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Release date: 24 July 2003

FAQ

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Thermal Head Lens Cleaning FAQ

A lens cleaning kit that includes acetone, several different types of cleaning swabs, rubber gloves, wiping clothes, and so on is available for Creo service personnel. Many heads are returned as faulty with image quality issues, and, in most cases, no attempt has been made to clean the final lens or window.

Most media ablate to some degree, so it is important to ensure that the final lens or window is clean before swapping out a head. Debris build-up can cause a serious reduction in both image quality and power output from the head.

Note: For imaging with fine screens like Staccato® screening, it is required that the final lens or window be clean.

The following is a list of answers to commonly asked questions about the new lens cleaning kit (and lens cleaning in general):

Can acetone be shipped?

Answer: Yes. The shipping department will be familiar with regulations for specific regions and supply the correct documentation and packaging for the destination you request.

It's best that you have a supply on hand prior to going on-site.

Tip: To prevent leaking during shipping, the bottle is sealed with a crimp style cap. You will need a lever style bottle opener to open this bottle.

Can I have my cleaning supplies sent to my home or office?

Answer: Yes, have the supplies shipped to where it is most convenient for you.

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What are the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) papers that come with the kit?

Answer: These sheets provide important safety and handling information. Please take a few minutes to read and understand the safety information provided to you.

Why do I have to clean the lens or window?

Answer: To maximize head life with quality and throughput:

- 90% of all returned heads have never had the lens or window cleaned
- 5% of all returned heads were not cleaned correctly
- 5% of all returned heads had the lens or window cleaned correctly

Can I clean the optics when the head is on the carriage?

Answer: No. You cannot successfully clean the lens without removing the head. Product Development has thoroughly tested and confirmed that it is *not* possible the clean the lens or window with the head on the carriage of any device. You must remove the head to correctly clean and inspect the lens or window.

Where can I find out how to properly clean the lens?

Answer: Find the procedures at: **TechPlanet Home** > **Output** > **Heads** > **Thermal 1.x or Thermal 2** > **Procedures,** or click the links below:

- For Thermal 1.x: http://techplanet.creo.com/output/heads/thermal/content/docs/77-0125A-D-PR01.pdf
- For Thermal 2: http://techplanet.creo.com/output/heads/thermal_2/content/docs/th2_window_cleaning.pdf

What is the part number and description of the lens cleaning kit?

Answer: Part Number 04-0012B, FG, Cleaning Kit Encoder/Lens.

This modified version of the original Encoder Cleaning Kit contains acetone and swabs. If you need to clean the encoder, order part number 04-0014. The correct kit for lens cleaning is part number 04-0012B.

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Can I order individual items from the kit?

Answer: Yes, the acetone and swabs are set up with part numbers for individual re-ordering.

- Part number 402-00062 Acetone (100 ML)
- Part number 404-00040 Swabs (approximately 180 per box)

Is acetone safe to use when cleaning the lens or window? I know people who use other liquids, and I have heard that acetone destroys the coating on the optics.

Answer: HPLC-grade acetone is recommended by our optical suppliers and is a standard in the industry. It is a proven Creo standard and is used daily by our Optical Production Teams. Other products are not as pure as the HPLC-grade acetone provided in the lens cleaning kit.

Tip: Do not use acetone to clean your eyeglasses or plastic products.

Why can't I buy acetone from the local hardware store or alcohol from the drugstore? Why can't I use eyeglass cleaner?

Answer: Acetone from the hardware store is not intended for optical cleaning, and is contaminated with impurities and unknown particles. Alcohol from the drug store is slow to evaporate and highly absorptive of airborne moisture — this makes lens cleaning even more challenging.

Eyeglass cleaner is not pure enough and is not controlled in its makeup. It is not intended for the quality of cleaning required for the thermal imaging head.

How much acetone should I use when cleaning a head?

Answer: Expect to go through one third to one half of the 100ml bottle by the time you've done a thorough cleaning of the optical lens or window, and wiped plate debris and dust from the surrounding area (air jet, debris removal system, exposure side of the head, and so on).

How much acetone will I receive in each kit?

Answer: A 100ml bottle is provided with each kit (this will be enough to typically clean 2 to 3 heads).

Why ship such a small bottle?

Answer: Acetone exposed to air will absorb moisture and airborne particles. Using small bottles will reduce the chances of contaminating the acetone.

How can I help reduce contamination of my bottle of acetone?

Answer: Cover it. Rest the crimp-style cap over the bottle after pouring a small amount into the twist cap to use for dipping the swab while cleaning the lens or window.

How many swabs can I expect to use when cleaning a lens or window?

Answer: There is no set number. Use each swab for only one rolling pass-over. Also, the amount of debris and the plate material will determine the degree of difficulty and time required for cleaning (you could use 40 or more swabs).

Why does it seem I am making a mess rather than cleaning?

Answer: There are several possibilities:

- The swab may be too wet with acetone (shake the excess off the swab to help with this).
- You may be trying to clean a particularly challenging and dirty lens or window.
- You may need to go over the optics 40 times or more.

Tip: Refer to the lens cleaning procedure. Persistence and patience will pay off — lens cleaning is a learned skill.

About Creo

Creo is a world leader in solutions for the graphic arts industry. Core product lines include image capture systems; inkjet proofers; thermal imaging devices for films, plates and proofs; professional color and copydot scanning systems; and workflow management software. Creo is also an Original Equipment Manufacture supplier of on-press imaging technology, components for digital presses, and color servers for high-speed, print-on-demand digital printers.

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