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TROUBLESHOOTING GUIDE

Brother TD-4 troubleshooting guide: errors, faults and fixes

Updated 21 October 2026 · By TIMCOD maintenance technicians · Source: official Brother documentation, Brother support FAQs and troubleshooting for the TD-4420TN, TD-4520TN, TD-4650TNWB and TD-4750TNWB (list at the end of the page)

TIMCOD PRODUCT PAGE (IN FRENCH)

[See the Brother TD4 product page →](#)

In brief. The Brother TD-4 Series covered here comprises the TD-4420TN, TD-4520TN, TD-4650TNWB and TD-4750TNWB 4-inch desktop label printers, which print in thermal transfer (with a ribbon) or direct thermal mode. They report errors with a green, orange or red light, and the BPM tool (Brother Printer Management Tool) displays the exact status on the computer. According to Brother, the most frequently cited causes are a printhead that has not been closed properly, a roll or ribbon that is used up or incorrectly installed, and an uncalibrated or dirty label sensor. This guide covers the Brother troubleshooting FAQs: lights, calibration, loading, cleaning and print quality. Click a question to open the entry.

- **The light is red** (Head Open, Out of Paper, Paper Jam...): find the status shown in BPM or the light state in the [lookup table](#) and open the matching entry.

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- **No error, but the print is poor:** skipped labels, see [calibration](#); poor print quality, see [print quality](#) and the [printhead](#); ribbon or roll to be refitted, see [loading](#).
- **The problem keeps coming back:** the [preventive maintenance](#) section explains how it reduces this type of fault.

What error is my Brother TD-4 showing? Lookup by BPM status and by light

The TD-4 reports its errors by the colour of its light; the BPM tool (Brother Printer Management Tool) also displays the exact status, in English. The table links each status or light state to its cause and to the troubleshooting entry.

Message or state	Light (Brother FAQ)	Likely cause	Entry
Head Open	● Solid red (flashing red possible according to the light table)	Printhead mechanism not closed properly	Head Open
Out of Paper	● Flashing red	Roll used up or incorrectly installed, sensor not calibrated	Out of Paper
Out of Ribbon / Ribbon Encoder Err. / Ribbon End Err.	● Flashing red	Ribbon used up or incorrectly installed	Out of Ribbon
Paper Jam	● Flashing red	Media jammed, sensor not calibrated or wrong paper size	Paper Jam
Memory full error	● Flashing red	Data sent too large	Memory full

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Message or state	Light (Brother FAQ)	Likely cause	Entry
Cutter error	● Solid red	Media jammed at the cutter entry or exit	Cutter error
Receiving data or paused	● Flashing green	Normal operation: data being received or printer paused	Lights
Deleting data	● Solid orange	The printer is deleting data	Lights

The light states come from the Brother FAQ “What do the indicator lights mean?” and from the FAQs specific to each BPM status (TD-4420TN, TD-4520TN, TD-4650TNWB, TD-4750TNWB). A dash would indicate that a page consulted does not specify the state of the light.

Brother TD-4 errors: Head Open, Out of Paper, Out of Ribbon, Paper Jam

Brother documents five errors reported by the red light and by the BPM tool: printhead open, out of paper, out of ribbon, jam and memory full; the cutter error is covered in the cutter section. For each one: the short answer, the cause, the steps to follow and, where the FAQ provides for it, the point at which you should hand over to a technician.

Why is the light on my Brother TD-4420TN red, with the “Head Open” status in BPM?

BPM status: Head Open · Light: solid red.

Short answer: The printhead mechanism is not closed and latched. Open the roll compartment cover, open the printhead with its release button, then close it with both hands until it latches.

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LIKELY CAUSE

Brother associates the “Head Open” status in the BPM tool (Brother Printer Management Tool) with a solid red light: the printhead mechanism is not completely closed. The Brother light table also mentions a printhead open error shown as flashing red, with the same instruction: check the printer’s condition and close the printhead correctly.

WHAT TO DO

1. Open the roll compartment cover by pressing the tabs on both sides of the printer.
2. Press the printhead release button to open the printhead mechanism.
3. Close the printhead mechanism with both hands until it latches.
4. Close the roll compartment cover.

This Brother FAQ is published for the TD-4420TN and TD-4520TN.

Sources: [The LED is lit in red and the printer status from the BPM \(Brother Printer Management Tool\) shows “Head Open”](#). [↗](#) · [What do the indicator lights mean?](#) [↗](#) – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

Why is my Brother TD-4 flashing red with the “Out of Paper” status?

BPM status: **Out of Paper** · Light: flashing red.

Short answer: The roll is almost or completely empty, it is incorrectly installed, or the gap / black mark sensor is not calibrated. Replace or reinstall the roll, then calibrate the sensor.

LIKELY CAUSE

Brother cites three causes: roll almost or completely used up, roll incorrectly installed, gap / black mark sensor (Gap/Black Mark Sensor) not calibrated. The Brother light table also asks you to check that the media passes under the sensor.

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WHAT TO DO

1. Check how much is left on the roll. If there is not enough, replace it with a new roll (see [loading labels](#)).
2. Check that the roll is correctly installed and that the media passes under the sensor. If not, reinstall it.
3. If necessary, press the Feed/Pause button to feed the media.
4. Calibrate the gap / black mark sensor (see [calibration](#)).

Sources: [The LED is flashing in red and the printer status from the BPM \(Brother Printer Management Tool\) shows "Out of Paper".](#) · [What do the indicator lights mean?](#) · [Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting](#) (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

What should I do when my Brother TD-4 shows “Out of Ribbon” or “Ribbon End Err.”?

BPM status: `Out of Ribbon` , `Ribbon Encoder Err.` or `Ribbon End Err.` · Light: flashing red.

Short answer: According to Brother, the ribbon is almost or completely used up, or it is incorrectly installed. Replace the ribbon if there is not enough left; otherwise reinstall it correctly.

LIKELY CAUSE

Brother cites two causes for these three statuses: ribbon low or used up, ribbon incorrectly installed.

WHAT TO DO

1. Check the amount of ribbon remaining. If it is insufficient, replace the ribbon.
2. If there is enough ribbon, check how it is installed and reinstall it correctly (see [installing the ribbon](#)).

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Sources: [The LED is flashing in red and the printer status from the BPM \(Brother Printer Management Tool\) shows "Out of Ribbon" or "Ribbon Encoder Err./Ribbon End Err".](#) [↗](#) · [What do the indicator lights mean?](#) [↗](#)
– Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

Why does my Brother TD-4 report “Paper Jam” with a flashing red light?

BPM status: **Paper Jam** · Light: flashing red.

Short answer: Media is jammed in the printer, the gap / black mark sensor is not calibrated, or the paper size set does not match the roll. Remove the jammed media, calibrate, then check the paper width and height in BPM.

LIKELY CAUSE

Brother cites three causes: label or media jammed inside, gap / black mark sensor not calibrated, paper size set in the software different from the roll installed.

Caution: Remove the jammed media carefully, so as not to damage the printer (Brother instruction).

WHAT TO DO

1. Look for a label or media jammed inside the printer and carefully remove it.
2. Calibrate the gap / black mark sensor (see [calibration](#)).
3. With the computer connected and the printer switched on, run BPM and click **Printer Configuration**.
4. In the **FBPL** tab, check that **Paper Width** and **Paper Height** match the roll installed.

Source: [The LED is flashing in red and the printer status from the BPM \(Brother Printer Management Tool\) shows “Paper Jam”.](#) [↗](#) – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

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What does the memory full error mean on my Brother TD-4?

Error: **Memory full error** · Light: flashing red.

Short answer: The data sent is too large for the printer. Brother asks you to reduce or adjust the data, then send it again.

LIKELY CAUSE

According to the Brother light table, a flashing red light can indicate a memory full error: the print data is too large to be received.

WHAT TO DO

1. Reduce or adjust the print data.
2. Send the print job again.

Source: [What do the indicator lights mean?](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

Calibration problems: my Brother TD-4 skips labels or does not detect them

The TD-4 locates labels with a fixed gap sensor and a movable black mark sensor. Brother asks you to calibrate the sensor at each media change and to clean the sensors if labels are skipped.

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How do I calibrate the label sensor (gap or black mark) on my Brother TD-4420TN?

When: new printer, new label type, after initialisation, or “Out of Paper” and “Paper Jam” with a roll loaded.

Short answer: With the printer off, hold down the Feed/Pause button, switch it on and release the button when the light has flashed red 5 times. You can also calibrate from the BPM tool: **Printer Function**, sensor type, then **Calibrate**.

LIKELY CAUSE

Brother recommends calibrating the sensitivity of the gap / black mark sensor when the printer is purchased, at each change of label type and after initialisation. The media loading FAQ asks you to calibrate at each media change; an uncalibrated sensor is among the causes cited for “Out of Paper” and “Paper Jam”.

OFFICIAL CALIBRATION PROCEDURE

1. Switch the printer off.
2. Press and hold the Feed/Pause button and switch on the printer.
3. Keep the button pressed while the light comes on orange, then flashes red. Release it after 5 red flashes.
4. Select the sensor by sending the corresponding command to the printer: **GAP** for the gap sensor, **BLINE** for the black mark sensor.
5. Alternative method, from the computer: with the printer connected and switched on, run BPM and click **Printer Configuration**. In the **FBPL** tab, set **Paper Width**, **Paper Height**, **Media Sensor** and **Gap**, click **Set**, then **Get** to check that the settings are active.
6. Then click **Printer Function**, choose the sensor type and click **Calibrate**.

Brother specifies that the button procedure calibrates both the ribbon and the gap / black mark sensor. If the button is kept pressed, the light goes through: orange, red (5 flashes), orange (5 flashes), green (5 flashes), alternating green and orange (5 times), alternating red and orange (5

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times), then solid green. The FAQ does not explain how to send the GAP and BLINE commands.

Sources: [How to calibrate the Gap/Black Mark Sensor by directly operating the printer](#) · [How to load the Media](#) – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

Why does my Brother TD-4 skip labels when printing?

Symptoms: one or more labels are skipped during printing.

Short answer: Brother cites three causes: incorrectly set label size, unsuitable sensor sensitivity, dirty sensors. Check the size in BPM, change the detection threshold, then clean the gap and black mark sensors.

LIKELY CAUSE

According to Brother, the printer skips labels when the label size is not correctly specified, when the sensor sensitivity does not suit the media, or when dust has settled on the sensors.

WHAT TO DO

1. With the computer connected and the printer switched on, run BPM and click **Printer Configuration**.
2. In the **FBPL** tab, check **Paper Width** and **Paper Height**.
3. In the **Advanced** tab, change the **Threshold Detection** setting (automatic or manual gap detection: Auto Gap or Manual Gap), then click **Set**.
4. If the problem persists, clean the gap sensor and the black mark sensor (see [cleaning the sensors](#)).

Source: [The label is skipped when printing](#) – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

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How do I clean the label sensors on my Brother TD-4420TN?

Symptoms: skipped labels, irregular media detection.

Short answer: Open the cover and the printhead, switch off the printer, then clean the gap sensor and the black mark sensor with compressed air or a vacuum cleaner. Brother specifies this cleaning as needed.

LIKELY CAUSE

Dust on the gap and black mark sensors is among the causes cited by Brother for skipped labels.

Caution: Switch off the printer before cleaning the sensors.

BROTHER PROCEDURE

1. Open the roll compartment cover by pressing the tabs on both sides of the printer.
2. Press the release button to open the printhead mechanism.
3. Switch the printer off.
4. Clean the gap sensor and the black mark sensor with compressed air or a vacuum cleaner.

Sources: [How do I clean / maintain my printer?](#) [↗](#) · [The label is skipped when printing.](#) [↗](#) – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

Loading the ribbon and labels on the Brother TD-4420TN: Brother procedures

An incorrectly installed roll or ribbon causes “Out of Paper”, “Out of Ribbon” and print defects. Here are the loading procedures published by Brother.

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How do I load a roll of labels into a Brother TD-4420TN?

Symptoms: “Out of Paper” after changing the roll, media poorly guided.

Short answer: Open the cover, unlock and spread the guides, insert the roll, then pass the media under the printhead, print side up. Align the black mark sensor with the media, close the printhead and calibrate the sensor from BPM.

LIKELY CAUSE

An incorrectly installed roll or an uncalibrated sensor is among the causes cited by Brother for “Out of Paper” and for poor print quality.

Caution: Do not touch the rotating parts: a finger caught in the gear can be injured. Switch off the printer before touching the gear (Brother warning).

BROTHER PROCEDURE

1. Open the roll compartment cover by pressing the tabs on both sides of the printer.
2. Push the LOCK lever up to unlock the roll guides, then spread the two guides apart.
3. Insert the roll, then push the LOCK lever down to lock the guides.
4. Press the release button to open the printhead. Slide the (movable) black mark sensor to align it with the media, and check that the gap or black mark passes in front of the (fixed) gap sensor.
5. Adjust the media guides to the width of the label, print side up.
6. Feed the paper through the exit slot, leaving its end protruding slightly.
7. Close the printhead with both hands until it latches.
8. Connect the printer to the computer and switch it on.
9. In BPM, set the size and the sensor in **Printer Configuration > FBPL**, then run calibration in **Printer Function** (see [calibration](#)).

Brother asks you to calibrate the gap / black mark sensor at each media change.

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Source: [How to load the Media](#) – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

How do I install the thermal transfer ribbon in a Brother TD-4420TN?

Symptoms: “Out of Ribbon” or “Ribbon End Err.” after fitting a ribbon.

Short answer: Place the empty core on the take-up spindle, insert the ribbon on its spindle, pass it under the printhead and attach its leader to the core. Turn the take-up until the black part of the ribbon covers the printhead, then close the printhead with both hands.

LIKELY CAUSE

An incorrectly installed ribbon is among the causes cited by Brother for “Out of Ribbon” and for “Printing is not possible”.

Caution: Do not touch the rotating parts: a finger caught in the gear can be injured. Switch off the printer before touching the gear (Brother warning).

BROTHER PROCEDURE

1. Open the roll compartment cover by pressing the tabs on both sides.
2. Insert the ribbon take-up spindle into the empty core, in the direction shown in the illustrations in the Brother FAQ.
3. Fit the take-up spindle on its hub: the right-hand side first, then the left-hand side in the hole provided.
4. Press the release button to open the printhead.
5. Insert the ribbon on the ribbon spindle, then fit this spindle on the supply hub: the right-hand side first, then the left-hand side.
6. Pass the ribbon under the printhead and attach its leader to the take-up core.
7. Turn the take-up hub until the plastic leader is fully wound on and the black part of the ribbon covers the printhead.

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8. Check that the black part of the ribbon properly covers the take-up, then close the printhead with both hands until it latches.

According to Brother, a 12.7 mm or 25.4 mm core notched on both sides can be inserted directly on the take-up hub, and a ribbon notched on both sides directly into the mechanism.

Sources: [How to load the Ribbon](#) · [The LED is flashing in red and the printer status from the BPM \(Brother Printer Management Tool\) shows "Out of Ribbon" or "Ribbon Encoder Err./Ribbon End Err"](#) · [Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting \(support.brother.com, United States\)](#) (official documentation).

Several of these faults involve the ribbon or labels used. TIMCOD supplies [labels](#), [thermal transfer ribbons](#) and [printheads](#) for thermal printers (pages in French).

Brother TD-4 print quality: poor printing, dirty roller

Brother links poor print quality to the consumables, the cleanliness of the printhead and platen roller, and the density and speed settings.

Why is the print quality on my Brother TD-4 poor?

Symptoms: poor print quality.

Short answer: Brother has you check, in this order: suitable ribbon and labels, correctly loaded; cleanliness of the printhead and platen roller; density and speed settings; then the printhead test pattern on the self-test. If the fault persists, contact your reseller or Brother customer service.

LIKELY CAUSE

Brother cites four causes: unsuitable or incorrectly loaded ribbon or labels, dust or adhesive on the printhead or platen roller, incorrectly set print density or speed, missing dots on the printhead.

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WHAT TO DO

1. Check that the ribbon and labels are suitable and correctly loaded (see [ribbon](#) and [labels](#)).
2. Clean the printhead (see [printhead cleaning](#)) and the platen roller (see [roller cleaning](#)).
3. With the computer connected and the printer switched on, run BPM, click **Printer Configuration** and check **Density** and **Speed** in the **FBPL** tab.
4. Print the self-test and check whether the printhead test pattern, at the bottom of the printout, has missing dots (see [self-test](#)).

When to call a technician: if the quality is still poor after these checks, Brother refers you to the reseller or Brother customer service.

Source: [The print quality is poor.](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

How do I clean the platen roller on my Brother TD-4420TN?

Symptoms: poor print quality, adhesive or dust on the roller.

Short answer: With the printer off, open the cover and then the printhead, turn the roller and wipe it with a lint-free cloth or a cotton swab moistened with isopropyl alcohol or ethanol. Brother recommends this cleaning at each change of label roll.

LIKELY CAUSE

According to Brother, dust or adhesive on the platen roller is among the causes of poor print quality.

Caution: Switch off the printer before cleaning the platen roller.

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BROTHER PROCEDURE

1. Switch the printer off.
2. Open the roll compartment cover by pressing the tabs on both sides.
3. Press the release button to open the printhead.
4. Turn the platen roller and wipe it carefully with a lint-free cloth or a cotton swab moistened with isopropyl alcohol or ethanol.
5. Close the printhead with both hands until it latches, then close the cover.

Sources: [How to clean the Platen Roller](#) · [The print quality is poor.](#) – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

Brother TD-4420TN printhead: cleaning and checking the dots

Cleaning the printhead is the first measure Brother specifies; the self-test then shows whether any printhead dots are damaged.

How do I clean the printhead on my Brother TD-4420TN when print quality deteriorates?

Symptoms: poor print quality, dust or adhesive on the printhead.

Short answer: Switch off the printer, let the printhead cool for at least one minute, then wipe the heating element with a cotton swab moistened with isopropyl alcohol or ethanol. Brother recommends this cleaning at each change of label roll.

LIKELY CAUSE

According to Brother, dust or adhesive on the printhead degrades print quality.

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Caution: Always switch off the printer before cleaning the printhead and let it cool for at least one minute (Brother instructions).

OFFICIAL CLEANING PROCEDURE

1. Switch off the printer and let the printhead cool for at least one minute.
2. Open the roll compartment cover by pressing the tabs on both sides.
3. Press the release button to open the printhead.
4. With a cotton swab moistened with isopropyl alcohol or ethanol, wipe the heating element: the black bar above the green bar.
5. Close the printhead with both hands until it latches, then close the cover.

Sources: [How to clean the Print Head](#) · [The print quality is poor.](#) – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

How can I tell whether the printhead on my Brother TD-4420TN has faulty dots?

Symptoms: print quality still poor after cleaning.

Short answer: Print the printer configuration (self-test): it shows the number of faulty dots on the printhead and ends with a test pattern. If dots are missing and the quality is still poor, Brother refers you to the reseller or customer service.

LIKELY CAUSE

According to Brother, the self-test shows whether the heating element of the printhead has damaged dots. The printout also gives the firmware version, the distance printed, the cut counter, the print settings (speed, darkness, label size, sensor sensitivity), the ZPL emulation settings, the RS232 and Ethernet settings (MAC address, DHCP, IP address) and the memory status.

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WHAT TO DO

1. Print the printer configuration (Self-test). Brother states that it is printed after calibration of the gap / black mark sensor (see [calibration](#)).
2. In the System Information section, note the number of faulty printhead dots.
3. At the bottom of the printout, examine the printhead test pattern: missing dots indicate a fault in the heating element.
4. Check that the printhead has been properly cleaned (see [printhead cleaning](#)).

When to call a technician: if the test pattern shows missing dots and the quality is still poor, Brother refers you to the reseller or Brother customer service.

The button sequence for the self-test is described by Brother in a separate FAQ (“How to execute the printer configuration (Self-test) to debug”).

Sources: [Printing the printer configuration \(Self-test\)](#) · [The print quality is poor.](#) – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

TIMCOD supplies [printheads for thermal printers](#) (page in French).

My Brother TD-4 does not print: cable, consumables and settings

When nothing comes out, Brother has you check the cable first, then the loading of the consumables and the density.

Why does my Brother TD-4420TN not print?

Symptoms: no label comes out.

Short answer: Brother asks you to check three things: the cable between the printer and the computer, the loading of the ribbon and labels, then the density setting in BPM. Disconnect and reconnect the cable, then replace it if printing does

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not resume.

LIKELY CAUSE

Brother cites a poorly connected or faulty cable, incompatible or incorrectly loaded ribbon or labels, and an incorrect density setting.

WHAT TO DO

1. Check that the cable is compatible and properly connected to the printer and the computer.
2. Disconnect the cable at both ends, then reconnect it.
3. If printing still does not work, replace the cable with a new compatible cable.
4. Check that the ribbon and labels are compatible and correctly loaded (see [ribbon](#) and [labels](#)).
5. Run BPM, click **Printer Configuration** and check the **Density** setting in the **FBPL** tab.

Source: [Printing is not possible.](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

Brother TD-4 cutter and peel bar: cutting error and maintenance

The cutter reports its errors with a solid red light; the cutter or peel bar is cleaned with alcohol.

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Why does the light on my Brother TD-4 stay solid red with a cutter error?

Error: **Cutter error** · Light: solid red.

Short answer: Media is probably jammed at the cutter entry or exit. Remove it; if the error persists, Brother asks you to contact your reseller or Brother customer service.

LIKELY CAUSE

According to the Brother light table, a solid red light can indicate a cutter error: media may be jammed at the cutter entry or exit.

WHAT TO DO

1. Locate the jammed media at the cutter entry or exit and remove it.
2. If the error persists, contact your reseller or Brother customer service.

When to call a technician: if the cutter error persists once the media has been removed, Brother refers you to the reseller or Brother customer service.

Source: [What do the indicator lights mean?](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

How do I clean the tear bar or peel bar on my Brother TD-4420TN?

Maintenance: adhesive on the tear bar or peel bar.

Short answer: Open the roll compartment cover and wipe the tear bar or peel bar with a lint-free cloth moistened with isopropyl alcohol or ethanol. Brother specifies this cleaning as needed.

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BROTHER PROCEDURE

1. Open the roll compartment cover by pressing the tabs on both sides.
2. Wipe the tear bar or peel bar with a lint-free cloth moistened with isopropyl alcohol or ethanol.

The same Brother FAQ specifies, as needed, wiping the exterior with a lint-free cloth moistened with water and removing dust from the interior with a brush or a vacuum cleaner.

Source: [How do I clean / maintain my printer?](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

Other questions about the Brother TD-4: what does the light colour mean?

The light does not only report errors: here is the meaning of each colour according to Brother.

What do the light colours on my Brother TD-4 (green, orange, red) mean?

Light: solid or flashing green, solid orange, solid or flashing red.

Short answer: According to Brother, solid green indicates that the printer is powered on, flashing green that it is receiving data or paused, and solid orange that it is deleting data. Red, solid or flashing, indicates an error; the exact status is displayed in the BPM tool.

MEANING OF THE LIGHT (BROTHER FAQ)

1. Solid green: printer powered on.
2. Flashing green: receiving data from the computer, or printer paused.
3. Solid orange: the printer is deleting data.

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4. Solid red: printhead open (see [Head Open](#)) or cutter error (see [cutter error](#)).
5. Flashing red: printhead open, out of paper ([Out of Paper](#)), out of ribbon ([Out of Ribbon](#)), memory full ([memory full](#)); a jam also makes it flash ([Paper Jam](#)).

The Brother light table covers the TD-4420TN, TD-4520TN, TD-4650TNWB and TD-4750TNWB.

Sources: [What do the indicator lights mean?](#) · [The LED is flashing in red and the printer status from the BPM \(Brother Printer Management Tool\) shows "Paper Jam"](#). · [Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting](#) (support.brother.com, United States) (official documentation).

When should you call a technician for a Brother TD-4?

The entries above first suggest reloading, cleaning, calibrating or a setting in BPM. In the following cases, Brother refers you to the reseller or customer service:

- **Print quality still poor:** after checking the consumables, cleaning, the density and speed settings and the self-test.
- **Missing dots on the printhead test pattern:** printhead heating element damaged, quality still poor after cleaning.
- **Persistent cutter error (solid red light):** the error is still displayed once the jammed media has been removed.

Avoiding recurring faults on the Brother TD-4: preventive maintenance

Several entries in this guide point to sensors that are badly positioned or dirty, a printhead or platen roller that needs cleaning, or unsuitable settings or consumables. These are exactly the points a preventive maintenance visit checks before they cause a breakdown.

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TIMCOD preventive maintenance is part of the through-life maintenance (MCO). TIMCOD provides for your fleet (page in French): scheduled preventive visits by certified technicians, with a detailed report. What it brings to a TD-4 fleet:

Fewer breakdowns, less downtime

Fewer production interruptions caused by label printers.

Worn parts detected in time

Printhead, platen roller, sensors: spotted before they cause a breakdown.

Regular cleaning and checks

Printhead, rollers and sensors cleaned and checked at every visit.

Longer service life

A well-maintained, properly adjusted printer lasts longer.

Print quality maintained

Legible barcodes, with darkness and printhead pressure suited to your consumables.

Fewer emergency call-outs

Incidents are handled during scheduled visits rather than as emergency repairs.

Controlled maintenance costs

A predictable budget instead of unplanned repairs.

Specialist Brother technicians

Support from teams who know your equipment.

In addition, TIMCOD corrective maintenance includes phone support (hotline), repair to working order, express exchange and, as an option, SWAP. Maintenance contracts come in three levels (Essentiel, Confort, Premium).

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Brother TD-4 troubleshooting: frequently asked questions

How do I calibrate a Brother TD-4420TN?

With the printer off, hold down the Feed/Pause button, switch it on and release the button when the light has flashed red 5 times. You can also calibrate from the BPM tool: Printer Function, sensor type, then Calibrate. Brother recommends calibrating at each change of label type. [See the detailed entry.](#)

Why is the light on my Brother TD-4 flashing red?

According to Brother, flashing red indicates printhead open, out of paper, out of ribbon or memory full; a jam (Paper Jam) also makes it flash. The BPM tool displays the exact status. Check that the printhead is closed, check the roll and the ribbon, then calibrate the sensor if necessary. [See the detailed entry.](#)

Why does my Brother TD-4 skip labels?

Brother cites three causes: incorrectly set label size, unsuitable sensor sensitivity, dirty sensors. Check Paper Width and Paper Height in BPM, change the detection threshold (Threshold Detection) in the Advanced tab, then clean the gap and black mark sensors. [See the detailed entry.](#)

How do I clean the printhead of a Brother TD-4420TN?

Switch off the printer, let the printhead cool for at least one minute, then open the cover and the printhead. Wipe the heating element with a cotton swab moistened with isopropyl alcohol or ethanol. Brother recommends this cleaning at each change of label

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roll. [See the detailed entry.](#)

Why does my Brother TD-4420TN not print?

Brother asks you to check the cable between the printer and the computer: disconnect it, reconnect it, then replace it if printing does not resume. Then check the loading of the ribbon and labels, and then the density setting in the BPM tool. [See the detailed entry.](#)

How do I put the ribbon into a Brother TD-4420TN?

Place the empty core on the take-up spindle, insert the ribbon on its spindle, pass it under the printhead and attach its leader to the core. Turn the take-up until the black part of the ribbon covers the printhead, then close the printhead with both hands. Switch off the printer before touching the gear. [See the detailed entry.](#)

Why is the print quality on my Brother TD-4 poor?

Brother has you check that the ribbon and labels are suitable and correctly loaded, clean the printhead and the platen roller, then check the density and speed in BPM. The self-test shows whether any printhead dots are missing. If the fault persists, contact your reseller or Brother customer service. [See the detailed entry.](#)

What does “Paper Jam” mean on a Brother TD-4?

This status indicates a jam: media stuck, sensor not calibrated or paper size different from the roll. Carefully remove the media, calibrate the sensor, then check Paper Width and Paper Height in the FBPL tab of the BPM tool. [See the detailed entry.](#)

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Sources consulted

All the causes, procedures and light states in this guide come from the pages below in Brother's official "FAQs & Troubleshooting" knowledge base (support.brother.com, US English version, TD-4420TN), consulted on 20 October 2026.

- [FAQs & Troubleshooting | TD-4420TN | United States | Brother](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [What do the indicator lights mean?](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [The LED is lit in red and the printer status from the BPM \(Brother Printer Management Tool\) shows "Head Open".](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [The LED is flashing in red and the printer status from the BPM \(Brother Printer Management Tool\) shows "Out of Paper".](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [The LED is flashing in red and the printer status from the BPM \(Brother Printer Management Tool\) shows "Out of Ribbon" or "Ribbon Encoder Err./Ribbon End Err".](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [The LED is flashing in red and the printer status from the BPM \(Brother Printer Management Tool\) shows "Paper Jam".](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [How to calibrate the Gap/Black Mark Sensor by directly operating the printer](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [The label is skipped when printing.](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [How to load the Media](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [How to load the Ribbon](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [The print quality is poor.](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [FAQs & Troubleshooting | TD-4420TN: Print Quality/Print Settings \(FAQ list\)](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**

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- [How to clean the Platen Roller](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [How to clean the Print Head](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [Printing the printer configuration \(Self-test\)](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [How do I clean / maintain my printer?](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**
- [Printing is not possible.](#)  – Brother TD-4420TN FAQs and troubleshooting (support.brother.com, United States) **official**

The Brother France and UK FAQs (support.brother.com, c=fr and c=gb), the list of Brother manuals (manuallist.aspx, manualtop.aspx), the TD-4 user guide and the FAQs “Memory full error occurred.”, “How to execute the printer configuration (Self-test) to debug” and “When I print a long label or many labels continuously, printing stops suddenly before finishing.” were not consulted for this guide and are not cited. If the fault falls under these documents, refer to the manufacturer’s documentation or ask the TIMCOD technicians.

See also

- Product page on timcod.fr (in French): [Brother TD4](#)
- [All Brother printer troubleshooting guides](#) (PJ-8, RJ-4250WB, TD-2, TJ-4420TN)
- [Maintenance and repair of Brother printers](#)
- [All printer troubleshooting guides, all brands](#)
- [Through-life maintenance \(MCO\): preventive and corrective maintenance](#) (in French)
- [Consumables for thermal printers: labels, thermal transfer ribbons, printheads](#) (in French)
- [Printer cleaning kits](#) (in French)

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7 TIMCOD agencies covering all of France

125 experts across 7 agencies, from Lille to Aix-en-Provence. Call the reception desk or the technical hotline of the agency nearest to your sites.

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A question, a persistent fault, a repair request? Write to us from the contact page on [timcod.fr](https://www.timcod.fr), or call one of our 7 agencies below.

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PDF version of the page <https://www.timcod.fr/repairation/en/printer-troubleshooting/brother/td-4>, updated on 21 October 2026.

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