

The information posted below was taken from:

<http://www.marcuslink.com/pens/ink/>

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Acid & Alkaline Levels

What about the acidity of ink? This seems to be a point of ongoing talk on various discussion sites. Is it really important? On one hand I am told it is not that much of an issue. The compatibility of inks and dyes used in the particular inks is more of an issue.

In 1996 Gregory Clark had an article published in *Pen World* giving the pH levels of a wide variety of inks. A low pH reading indicates the relative level of acid to a high pH reading that indicates the level of alkaline. Some brands/colours are listed with two different readings. That is because Gregory included both the pH levels found through his testing and those reported by the pen manufactures. Confused? Well as a reference point, water has a pH of 7.

Readings were reported for pH levels of :

- 1.7 for Omas Blue-Black, Omas Royal Blue, Viconti Lapis Blue;
- 2.2 for Montblanc Blue-Black, Montblanc Bordeaux, Pelikan Blue-Black, Viconti Turquoise;
- 2.7 for Pelikan 4001 Blue, Quink Permanent Blue-Black, Pelikan 4001 Tourquoise, Quink Washable Blue, Waterman Purple;
- 3.0 for Montblanc Emerald Green, Quink Permanent Black, Waterman Blue-Black, Waterman Blue;
- 4.0 for Sheaffer Brown, Emerald Green, Peacock Blue;
- 6.3 for Parker Penman Emerald;
- 6.5 for Omas Sepia;
- 6.6 for Parker Penman Ebony;
- 6.8 for Herbin Green, Omas Vespucci Red, Parker Penman Mocha, Parker Penman Sapphire;
- 7.0 for Waterman Havana
- 7.2 for Omas Permanent Black;
- 7.5 for Parker Penman Ruby; Pelikan Brilliant Green;
- 7.8 for Visconti Black
- 7.9 for Rotring black, Waterman red
- 8.2 for Pelikan brilliant red, turquoise, violet
- 9.0 for Sheaffer jet black

What does all that really mean? Clark came to the conclusion that all the modern inks were safe to use in pens. Pens with piston or vacuum fillers would be subject to staining of some inks. Pens with sacs or converters would not have that issue. Neutral inks were considered to be those in the pH 6 to 8 range.