

Brayer Care

The Japanese and Takach Brayer's rollers are made with nitrile rubber. Nitrile is a synthetic rubber that is resistant to oil and other chemicals, so it is safe to use with oil- or water-based ink.

Nitrile is very tough and will not deform easily, so you can leave the brayer sitting on the roller for long periods of time without any problem. We left a Japanese Brayer on a shelf for three months and the roller was still perfectly round when we picked it up.

However, nitrile is sensitive to UV light. If left in sun light or under florescent lights for a long time, the roller will dry out and crack or split. For that reason, it is a good idea to store your brayers in a box, cupboard or drawer where they are not exposed to light.

High heat can dry out nitrile. Do not store near heating vents. If you live in a hot climate and your studio is not air-conditioned, consider storing your brayers in an air-conditioned location.

Do not allow ink to dry on the roller, since dried ink will not dissolve and will ruin the roller.

Nitrile can be nicked so do not try to clean off dried ink or bits of wood picked up from the block with a sharp object. Instead, carefully pick the debris off with blunt tweezers or your fingers.

To clean off water-soluble or water-based ink use Dawn dishwashing liquid and water at the temperature you would use to clean your own skin. If you are using oil-based ink, use a small amount of odorless mineral spirits, like Gamsol, on a rag to clean the brayer. Some people like to use vegetable oil to clean brayers but it can leave behind a film

that will contaminate the ink the next time the brayer is used. If you clean your brayers with vegetable oil, use a small amount of oil and wash them with Dawn dishwashing liquid to remove any remaining residue.

Begin by rolling off as much ink as possible onto newsprint or newspaper. When most of the ink is gone, apply the cleaner to the roller and rub gently with a rough cloth or nail brush to loosen the remaining ink. Pay special attention to the edges and sides of the roller as well as the face. Rinse off the remaining cleaner with comfortably hot water. With Takach brayers, do not get the metal parts wet. This can cause a washer inside the brayer to rust so it squeaks as it is being used. Instead, use a wet rag to rinse the roller.

Dry with a clean, lint-free cloth. If any more ink comes off, apply more cleaner and rub some more. Take your time and make sure the roller is completely clean before you put it away.

Clean rollers stay flexible, work well and last a long time. Dirty rollers get sticky and may be impossible to clean after too much time has passed. If the roller develops a glaze or becomes hard, it is time to have the rubber reground or replaced.

Frames catch ink over time. With Takach Hand Brayers, the space between the roller and frame is wide enough that you can clean this area with a rag. With Japanese Brayers, you can remove the roller from the frame by taking out the screw at one end and then you can clean the frame thoroughly.



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