

Wick Shop

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Installing wicks in B&H Student Duplex Lamp Burners

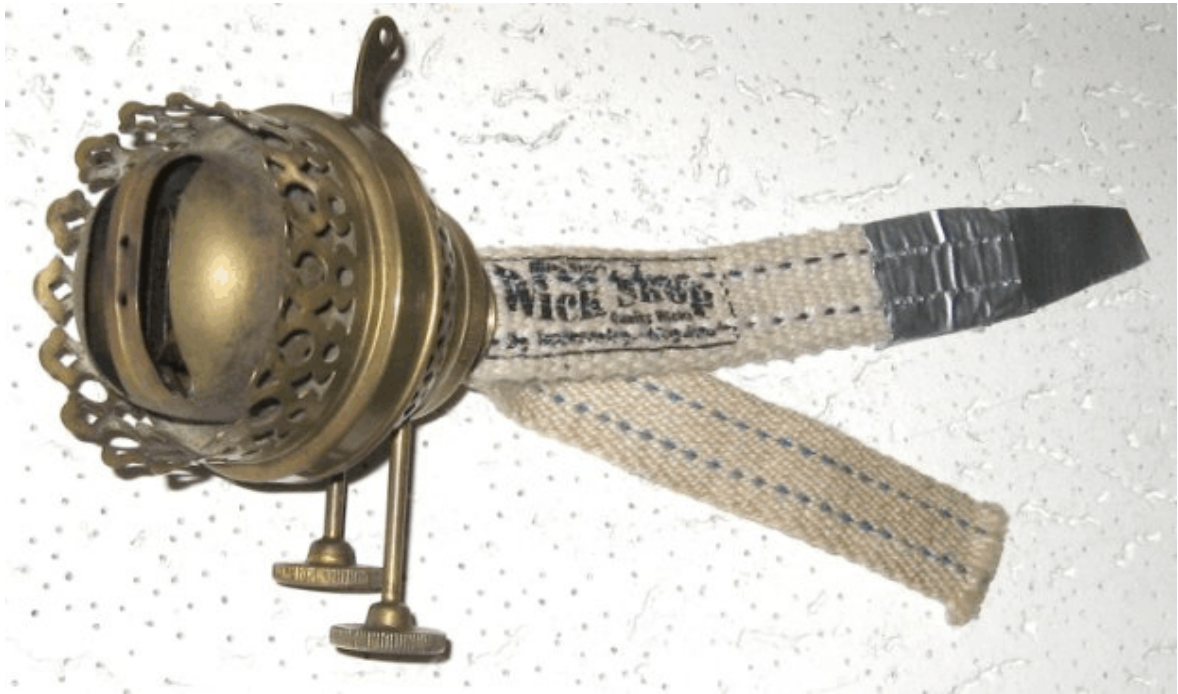


Wicks for the B & H Student Lamp Duplex burner have not been available for over 80 years. I have to make them from existing wick material designed for other lamps.

The special wicks required by the B&H Student Lamp Duplex burner are 1 1/8" wide and 1/8" thick - the thickest wicks made for a flat wick lamp. B & H used the thick wicks for a reason - to have the maximum capillary action possible to keep the exposed portion of the wick minimized, the resulting flame being as white as possible. Thinner wicks produce a yellow flame. This trick was also employed in some center draft lamps, notably the P&A Royal and Success lamps.



The thickness of the wick makes installation difficult. Note the duct tape on one wick in the illustration at left. That is the end of the wick with the tapered edges. A 6" piece of duct tape is applied to about one inch of one side, a two inch long fold is made in the duct tape, and the remaining inch of duct tape stuck to the opposite side of the wick.



The duct tape is then trimmed with a pair of scissors to follow the contour of the tapered end of the wick, and the flat 2" extension is likewise tapered, as shown in the photo above.

Insert the extension of duct tape through the TOP of the wick slot. The extra length of the duct tape extension will poke through the gear star wheel rollers, then can be grabbed and pulled down. Notice the two rows of indenting in the duct tape on the photo above, indicating the position of the star wheels. Pull the wick down until resistance is felt, then pull down while turning the wick lowering knob. The wick should easily retract down to the proper level for operation. Work the wick up and down several times to make sure it is centered in the wick tube gap.

Repeat for the second wick, then remove the duct tape from each wick. Removing the duct tape will frazzle the cotton wick a little, which helps with absorption of fuel and capillary action needed to sustain a full burn of the wick.



The feeder wick is inserted through the loop between the two wicks, as shown at left.

One traditional way of installing wicks in duplex lamps with a feeder wick was to use four continuous feet of wicking to form a "W" shaped wick inside the tank. The wick is first fed through the loop, the lengths equalized, then each end is brought up and fed through the wick slots from the bottom. This method provided the maximum capillary action for a terrific white light.