

Wick Shop

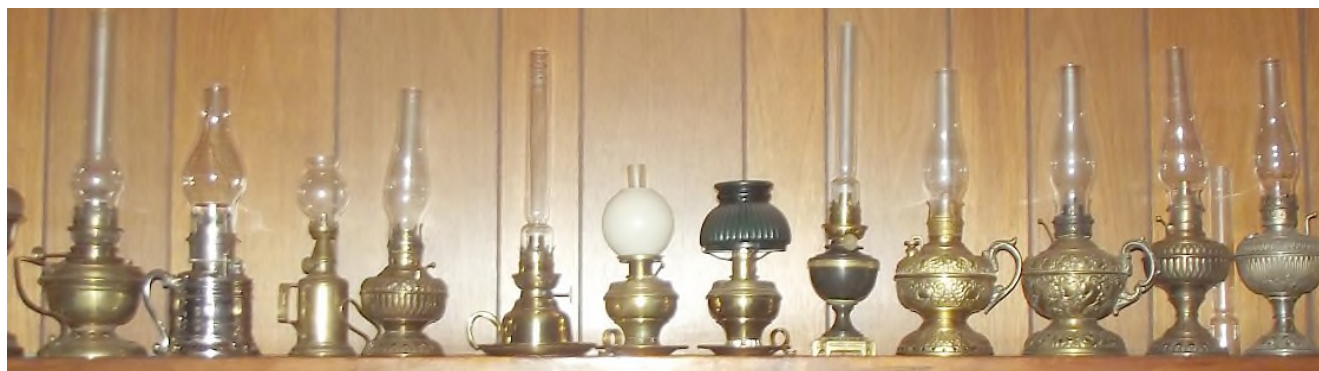
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Installing Wick #0S in Small Center Draft Lamps



Small-font center draft lamps can be either table lamps (far right above) or hand lamps. Many of them require the thin, relatively short wick #0S.

Every lamp manufacturer used a proprietary system of holding the wick securely so it could be raised and lowered. Three common examples are shown below.

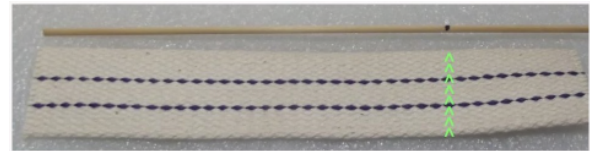
		
Tiny Miller Wick Sleeve	Rochester Wick Sleeve	Penfield Patent, B&H

The lamp must be disassembled to install a new wick. Please do not force anything as soft brass can easily bend or be crushed! If disassembly is not easy the lamp may have be soaked in a hot citric acid bath for a half hour, then disassembled while hot. That is the time to clean threads and joints and polished the lamp. For more information, see www.milesstair.com/Beginning_Lamp_Restoration.html

The first step installing the wick is to measure the depth of the font from the top of the center draft tube. The #0S wick is supplied as a solid tube because length of the “tails” of the wick depend absolutely upon the available length of the solid top section of the lamp. Wicks must have “tails” so that when the wick is lowered to extinguish the flame the bottom of the wick can splay out on the bottom of the font: a solid tubular wick will not compress when around a draft tube. The photo at right shows a bamboo skewer being used to measure the total height from the bottom of the font to the top of the draft tube.



The side of the wick is cut from the mark to the bottom. The slit on the other side of the wick depends upon the distance from the top of the draft tube to the wick sleeve attachment system (see Miller & Rochester sleeves on the other side of this page), which requires another measurement.



The marked rod is laid beside the wick as shown.

When installed and lowered as much as possible the wick should be slightly below the top of the draft tube, as shown at right. That will enable the wick to be retracted down between the draft tubes so the flame can be extinguished.

Note the wick shown at right is charred on top. It has already been burned level with the draft tubes.

After the new wick is installed, reassemble the lamp and follow the directions listed below to prepare the wick for a beautiful, even flame.



BEFORE THE FIRST LIGHTING

Check to make sure the center draft tube is centered in the outer wick tube. Gently bend the draft tube to get it into the center so the wick gap is even all the way around the wick. A large gap on one side of the draft tube means a small gap on the opposite side. A wick which is compressed does not have the same capillary action as a section of wick which has excessive wick gap. It is impossible to get an even flame unless the wick gap is uniform.

The new wick must be level on top to avoid flame spikes. You simply cannot trim the wicks perfectly with scissors or a razor. Set the lowest section of the wick 1/16" higher than the wick tubes. Put a couple of eyedroppers full of kerosene on the top of the wick, put in the flame spreader, light the wick and put on the chimney. After the kerosene burns off the cotton wick itself will burn down level with the wick tubes. Rub the charred wick down with a finger, cloth or stick in a circular motion around the wick tube to get the charred wick even. Be consistent; rub the same direction (clockwise or counterclockwise) every time. Make sure the chimney does not touch the shade at the top or the shade may crack from the heat!

It usually takes more than one “level burning” session to obtain a perfectly flat top to the wick so there will not be any flame spikes. Raise and lower the wick several times to make sure it moves freely.