vintage visual

Colour film in the school darkroom

AGO Film Processor develops colour and black and white film with the Paterson tanks you already use.



reddot winner 2025

TIPA WORLD AWARDS 2025
BEST ANALOG PRODUCT

2026/27

Why schools use AGO

Most school darkrooms develop black and white film by hand. Colour film usually stays out of the course because C-41 and E-6 need warm chemistry and exact timing at every step. AGO agitates the reels inside a Paterson tank, measures the chemistry temperature and adjusts the development time as the chemistry cools. Warm the chemistry once and AGO takes care of the timing.

Colour film in the course

AGO has programs for C-41 colour negative, E-6 slide film, ECN-2 cinema film and RA-4 colour prints, next to black and white. Students learn the colour processes a lab runs, in the darkroom they already know.

Each student runs a full process

The screen shows every step and counts it down. Students pour, AGO agitates the reels and times the step, then the screen says what comes next. Several AGOs can run side by side in one lesson, so the teacher helps where help is needed and nobody keeps time for the whole room.

Negatives students can compare

Agitation and timing are the same on every run. Differences between negatives come from the film and the exposure, which is what students are there to learn. Fewer rolls are lost to a missed or late step.

Fits the darkroom you have

AGO works with Paterson Super System 4 tanks, from one roll up to eight rolls of 35mm per run. It runs a full day on battery and charges over USB-C, so any bench or table will do.

Less chemistry per roll

Rotary agitation needs less chemistry than inversion, so a colour kit develops more rolls.





AGO in classrooms

Buckinghamshire College Group

Photography course, UK

The college's deep tanks had broken down and students had not developed their own film for years. The course brought AGO into daily teaching. Students now develop colour and black and white film themselves, with fewer processing mistakes and more control over their own work.

Read the story by First Call Photographic

Estonian Academy of Arts

Thesis work and a colour workshop, Estonia

Noah developed 25 to 30 rolls of C-41 film with AGO for his thesis. He then led a colour darkroom workshop at the academy, where students picked up the colour process quickly.

Read Noah's story

What AGO covers

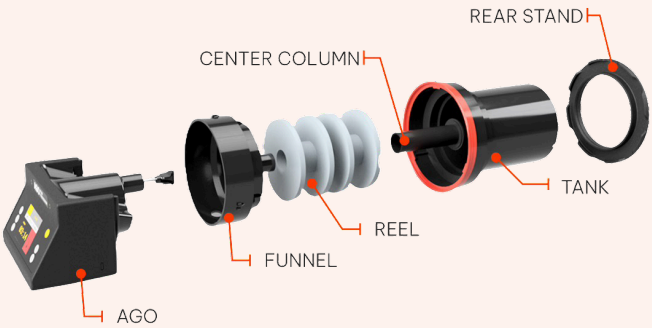
Processes	Black and white, C-41, E-6, ECN-2, RA-4 paper
Film formats	110, 35mm, 120, 4×5, 5×7 and 8×10 inch sheet film. 110 and sheet film use our own reels
Prints	Colour and black and white paper up to 30×40 cm with the Paper reels
Tank size	1 to 8 rolls of 35mm, Paterson Super System 4 tanks
Temperature range	Start in the range and AGO adjusts the time. Black and white 18–24 °C, C-41 35–41 °C, E-6 30–40 °C
Power	Full day on battery, USB-C charging

What is AGO



AGO is a compact film processor that clips onto a Paterson tank. It agitates the reels inside the tank, measures the chemistry temperature and adjusts the development time.

- Active Time Compensation for every process step
- Built-in programs for common black and white, C-41, E-6, ECN-2 and RA-4 kits
- Custom programs for your own chemistry and times
- Manual in English, German, Italian, Spanish, French and Japanese, plus video guides
- Shared program library and an active owner community



In the box

AGO, modified Paterson funnel, reel, Paterson 2-reel tank with centre column, rear stand and charging cable. AGO is also sold without a tank for darkrooms that already have Paterson tanks.

Working with Vintage Visual

School prices
Schools, universities and educational centres get a school price on AGO, our reels and Paterson equipment. Ask for the school price list or a quote.

One supplier for the darkroom
Paterson tanks, reels, graduates, timers and safelights, and our own reels for sheet film, 110, Super 8 and colour prints.

Try it first
Ask us about trying AGO for 30 days.

Help when you need it
A wiki, video guides and support by email from the team that designs and builds AGO.

Questions and quotes joonas@vintagevisual.eu
More about AGO in schools vintagevisual.eu/pages/for-education

A reel for every format

AGO works with Paterson Super System 4 tanks. Our own reels add the formats a standard Paterson reel cannot hold, so one AGO covers 110 film, roll film, large format sheets and colour prints up to 30×40 cm.



Paterson reel

35mm and 120 roll film

The standard Paterson reel. A Paterson 8 tank takes up to 8 rolls of 35mm or 5 rolls of 120 per run.



REEL 110

110 film

One roll per reel. Fits every Paterson tank.



REEL 4×5

4×5 inch sheet film

4 sheets per reel in a Paterson 3 tank or larger. Two reels in a Paterson 8 tank develop 8 sheets.



REEL 9×12 cm

9×12 cm sheet film

4 sheets per reel in a Paterson 3 tank or larger. Two reels in a Paterson 8 tank develop 8 sheets.



REEL 5×7

5×7 inch and 13×18 cm sheet film

2 sheets per reel in a Paterson 5 or 8 tank. Inside the Paper 5 reel it splits it in two for 5×7 prints.



REEL Paper 5

Prints and sheet film up to 8×10 inch

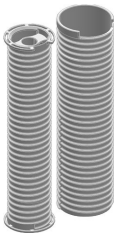
Colour RA-4 and black and white paper up to 20×25 cm, or one 8×10 sheet of film. Paterson 5 tank or larger.



REEL Paper 8

Prints up to 12×16 inch

Colour and black and white prints up to 30×40 cm in a Paterson 8 tank, without trays.



REEL Super 8

Super 8 cine film

50 ft per reel in a Paterson 8 tank. Black and white, black and white reversal, and C-41 and E-6 with AGO.

Every reel also works with hand agitation, except Paper 8, which is made for AGO. The Paper 5 and 5×7 reels are also sold together as a bundle.



Coming next: Fränk and Fränkie

We are building two systems for cine film. Fränk is a film processor for Super 8, Double 8 and 16mm. Fränkie is a reel and tank system for developing the same films by hand. Both are in development, and we will share school prices when they are ready.

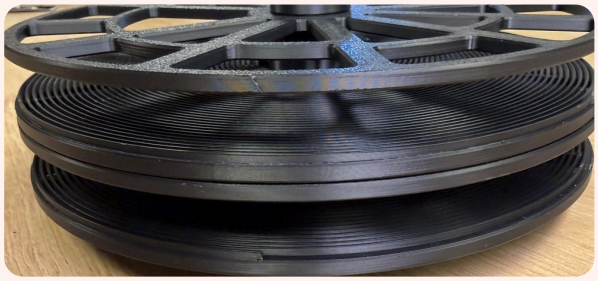
Fränk film processor

Fränk does for cine film what AGO does for still film. Load the reel in a changing bag or the darkroom and pour the chemistry. A motor turns the reel the whole time, a sensor reads the chemistry temperature and Fränk adjusts the development time.

- Super 8, Double 8 and 16mm, 2×50 ft per run
- Black and white, C-41, E-6, ECN-2 and ECP
- About 1 litre of chemistry per fill, the size of common colour kits
- Built-in and custom programs, Wi-Fi, runs on battery
- Chemistry is warmed in a water bath. Fränk measures it and adjusts the time

For film schools this opens colour negative, colour reversal and the cine colour processes in class. A roll can go through the whole process during a lesson while the teacher explains each step.





Fränkie reel and tank system

Develop Super 8, Double 8 and 16mm by hand in daylight, up to 100 ft per run. Fränkie uses the same reel as Fränk, so a school can start with Fränkie and move the reel to Fränk later.

Follow the build **vintagevisual.eu/blogs/frank-build-diary**
Ask to hear when they are ready **joonas@vintagevisual.eu**

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