RasterLink 8

Calibration Tool Guide

MIMAKI ENGINEERING CO., LTD.

https://mimaki.com/

D204033-10

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Introduction

This document describes how to install, set up, and use the Mimaki RasterLink8 ("RasterLink8") calibration tool.

Precautions

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About this Guide

Notation used in this guide

- The buttons and items displayed in screens are enclosed in square brackets, such as [OK] and [Open].

Symbols used in this guide

Description		
Important!	Important	The "Important" symbol represents information you must be familiar with when using this tool.
	Mandatory action sign	Indicates an action that must be carried out.
	Tip	The "Tip" symbol represents useful information to know.
	Reference information	Indicates the corresponding page for related information. Clicking the symbol takes you to the applicable page.

How to obtain this guide and related documents

The latest versions of this guide and related documents are available at the following location:

- Our official site (https://mimaki.com/download/software.html)

Chapter 1 Summary

This chapter

Provides an outline of the calibration tool.

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1.1 Operating Environment

The required operating environment is the same as that for RasterLink8. For more information, refer to the RasterLink8 installation guide.

● Supported RasterLink8 versions

RasterLink8 v.1.0.0 or later

● Supported colorimeters

Name displayed in RasterLink8	Supported colorimeter	Manufacturer	Remarks
i1Pro	i1Pro/i1Pro2	X-Rite	
i1iO	i1iO2	X-Rite	*1
i1Pro3	i1Pro3	X-Rite	
i1Pro3 PLUS	i1Pro3 PLUS	X-Rite	
i1iO3 with i1Pro3	i1iO3 (with i1Pro3 connected)	X-Rite	*1
i1iO3 with i1Pro3 PLUS	i1iO3 (with i1Pro3 PLUS connected)	X-Rite	*1
SpectroLFP	SpectroLFP	Barbieri	

*1. This feature is available only in calibration and emulation tools. Cannot be used for color replacement.

For more information on colorimeter selection, refer to ☞ "Setting the Colorimeter"(P. 13).

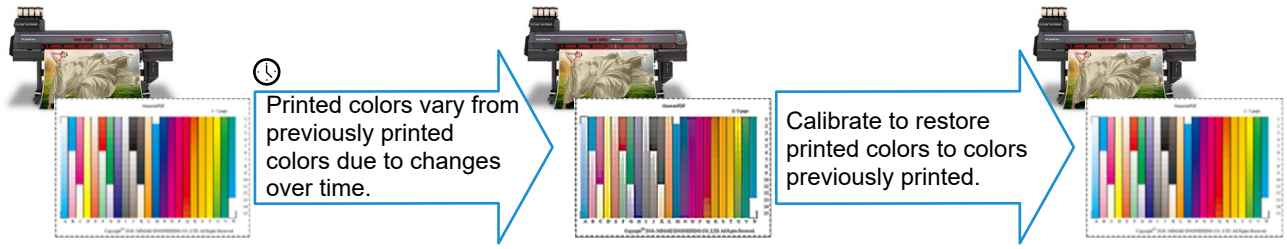
1.2 Terminology

Term	Explanation
Color measurement	Measuring colors using a colorimeter.
Color measurement value	A numerical value expressing the result of color measurement. The RasterLink Series primarily uses the L*a*b* color system.
Chart image	An image containing rows of color patches to be measured. The size and layout will differ depending on the particular colorimeter used.
Measured color value file	A file containing the color measurement results for a chart image.
Color difference	A value expressing the difference between two colors. Color differences can be calculated in several ways. This tool uses the following two values: ⊿E, ⊿E2000
MimakiProfileMaster3 (MPM3)	Mimaki color management software. Includes functions for creating RasterLink Series device profiles and calibration.

1.3 What is calibration?

Changes can occur in colors printed using inkjet printers due to factors such as inkjet head replacement, variations in inkjet nozzles over time, and fluctuations in ambient conditions.

Calibration is a function that spot measurements of ink density and performs automatic adjustments to ensure colors printed are close to those (basis color) set as the datum.



Functions and calibration management

Calibration tool provides the following three functions for managing calibration:

● Basis color creation

A chart image is printed to show the printer's current output color. This is then measured and used as the basis color for calibration. Calibration adjusts the ink density to match this color as closely as possible.

● Daily Confirm

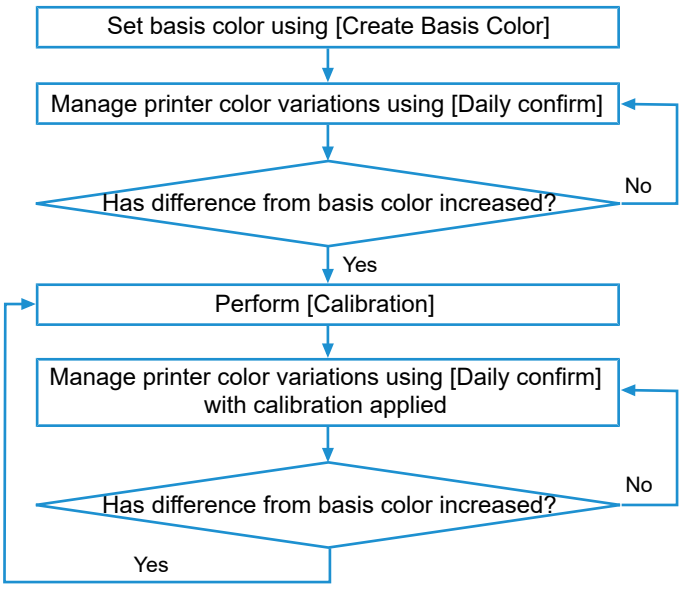
This periodically measures the current printer color after setting the basis color to check for differences in color from the basis color. Calibration is performed if the difference is significant. The current printer color is measured periodically with the calibration data applied after performing calibration to check for differences from the basis color. Calibration is repeated if the difference is significant.

● Calibration

Calibration is performed if the difference between the current printer color and the basis color is significant.

● Management process

Calibration is managed using the following process:



Calibration applicability

RasterLink8 calibration data is individually created for each registered printer and device profile. Calibration data created for a different printer cannot be used, even if it is of the same model. This is because calibration data is created based on individual printer information.

Select a device and favorite when creating calibration data. ☞ "Favorite Settings"(P. 14) This can be used when applied to a job regardless of the favorite used when creating the job, provided the same device profile is selected for the registered printer.

Chapter 2 Before Use

This chapter

Describes the procedures that must be performed before using the calibration tool.

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2.1 Installation

Install the calibration tool.

● Obtaining the installer

The installer is provided separately from RasterLink8.
It can be downloaded from the following URL:
https://mimaki.com/product/software/rip/

● Installation

1 Run the downloaded calibration tool installer on the PC on which RasterLink8 is installed.

2 Install as instructed on the installer screen.

- The calibration tool is installed in the same folder as RasterLink8.

- Check to confirm that RasterLink8 is installed before installing the calibration tool. The calibration tool cannot be installed unless RasterLink8 is already installed.

● Uninstall

1 Select [Apps] - [Apps & features] in Windows.

2 Select "Mimaki RasterLink8 Calibration tool".

3 Click [Uninstall].

- The calibration tool will be uninstalled.

Important!

- Calibration data will remain and be usable even after the calibration tool has been uninstalled. Calibration data will be deleted if RasterLink8 itself is uninstalled.

2.2 Setting the Colorimeter

- When installing RasterLink8, driver of colorimeter is not installed. Therefore, please install the driver of the colorimeter to be used separately.

1 **Select [Environments] - [Option...] from the RasterLink8 menu.**

2 **Select the [Device] tab, then click [Colorimeter setting].**

- The [Setting] screen will appear.

3 **Select the colorimeter to be used from the [Device] list.**

- Click [Connection check] to confirm the colorimeter is connected correctly.

4 **Click [OK] on the [Setting] screen.**

- The colorimeter is set.

2.3 Favorite Settings

The calibration tool uses the [Favorite] function to specify corresponding device profiles and to determine chart output conditions.

The favorites used for calibration are set before launching the calibration tool.

For more information on setting favorites, refer to the RasterLink8 Reference Guide.

This section describes important settings for each screen.

● [Properties] screen

- Do not select "Mono Color" for [Job Attribute]. Selecting this option will print the chart image in monochrome.

● [Print Condition] screen

Specify the device profile to be calibrated.

Device profiles that cannot be calibrated

The following device profiles cannot be calibrated:

- Device profiles for which [Type] is "Metallic"
- Device profiles for special purposes (e.g., bottom clear device profiles)
- Device profiles with "Calibration" or "Equalization" data created using MPM3 (refer to MPM3 Reference Guide for details)

● [General Print] screen

- The chart image will always be printed at 100 %, even if [Scale] is set other than 100 %.
- The value set on this screen will be the initial value of [Mirror] and [Rotate] at the time of chart printing. Enable [Mirror] to prevent mistake if the image needs to be output reversed - for example, when using transfers or transparent media. ☞ "Print a chart image"(P. 28)

● [Special plate] screen

- [Special plate] must be set when printing white plates, such as for transparent or special media. "Whole Image" must be selected for [Special Color Print Area] in such cases.

● Hot folder setting

- A hot folder set for the favorite is used for chart printing. A hot folder must be created if one has not already been created.

Chapter 3 Calibration Procedure

This chapter

Describes the calibration procedure.

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3.1 Calibration Steps

1. Launch the calibration tool

☞ "Launch the Tool"(P. 17)

2. Create the basis color

☞ "Basis Color Creation"(P. 19)

3. Check the color difference from the basis color

☞ "Daily Confirm"(P. 21)

4. Calibration

☞ "Calibration"(P. 23)

5. Use calibration data with RasterLink8

Print using the calibration data. ☞ "Using with RasterLink8"(P. 36)

3.2 Launch the Tool

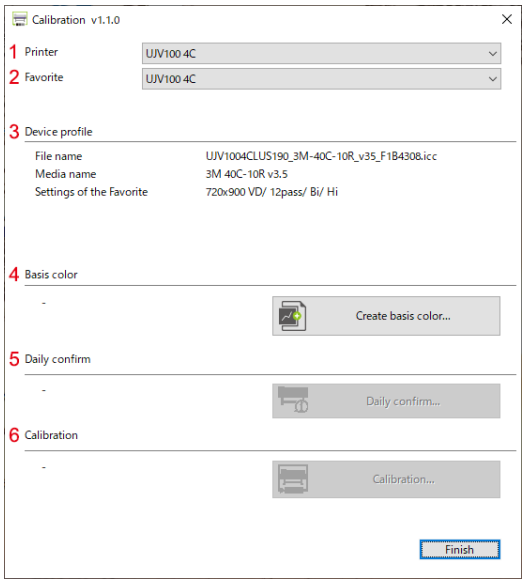
Start

Select [Tool] - [Calibration] on the RasterLink8 menu.

- The calibration tool starts up.

RasterLink8 itself can be used while the calibration tool is starting up. However, avoid the following operations:
- Exiting RasterLink8
- Altering settings for the favorite to be calibrated

Main screen



1. Printer

   Lists printers registered to RasterLink8.

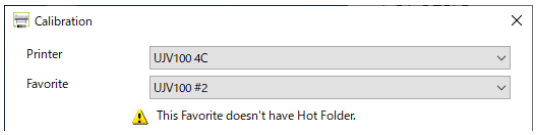
   Select the printer used to create calibration data.

2. Favorite

   Lists the favorites registered to the printer selected.

   Select the favorites set for creating calibration data.

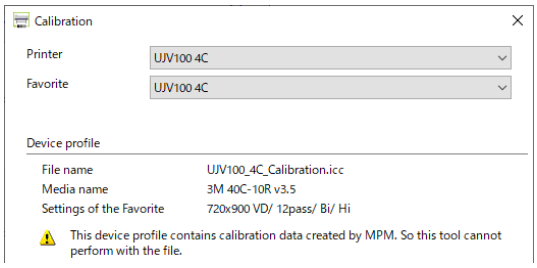
   - If a hot folder has not been set for the favorite selected, the following message will appear, and calibration data cannot be created. Exit the tool. Create a hot folder using [Favorite].



3. Device profile

   Displays information for the device profile set for the selected favorite and the output settings set for the favorite.

- If a device profile is selected for which calibration was performed using MimakiProfileMaster3, the following message will appear. Calibration data cannot be created.



4. Basis color

   Creates the color data to form the datum. (☞ "Basis Color Creation"(P. 19))

5. Daily Confirm

   Checks the printer status. (☞ "Daily Confirm"(P. 21))

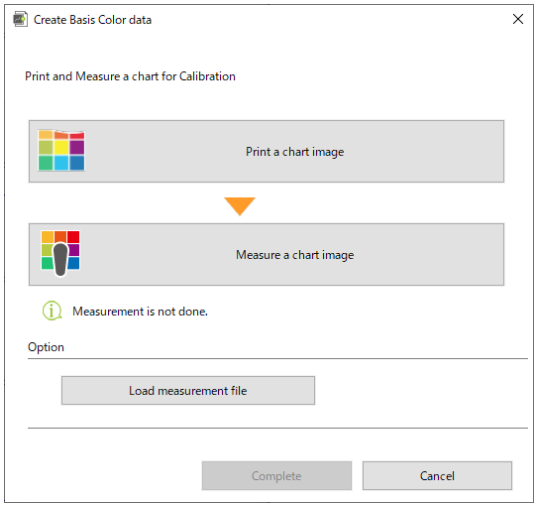
6. Calibration

   Creates calibration data. (☞ "Calibration"(P. 23))

3.3 Basis Color Creation

Creates a basis color.

Click [Create basis color...] on the tool screen.



Creation procedure

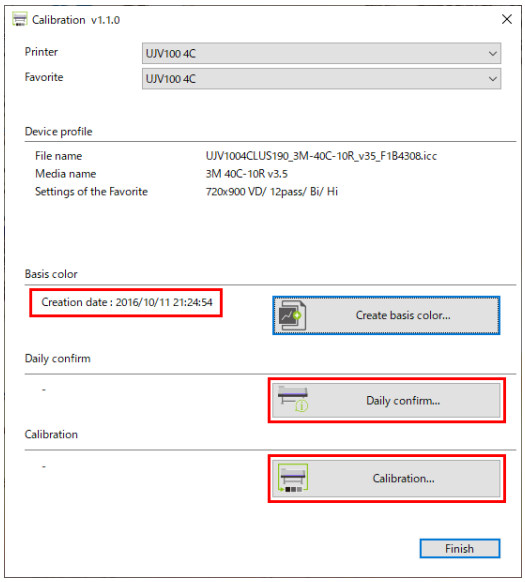
1 **Click [Print a chart image] to print a chart image.** (☞ "Print a chart image"(P. 28))

2 **Arrange the printed chart image for measurement.**

3 **Click [Measure a chart image] to measure the printed chart.** (☞ "Chart color measurement"(P. 29))

4 **Click [Complete] to end the creation process.**

5 **On returning to the main screen, the creation time and date are indicated for [Basis color]. [Calibration] and [Daily confirm] can now be used.**



3

Option

● [Load measurement file]

Clicking [Load measurement file] displays the [Open] screen. Select the basis color chart measured color value file. Click [Open] to load it. The color measurement value for the file loaded can be used as the basis color.

Important!

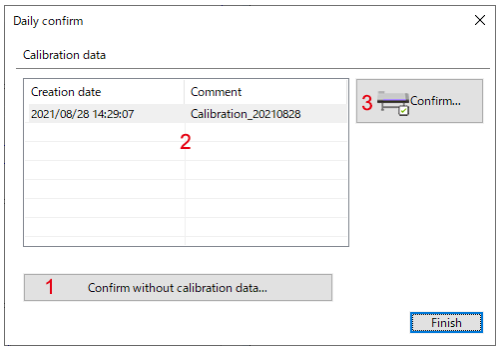
- The basis color can be recreated. Previously created calibration data and daily confirmation data will all be deleted if the basis color is recreated.

3.4 Daily Confirm

After setting the basis color, [Daily confirm] can be used to periodically check for any difference in color from the basis color.

[Daily confirm] screen

Click [Daily confirm...] on the tool screen.



1. [Confirm without calibration data]

   Checks for any difference in color from the basis color without using calibration data.

   This is primarily used for checking before calibration data has been created.

2. Calibration data list

   Lists the information for calibration data created.

3. [Confirm]

   Checks the color difference from the basis color when using data selected from the calibration data list.

   This is used after calibration data has been created.

Checking color difference from basis color

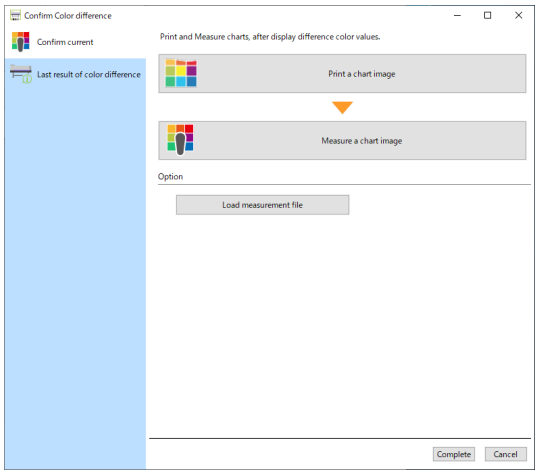
Clicking [Confirm without calibration data...] or [Confirm...] on the [Daily confirm] screen displays the [Confirm Color difference] screen.

Use the tabs on the left-hand side to switch between [Confirm Color difference] screens.

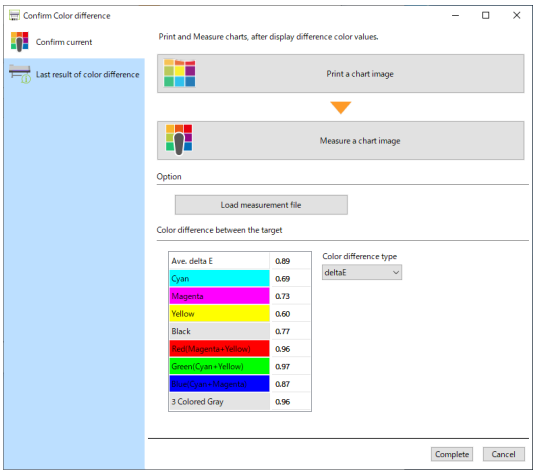
[Confirm current]

Used for printing a color measuring chart to check for difference in color from the basis color.

Before chart color measurement



After chart color measurement



● Color difference confirmation procedure

1 **Click [Print a chart image] to print a chart image.** (☞ "Print a chart image"(P. 28))

2 **Arrange the printed chart image for measurement.**

3 **Click [Measure a chart image] to measure the printed chart.** (☞ "Chart color measurement"(P. 29))

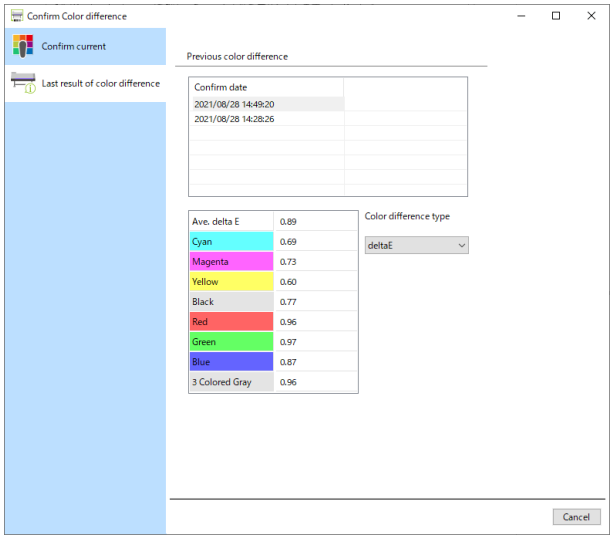
- After the colors have been measured, the color difference values are shown.
- A color measurement file can be loaded by clicking the [Load measurement file] button.

About color difference values
Larger values indicate a greater color difference from the basis color.
Evaluation is normally performed as follows, based on the ⊿E value:
In this tool, values are indicated in red if ⊿E is 3 or greater.

- ⊿E = approx. 1: Differences are apparent if the two colors are placed side by side with no gap between them. (Differences are not apparent if the two colors are placed away from each other.)
- ⊿E = approx. 2 to 3: Differences are apparent even if the two colors are placed away from each other.
- ⊿E = approx. 4 to 5: Differences are apparent even if the two colors are compared alternately.

If the color difference has been checked using calibration data, the time and date of the last check are indicated in the [Calibration] column on the tool screen, after the [Daily confirm] screen has been closed.

[Previous color difference]



Displays the previous color difference history.

The color difference for a particular time and date can be viewed by selecting that time and date from the list.

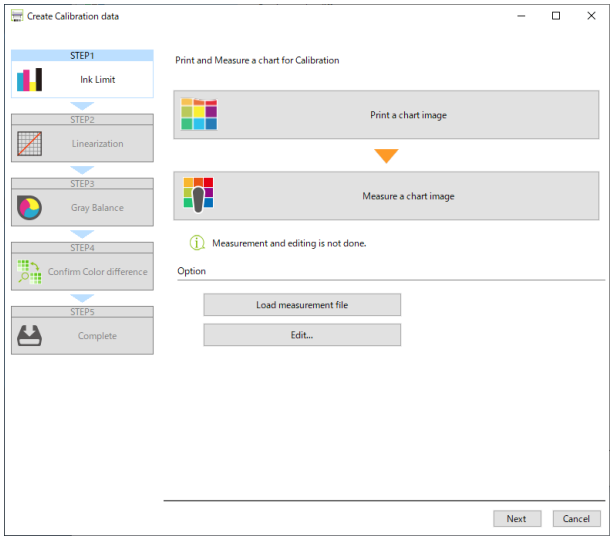
3.5 Calibration

Check the current color difference from the basis color using [Daily confirm], and calibrate if the color difference is significant.

Click [Calibration...] on the [Calibration] screen.

Important!

- Calibration data is added each time calibration is performed. Past calibration data is retained, and can be used in RasterLink8.



Calibration involves automatic adjustment of the following items by measuring the chart colors:

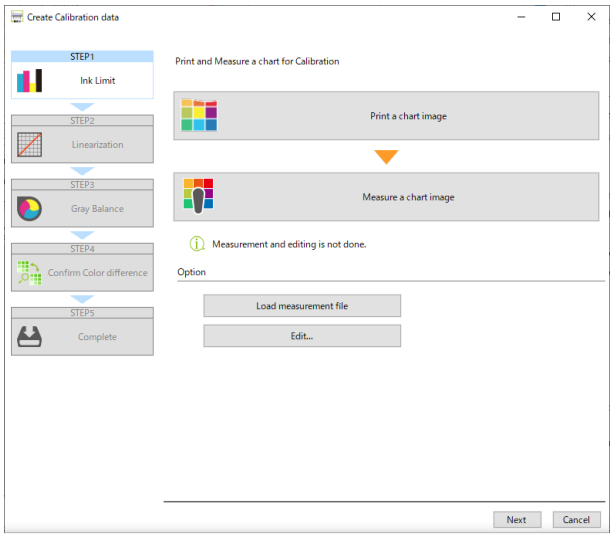
Creation sequence	Item	Summary
1	Ink Limit	Adjusts the overall ink density.
2	Linearization	Adjusts the hue harmonization.
3	Gray Balance	Adjust the balance for three or more mixed colors.

Further, data is managed by adding the following information:

Creation sequence	Item	Summary
4	Confirm Color difference	Checks the color difference from the basis color.
5	Title	Sets a comment to identify the calibration data.

Create calibration data

1. Ink Limit



1 **Click [Print a chart image] to print a chart image.** (☞ "Print a chart image"(P. 28))

- Ink limit chart image jobs are deleted automatically after being successfully output.

2 **Arrange the printed chart image for measurement.**

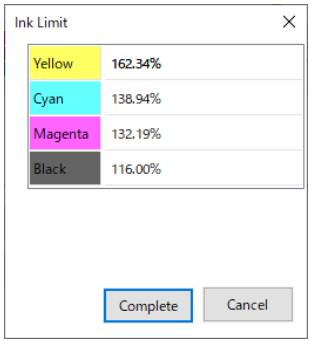
3 **Click [Measure a chart image] to measure the printed chart.** (☞ "Chart color measurement"(P. 29))

- A color measurement file can also be loaded by clicking the [Load measurement file] button.

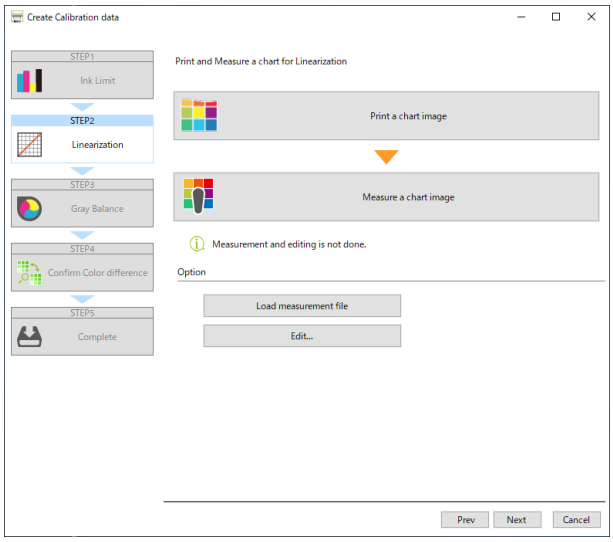
4 **Click [Next] to move to the next page.**

● [Edit] button

[Edit...] can be clicked to check the adjusted values. The values displayed here are shown as percentages, based on 100% set as the ink limits in the device profile.



2. Linearization



1 **Click [Print a chart image] to print a chart image.** (☞ **"Print a chart image"(P. 28)**)

2 **Arrange the printed chart image for measurement.**

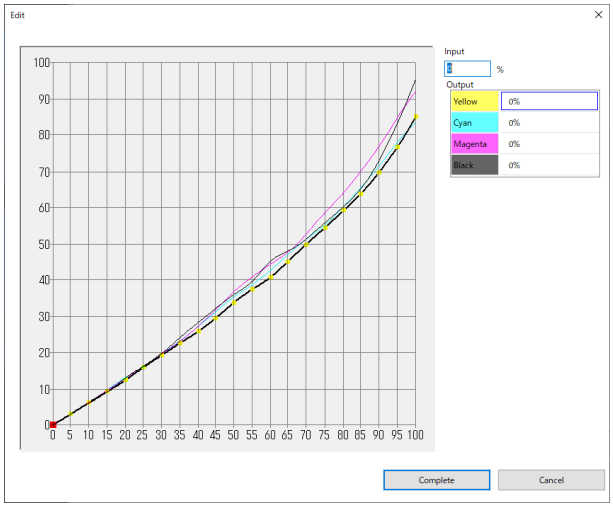
3 **Click [Measure a chart image] to measure the printed chart.** (☞ **"Chart color measurement"(P. 29)**)

- A color measurement file can be also loaded by clicking [Load measurement file].

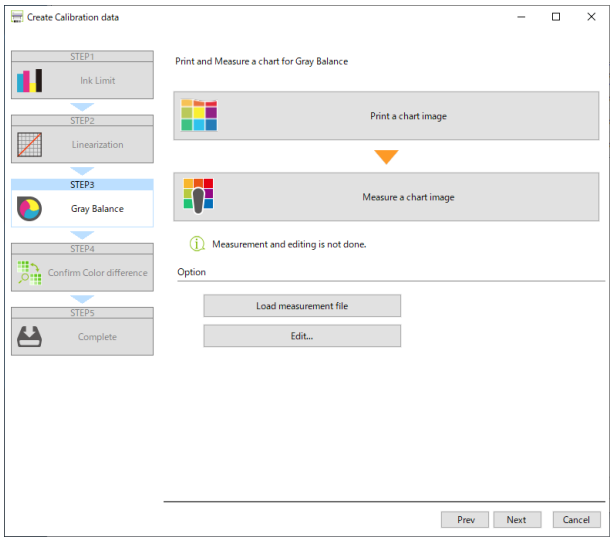
4 **Click [Next] to move to the next page.**

● [Edit] button

[Edit...] can be clicked to view the adjusted values as a graph.



3. Gray Balance



1 **Click [Print a chart image] to print a chart image.** (☞ "Print a chart image"(P. 28))

2 **Arrange the printed chart image for measurement.**

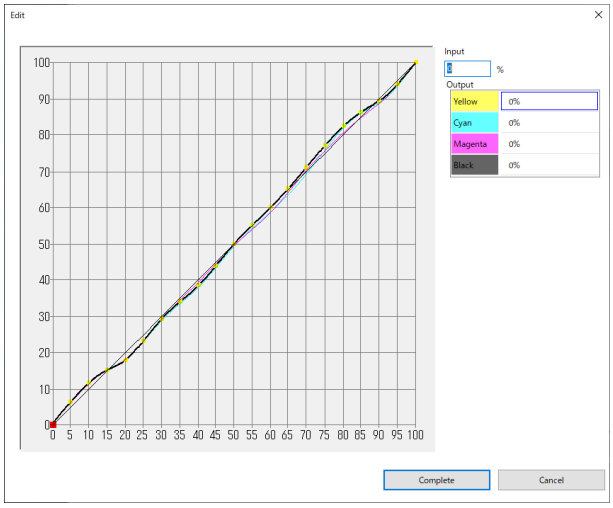
3 **Click [Measure a chart image] to measure the printed chart.** (☞ "Chart color measurement"(P. 29))

- A color measurement file can be also loaded by clicking [Load measurement file].

4 **Click [Next] to move to the next page.**

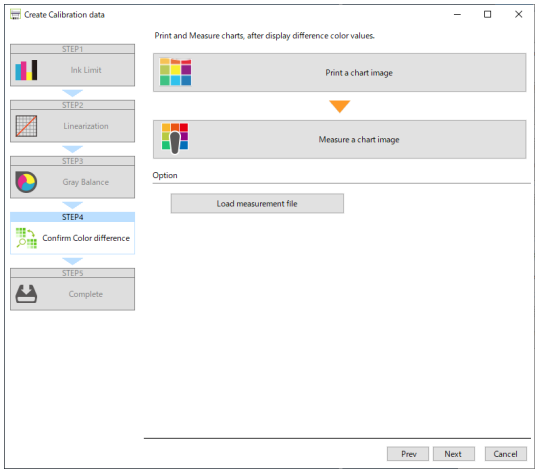
● [Edit] button

[Edit...] can be clicked to view the adjusted values as a graph.

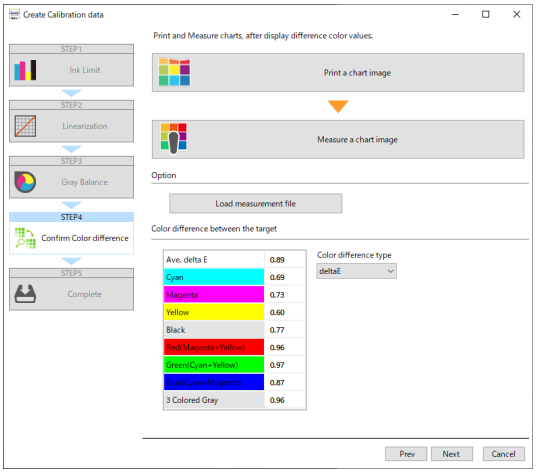


4. Confirm Color difference

Before color measurement



After color measurement



1 **Click [Print a chart image] to print a chart image.** (☞ **"Print a chart image"(P. 28)**)

2 **Arrange the printed chart image for measurement.**

3 **Click [Measure a chart image] to measure the printed chart.** (☞ **"Chart color measurement"(P. 29)**)

- After the colors have been measured, the color difference values are shown.
- A color measurement file can be also loaded by clicking [Load measurement file].

4 **Click [Next].**

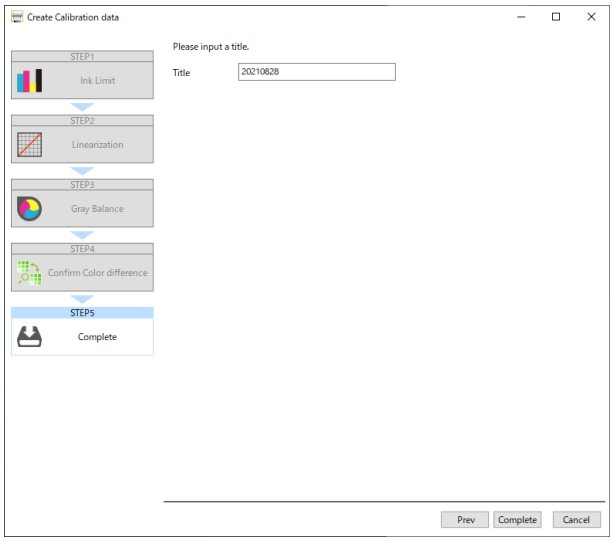
Corrective action if the color difference is significant

- If the color difference from the basis color is large in [Confirm Color difference], this may be caused by one of the following factors:

  (1) (Cause 1) Chart color was incorrectly measured
  The chart color may not have been correctly measured, preventing correct data from being created.
  - Click [Cancel] to close the [Create calibration data] screen, then repeat calibration.

  (2) (Cause 2) There were variations outside the permitted calibration range
  The following cause is possible if the color difference does not decrease even after repeating calibration:
  - Variations exceeding the calibration capability have occurred due to media jamming or use over extended periods of time.
    In such cases, consider replacing the head.

5. Complete



Add a comment to [Title] to identify the calibration data, then click [Complete].

- After creation is finished, the title and time/date of the created calibration are displayed on the calibration main screen.

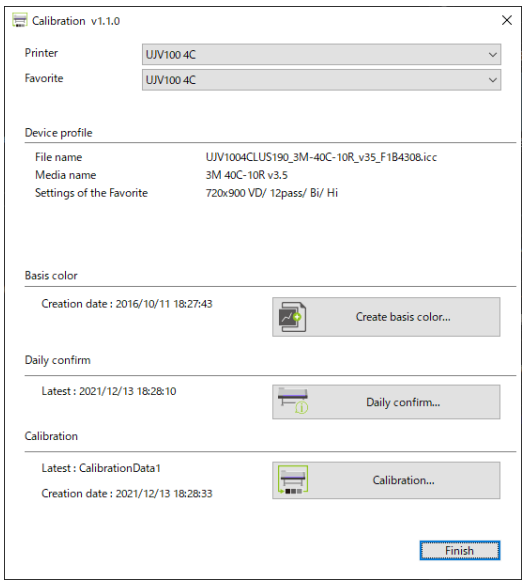


Chart printing and color measurement procedure

Print a chart image

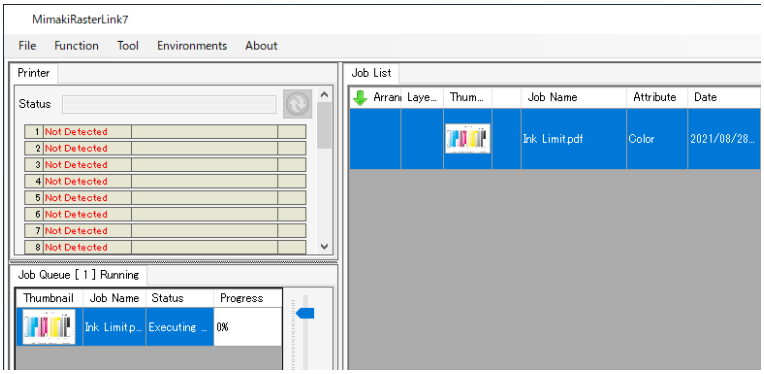
1 **Click [Print a chart image].**

- The preview screen appears.

2 **Click the [Print] button on the preview screen.**

- [Mirror] and [Rotate] can be set. The initial value is the value of [Favorite]. ☞ "Favorite Settings"(P. 14)

- A job is created and automatically output in RasterLink8.



- Ink limit chart image jobs are deleted automatically after being successfully output.

- Any chart image jobs except "Ink limit" are retained even after they have been successfully output. A job can be output again and used with the calibration tool provided another chart has not yet been printed out. If another chart has been printed, use [Print a chart image] in the calibration tool again to create a job.

Chart color measurement

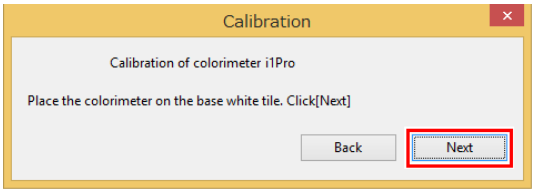
This describes the operation performed when [Measure a chart image] is clicked on each screen. The procedure differs depending on the particular colorimeter.

i1Pro2, i1Pro3, i1Pro3 PLUS

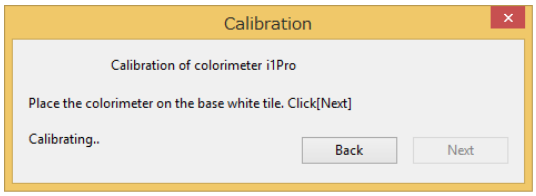
● Calibrating the colorimeter

Calibrate the colorimeter.

1 **Place the colorimeter on the white tile, and click [Next].**



- Calibration is performed.

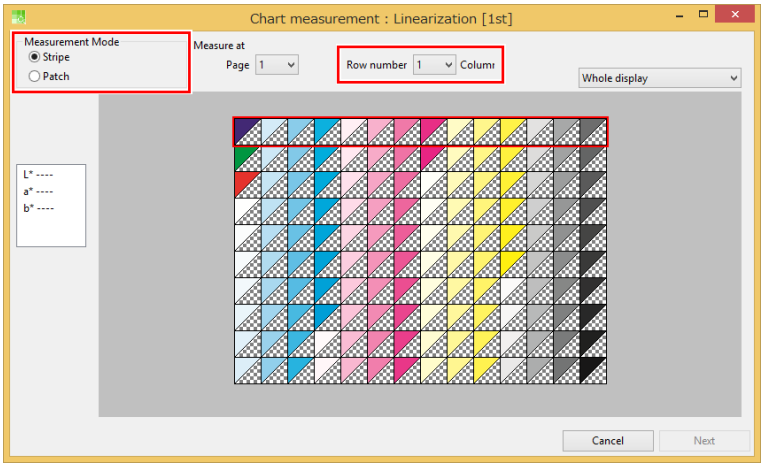


● Measuring the chart

Measure the colors in the measurement chart.

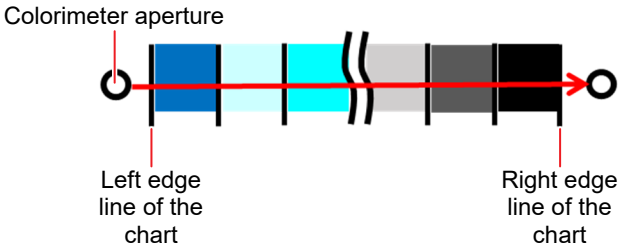
1 **Select “Stripe” as the Measurement mode.**

- The next row number to be scanned is displayed for [Measure at]. Check this before proceeding.



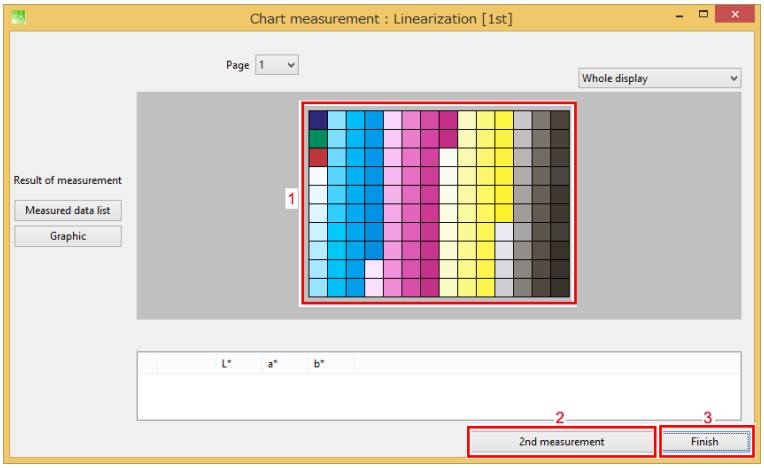
2 **Slide the colorimeter from left to right to scan one row.**

- Press the measure button, then slide the colorimeter so it passes through the left edge line and the right edge line.



● Completing the measurement

After the measurement, a dialog window for confirming the measurement values is displayed.

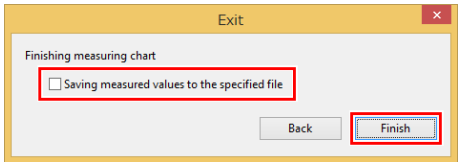


1. Patch: Click to display the color measurement value.
2. [2nd measurement]: Click to measure the second color.
3. [Finish]: Ends measurement. Measurement is performed only once.

1 **Click [Finish] on the color measurement value confirmation dialog.**

2 **Select the [Saving measured values to the specified file] check box, then click [Finish].**

- The file saving window appears.



3 **Save the color measurement value file in the file saving window.**

Measure colors twice

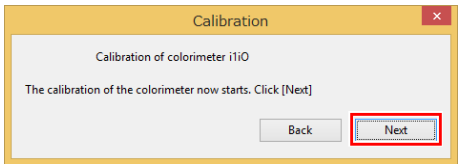
- Colors can be measured twice to improve accuracy and correct any incorrect color measurement values.
  (1) Click [2nd measurement] on the color measurement completion screen to measure the chart again.
  - Once measurement is complete, the second color measurement completion screen appears.

i1iO2, i1iO3

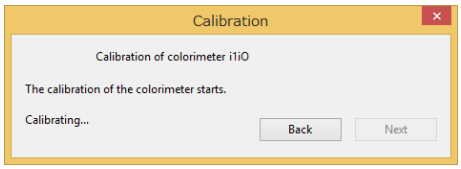
● Calibrating the colorimeter

Calibrate the colorimeter.

1 **Click [Next], and the calibration starts automatically.**



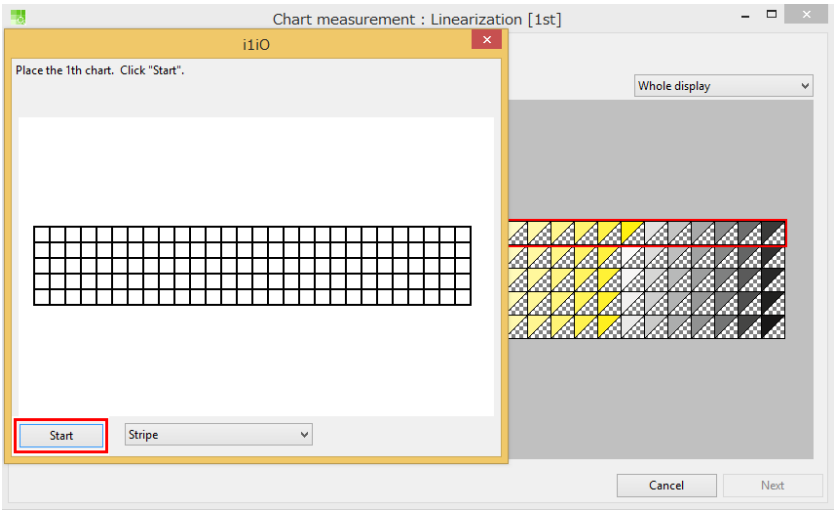
- Calibration is performed.



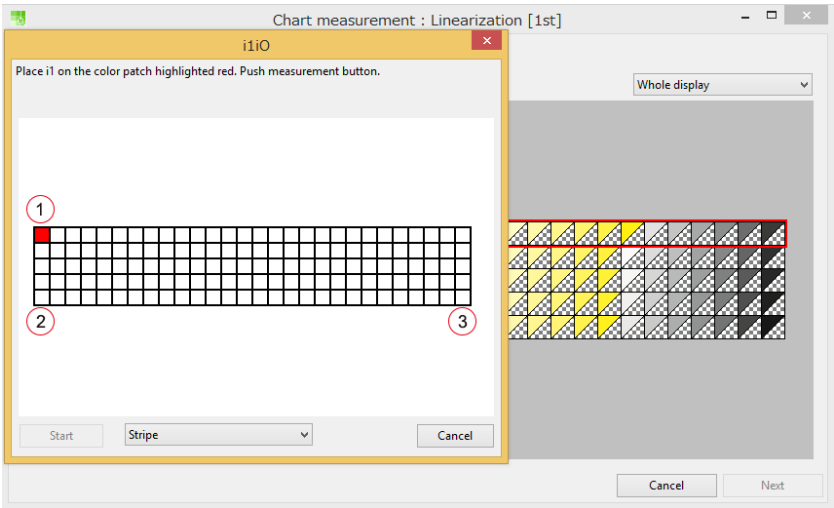
● Setting the position of the chart

Follow the instructions in the wizard to measure three points in the corners of the chart.

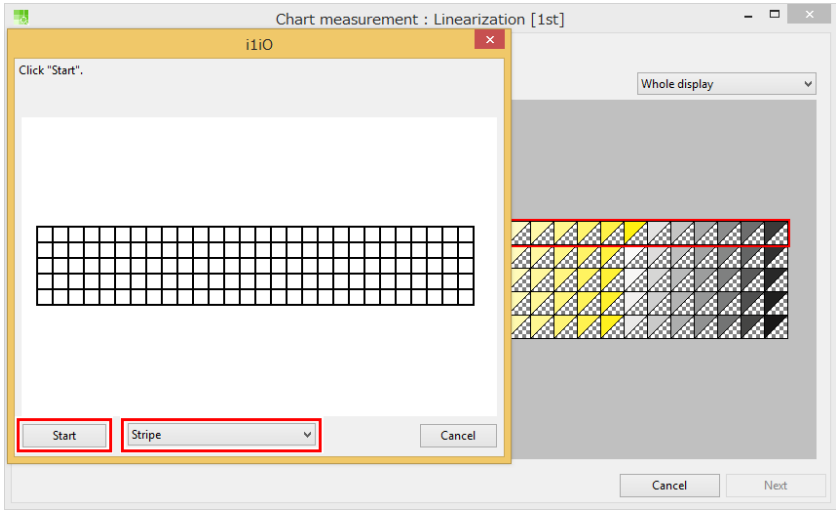
1 **Click [Start] to set the position of the chart.**



2 **Place the colorimeter at the corners of the chart and measure the colors.**

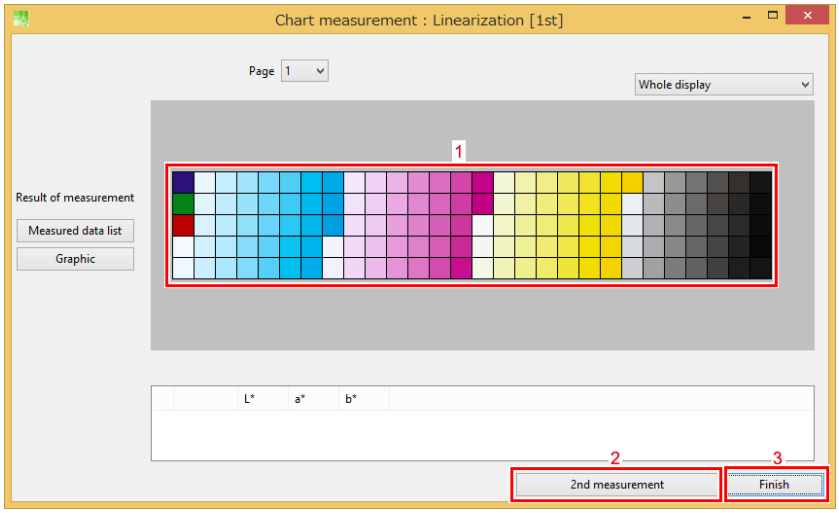


3 **Click [Start] in Stripe mode.**



● Completing the measurement

After the measurement, a dialog window for confirming the measurement values is displayed.

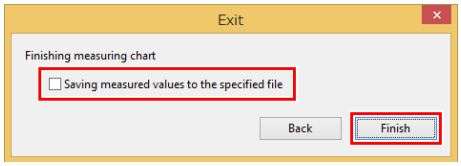


1. Patch: Click a patch to display the color measurement value.
2. [2nd measurement]: Click to measure the second color.
3. [Finish]: Ends measurement. Measurement is performed only once.

1 **Click [Finish] on the color measurement value confirmation dialog.**

2 **Select the [Saving measured values to the specified file] check box, then click [Finish].**

- The file saving window appears.



3 **Save the color measurement value file in the file saving window.**

Measure colors twice

- Colors can be measured twice to improve accuracy and correct any incorrect color measurement values.

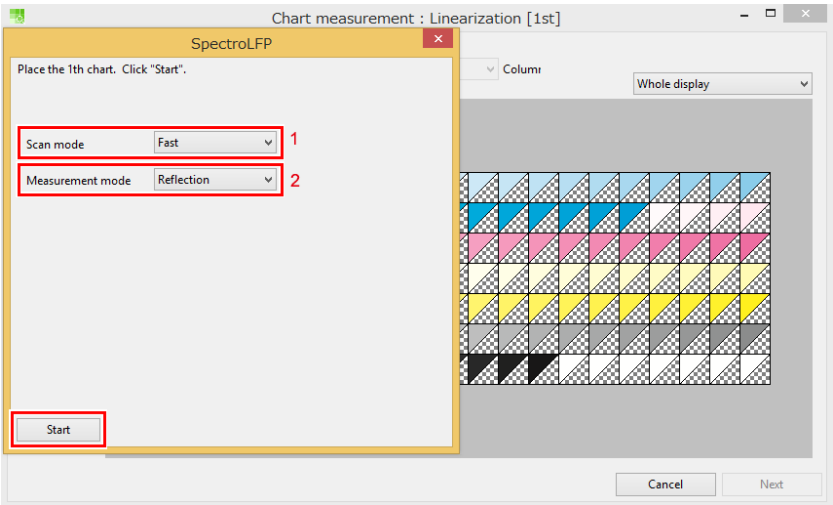
  (1) Click [2nd measurement] on the color measurement completion screen to measure the chart again.

  - Once measurement is complete, the second color measurement completion screen appears.

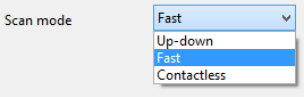
SpectroLFP

● Starting measurement

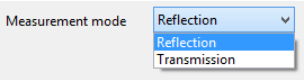
1 Set [Scan mode] and [Measurement mode], then click [Start] to start color measurement.



1. [Scan mode]
   - Up-down:
     The measurement head is lifted for moving and is lowered in contact with the media for measurement. Color measurement takes longer but provides higher accuracy for media such as fabric with an uneven surface.
   - Fast:
     The measurement head remains in contact with the media surface when moving. This allows faster color measurement, but is suitable only for media with a flat surface.
   - Contactless:
     The measurement head skims over the media when moving, and does not make contact with the media when measuring. This allows measurement of a wide range of media surface types, but results in lower color measurement accuracy.

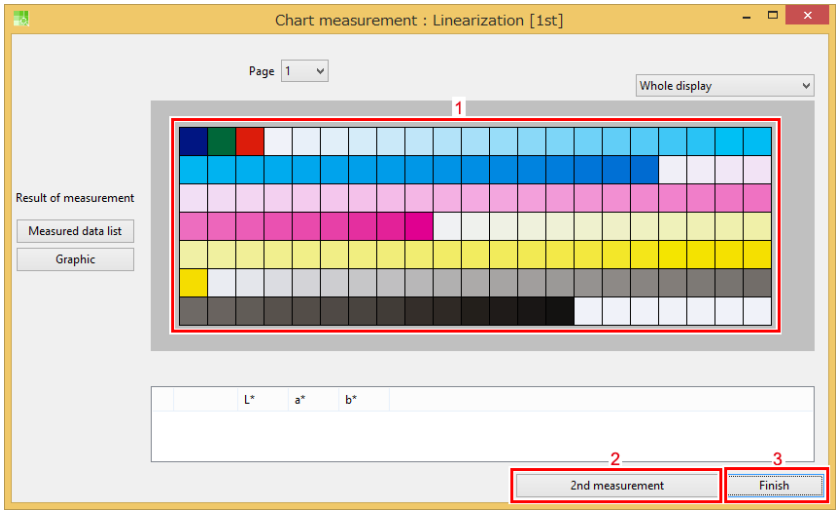


2. [Measurement mode]
   - Reflection:
     Measures colors on media used for shining a light on to the printed surface.
   - Transmission:
     Measures colors on transparent media used for shining light from behind the media.



● Completing the measurement

After the measurement, a dialog window for confirming the measurement values is displayed.

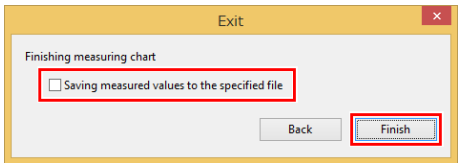


1. Patch: Click a patch to display the color measurement value.
2. [2nd measurement]: Click to measure the second color.
3. [Finish]: Ends measurement. Measurement is performed only once.

1 **Click [Finish] on the color measurement value confirmation dialog.**

2 **Select the [Saving measured values to the specified file] check box, then click [Finish].**

- The file saving window appears.



3 **Save the color measurement value file in the file saving window.**

Measure colors twice

- Colors can be measured twice to improve accuracy and correct any incorrect color measurement values.

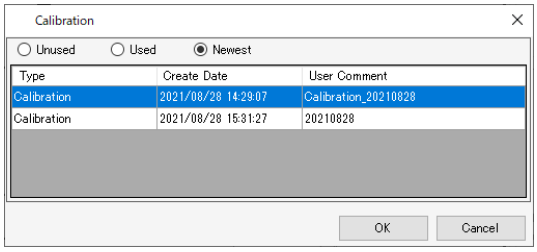
  (1) Click [2nd measurement] on the color measurement completion screen to measure the chart again.
  - Once measurement is complete, the second color measurement completion screen appears.

3.6 Using with RasterLink8

1 **Select a job, then open the [Print Condition] screen.**

2 **Select the device profile created for calibration.**

3 **Click [Calibration] - [Setting].**

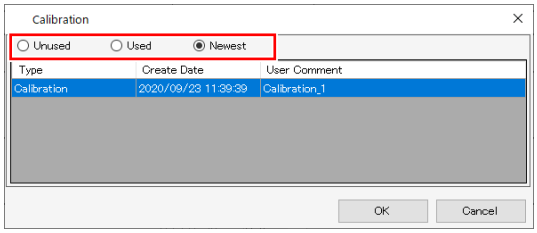


Important! Calibration settings will be enabled when a device profile with calibration data set is selected.

4 **Click [Setting] in [Calibration] within the device profile.**

- A dialog appears.

5 **Select the following items.**



1. [Unused]
   - Color matching is performed without using calibration or equalization data.
2. [Used]
   - Uses the calibration data selected from the list underneath.
3. [Newest]
   - Uses the calibration data with the most recent creation date. The newest data is always selected, so there is no need to reselect the data each time, even when information is added frequently.

- If you frequently use calibration data, setting this as a favorite will help.

Chapter 4 When in Trouble

This chapter

Describes how to resolve potential problems and operation procedures that may be unclear.

Q&A 38
Basics 38
Differences from MimakiProfileMaster3 (MPM3) 38
Troubleshooting 40
Color measurement errors frequently occur while color measuring a chart image/The color difference has increased after calibration 40
Dealing with Messages 41

4.1 Q&A

Provides answers to frequently asked questions.

Basics

● Can emulation profiles be calibrated?

Yes.

● Can multiple basis colors be used?

Only one basis color can be used for a combination of registered printer and device profile.

● Can calibration data be moved to other PCs?

They can be moved using the job backup function.

1 **Select a job, then select the device profile for which the calibration data to be moved has been set.**

2 **Create a backup job. (For more information on the backup procedure, refer to the RasterLink8 Reference Guide.)**

- Backup files contain the basis color, calibration, and daily confirmation data for the specified device profile.

3 **Backup files can be restored using RasterLink8 on the destination PC.**

Important!

- If basis color and calibration data has already been created for a printer and device profile at the destination PC, this information will be overwritten when the backup file is restored.

Differences from MimakiProfileMaster3 (MPM3)

The RasterLink Series includes a calibration function using MimakiProfileMaster3 (MPM3) separate from this function.

● What are the differences between the MPM3 calibration function and this function?

The differences between calibration using this tool and MPM3 are as follows:

	MPM3	RasterLink8
Calibration data save destination	Data is saved in the corresponding device profile.	Data is saved in the RasterLink8 system separately from the device profile.
Method for applying calibration data to RasterLink after creation	A device profile containing calibration data is manually installed in RasterLink.	Data is automatically incorporated into RasterLink8.
Method for applying to jobs	As above	
Performance	Identical	

● I previously performed calibration using MPM3, but is it possible to perform this work in RasterLink8?

If you have been creating calibration data using MPM3, you should continue using MPM3.

4.2 Troubleshooting

Color measurement errors frequently occur while color measuring a chart image/The color difference has increased after calibration

The following precautions should be observed to ensure correct color measurement of chart images without errors occurring:

● Check to confirm there are no missing dots or nozzle contamination.

If missing dots or nozzle contamination is observed, resolve the issue, then print the chart again.

● Remove any tackiness from the printed surface.

If the printed surface has not dried sufficiently and remains tacky, errors or incorrect color measurements may result due to the colorimeter catching on the surface.

Eliminate any tackiness by allowing the surface to dry adequately.

● Check the favorite settings.

Check that the following settings are correct in the favorite:

- If a UV unit is used, check that “Whole Image” is set when white plate automatic composition is enabled using the [Special plate] function.

● Check the settings when printing a chart image.

- Check that [Mirror] is turned on if the printed face is to be viewed from the opposite side, such as with transfers and transparent media.

● Use the same post-processing as for the end product.

In the case of transfers, measure the actual transfer after it has been transferred, and not the image printed on to transfer paper.

In the case of textiles, measure after post-processing (such as heat treatment and washing).

4.3 Dealing with Messages

Message	Operation/Cause	Corrective action
Please setup colorimeter settings.	[Tool] - [Calibration] was selected on the RasterLink8 menu.	No colorimeter has been selected. Select a colorimeter. ☞ "Setting the Colorimeter"(P. 13)
[Tool] - [Calibration] is not installed.	[Tool] - [Calibration] was selected on the RasterLink8 menu.	The calibration tool has not been installed. Download the installer and install the calibration tool. ☞ "Installation"(P. 12)
If you create a new basis color, the existing calibration data will be deleted. Is it OK?	Appears when [Create Basis Color] is attempted when a basis color has already been created.	• Clicking [OK] displays the [Create Basis Color] screen. Creating a new basis color will result in the previously created basis color, calibration data, and daily confirmation data to be deleted. • Data will not be deleted if [Cancel] is clicked or if a new basis color is not created on the [Create Basis Color] screen.
All created data will be deleted. Is it OK?	Appears when [Cancel] is clicked while creating calibration data.	• Clicking [OK] deletes the calibration data being created, and quits the process. The data being created will not be saved. • Clicking [Cancel] returns to the data creation screen.
Creating of data is finished. [Note] Color difference delta E value of the basis color is more than 15. Please confirm measurement value.	Appears if the mean color difference is ⊿E15 or more after color measurement on the [Confirm Color difference] screen.	Repeat color measurement for the output chart using [Confirm Color difference]. If the same message appears even after repeating color measurement, this may be due to the following: • In the case of [Confirm Color difference] for calibration data, an error may have occurred in color measurement when creating the calibration data. Repeat the procedure from the start.

RasterLink8 Calibration Tool Guide

October, 2026

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D204033-10-05102026

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SW : 1.0.0