of the press are allowed to use it.

Description and Uses

The etching presses are used to make prints and embossed metal plates, lino blocks, woodcuts or Plexiglas/ Lexan plates and polyester lithographic plates. These presses apply pressure to the printing media and paper with a balanced and heavy roller.

Standard Operations

Note: only those individuals that have received proper instruction are allowed to use these presses. Please refer to training demonstrations for specifics about materials and settings.

The presses and the surrounding areas should be inspected before use to ensure that all parts are in working order and that the area is tidy and free of all other hazards.

Setting up

1. Set/check the printing pressure. Please note that maximum pressure is not necessary, only increase the pressure as the job requires.
2. Soften tarlatan, prepare ink, soak paper and gloves accessible.
3. Place registration sheet on press bed.
4. Align plate face up to registration.
5. Blot printing paper, and place on top of registered plate.

6. Cover with newsprint or tissue and pull blankets over.

Printing

1. To crank through press turn handle. (Take care not to over crank the press handles as the press beds can be ejected from the press due to carelessness.). Never force a press, if it doesn't feel right.
2. Pull blankets over the roller; lift newsprint, carry print to drying boards or place on drying rack.

Shut Down

1. After work is complete clean press bed.
2. Scrape excess ink off glass slabs and clean all tools. Use vegetable oil and vinegar for oil-based inks and soap and water for soya-based inks.
3. Clean rubber rollers according to proper instruction.
4. Ensure area and equipment are ready for next use.

Further Considerations

- Ask other workers to move away from the press while in use.
- It is important that the bed of the press is not misaligned with the tracks of the press.
- Maximum pressure is not necessary. Increase pressure, as the print job requires.
- Never operate the press if there is anyone standing behind it.
- Ensure that the area around press is clear of other items or hazards. Trip hazards are particularly dangerous when using this tool.
- Make certain that nothing is placed on the press bed besides your material before making a print.
- If the press is not operating correctly then notify your supervisor immediately. Do not attempt to operate again until corrective action has been taken and documented. Only supervisors are trained and are permitted to perform maintenance on the press.

Hazards

Presses exert powerful forces to transfer ink from the printing surface on to sheets of paper. This presents severe dangers of crushing and severing extremities in moving parts and at pinch points. Always keep hands away from moving parts like springs, bearings, gears, or rollers when feeding work through the press or adjusting any pressures.

When the bed is moved by hand the weight of the bed can increase it's momentum making it difficult to stop. Always move the press bed in a controlled and continuous motion to avoid injury and/ or property damage. Never move the press bed if another worker is standing behind the press.