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Photosmart 5520 Microsoft Windows 10 (64-bit) Help, my printer is streaking. By that I don't mean running naked onto a cricket pitch, but that there are faint lines a few pixels wide running across the width of my prints. (A4 paper, normal mode) I have changed my ink cartridges, cleaned the printer heads (simple clean and second level clean), aligned my printer. Indeed, I have cleaned and aligned twice. What do I do next? Vertical bands, lines, or streaks in copies you can identify and address the underlying issues with the right troubleshooting steps and the quality of your printed or scanned documents. Various factors often cause these imperfections, but with the right troubleshooting steps, you can identify and address the underlying issues. Here's an expanded guide on how to tackle this problem: VIDEO: HOW TO fix lines on your HP printer while making copies. Here's a step-by-step guide to help you fix this problem: Clean the Scanner Glass and ADF: #Dust, smudges, or debris on the scanner glass or the ADF can lead to streaks in scans or copies. To clean these components: Power off the printer and unplug it for safety. Open the scanner lid and ADF. Use a lint-free cloth and a glass cleaner to clean the scanner glass and the white strip under the ADF. Ensure they are completely free of any marks or dirt. Check the Scanner Glass for Scratches: #Inspect the scanner glass carefully for any scratches. If you find scratches, they may be causing streaks and will need professional servicing. Check the Original Document or Photo: #If you're scanning or copying from a printed document, ensure that the original does not have any marks, stains, or scratches. Clean the ADF Rollers: #If you're using the ADF for scanning or copying, clean the rollers. These rollers can accumulate dust and debris. Consult your printer's manual for instructions on how to access and clean them. Replace or Refill the Ink or Toner: #If you're getting streaks in copies, it could be due to low or empty ink or toner cartridges. Replace or refill the relevant cartridges as needed. Print a Blank Page: #Sometimes, excess toner or ink can build up on the printer's imaging components. Printing a few blank pages can help clear this buildup. Update or Reinstall Printer Drivers: #Outdated or corrupted printer drivers can also cause printing issues. Make sure you have the latest drivers installed, or try reinstalling them. Adjust Printer Settings: #Check your printer settings for any settings that might be causing the issue, such as print quality settings. Adjusting the settings to a higher quality may help reduce streaks. Check for Firmware Updates: #Check for any firmware updates available for your printer model and install them. Sometimes, firmware updates can address printing issues. Use High-Quality Paper: #Low-quality or damaged paper can sometimes cause streaks or lines. Ensure you're using good quality, clean, and dry paper. Run a Cleaning Cycle: #Many HP printers have a cleaning cycle option in the printer software. Running this cycle can help clear any clogs in the printhead. Contact HP Support: #If the issue persists after trying the above steps, it might be a more complex problem with the printer's hardware. In that case, it's best to contact HP customer support or seek professional assistance. Remember to refer to your printer's manual for specific instructions related to cleaning and maintenance. Additionally, follow safety guidelines, especially when working with cleaning agents or the printer's internal components. HP ENVY Photo 6255 printer is printing everything in a streak manner in that it prints normally but has lines where the ink randomly fades, proceeds as normal, fades again, rinse and repeat. I've already tried to clean the cartridges, aligned the cartridges, and cleaned page smudges but none worked. I've also checked and the cartridge is half full still and was brand new when this problem began. Hi @jenni_m_r, Welcome to HP Support Community. Thank you for posting your query, I will be glad to help you. Streaks in color prints, especially with green and yellow, can be frustrating. Here are some steps you can follow to try to resolve this issue with your HP OfficeJet Pro 8024e. Check the Print Quality Report: On your printer's control panel, go to Settings > Reports > Print Quality Report. This will help identify if any of the color blocks are not printing correctly. Clean the Printhead Again: Even if you've already cleaned the printhead multiple times, running the cleaning utility again can sometimes help. Go to Settings > Printer Maintenance > Clean Printhead. Align the Printhead: Ensure the printheads are properly aligned. Go to Settings > Printer Maintenance > Align Printhead. Check the Ink Cartridges: Make sure the ink cartridges are properly installed. Remove and reinstall them to ensure good contact. Verify that the vents on top of the cartridges are not clogged. If they are, gently use a pin to clear any blockages. Print a Diagnostic Page: Print a test page to see if the problem persists. Go to Settings > Printer Maintenance > Print Diagnostic Page. Perform a Secondary Cleaning: Some HP printers have a secondary or deeper cleaning option. If available, it can be found in the Printer Maintenance menu. Update Printer Firmware: Ensure your printer's firmware is up to date. Sometimes, firmware updates can resolve printing issues. You can check for updates from the HP Smart app or the printer's control panel. Check for Obstructions: Open the printer and check for any obstructions or debris around the printhead path. Use Genuine HP Ink Cartridges: If you're not already using genuine HP ink cartridges, switch to them. Non-HP cartridges can sometimes cause printing issues. Manual Cleaning: If none of the above solutions work, you might need to manually clean the printhead. Remove the printhead and gently clean the contacts with a lint-free cloth moistened with distilled water. Be cautious not to touch the nozzles. I hope this helps. Take care and have a good day. Please click "Accepted Solution" if you feel my post solved your issue, it will help others find the solution. Click the "Kudos/Thumbs Up" on the bottom right to say "Thanks" for helping! Alden4 HP Support Raj_05HP Support Community Moderator View solution in original post If you've recently noticed that your HP printer is producing documents with unsightly streaks, you're not alone. Many users encounter this frustrating issue at some point, leading to wasted ink, paper, and time. Understanding the causes of printing streaks can help you troubleshoot effectively and restore your printer to its optimal performance. In this article, we will explore various reasons behind this common problem, potential solutions, and tips for maintenance to ensure your printer runs smoothly. Understanding the Causes of Streaky Prints Streaking in printed documents can arise from several factors, and identifying the root cause is essential for effectively resolving the issue. Below are some of the most common causes of streaky prints in HP printers. 1. Low or Empty Ink Cartridges One of the primary reasons for streaky prints is low or empty ink cartridges. When your cartridges are running low on ink, they may not dispense ink evenly, leading to gaps and streaks in your documents. How to Check Ink Levels To determine if your ink cartridges are the issue, follow these steps: Open the printer software on your computer. Navigate to the "Estimated Ink Levels" section. Check the status of each cartridge. If you find that the cartridges are low or empty, consider replacing them. Make sure to use genuine HP cartridges to ensure compatibility and quality. 2. Clogged Print Head Nozzles Clogged print head nozzles are another common culprit for streaks and poor print quality. Over time, dried ink can accumulate in the nozzles, preventing proper ink flow during printing. How to Clean the Print Head Cleaning the print head can often resolve this issue. Most HP printers have a built-in cleaning option: Access the printer software on your computer. Look for the "Maintenance" or "Tools" section. Select "Clean Printhead" or "Printhead Cleaning." It might require multiple cleaning cycles to remove stubborn clogs, so be patient. 3. Incorrect Paper Type or Quality Using the wrong type of paper can also lead to streaky prints. If your printer is set to a specific paper type and you're using a different kind, it may not print correctly. Choosing the Right Paper Ensure you're using the recommended paper type for your printer. If you're using photo paper, for instance, your printer settings should reflect that to achieve the best results. 4. Misalignment of Print Heads Another reason for streaky prints can be due to misalignment of the print heads. When print heads are misaligned, it can result in inaccurate ink deposition, leading to undesirable streaks. Aligning Print Heads To align your print heads, follow these steps: Open the printer software on your computer. Navigate to the "Maintenance" or "Tools" section. Select "Align Printhead." This process can take a few minutes, but it can significantly improve print quality. 5. Environmental Factors Environment plays a substantial role in printer performance. Factors such as humidity, temperature, and dust can contribute to printing issues. A warm, dry environment can cause ink to dry prematurely in the nozzles, while excessive humidity can cause paper to warp, affecting print quality. Creating an Optimal Printing Environment To maintain your printer's efficiency, consider the following tips: Keep the printer in a cool, dry place, away from direct sunlight. Ensure the room has adequate ventilation. Regularly clean the printer to minimize dust buildup. 6. Outdated Printer Drivers Running an outdated printer driver can lead to various printing issues, including streaks. Driver updates often contain fixes for bugs and improvements for print quality. Updating Your Printer Drivers To update your HP printer drivers, follow these instructions: Visit the HP Support website. Enter your printer model in the search bar. Navigate to the "Drivers & Software" section. Download and install the latest driver for your operating system. Steps to Troubleshoot Streaky Prints If you are experiencing streaking issues, you can follow these troubleshooting steps to identify and resolve the problem quickly. Step 1: Check Ink Levels As previously mentioned, begin by checking the ink levels through the printer software. This will give you a clear indication if your cartridges need to be replaced. Step 2: Clean the Print Heads If your ink levels are adequate, perform a print head cleaning cycle. This might involve running it multiple times for the best result. Step 3: Align the Print Heads After cleaning the print heads, utilize the alignment feature in your printer software to ensure optimal print head placement. Step 4: Test with Different Paper Types Try printing on a different type of paper. If the streaks disappear on one type but not another, it may indicate a paper compatibility issue. Step 5: Update or Reinstall Printer Drivers Check for any updates for your printer's driver software. If problems persist, consider uninstalling and reinstalling the drivers. Step 6: Review Environmental Conditions Lastly, assess your printer's environment. Ensure it is in a suitable location with the right temperature and humidity levels. Preventive Measures for HP Printer Maintenance Maintaining your HP printer can prevent streaks and improve overall print quality. Here are some key preventative measures to consider: 1. Regular Cleaning Perform regular maintenance cleaning of the print heads and interior components to avoid dust buildup and ink clogs. 2. Use HP-Compatible Paper Always opt for paper types recommended by HP to ensure proper ink distribution and reduce the chances of streaking. 3. Monitor Ink Levels Keep a watchful eye on ink levels and replace cartridges promptly to avoid the problems associated with low ink. 4. Keep Drivers Updated Regularly check and update your printer drivers to ensure compatibility with your operating system and software. 5. Printer Environment Management Ensure the printer's environment remains conducive to its functioning by maintaining appropriate humidity and temperature levels. When to Seek Professional Help If you have tried all the above troubleshooting techniques and your HP printer is still producing streaks, it may be time to consult a professional. Sometimes, hardware malfunctions or more complex issues may require assistance from an authorized service technician. Signs that indicate the need for professional help include: Consistent streaking after following all troubleshooting steps Error codes displayed on the printer Inability to print at all Conclusion Dealing with streaky prints from your HP printer can be a frustrating experience, but understanding the underlying causes and implementing preventive measures can significantly improve print quality. If you follow the troubleshooting tips outlined in this article, you're well on your way to eliminating streaks and ensuring your printer functions optimally. Remember, regular maintenance and environmental considerations are essential to prolong your printer's lifespan and enhance your printing experience. If all else fails, seeking professional assistance can help resolve more complex issues. Happy printing! What causes my HP printer to print streaks? The streaks in your prints can often be attributed to clogged printhead nozzles, which is a common issue for inkjet printers. Over time, ink can dry up in the nozzles, leading to uneven ink distribution during printing. This phenomenon is especially prominent when the printer has not been used for an extended period of time, or if low-quality ink cartridges are installed that do not flow well. Another possible cause for streaked prints could be due to dirty printhead contacts or the wrong paper type being used. If the printhead has accumulated dust or grime, it can interfere with the ink flow. Using paper that is not compatible with your specific printer model can also result in incomplete ink absorption, leading to streaks on the printed page. How can I clean the printhead to resolve the streaking issue? To clean the printhead, you can run the cleaning utility that is built into the printer's software. Most HP printers come equipped with a maintenance menu that includes print head cleaning options. Access the printer settings on your computer or printer display, navigate to the maintenance section, and select the cleaning option. This process may take a few minutes and should be repeated if necessary. Additionally, you can manually clean the printhead by removing the cartridges and using a lint-free cloth lightly moistened with distilled water to wipe the printhead area. Be cautious not to touch the copper contacts or the nozzles directly with your fingers. Allow the printhead to dry completely before reinserting the cartridges and running a test print to check if the issue has been resolved. Are there specific types of paper that could cause streaks when printing? Yes, the type of paper used can significantly impact print quality. If you're using outdated or unsuitable paper, the ink may not adhere properly, resulting in streaks. For optimal results, it's recommended to use paper that is specifically designed for inkjet printers. This paper is typically more absorbent and allows for better ink distribution, reducing the chances of streaking. Additionally, using glossy or photo paper with a matte finish can sometimes lead to issues if the printer is not calibrated for those specific media types. Always consult your printer's manual for recommended paper types, as mismatched media can result in a range of printing defects, including streaks. How often should I perform maintenance on my HP printer? Regular maintenance is essential for keeping your HP printer in optimal working condition. For routine use, it is advisable to run print head cleaning and alignment utilities at least once a month, especially if you print frequently. However, if you notice issues like streaking, you may need to perform maintenance more frequently to prevent the buildup of dried ink. In addition to cleaning, you should also inspect and possibly clean the printer's interior components, particularly the rollers and paper path. Keeping these parts clean can help ensure smooth paper feeding and enhance overall print quality. Regular maintenance not only prolongs the lifespan of your printer but also helps maintain the clarity and quality of your printed materials. What should I do if cleaning the printhead doesn't fix the streaking issue? If cleaning the printhead does not resolve the streaking, the issue may stem from low or expired ink cartridges. Check the ink levels and replace any cartridges that are low or empty. It's also important to ensure that you are using genuine HP cartridges, as third-party products may not meet the same quality standards and can lead to various printing problems. If you have confirmed that the ink is sufficient and the cartridges are legitimate, consider resetting the printer and reinstalling the printer drivers. Sometimes, driver issues can interfere with printing quality. After reinstalling the drivers, run a test print to see if this rectifies the streaking problem. Could the printer's settings affect print quality and cause streaks? Absolutely, printer settings play a crucial role in the quality of your output. If your printer is set to a low-quality or draft mode, it may not apply enough ink to the paper, resulting in streaky prints. Always make sure that the settings are adjusted to the highest quality when printing important documents or images. You can find these settings in the print dialog box on your computer when you initiate a print job. Moreover, adjusting the paper type setting is equally important. If the printer is set to a different type of media than what you are actually using, it may not apply the correct amount of ink. Make sure to select the appropriate paper type that corresponds with your actual paper to improve print quality and reduce streaks. What role do ink cartridge age and type play in printer streaks? Ink cartridges also have a shelf life, and expired cartridges can cause poor print performance, including streaking. Over time, even unused cartridges can dry out, leading to clogged printheads. Before starting a print job, always check the expiration date on your cartridges and replace any that are past their prime. Using the correct type of ink cartridges—whether OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) or high-quality third-party brands—also impacts output. Inks that are not designed for your HP printer may lead to inconsistent flow and could potentially damage your printer. Always opt for cartridges that are compatible with your printer model to ensure better performance and print quality. When should I contact HP support regarding my printer's streaking issues? If you have tried various troubleshooting steps such as cleaning the printhead, replacing cartridges, and checking your printer settings but are still experiencing streaking, it may be time to contact HP support. This could indicate a more significant issue, such as a mechanical failure that requires professional assistance. HP's customer support can provide guidance based on your specific printer model and current problems. Additionally, if your printer is still under warranty, reaching out to HP support may be beneficial for repairs or replacements. They can offer instructions on warranty claims and may provide solutions that are not widely known. Document any troubleshooting steps you've taken to facilitate a quicker diagnosis, as this information can help the support team assist you more effectively.