# PixBlaster™ PRFAQ

## Introducing the PixBlaster Embosser

The American Printing House (APH) has partnered with ViewPlus Technologies to make an embosser that is available with Federal Quota funds for the first time ever!

PixBlaster easily produces double-sided interpoint braille with smooth, rounded dots for improved readability along with industry-leading, high-quality tactile graphics with seven variable dot heights for color representation. Connect to Wi-Fi to translate and emboss documents on the fly from your computer or mobile device using the included PIXie box.

Produce high-quality braille and tactile graphics with PixBlaster!

Detailed embosser set-up and other training tutorial videos help make using your embosser in the classroom, office, or at home as easy and efficient as possible.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Q: What is the primary purpose of PixBlaster?

PixBlaster is a lightweight portable embosser that is designed for both business and home use. Enjoy printing braille and tactile images exactly as they appear on your after a fast and easy setup process. PixBlaster also includes the PIXie box for quick Wi-Fi connectivity and printing. PixBlaster also supports Duxbury and other popular braille translation programs.

### Q: What is unique about PixBlaster?

* Easy to set up and use thanks to user-focused documentation and customer support
* Includes APH branding
* Is available with Federal Quota funds
* Includes links to training videos
* Integration and support of APH BrailleBlaster’s .BBZ files

### Q: Is PixBlaster suitable for classroom use?

Yes, absolutely. PixBlaster is used by students and teachers alike. With its industry-leading tactile graphics, PixBlaster is very suitable for classroom use. PixBlaster is also helpful to braille transcribers or any industry that conducts braille production.

### Q: Is PixBlaster suitable for office use?

Yes, at only 20 pounds and easy to connect, PixBlaster is ideal for office use. With the help of PIXie, you can print from any location.

### Q: What model embosser is PixBlaster based on?

ViewPlus Columbia 2

### Q: What makes PixBlaster different from ViewPlus Columbia 2?

* Available with Federal Quota funds
* A professional looking embosser with APH branding, including a QR code that links directly to the PixBlaster webpage
* User-focused and task-oriented documentation (Getting-Started Guide, PixBlaster User Guide, and PIXie User Guide) that allow easy setup and use
* Links to APH-branded, professionally narrated, and accessible training videos (6 total)
* APH-branded PixBlaster and PIXie flash drives
* Inclusion of an external speaker for accessibility during embosser setup
* Integration and support of APH BrailleBlaster’s .BBZ files
* Customer support by APH and ViewPlus based on type of issue
* Formally field tested by teachers and braille/tactile graphic producers in the United States
* APH-branded shipping box

### Q: What is the difference between the PixBlaster and PageBlaster embossers?

* PixBlaster generates higher quality tactile graphics from a greater variety of sources.
* PixBlaster is slower, but the braille and tactile graphic quality makes the wait worth it!
* PixBlaster produces multiple dot heights; PageBlaster cannot.
* PixBlaster is noticeably quieter during embossing.

### Q: Is PixBlaster available with Federal Quota funds?

Yes, PixBlaster is available with Federal Quota funds for $3,995.

### Q: Is PixBlaster available for cash purchase?

Yes, PixBlaster is priced at $3,995 for cash purchase.

### Q. Are PixBlaster embossers available for purchase outside the U.S.?

For international sales, please refer to the ViewPlus Technologies website for the Columbia 2 embosser (<https://viewplus.com/product/vp-columbia-2/>).

### Q. What is the APH catalog number for PixBlaster?

The PixBlaster catalog number is 1-08070-00.

### Q: What are the dimensions/size of PixBlaster?

* Width = 21.9 inches or 557 millimeters
* Depth= 10.8 inches or 275 millimeters
* Height = 6.2 inches or 158 millimeters

### Q. What are the dimensions of the shipping box?

The PixBlaster shipping box dimensions are 29” x 18” x 14”.

### Q: How much does PixBlaster weigh?

PixBlaster is 19.8 pounds or 9 kilograms.

### Q: What is the noise level of PixBlaster?

PixBlaster is quieter than most of its competitors at a maximum level of 70 dB and an operating level that is closer to 60 dB. The amount of noise produced also depends on the braille quality or tactile graphic you are producing.

### Q: What is included in the shipping box with each PixBlaster embosser?

* PixBlaster embosser
* PIXie box (for wireless connectivity)
* PIXie power adapter
* Speaker and USB-A to Mini-B power cord
* USB-A to USB-B printer cable
* PixBlaster USB flash drive (includes driver, user guides, and software)
* PIXie USB flash drive (includes PIXie reset file)
* Print and braille versions of the Quick-Start Guide
* Hardcopy tactile graphic/braille samples

### Q: Is it important that I keep all of the shipping box and all packing material?

Yes, it is important to keep all packing material in the rare case that damage occurs during shipping or if the embosser needs to be returned for repair at a later date. Be sure to inspect the embosser when unpacking and checking for damages. If noticeable damage occurred during shipping, notify APH immediately.

**IMPORTANT:** Save the packing material and shipping box. The packing material must be used to ship PixBlaster for warranty maintenance service and to settle any insurance claim.

### Q: What is the importance of the shipping bolt?

The shipping bolt is placed in PixBlaster prior to shipping to avoid the printer head moving within your embosser. Before using, please remove and the shipping bolt and store it in the plastic retaining loops on the inside frame.

**IMPORTANT:** Before packing up PixBlaster embosser for shipping, please make sure to reinstall the shipping bolt. You may need to tilt the embosser gently to the side with the buttons until you hear a sliding sound to allow complete insertion of the shipping bolt. Screw and tighten the shipping bolt securely. Replace the tape to hold the lid on the embosser. Reinsert PixBlaster into the original plastic bag and add the side-specific foam end caps to the embosser. These shipping instructions are mandatory otherwise the warranty is voided.

### Q: Why is there an external speaker included with PixBlaster?

There is an external speaker included to access audio messages from PixBlaster. For audio, connect the powered speaker to the embosser using the audio jack on left side of the embosser. Audio messages include status messages, device menu items and commands, error messages, and so on. The speaker must be powered since there is no onboard audio amplifier. To learn more about powering the speaker, refer to the instructions provided with the speaker.

### Q: Are the buttons and labels on the embosser's control panel accessible?

Yes. Many features of PixBlaster are made with accessibility in mind, including accessible labels and buttons on the control panel.

### Q: What is the URL address of the PixBlaster webpage?

Updates and additional information can be found on the APH PixBlaster webpage at <https://www.aph.org/product/pixblaster>.

### Q: Where can the QR code be located that links directly to the PixBlaster webpage?

The QR code is located directly on the PixBlaster embosser near the menu buttons. You can also find the QR code on the second page of the Quick-Start Guide.

### Q: What user guides are available for learning how to use PixBlaster?

The American Printing House has furnished several resources for reference. The Quick-Start Guide provides an overview of the PixBlaster embosser, including setup and packing instructions. The PixBlaster User Guide provides in-depth instructions for installation, utilization of transcription software, location of warranty information, and much more. The accompanying PIXie User Guide assists with Wi-Fi connectivity. This Frequently Asked Questions document also contains information on common questions about PixBlaster. Again, please consider visiting the APH PixBlaster webpage at <https://www.aph.org/product/pixblaster>.

### Q: Are training videos available to assist with setup and use of the PixBlaster embosser?

Yes, six training videos are available and cover a variety of topics including the following:

* [Unpacking and Initial Setup](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cuRzfd5Qk8s&list=PLUj6DcM1nN3FyolRzei_USjLKuAAOl9s6&index=6)
* [Installation of PixBlaster](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u-zOK9kMS-8&list=PLUj6DcM1nN3FyolRzei_USjLKuAAOl9s6&index=2&t=0s)
* [Embosser Setup Using PIXie](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6a2ZbiQKHs&list=PLUj6DcM1nN3FyolRzei_USjLKuAAOl9s6&index=2)
* [Adjusting Settings on the PIXie](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssa0uADfKPQ&list=PLUj6DcM1nN3FyolRzei_USjLKuAAOl9s6&index=3)
* [Installation of TSS (Tiger Software Suite)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_fvC0VUKC8&list=PLUj6DcM1nN3FyolRzei_USjLKuAAOl9s6&index=4)
* [Working with .BBZ Files](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zYE2yjR59eo&list=PLUj6DcM1nN3FyolRzei_USjLKuAAOl9s6&index=5)

### Q: What are the contents of the PixBlaster USB flash drive?

The PixBlaster flash drive includes the PixBlaster driver, user guides, and software. Software included consists of APH’s BrailleBlaster and ViewPlus’s Tiger Software Suite (TSS). **Note:** The PixBlaster flash drive is different from the PIXie flash drive.

### Q: What is a driver, and why do I need to install it?

A driver is just a way for hardware to interface with your computer. All hardware uses drivers, but most mainstream hardware either uses a standard driver that is easily fetched or already installed with your operating system.

Most often, technology for people with visual impairment is made with manual driver installation because it’s not used widely enough to be easily discovered by Windows® operating systems. A manufacturer can pay to avoid this, but it’s very expensive and not generally worth it at the scale of production.

### Q: Is PixBlaster compatible with PC, Mac, and mobile devices?

Yes, PixBlaster is compatible with Mac, PC, and mobile devices. Any device that can access a website can use the PIXie interface to emboss to PixBlaster.

### Q: What is the purpose of the PIXie box?

The PIXie box is an accompanying piece of equipment with PixBlaster that allows you to connect wirelessly for quick access to printing.

### Q: What is the purpose of the PIXie USB flash drive?

The PIXie USB flash drive contains a reset file, in the event you were to need it. You can only access PIXie if it is on the same network as you. If you’re on a different network and would like to access PIXie, you’ll need to reset PIXie using this flash drive. Plug in the flash drive, unplug PIXie, and then plug it back in. Once it starts up, wait five minutes and then remove the flash drive. PIXie is now reset, and you can change the Wi-Fi settings so it is on the same network as you.

### Q: How do I set up PIXie for Wi-Fi connectivity?

You can achieve Wi-Fi connectivity in five easy steps, listed below. (Also refer to [Getting PIXie Ready for Use](https://nyc3.digitaloceanspaces.com/aph/app/uploads/2020/07/28155008/PIXieUserGuide-accessible.pdf) in the PIXie User Guide.)

* 1. Open Settings on your mobile device, and select Wi-Fi. Known networks are listed.
	2. Select PIXie network. Connection to Wi-Fi happens automatically. Your device recognizes that PIXie does not have internet access and might try to disconnect and connect to a different Wi-Fi network instead (because the known network with internet access is preferred by your device). You may need to acknowledge that you want to stay connected, and possibly also select Forget Other Networks and turn off mobile data.
	3. When successfully connected to the PIXie Wi-Fi network, open your preferred web browser application.
	4. Enter http://10.10.0.1 for PIXie dedicated IP address, or URL address http://PIXie within the address line. The PIXie Home webpage opens. Depending on the APH embosser model that you have currently connected to your PIXie, printer-specific information is displayed. With no embosser connected to PIXie, printer-specific information is not available. You can switch between the sections Home, Formatter Settings, Legacy Settings, and System by selecting the center-left menu items.
	5. Go to System page for Wi-Fi Direct or Wi-Fi Network Client configuration settings.

### Q: What versions of Windows are compatible with PixBlaster?

PixBlaster is compatible with Windows Vista®, 7, 8, 8.1, and 10, both 32- and 64-bit systems. With PixBlaster you can print from almost any program in the Windows operating system. Read more about the Windows printer driver installation in the section [Installing the Software](https://nyc3.digitaloceanspaces.com/aph/app/uploads/2020/07/28154959/PixBlasterUserGuide-accessible.pdf#page=11) (within the PixBlaster User Guide).

A macOS® 10.9 printer driver is also available for the PixBlaster embosser.

The PIXie interface allows any device that can access a webpage to use PixBlaster without any installation required.

### Q: What file types does PixBlaster support?

* Braille: BBZ, BRF, BRL, TXT
* Graphics: PRN, PDF, JPG, PNG
* Via TSS: DOCX, PDF, Excel

### Q: How do I emboss PRN files?

PRN files are embossed by opening them in Tiger Designer and going to File > Emboss.

### Q: My PRN file will not emboss to PixBlaster, what can I do?

PRN files are made for specific embossers; open the file in Tiger Designer, go to File > Save and then Save As a PixBlaster PRN. Then you should be fine.

### Q: Which braille translation and graphic software are compatible with PixBlaster?

The PixBlaster embosser is compatible with APH’s BrailleBlaster® software, Tiger Software Suite (TSS), and third-party products such as Duxbury and Braille2000.

### Q: Does PixBlaster support the use of APH’s BrailleBlaster?

Yes, the PixBlaster embosser is compatible with APH’s BrailleBlaster. Users may also take BBZ files from BrailleBlaster and emboss them directly with PixBlaster using the PIXie interface.

### Q: Does the Tiger Software Suite (TSS) come with the purchase of PixBlaster?

Yes, every PixBlaster comes with a license for Tiger Software Suite that is good for two “seats.” Ex Officio Trustee (EOTs) will want to be careful how they manage these installations because they are tied to the PixBlaster embosser. A seat can be disabled by following the uninstall process and disassociating your seat. You can remotely disable a seat by contacting ViewPlus Customer Service. For installation, please follow the instructions from the setup program. For use of the Tiger Software Suite (TSS), please refer to the [TSS User Manual](https://viewplus.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/VPTSS61_UM_EN_20190318.pdf). You may also view the following webinar on TSS: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPxRShDSnS0>

Q: How and when do I obtain the TSS license number?

To obtain your TSS license number, visit [Viewplus.com/aph](http://viewplus.com/aph) and complete the registration form. You will be asked to enter the purchased embosser's serial number, the Order Number, and your email address. A 16-digit license number will be emailed to you from ViewPlus Technologies, Inc.

The TSS works for 30 days without a license. We recommend that you complete the license registration form during those first 30 days to avoid any gap in usage of the embosser.

### Q: Does PixBlaster support music braille?

PixBlaster embosses a BRF created using music braille but otherwise cannot within itself create a music braille file. You could use Duxbury, Braille2000, or BrailleBlaster to make a music braille file with different levels of automation for each.

### Q: Is tractor-feed braille paper required?

Yes, 8.5" x 11" or 11.5" x 11" continuous tractor-feed paper is required.

APH currently offers tractor-feed braille paper with Quota Federal funds (Catalog No. 1-04140-01).

Also available from APH with Quota Federal funds are Braillable Labels and Sheets: 8.5 x 11 tractor-feed clear self-adhesive sheets and labels (Catalog Number: 1-08875-00).

### Q: What size and weight of paper can you use with PixBlaster?

Paper width can vary from 7 to 12 inches (or 176 to 305 millimeters). The paper weight can be 33-120 lbs.

### Q: How do I troubleshoot paper jams?

To resolve paper jams, see the [Resolving Paper Jams](https://nyc3.digitaloceanspaces.com/aph/app/uploads/2020/07/28154959/PixBlasterUserGuide-accessible.pdf#page=46) section in the PixBlaster User Guide or follow these six steps:

1. Tear off the paper at the closest perforation to the embosser, for both the paper input and output.
2. Open the tractor feeder lid, and release paper from the tractor pins if still engaged.
3. Pull on visible paper on the output (front) side of the machine; take care to distribute pulling force evenly across the paper to prevent tearing.
4. If the paper does not pull out completely from the front, remove any remaining paper from the rear of the embosser; take care to distribute pulling force evenly across the paper to prevent tearing.
5. (Alternative step) You may also try the Up and Down Arrow buttons on the Operating panel to support paper moving out of the machine.
6. In the rare event that there are still scraps of paper left behind in the embosser, fold a thick sheet of paper in half, insert the sheet into the embosser over the tractor feed, and move the sheet from side to side to free paper remnants.

Once the paper jam is clear, insert paper again, engage tractors, close the lid, and reprint the document.

### Q: What should I do if I can't resolve a paper jam?

If you are unable to resolve a paper jam, please contact APH directly for additional assistance.

* Send an email to cs@aph.org or
* Call APH Customer Service at +1 (800) 223-1839.

### Q: Does PixBlaster produce interpoint braille documents?

Yes, PixBlaster produces both single-sided braille and double-sided interpoint braille.

### Q: What is the tactile resolution of the braille produced by PixBlaster?

PixBlaster has a tactile resolution of 100 DPI (dots per inch).

### Q: Does PixBlaster produce variable dot heights for braille dots?

PixBlaster produces three adjustable braille dot heights, as well as seven variable dot heights to accommodate enhanced tactile graphics.

### Q: How many characters per second (CPS) does PixBlaster print?

PixBlaster prints up to 120 characters per second.

### Q: How do you adjust the braille quality?

With PixBlaster you get to choose your desired braille quality by selecting Draft, Standard, or Best. Printing with Draft dot quality is the faster option. Standard or Best dot quality produces rounder, smoother dots, but slows down the printing process. If using PIXie, braille quality is adjusted via the PIXie interface and is found under the Tiger Tab. There are options for both Braille Quality and Graphics Quality. The Best setting is recommended. It is slower, but produces better quality dots. If you are not using PIXie, access the [Printing Preferences](https://nyc3.digitaloceanspaces.com/aph/app/uploads/2020/07/28154959/PixBlasterUserGuide-accessible.pdf#page=15) as thoroughly explained in the PixBlaster User Guide.

### Q: Does PixBlaster come with a warranty?

Yes. For information on your product warranty, please visit <https://viewplus.com/viewplus-support/warranty-details/>.

### Q: Are extended warranty options available?

Yes, please contact sales@viewplus.com for more information.

### Q: How do I contact customer support?

Please consult the APH webpage [https//www.aph.org/product/pixblaster/](http://https//www.aph.org/product/pixblaster/) or contact APH directly for additional information about training, maintenance, and support:

* Send an email to cs@aph.org or
* Call APH Customer Service at +1 (800) 223-1839.