

# Epson Stylus CX 4200 All-In-One

by Beverly Buchanan



*EPSON STYLUS CX 4200 ALL-IN-ONE, Printer, Copier, Scanner*

At the member raffle at the November 12, 2005 meeting, I was the lucky winner of the Epson Stylus CX 4200 all-in-one color printer/copier/scanner.

This printer can be used with either a Windows computer or a Macintosh computer running 10.2.x and higher with 512 MG RAM and 200–300 MG free space on hard drive. In addition to being a color printer and scanner, it can also be used as a color or black stand alone copier or to print photos directly from certain digital cameras, described later.

I bought my first Apple Computer, an Apple IIc, in 1984 and my first Mac in 1989 and have been hooked on the Mac ever since. We currently have two Macintosh computers: a G4 PowerMac running Jaguar 10.2.8 and a fairly new G5 iMac running Tiger 10.4.2. We chose to install on the iMac. Both computers are used at home for personal use.

Upon opening the box, a fold out showed that five items should be in the box: the printer, color cartridges (4), a power cable, the installation CD and a user's Quick Guide. The fold out also contained step by step instructions for setup and installation.

Installation was straightforward and easy. Only a USB cable had to be purchased to connect to the computer. For the purpose of the review, the directions were closely followed. We unpacked, removed the tape, connected the power cord, installed the four ink cartridges, loaded the paper, inserted the CD, followed the screen instructions, con-

nected the USB cable (not provided), added the printer to the Printer Setup Utility, restarted the computer, and printed a trial page. No problems.

## **COPYING: As a copier without computer**

The first copy made was a little confusing because the sheet to be copied was laid on the copier in "landscape" mode while the paper was in "portrait." However, the copies came out correctly. Once this is understood, it is not a problem.

Selection buttons along the left side allow for a range of choices when using as a copier: number of copies, type and size of paper, reduction or enlargement, black or color.

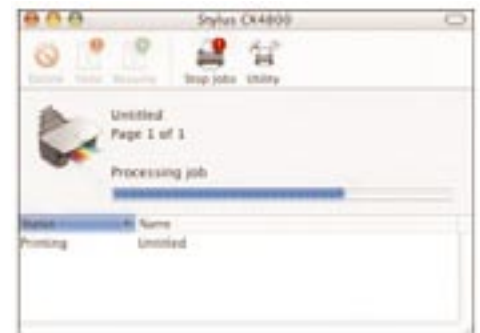
Up to 100 copies can be printed. When printing more than nine copies, the number of sheets of paper in the feeder determines the number of copies that will be printed. Either black or color copies can be made. Three choices of paper size; letter, 4 x 6, or 5 x 7, with choice of border or borderless, are available. If copying from a thick book, the cover can be lifted off. It is possible to reduce or enlarge a copy to fit the selected paper, although there is no % zoom. Paper for photos should be put in the feeder with the glossy, or image side facing outwards. Text and pictures both copied well. When comparing a picture, such as from a newspaper, with a copy from a copy machine, the Epson 4200 produced a better reproduction. Color copies had a slight change of color from the original but not enough to detract. If not comparing, the difference would not be noticeable. The Quick Guide instructions were accurate.

Printing from a Digital camera that is PictBridge or USB Direct-Print compatible is another feature. For this, the computer must be turned off. However, this could not be tested because our digital camera is a Sony Mavica with a 14x Optical lens, and the images are stored on floppy disks that are imported into the iMac via an external floppy drive purchased for this purpose.

## **PRINTING: From Mac OS X**

Following the instructions in the Quick Guide, page setup was standard. Choosing Print Settings, as the guide suggests, brings up many options for fine tuning depending on the settings selected. Although the options are the same as the buttons on the left side of the printer, these options must be selected from the computer because the buttons on the printer are only for independent use of the copier. Other features allow for scheduling printing for a later time, saving to PDF, selecting the preferred style which includes greeting cards, choosing ColorSync or color management, changing the gamma setting, printing with sepia tone and more. After all selections have been made, a summary of those chosen can be seen. There is a slider to choose printing speed. Fast is fast.

If printing in Text Edit or similar applications, the illustrations in the Quick Guide apply. If printing from iPhoto or Preview, and the Copy and Pages option does not appear, click the "Advanced" button to access the pull down menu options. This step is an Apple function, not Epson's. While not a problem, it is helpful to know so that valuable time is not lost wondering why the Print Settings can't be accessed. If selecting landscape orientation in Preview or iPhoto, the print preview shows in portrait orientation with the image rotated, but the picture prints to the correct orientation. At first I found this disconcerting because I am accustomed to landscape orientation appearing that way on the screen. Again, knowing that, it was not a problem. Text documents were okay.



I tried printing both photos and text files without making any changes to settings. The printer defaulted to the necessary mode depending on the file type. The color prints were sharp with bright color without fiddling with the settings. Text was crisp. Printing progress can be followed by clicking the printer icon for Tiger or print center for Jaguar.

## SCANNING:

At first I was unable to use the scanner because I could not find the necessary Epson Scan application. After several frustrating minutes, I called Epson Tech support, and after a wait of about 2 minutes was connected with a knowledgeable and articulate tech person. He quickly determined that the Epson Scan application had not installed with the installation and walked me through accessing their website to download and install the latest driver. This could have been done on my own, but I found it reassuring to have his assurance that I was doing everything correctly. That solved the problem. With Epson Scan installed, I could now follow the instructions to scan.

Scanning can also be done using a Twain compliant application if one has it. I don't, so I chose the built in Epson Scan, and put it in the Dock. There are three modes to choose from: Full Auto Mode, Home Mode, or Professional. Full Mode scans the quickest and easiest without any further settings. Home Mode provides image adjustments, cropping tools and other preset options. Professional Mode allows for manual configuration and more control with an array of tools. The window that appears depends on which mode is selected. A preferred location and file name can be designated in typical Mac fashion. The default location was the "Pictures" folder on the Hard Drive.

Another scanning feature is to transform an old faded color photo and give it more color and sharpness. Clear instructions are included. I couldn't find an old picture so used a photo taken on a cloudy day, scanned

it and then printed it with good results.

There are self tests for checking the print head nozzles and ink, with instructions for cleaning the print head when necessary. A light will flash when an ink cartridge gets low, the light will stay on when a cartridge needs to be replaced, and a message will indicate which cartridge needs replacing.

Technical assistance is available 24 hours a day through the Epson web site and email. Automated telephone assistance is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Live technical support is available 6 am to 6 pm Pacific time, or 8:00 am–8:00 pm local time. The phone number given, (562) 276-4382 is probably a toll call, (I'll know after the next phone bill); but if the product is still under the one year warranty, there is no charge for the support. Otherwise a \$9 charge will apply.

I was impressed with Epson's tech support: the wait was short, the technician helpful, his instructions clear and easy to follow. The technician said if I have any more problems to call back, that they have excellent tech support, and for a year it's free.

In addition to the printed Quick Guide that was in the box, an online User's Guide is available and well laid out. The online

User's Guide contains some information not in the Quick Guide, so it's well to check both. Warning: the Quick Guide is illustrated for the 4800 model and the options at the bottom of the illustrations may differ from the 4200. (see Pictures below).

In the online User's Guide are instructions for configuring the computer that is connected to the printer so that the printer can be shared with other Mac computers. I have no need for this feature so did not try it.

This all-in-one is amazing for all it can do. One just needs to be patient when changing from one function to another. Startup time is slower than other printers I have used, but considering the different functions and options available, it is understandable and worth the wait. Even if all the high end features are not needed, this all-in-one is has enough useable features to make it a good buy for home use and for a moderate price. On a scale of 1-5, I give a rating of 5 with an equal rating on the Quick Guide and tech support experience.

*The Epson website can be found at <http://www.Epson.com>*

