

**versalab** PRINT WASHER

Assembly and use of your new print washer is **extremely simple**, and shouldn't take but a half hour or so. The parts list may be long, but there is nothing complicated in it. We have included drawings in the back to clarify the text - also note that I.D. = inside diameter, O.D. = outside diameter, and GPM = gallons per minute. The following is the complete list of parts included with your washer. We have included extras of some of the small items.

- 1 polyethylene tank with grommets installed
- 15 separator panels (white styrene)
  
- 8 no.8 stainless steel nuts
- 8 no.8 stainless steel washers (large hole)
- 8 no.4 stainless steel washers (small hole)
- 48 3/4" long nylon spacers
- 8 5/8" long nylon spacers
- 4 lengths 1/8 polyethylene rod
- 2 small black silicone rubber plugs
- 1 1/8" I.D. hose-to-garden-hose-thread (GHT) adapter
- 2 plastic clamps
  
- 2 6' lengths of 3/8" I.D. PVC hose
- 1 6' length of 3/8" I.D. PVC hose - INLET HOSE
- 1 20" length of 1/2" I.D. PVC hose - SIPHON HOSE
- 1 2" length of 1/2" I.D. PVC hose -
  
- 1 5" length of 1/2 O.D. rigid PVC tubing with 1 hole - SIPHON BREAK TUBE
- 1 14" length of 3/8" O.D. rigid PVC tubing with series of holes - SPRAY BAR
- 4 no.8 stainless steel studs
- 3 3/4" square x 11+" long gray plastic bars (print weights)

**WASH**

The first job is to wash all the components. Most of the parts have manufacturing lubricants on them that should be washed off so as to not contaminate your print wash water.

We suggest you wash all the parts thoroughly with hot detergent water. If you wish, use the tank as the wash basin. Don't mix up the short nylon spacers with the longer ones and try to keep the separator panels in the same order that they were packed.

**PRINT BASKET ASSEMBLY**

The finished print basket consists of 15 white plastic separator panels fastened together by stainless steel studs. The panels are held apart, creating the 14 slots for prints, by the nylon spacers. At the bottom are thin plastic rods which support the prints. The separator panels are smoothed on the top edge and have a hole at the upper corner for orientation purposes.

*Note: In order to make the washer pleasant to use and safer for your prints, we have rounded the top edge of the separators. Sometimes we aren't perfect. Please make sure this was done adequately. A quick dab with even a fingernail file will do it. Using a sharp edged tool is fine also, providing you use it as a scraper since sharp edges dig into the soft plastic.*

You will be building up the print basket by stacking things together on a table top or work surface. Prepare the studs by placing a no.8 washer (large hole) and then a nut right at one end of each of them. Take one of the panels and place it on the work top with the indicator hole (see drawing) at the upper right and the long side with the four holes nearest you. Put one stud up through each of the four side holes of this panel. The panel should now be laying flat with the studs sticking up through the holes. Put one short spacer on each stud and then put another panel over the studs. Keep the panels oriented as they came packaged with the indicator hole corners all in a line. Again put one short spacer on each stud, and another separator panel. After that put one long spacer over each stud, and then add another panel over the studs. Keep building the print basket in the same fashion with a long spacer over each stud until all the panels been assembled.

Now put a no.8 washer and a nut on each stud and tighten the nuts. Set the basket upright so that the panels are vertical and sitting on their long side. This is how it will sit in the tank. Tighten the nuts firmly enough that the basket moves and feels like a single unit, but not so tight that something is stressed.

You should now have a fairly rigid assembly that consists of 15 separator panels held together by the studs. Check that the nylon spacers are as on the sketch.

Now turn the basket upside down so that the four holes are upper most. Put one of the polyethylene rods through the same hole in each of the separators (running parallel to the studs). Position them so that about the same amount sticks out each side of the basket. Place a no.4 washer over each of these ends. Squeeze the end of the rod with pliers quite hard. This should upset the end of the rods so that they do not pull back through the washers.

*Note: In the following procedures, when fitting hose or tubing into the rubber grommets, you will want to use water with a tiny bit of detergent or Windex as a lubricant to ease fitting.*

#### TANK INLET

You have a choice which side of the tank the inlet water hose is to be on. Simply orient the open end of the spray bar on that side. Wet the inside of the grommets and the outside of the spray bar. Water will suffice, but Windex or similar will be more slippery. Push the spray bar through both grommets so that the spray holes are facing down toward the center bottom of the tank (see drawing) and about evenly spaced side to side across the tank.

Wipe the lubricant from the open end of the spray bar so that the hose and clamp will grip firmly. Put a clamp onto the open end of the spray bar. Push one end of the 6' hose onto the spray bar about 3/4". Tighten the clamp by squeezing it with pliers. The little ratchet will hold very tightly. If you need to loosen a clamp, push the two parts of the ratchet assembly apart sideways but be careful -- the sharp edges of the clamp can hurt!

Push the other end of the hose (with a clamp) onto the garden hose thread adapter (easiest when the adapter is fastened to the faucet) and tighten the clamp.

## SIPHON and OVERFLOW

There are two more holes in the tank. The one high up on the side away from the inlet with a large grommet in it is for the main siphon outlet. The other, nearby in the bottom of the top lip, is for the overflow hose.

Wet the siphon break tube (5" length of 1/2 O.D. rigid PVC tubing with one hole) and the siphon grommet. Push the tube through the grommet from the inside until about 1" sticks outside the tank. Orient the siphon break tube so that the single hole in it will be inside the tank and facing upwards.

Push the short 2" length of flexible hose over the end of the tube that is sticking out of the tank. Push one of the 6' lengths of hose into that short length. The short tube should be over about one inch of each and gently join the two.

Push one end of the 20" (1/2" I.D.) long siphon hose onto the other end (inside the tank) of the siphon break tube about an inch. Orient the curvature of this hose so that it roughly makes a downward arc from the end of the siphon break tube, touches the inside of the other side of the tank and ends up near the center of the bottom of the tank against the end wall. The precise position of the end of this hose is not very critical to performance.

The overflow hose is a safety device for using the print washer outside a sink or bathtub. If you are using the washer in a sink or tub, I suggest that you don't bother to install this hose since it is an extra nuisance when moving and storing the washer. The hole suffices as an overflow.

To install the overflow hose it is best to turn the tank upside-down. Again, wet the hose and hole at the time of insertion. The hose is a very tight fit and will take some effort to install. There are two basic ways to get the hose into the hole, but in either the requirement is to force the hose to collapse into a "C" shape such as in the adjacent sketch. One way is to place the end of the hose over the hole and use a screwdriver to collapse the hose and force it into the hole. The second way is (either using your fingers or with the aid of needle-nose pliers) to force the hose into the "C" shape and hold it collapsed while pushing it into the hole. Once the hose is through the hole, with something like 1/8th inch showing through, use the screwdriver or needle-nose pliers inside the opening (end) of the hose to force the hose back to the round shape. All of this is easier if the hose is warm. You might want to run it under hot water. If you have damaged the end of the hose pull a bit more through the hole and trim the bad section off.



## FINAL

Set the print basket into the tank with the polyethylene rods on the bottom (they keep the prints off the bottom of the washer tank). Make sure that the bottom end of the siphon pickup hose is between the end of the basket and the end wall of the tank and about in the center as per the drawing. Roughly center the holes in the spray bar in the gaps between the separator panels. Finished.

## USE

Place the washer on a convenient, level, sturdy surface. NOTE THAT THIS UNIT WEIGHS AROUND 100 LBS., IT IS HEAVY! Check that the clamps on the inlet hose connections are tight. Hook up the water and turn it on gently at first. Check that the spray bar is directed roughly as per the previous instructions. You can run the water as hard as you want to fill the tank fast.

*Note: The washer is very carefully designed to be used inside or outside a sink. But we recommend caution whenever water is used outside a sink. Having nearly limitless quantities of pressurized water outside a drained area can have terrible consequences - even the 22 gallons of water in the tank will be very messy if the support for the washer collapses.*

As the water level gets near the top, slow down the flow to around 1 to 2 GPM or so. Observe that at about the time the water is a little over the siphon break tube, the siphon flow begins. It should flow with a completely full hose, not a trickle. If it does not start automatically, the overflow hole will go to work keeping the level below the top edge of the tank (unless you are well over 2 GPM incoming flow).

If the siphon does not begin flowing fully automatically it is probably an air blockage in the hose. A quantity of water blocking the end of the hose, with air between it and the tank, may prevent automatic siphon start. Lift the hose, causing the air to bubble out the siphon break hole, and set the hose back down. Siphoning should start immediately.

*Note: There are several states of flow in both the siphon and overflow hoses. The first is no flow. The second is a trickle. Some water is moving out the hose but the hose is mostly filled with air. The third is a full hose. Water is moving out of the tank down hill fast.*

*The tank is designed to be operated between two conditions. In each of these conditions the siphon hose is full and flowing. It is intended to be the main output and therefore must flow the same amount as the input. The upper limit on tank flow rate relates to the amount that can flow through the overflow hose. The washer is safe to be used up to whatever flow rate the overflow hose can handle. If the water level rises above the overflow opening, you can no longer be sure whether the level may continue to rise and overflow the top of the tank. This isn't a problem in a sink. This shouldn't happen until well over 2 GPM.*

*Between .3 and 2.0 GPM is the design flow range. Roughly .3-6 GPM should be satisfactory in normal use. This lower flow rate causes the siphon break hole to make a little buzzing or purring sound as a little air is added through the hole to make up the flow. Somewhere around .2 GPM the siphon flow may stop because enough air was sucked in that it broke the siphon effect. The rising water level will usually start the siphon action up again automatically under these conditions allowing the washer to be used even at these very slow flow rates.*

*Outflow rates, generally the flow rate of the siphon drain hose, will affect the usable inflow rates. The above rates are based on having the ends of the overflow and siphon drain hoses at the same height as the bottom of the tank. If they are higher up they will flow less. If they are lower than the bottom of the tank, they will flow more. The length of the drain hoses also affects the flow rates. If you need to shorten the hoses you may, but it is best to leave the siphon drain uncut.*

Once the flow has been established, prints can be inserted. Once all the prints are in, place two print weights across the top of the print basket to keep the prints down in the water (any air in the wash water will stick to the prints and cause them to float up). The third weight is useful when washing multiple smaller prints in each slot. If the flow stops, don't worry about your prints drying out, the siphon break hole will do its job and stop the siphoning action when the water level drops below it.

## DRAINING

When you want to drain the tank, simply use the designed-in siphon. With the siphon break hole open, the washer will not drain. To drain the tank, simply establish siphon action (as in print washing) and insert one of the silicone rubber plugs into the siphon break hole, then turn off the water. The tank will empty very nearly completely reasonably quickly. You can, if you wish, heave the robust tank over in the sink, emptying it very quickly. When not in use, store the plug in the little hole in the tank's lip, adjacent to the siphon break hole. This will reduce the chances of losing the plug.

Recommendations, flow rates, and stuff like that:

The final responsibility for taking care of your prints remains with you. There are many small changes in procedure, chemistry, and water character, all of which can affect the archival nature of the wash. Check your results. The best known verification of a good wash is HT-2 applied to a spot on washed prints or blank processed print paper. Rather than the amount of stain allowed in the Kodak guide, I prefer to see no visible stain at all on most types of paper. HT-2 can be purchased from us.

The level of saturation of fixer in the print as it enters the washer is the major determinant to wash time (various types of fixer, conventional or rapid are also major affects). Good procedure calls for rinsing and possibly hypo clearing which will remove the gross amounts of hypo, speeding the process enormously. If hypo is dripping from the print when it enters the washer, you are asking for trouble.

As a conservative estimate you can basically expect the following:

Stop (acetic acid)	30 sec.
Fix (F6)	6 min.
water hold tray	until all prints done: change water periodically to clear excess hypo
Hypo Clearing Agent	3-5 min. constant agitation
water rinse	enough to clear the surface of the print of HCA
wash	around .5 GPM for 1 HOUR

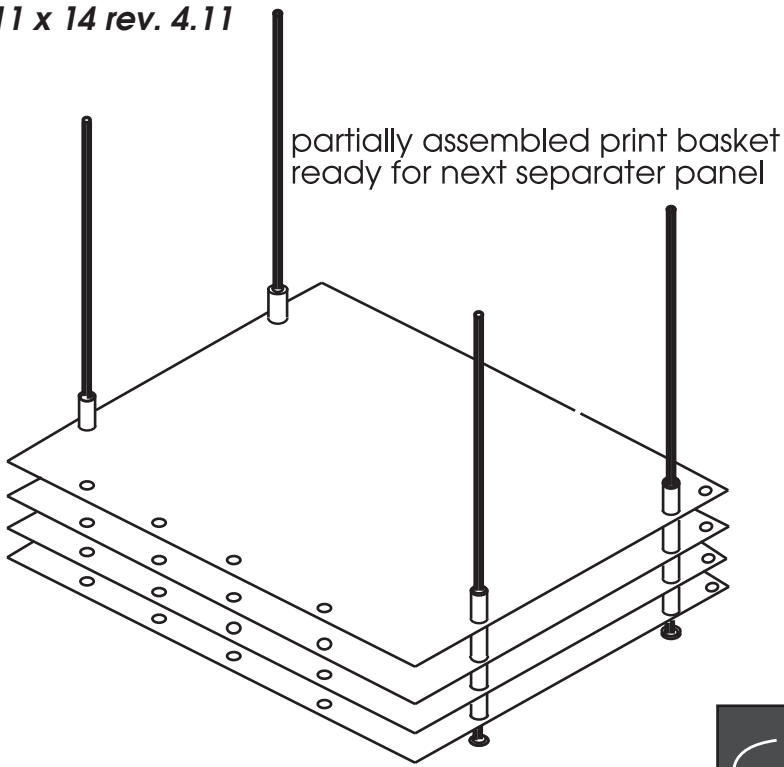
*Using rapid fix and some care could reduce this to as little as twenty minutes.*

The washer was made with nice wide slots so that reaching down in to retrieve prints is easy. This also makes it possible to put in double the amount of prints per slot providing they are arranged back to back so that natural curl will keep them apart. Washing extra prints in the back-to-back arrangement will require more wash time.

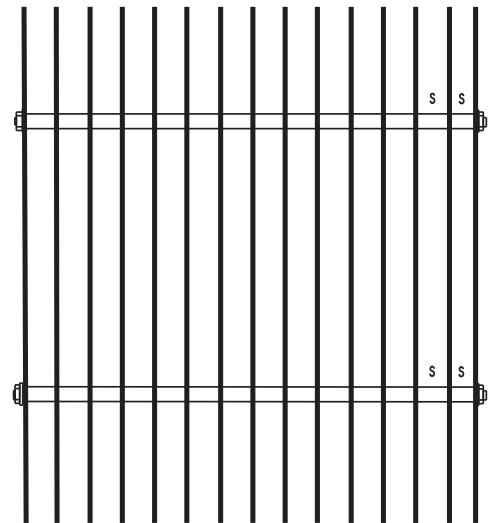
What about other wash recommendations and wash theories from other sources? Beware of old wives tales and marketing hype. The Versalab print washer is a well developed and proven design. Tests by ourselves and customers, and years in the field confirm that it will do a fine archival wash in as short a time and water use as any product in the world.

You can very easily be sure that the washer is working correctly. The only real criteria is that the output from the spray bar is pointed roughly in the right direction and that a reasonable flow is established. The flow rate is in the right range when the siphon break hole is gently burbling away. Prints will naturally touch the sides of the print basket separators. This does not affect the wash.

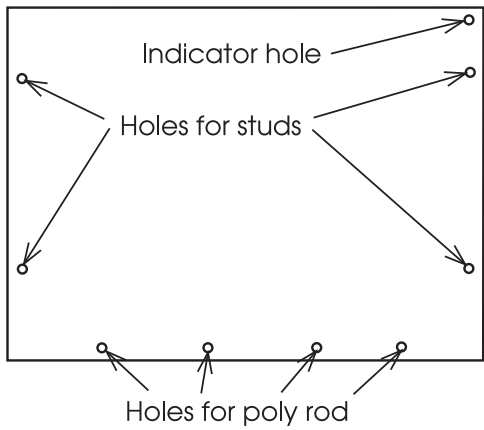
FINALLY - We hope that you find this product to be extremely useful to you as well as a pleasure to own. We are keen to hear any and all comments that you might have about our business and its products.



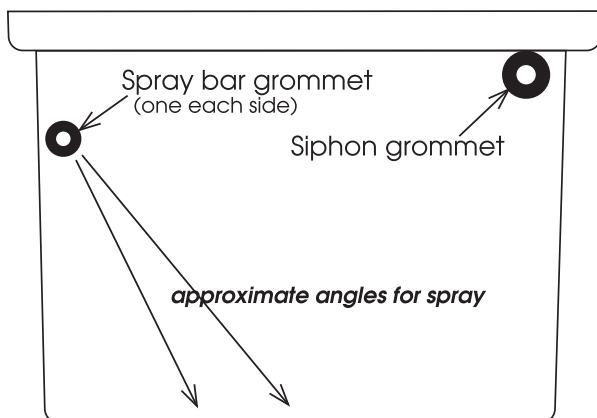
end view of print basket showing  
position of short spacers (s)



**Separator panel**



**Tank side view**



**Tank end view**

