

TONER TRANSFER

Some [time ago](#), I read about an interesting PCB etching method that uses ordinary laser printer toner as an etching mask. The mask is printed on a sheet of paper and then transferred from paper to PCB with an clothes iron. I decided to try this approach with a project I'm currently working on.

The author of the original article recommends using special InkJet papers to print the mask. I didn't like that idea because using paper that isn't meant to be used in lasers can have pretty bad effects on the xerographic unit in the printer, so I only tried it with ordinary office paper.

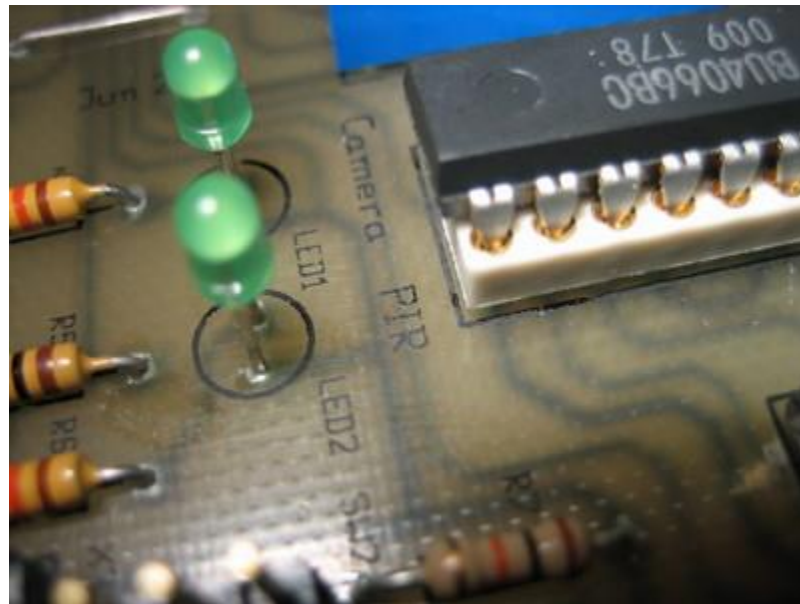
It turned out it still works remarkably well. I got the best results with the following recipe:

I printed the mask on a sheet of 80g office paper (with "toner saving" feature disabled). Then I positioned the artwork on the PCB laminate and taped it on with scotch tape. I heated the paper with iron on setting ●● then immediately firmly pressed down on the paper with an old rag so that all surface of the paper came into contact with laminate. I repeated the heating process a couple of times.

After the laminate cooled, I submerged it in water for 10 minutes or so until the paper became soft. Then I just scrubbed the paper off the laminate with a soft sponge.

The final results weren't good enough to use this technique for etching because for some reason small patches of toner always refused to stick to the laminate. Scrubbing with the sponge removed some more toner and I would have to spend a lot of time repairing the traces manually with a marker. On the other hand it worked great for the silk (text and symbols on the component side of the PCB that identifies components on the PCB).

I'll definitely do some more experiments with this.



Source : https://www.tablix.org/~avian/blog/archives/2006/06/toner_transfer/