How to strip fiber optic cables without damaging the fiber core



Overview

Good fiber optic stripping techniques in your cable assembly process are crucial. See best practices for how to strip fiber optic cable buffers & jackets.

Key Takeaways

Strip fiber optic cables carefully in stages using the correct tools and techniques to avoid damaging the delicate fiber core.

Safety First

Always wear safety glasses to protect your eyes from tiny fiber shards, and dispose of all fiber scraps properly in a designated container. Work in a clean, well-lit area free from dust and debris to prevent contamination of the fiber ends. Tools You'll NeedFiber optic cable stripper with multiple grooves for different buffer sizesKevlar scissors for cutting strength membersAlcohol wipes or cleaning solution for cleaning stripped fiber endsOptional: fiber optic cleaver and inspection microscope for precise termination Step-by-Step Stripping ProcessCut the Cable: Use Kevlar scissors to cut the cable to the desired length.

Strip the Outer Jacket: Use the largest groove on the fiber stripper to gently cut and remove the outer jacket. Pull off the cut piece carefully to avoid nicking the fibers underneath. Remove Strength Members: Cut the aramid yarn (Kevlar fibers) near the jacket end and wind them into a bundle for easier handling.

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Strip the Buffer Coatings: Strip the 900-micron buffer in small increments (about 6–8 mm at a time) using the appropriate groove on the stripper. Then strip the 250-micron buffer in similar small steps. Hold the stripper at a 45-degree angle to reduce stress on the fiber.

Clean the Fiber: Use alcohol wipes or a microfiber cloth to remove any debris or residue from the stripped fiber end. Inspect the Fiber: If available, use a fiber inspection microscope or visual fault locator (VFL) to ensure the cleave is smooth and free of defects.

Best Practices

Strip progressively: Each layer (jacket, aramid yarn, buffers) should be stripped individually to avoid damaging underlying layers. Take small cuts: Avoid removing too much buffer at once to prevent breakage. Maintain tools: Keep stripper blades sharp and clean for consistent results.

Practice patience: Stripping fiber without damage requires careful handling and repeated practice. By following these steps and using the correct tools, you can strip fiber optic cables safely and efficiently, ensuring optimal performance for splicing or connectorization.

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Use the fiber stripper to cut off 2" (50mm) of the cable jacket and pull off the cut piece. Use the first groove in the fiber stripper - the biggest one - and just gently cut the fiber jacket and pull it off. Be

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