

About Bill's Epson Profiles

December 2, 2002

Five months ago, my Epson Stylus Pro 9600 printer arrived, and I set out to create a series of accurate profiles for use in printing my fine art nature photographs. Although this turned out to be a much harder task than I expected, the results have been well worth the effort. The 9600 is the first inkjet printer I have used that prints as beautifully as the LightJet and Fujix printers that I have been using. I now print all my fine art photographs with the 9600, and will soon update my website and gallery catalogs to offer only Epson prints.

The profiles that Epson ships with the 9600 and 7600 are not bad profiles. Many people will find them useful, but for my own very demanding fine art use, I need better profiles. I need profiles that will deliver accurate neutrals, preserve fine distinctions between different colors, blend smoothly between colors, and reach the full gamut of saturated colors that the printer is capable of.

In my quest for better profiles, I found that none of the commercially available profile-making software packages could meet all of my needs. The 9600's native No Color Adjust mode is so far from linear and gray balanced, that none of the profiling software could deliver accurate enough neutrals. I have spent more than a thousand hours researching, writing software programs, creating custom gray balance targets, and making more than a half million spectral measurements. As a result, I have developed a series of software programs and a methodology that have allowed me to create superior profiles for this printer.

Most other printers vary significantly from one printer to the next, requiring custom profiles for each printer. All Epson Stylus Pro 9600 and 7600 printers have very close tolerances, so the profiles I built for my 9600 should work well on any 9600 or 7600.

After investing so much time and effort to create these profiles, I have decided to share them with the entire Epson community. My profiles for the Epson Stylus Pro 9600 and 7600 are now available for download from the Epson support website, <http://prographics.epson.com>, and also from my own public file-sharing folder at <http://homepage.mac.com/billatkinson>

Please note that I am providing these profiles free of charge, but with no warranties or technical support of any kind. I would be pleased to hear that my profiles help you make beautiful prints, but there are far too many Epson users for me to answer technical support questions about these profiles. Many people are successfully using these profiles, so if you run into difficulties, please try asking a friend or checking some of the online Epson user groups, rather than calling or e-mailing me.

The rest of this document answers some of the most frequently asked questions, gives a brief description of how I use these profiles from Photoshop 7, and then lists the printer driver settings to be used with each profile. For more complete instructions on using profiles with Epson printers, you can download the "How to Use ICC Profiles" document from the Epson America web site.

For those with a serious interest in fine art digital printmaking, Charles Cramer and I teach a very practical workshop on color management and fine art printing for photographers.

To learn more about these workshops, and to view my fine art nature photographs, please visit my website, www.billatkinson.com

Best wishes from Bill
December 2, 2002

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Atkinson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "B" and "A".

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Have you made profiles for the Epson Stylus Photo 2200?

A: No. I made these profiles for my own Stylus Pro 9600. They should also work fine for other Stylus Pro 9600 and Stylus Pro 7600 printers. Some people say that they work OK on the 2200, but they were not created for it.

Q: Do these profiles work on both Mac and Windows?

A: Yes, all ICC profiles can be used on both platforms.

Q: Can these profiles be used with the photo-realistic setting, or with the default Epson printer driver settings?

A: No, these profiles will give correct results only if you use the printer settings specified for each profile at the end of this document.

Q: What papers have you made profiles for?

A: I have made profiles for Epson Premium Glossy, Premium Luster, and Premium Semimatte papers with the photo black ink, and Enhanced Matte, Somerset Velvet for Epson, Smooth Fine Art, and Textured Fine Art papers with the matte black ink. I have also just finished the Epson Canvas.

Q: Where are the profiles for the canvas or matte papers?

A: If these profiles are not yet available on the Epson website, you can try downloading them from my own public file-sharing folder, <http://homepage.mac.com/billatkinson>

Q: In your public file-sharing folder, most of the file names end with ".sit" How do I deal with these files?

A: These files have been compressed with Aladdin's Stuffit software. If you don't already have Stuffit Expander, you can download it for free for Mac or Windows from <http://www.stuffitexpander.com/>

Q: What are the latest versions of each of Bill's Epson profiles?

A: As of November 25, 2002, the profiles for coated papers should all end in "v3.icc", and the profiles for matte papers should all end in "v2.icc"

Q: What paper and resolution do you use for your own fine art prints?

A: My favorite paper is the Epson Premium Semimatte 250 paper, and I usually make my fine art prints at 2880 dpi. I like the rich colors, smooth shadings and fine detail that are possible with this paper. I also like the Epson Premium Luster paper, which gives similar results.

How to use Bill's Epson Profiles from Photoshop 7

To use these profiles with the Epson Stylus Pro 7600 or 9600, you must first place them in the standard place for profiles. On a Macintosh computer, this is usually MacHD/SystemFolder/ColorSync Profiles. On a Windows computer, this is usually C/Windows/System/Color.

If you are printing from Photoshop 7, then choose the Print with Preview item from the File Menu.

Notice the document dimensions, then click the "Page Setup" button and set the proper page size and options and click "OK".

Back in the "Print with Preview" dialog, you can visually confirm that your image will fit on the printed page, then check the "Show More Options" checkbox, and choose "Color Management".

Within the Color Management section, you should set the source space to the current document space, and the print space to the printer profile for this combination of ink, paper and resolution.

Most images print best with the rendering intent set to Perceptual without black point compensation. Some images work better with Relative Colorimetric with black point compensation. For boosted saturation, you can try the Saturation rendering intent.

At this point, you should make a mental note of the printer setup code, which is the third word of the profile name, such as "PGL1". After noting the setup code, click the "Print" button.

When the Epson print dialog appears, click the "Custom" radio button, and choose the custom printer setup corresponding to the printer setup code from the profile.

If this is the first time you have used that particular printer setup, you will have to click on the "Advanced" button and carefully create and save a new setup. See below for a complete specification of all printer settings for each printer setup code.

After you have chosen the correct printer setup for this profile, then click the "Print" button to actually start the printing.

Printer Setup Specifications

Each of these profiles has been created for a specific set of printing conditions, including printer, paper, inks, resolution, and other printer driver settings. To get correct results with these profiles, you need to reproduce those same conditions on your printer. The third word of each profile name is a Printer Setup Code that refers to the following table.

It is a good practice to carefully make all the settings once, and then save each setup, naming it "Setup PGL1" etc. Then as you make each print, you can simply choose the setup matching the setup code in the profile name.

Please notice that some of these profiles are for use only with the photo black ink, and others only with the matte black ink.

Printer Setup PGL1

Meaning:	Premium Glossy at 1440 dpi
Inks in Printer	Ultrachrome with Photo Black
Paper in Printer:	Premium Glossy Photo Paper (250)
Media Setting	Premium Glossy Photo Paper (250)
Ink Setting	Color/B&W
Print Quality	SuperFine – 1440dpi
Microweave	On
Super	Off
High Speed	Off
Color Management	No Color Adjustment
Color Density	0

Printer Setup PGL2

Meaning:	Premium Glossy at 2880 dpi
Inks in Printer	Ultrachrome with Photo Black
Paper in Printer:	Premium Glossy Photo Paper (250)
Media Setting	Premium Glossy Photo Paper (250)
Ink Setting	Color/B&W
Print Quality	SuperPhoto – 2880dpi
Microweave	On
Super	On
High Speed	Off
Color Management	No Color Adjustment
Color Density	0

Printer Setup PLU1

Meaning:	Premium Luster at 1440 dpi
Inks in Printer	Ultrachrome with Photo Black
Paper in Printer:	Premium Luster Photo Paper (24 inch roll)
Media Setting	Premium Luster Photo Paper
Ink Setting	Color/B&W
Print Quality	SuperFine – 1440dpi
Microweave	On
Super	Off
High Speed	Off
Color Management	No Color Adjustment
Color Density	0

Printer Setup PLU2

Meaning:	Premium Luster at 2880 dpi
Inks in Printer	Ultrachrome with Photo Black
Paper in Printer:	Premium Luster Photo Paper (24 inch roll)
Media Setting	Premium Luster Photo Paper
Ink Setting	Color/B&W
Print Quality	SuperPhoto – 2880dpi
Microweave	On
Super	On
High Speed	Off
Color Management	No Color Adjustment
Color Density	0

Printer Setup PSM1

Meaning:	Premium Semimatte at 1440 dpi
Inks in Printer	Ultrachrome with Photo Black
Paper in Printer:	Premium Semimatte Photo Paper (250)
Media Setting	Premium Semimatte Photo Paper (250)
Ink Setting	Color/B&W
Print Quality	SuperFine – 1440dpi
Microweave	On
Super	Off
High Speed	Off
Color Management	No Color Adjustment
Color Density	0

Printer Setup PSM2

Meaning:	Premium Semimatte at 2880 dpi
Inks in Printer	Ultrachrome with Photo Black
Paper in Printer:	Premium Semimatte Photo Paper (250)
Media Setting	Premium Semimatte Photo Paper (250)
Ink Setting	Color/B&W
Print Quality	SuperPhoto – 2880dpi
Microweave	On
Super	On
High Speed	Off
Color Management	No Color Adjustment
Color Density	0

Printer Setup SV1

Meaning:	Somerset Velvet at 1440 dpi
Inks in Printer	Ultrachrome with Matte Black
Paper in Printer:	Somerset Velvet for Epson 24x30 Sheet
Media Setting	Enhanced Matte – Poster Board
Ink Setting	Color/B&W
Print Quality	SuperFine – 1440dpi
Microweave	On
Super	Off
High Speed	Off
Color Management	No Color Adjustment
Color Density	0

Printer Setup EM1

Meaning:	Enhanced Matte at 1440 dpi
Inks in Printer	Ultrachrome with Matte Black
Paper in Printer:	Enhanced Matte Paper 24 inch Roll
Media Setting	Enhanced Matte Paper
Ink Setting	Color/B&W
Print Quality	SuperFine – 1440dpi
Microweave	On
Super	Off
High Speed	Off
Color Management	No Color Adjustment
Color Density	0

Printer Setup SFA1

Meaning:	Smooth Fine Art at 1440 dpi
Inks in Printer	Ultrachrome with Matte Black
Paper in Printer:	Smooth Fine Art Paper 24x30 Sheet
Media Setting	Smooth Fine Art Paper
Ink Setting	Color/B&W
Print Quality	SuperFine – 1440dpi
Microweave	On
Super	Off
High Speed	Off
Color Management	No Color Adjustment
Color Density	0

Printer Setup TFA1

Meaning:	Textured Fine Art at 1440 dpi
Inks in Printer	Ultrachrome with Matte Black
Paper in Printer:	Textured Fine Art Paper 24x30 Sheet
Media Setting	Textured Fine Art Paper
Ink Setting	Color/B&W
Print Quality	SuperFine – 1440dpi
Microweave	On
Super	Off
High Speed	Off
Color Management	No Color Adjustment
Color Density	0

Printer Setup CAN1

Meaning:	Canvas at 1440 dpi
Inks in Printer	Ultrachrome with Photo Black
Paper in Printer:	Epson Canvas (24 inch roll)
Media Setting	Canvas
Ink Setting	Color/B&W
Print Quality	SuperFine – 1440dpi
Microweave	On
Super	Off
High Speed	Off
Color Management	No Color Adjustment
Color Density	0