

Photographic Processes

Process	Characteristics	Period Used
Albumen Negatives	Hard to identify. They look the same as collodion negatives	1848-1860
Salted Print	this versatile process was from Talbot. Made on any type of rough or textured paper. The Salted paper process produced images with a reddish-brown colour. Today the prints are mostly faded to yellow. depending on the degree of fading. the entire image can be faded or just at the edges. Compared to its replacement the albumen print, that will have yellow highlights.	1839-1855 & 1890-1900
Cyanotype	The image produced by Hershel's process, will be on drawing or tracing paper, and the image in Prussian blue.	1842-1950
Carbon Print	Due to the process of applying a thick dark gelatine, the transitions from light to dark may have a noticeable contour of the edges producing a relief effect. Images are permanent and due not generally fade.	1860-1930
Albumen Paper Print	One of the most common photograph found utilizing thin paper coated with egg white and salt. Most will have a reddish-brown coloured image with yellowed highlights. Variations in the process reduced the amount of yellowing. Various coatings were used from light to very shiny. CDV's typically fall in this category.	1850-1900
Calotype Paper Print	Viewed by a magnifying glass this image is formed by a patterned or grained structure	1870-
Collodion Negatives	Most common negative image with high resolution. They have a milky or creamy look. The coating was manually applied so it is irregular at the edges. Finger prints are also sometimes found on the corners or edges. Cracking due to shrinkage may exist.	1851 to 1885

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Collodion Positive Print or Ambrotype	This common photo has many variations. It is characterized by a negative glass plate image with a black background that is cased. The black background was either the back of the glass painted with black varnish or a black felt or black paper inserted in the back of the glass. The image colour varies due the different variations in process, from white to creamy to silver. Since chemicals were applied manually, there may be signs of irregular black edges or black corners.	1852-1890
Daguerreotype	Dags are easily identified. They are typically cased images with glass to protect the image as recommended by Daguerre himself. The image is grey on a silver mirror like surface. Sometimes the image has been hand coloured. You must angle the image to be able to view it or hold under a bright light to diffuse the mirror reflections.	1840-1860
Ferrotype	The Cheaper Tin type photo, The common ferrotype is typically not marked, not cased, poor quality and is captured on a thin bendable metal plate.	1855-1930
Half-Tone Paper Print	Sometimes referred to as Letter Press, this image is identified by viewing under a magnifying glass the regular dots or lines of differing size or thickness	1880-?
Melainotype example	The melainotype is a collodion positive on a black enamelled tin plate. This is the first "tin type" photo and the images are typically cased with glass over the plate. The plate is thicker and not easily subject to bending, compared to the more modern and cheaper Ferrotype plates. The image is usually dark. The plate itself typically has a stamp on the top "FOR NEFF's PAT. 1852". A simple test without removing the photo is to slide a magnet over the image glass to see if iron exists.	1855-1862
Photogravure Paper Print	This reproduction of a photo is best viewed by a magnifying glass. the image will be formed by a grainy appearance with no regular structure	1889-1900