

Ball Bearing Baren Manual

Translated from the manufacturer's text. Text in parenthesis from McClain's

Before using the baren, lightly oil the surface of the plate. Use additional oil whenever the ball bearings do not roll smoothly. (*Silicon spray oil is now recommended; see below.*)

For an even, rich imprint from the block, move the baren using small, circular motion and light pressure. Note: Strong, heavy pressure may damage the baren. Do not use a back and forth motion: the block will not print evenly and you may also damage the baren. Experiment to see how to handle the baren in the best manner.

A recent study found that using a ball bearing baren directly on the back of the printing paper may leave black marks on the backside of the paper. This is caused by the friction of

the ball bearings against the aluminum plate. Steps are being taken to eliminate this problem.

(Use Ategami or a piece of baking parchment between the baren and the printing paper. This protects the paper from any possible black marks and allows the baren to move freely.)

If the baren is unused for a period of time, it may become rusty. Clean the baren plate and ball bearings with silicon spray and a lint-free cloth.

If you happen to find a sharp edge on the baren plate, file it down. And, again, avoid using strong or heavy pressure when printing or the ball bearings may not roll easily any more.

In 2014, we received new information about caring for these baren. To prevent oil clogging the ball bearings, the manufacturer now recommends using silicon-based oil instead of plant-based oil, such as olive oil or camellia oil. The reason is that plant-based oil can oxidize over time and become gummy. My local Ace Hardware Store expert recommended Tri-Flow silicone spray because according to hm, WD-40 will gum up over time as well.

Because silicon is not good for plant fiber paper, do not use a silicon-oiled baren directly on the printing paper. Place a piece of backing paper like Ategami (available from McClain's)

or baking parchment between the baren and printing paper. Ideally, he recommends laying a piece of thin acetate film or polyfilm smooth side down over the printing paper, spraying the textured side of the film lightly with the silicon oil, and then printing with the baren.

If the ball bearings are clogged from oil and no longer roll, the manufacturer recommends spraying the ball bearings with a product used to remove oil and grease from kitchen appliances, such as range hoods. Spray lightly, allow to sit for a while, and then wipe off.

Repeat three or four times until the baren is clean and the bearings roll easily again.



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