

THE BODNO BUYING GUIDE

How to choose an ID card printer

Ten printers we sell and support: what each one is for, which software you need, and what it costs to run.

Including the part where we tell you to buy less printer than you planned.



MOST RECOMMENDED

Bodno A30

Dual-sided

from \$1,995

100,000+

customers

4.95 / 5

5,539 reviews

10 years

choosing printers

2,000+

schools

Short on time?

Read **page 3** (four questions) and **page 5** (your printer, picked). Twelve pages in large print, made to be printed.

\$50 OFF YOUR FIRST PRINTER

Use it at checkout, or mention it on a phone or PO order.

PRINT50

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Why this guide is different

Most printer guides are written by resellers who sell someone else's printers. Bodno is a brand: we make our own printers and the software that prints the cards, and we stock every ribbon and card that goes with them.

One number for the printer, the software, the supplies and the help.

So this guide will tell you when a printer is too much for what you print. We earn more when you come back, not when you buy up.

SECTION 1 · CHOOSING

Four questions that decide everything

Answer these and ten printers narrow to two.

1 How many cards a year?

A few dozen badges for a small office is a different machine from 2,000 student IDs every August. Count new people plus reprints.

Under 300 a year: the smallest printer is enough. **More, or printed in batches:** get a card hopper. Every printer here has one except the A10.

2 One side, or both?

A dual-sided printer prints the front and back in one pass. Backs hold barcodes, QR codes, emergency numbers and policy text.

The most common regret we hear: buying single-sided, then needing a back.

3 Do the cards need to do anything?

Open a door, track time, tap a phone. That is encoding, and it changes both the printer and the software edition. Sort it out before you order.

Have card readers already? Tell us what kind. That usually picks the printer.

4 Where does the printer live?

USB is fine for one computer. Ethernet matters once several people send cards to it, or the printer sits in another room.

Wi-Fi is rare on card printers, on purpose. Security teams avoid it.

SECTION 2 · CHOOSING

Direct-to-card or retransfer

Only two ways to put color on a card. The choice is usually obvious.

THE STANDARD · 9 IN 10 BUYERS

Ink goes straight onto the card

The ribbon transfers the image onto the card with heat. It gives sharp, photo-quality cards at the lowest cost per card.

Choose it for: Employee, student, visitor and member IDs on plain white PVC. Eight of the ten printers [here](#).

FOR SPECIFIC NEEDS

Printed on film, then fused to the card

The image prints on a clear film that is bonded to the card. It covers the card edge to edge and handles cards that are not perfectly flat.

Choose it for: Chip, proximity and composite cards, and designs with no white border. From \$3,999.

The proximity card question

Direct-to-card does print on HID, iCLASS and MIFARE proximity cards, but on some cards the chip can faintly show through. If the finish has to be flawless, retransfer is the answer. If you were told your cards "won't print properly," this is almost always why.

Be honest with yourself here

Retransfer costs two to five times more, and it is the wrong answer for most buyers. Before you spend that, ask:

- Do your cards have chips or antennas inside them?
- Does the design run to the very edge, with no white border?
- Has anyone told you your cards "don't print right"?

Two no's and a no means you want an A30, and you'll be happier with it.

SECTION 3 · CHOOSING

Your printer, picked

Find the row that matches your answers.

YOU PRINT	OUR FIRST PICK	ALSO A GREAT FIT
Front only Under 300 cards a year	 Bodno A10 from \$995 Feed one card at a time	 Magicard 250X from \$1,349 Card hopper
Front only 300 or more, or in batches	 Bodno A20 from \$1,595 100-card hopper, Ethernet	 Matica MC320X from \$1,349 Single-sided
Both sides Most offices and schools	 Bodno A30 from \$1,995 Our most recommended	 Magicard 400X from \$1,549 Dual-sided
Both sides Every week, or photo-heavy	 Bodno A40 Pro from \$2,995 600 dpi, 5-year TotalCare	 Magicard D from \$2,595 Hard-to-fake watermark
Chip, prox or edge to edge Any amount	 Seaory R330 from \$3,999 Retransfer, 300 dpi	 Seaory R660 from \$4,999 Retransfer, 600 dpi

The honest recommendation

Most organizations should buy the **A30**: dual-sided, hopper-fed and priced in the middle. Unless your answer to "one side or both?" is a confident "one," start here.

When to go up to the A40 Pro

Sharper 600 dpi cards for photo-heavy badges, and **five years of TotalCare included**, which closes most of the price gap on its own.

SECTION 4 • THE LINEUP

All ten printers at a glance

Lowest price on bodno.com, as a complete kit. Windows 11 and Mac.

PRINTER	TYPE	SIDES	CARD FEED	COVERAGE	FROM
Bodno A10	Direct-to-card	Single	One at a time	3 years	\$995
Magicard 250X	Direct-to-card	Single	Hopper	3 years	\$1,349
Matica MC320X	Direct-to-card	Single or dual	Hopper	3 years	\$1,349 <small>\$1,649 dual</small>
Magicard 400X	Direct-to-card	Single or dual	Hopper	4 years	\$1,549 <small>\$1,999 dual</small>
Bodno A20	Direct-to-card	Single	Hopper	3 years	\$1,595
Bodno A30	Direct-to-card	Dual	Hopper	3 years	\$1,995
Magicard D	Direct-to-card	Single or dual	Hopper	3 years	\$2,595
Bodno A40 Pro	Direct-to-card	Dual	Hopper	5 yr TotalCare	\$2,995
Seaory R330	Retransfer	Single or dual	Hopper	3 years	\$3,999
Seaory R660	Retransfer	Single or dual	Hopper	3 years	\$4,999

Shaded rows are the Bodno A-Series, our own printers. Dual-sided prices are in red.

Every price is a complete kit

✓ The printer

with a color ribbon

✓ 300 blank PVC cards

standard credit card size

✓ Bodno ID Card Software

Bronze edition, lifetime license

✓ A webcam

photos go straight onto the badge

FREE SHIPPING

Over \$100. Order by 1 PM ET, it ships today.

30-DAY RETURNS

No restocking fee on eligible items.

TRADE-IN

Any old printer, even broken: up to \$600.

SECTION 5 • THE LINEUP

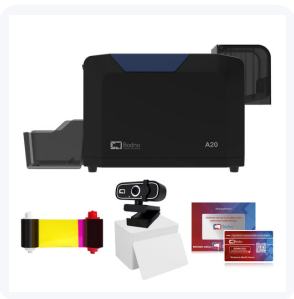
The Bodno A-Series

Four printers we design, support and stock supplies for.

**Bodno A10** • Single-sided **from \$995**

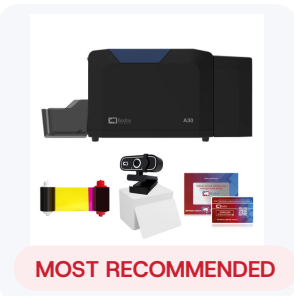
The smallest and least expensive, for an office issuing a few badges at a time. A few hundred cards a year, front only? It is genuinely enough.

Feed one card at a time • Ribbon about 65¢ a card • Trade-in \$100

**Bodno A20** • Single-sided **from \$1,595**

Same single-sided cards as the A10, built for long runs. The back-to-school printer: hundreds of student IDs in August, then quiet until onboarding season.

100-card hopper • Ribbon about 32¢ a card • Trade-in \$200

**Bodno A30** • Dual-sided **from \$1,995**

The everyday go-to: photo and title on the front, barcode or policy on the back, in one pass. On the fence between one side and two? Most people land here, and stay.

100-card hopper • Ribbon about 32¢ a card • Trade-in \$300

MOST RECOMMENDED

**Bodno A40 Pro** • Dual-sided **from \$2,995**

Our sharpest cards, at 600 dpi, and the only A-Series printer with five years of TotalCare included. For teams that cannot afford a bad badge day.

100-card hopper • Ribbon about 32¢ a card • Trade-in \$500

5-YR TOTALCARE

SECTION 6 • THE LINEUP

Magicard, Matica and Seaory

Bundled with Bodno software, with the same one-number support.

**Magicard 250X** Single-sided**from \$1,349**

A compact printer from a brand procurement offices recognize on a PO.

Best for: a recognized name on the requisition

**Matica MC320X** Single, or \$1,649 dual**from \$1,349**

A dependable mid-range workhorse with Ethernet, so it sits on the network. One of the better-value routes to front-and-back printing.

Best for: networked printing on a budget

**Magicard 400X** Single, or \$1,999 dual**from \$1,549**

One of our most-ordered partner printers, with four years of coverage. Steps up to dual-sided without changing machines.

Best for: programs adding volume or a back side

**Magicard D** Single or dual, same price**from \$2,595**

Built around HoloKote, a holographic watermark printed into every card, so badges are hard to fake at a glance.

Best for: government, security, badges checked by eye

**Seaory R330** Retransfer, 300 dpi**from \$3,999**

Entry-level retransfer: edge to edge, chip and prox cards, 200-card hoppers.

Best for: access-control cards and full-bleed designs

**Seaory R660** Retransfer, 600 dpi**from \$4,999**

Our retransfer flagship and the most capable printer in this guide, for organizations issuing technology cards all year.

Best for: large campuses and healthcare networks

SECTION 7 · BY ORGANIZATION

Which printer for which organization

Ten kinds of organization we sell to, and what we'd quote.

ORGANIZATION	WE'D QUOTE
K-12 schools and districts. Hundreds or thousands of student IDs in the weeks before term, names and photos already in a student system.	A20 or A30 · Gold edition · TotalCare advised
Universities and colleges. Cards open dorms, labs and libraries, so they carry chips. Several offices usually print.	A40 Pro or Seaory R330 · Platinum · encoder
Healthcare. Constant churn of clinicians, residents and agency staff. Badges nearly always open doors.	A30 or Matica MC320X · Platinum
Corporate HR. Steady hiring, and the back earns its keep: department, emergency contact, helpdesk.	A30 · Silver or Gold
Government agencies. Badges must be hard to forge, and the purchase must survive procurement: quote, W-9, PO.	Magicard D or Seaory R330 · Platinum
Houses of worship. Member cards, volunteer badges and children's check-in. Modest volume, real budgets.	A10 or A20 · Bronze or Silver
Construction and manufacturing. Contractor and safety cards that live in a pocket. Expiry dates go on the back.	A30 · Gold · holders and reels
Events. Huge volume for two or three days, then nothing. Lists arrive as spreadsheets.	A20 or A30 · Silver or Gold · ask about renting
Fitness and membership. Cards scan at a desk or turnstile, so a barcode or magnetic stripe does the work.	A10 or A30 · Bronze or Silver
Property management. Tenant and visitor cards that open doors, lifts and parking.	Matica MC320X or A30 · Platinum · encoder

SECTION 8 · SOFTWARE

Which software edition you need

Every printer here includes the Bronze edition, with a lifetime license.

Bronze

You type names in by hand.

Included

Photos, templates, 1D barcodes and magnetic stripes for time clocks. Badging people one at a time? This is it.

Silver

Your people are in a spreadsheet.

\$595 upgrade

Imports Excel and CSV files, links photos to each person, and adds QR codes. The biggest time saver in the product.

Gold

MOST COMMON

You print runs, and they should match.

\$795 upgrade

A built-in database, 2D barcodes, and auto face-crop so 500 student photos line up. For batches of 50 or more.

Platinum

Your cards open doors.

\$1,295 upgrade

Smart card, RFID and NFC encoding (Windows only), enterprise database links, audit logs and user logins.

Diamond

More than one location prints.

\$2,795 upgrade

A network license for up to 16 computers, a web print server, and MIFARE DESFire encoding.

Mac or Windows?

Design and printing work the same on Mac and Windows 11. Smart card, prox and NFC encoding is Windows only. Mac office with door cards? Tell us first.

SECTION 9 · OWNERSHIP

What it costs to run

The printer is a one-time cost. Ribbons and cards repeat, so compare the cost per card.

BLANK PVC CARD

about 8¢

COLOR RIBBON, PER CARD

32¢ to 75¢

ONE FINISHED CARD, A30

about 40¢

Ribbon per color card: A20, A30, A40 Pro about 32¢ · Magicard 400X 33¢ · Magicard D 37¢ · A10 and Magicard 250X 65¢ · Matica MC320X 75¢. An outside badge service charges \$5 to \$15 a card.

- ✓ **Clean it every time you change the ribbon.** Dust on the printhead shows up as lines on every card. A cleaning kit is the cheapest insurance here.
- ✓ **Plan on about seven years.** With regular cleaning that is a normal life. Printers that die early died of a dirty printhead.
- ✓ **Order what attaches the card to a person.** Holders or sleeves, lanyards or reels, and a slot punch.

Bodno TotalCare

from \$299, one payment, five years

Five years of protection, handled by Bodno, not a third-party claims line.

- ✓ Parts, labor and repairs for five years
- ✓ Repairs in under 3 business days
- ✓ Priority remote tech support
- ✓ A loaner printer while yours is fixed
- ✓ Free 1-day shipping both ways
- ✓ A yearly check-up and training

Who should take it: if a week without printing would hurt (a school in September, a hospital any month), take it. Twenty badges a year? It is optional, and we won't push it. The A40 Pro includes it.

SECTION 10 • NEXT STEPS

How to buy

Quotes and purchase orders

Ask for a formal quote, a W-9, or an invoice against your PO. We accept POs on Net 30.

Tax-exempt?

Send your exemption form once to Tax@bodno.com, and your orders after that are tax-free.

Trade in your old printer

Any brand, any condition. We email a prepaid label; your rebate is back within 7 business days.

Getting started

Register your printer at bodno.com for step-by-step setup, and book a free setup call.

Checklist before you buy

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Plain PVC, or chip and prox cards? | ☐ Anything on the back, now or later? |
| ☐ How many cards a year? | ☐ One computer, or the network? |
| ☐ Typing names, or a spreadsheet? | ☐ Mac or Windows? Do cards open doors? |
| ☐ What does one finished card cost? | ☐ What happens if it breaks? |

Tell us four things, we'll pick for you

What kind of cards, about how many a year, one side or both, and whether they open doors. You get two printers and a written quote the same day.

CALL OR EMAIL

(732) 987-5300sales@bodno.com

Mon to Fri, 9 AM to 7 PM ET

Mention PRINT50: \$50 off