

Using Estes Igniters

Estes igniters offer a very simple and reliable method of igniting your Estes model rocket engine motors by remote control. Although very reliable on the whole, we have created this factsheet to help customers who have encountered difficulties and to help all customers keep their ignition failure rate as low as possible.

Care tips:

- Never remove, tear or cut the tape joining the igniter leads.
- Store them carefully, the bridge wire and pyrotechnic material covering the bridge wire are very delicate.

Ignition tips:

- Insert the igniter all the way to the bottom of the propellant. The tip of the igniter must touch the propellant. Most ignition problems are due to the igniter not touching the propellant. However be careful not to push it too hard because the wires will touch inside the igniter hole and create a short.
- Always ensure the igniter is secured properly with a suitable plastic plug, otherwise the weight of the clips may pull the igniter away from the propellant and it will not ignite the motor.
- Always bend the igniter wires round into a U AFTER you have inserted the plastic plug. Bending each lead into a small U gives each clip 2 points of contact on each igniter lead.
- Always make sure your launch controller clips are CLEAN.

Diagnosis tips for if the motor does not ignite:

- If a small puff of smoke is seen, then the chances are the igniter has gone off but it was not touching the propellant.
- If no smoke is seen then REMOVE the safety key from your launch controller, then wait ONE MINUTE. Remove the igniter. If the igniter is intact with the pyrotechnic material still covering the bridge wire, then
 - you probably had a short either with the igniter under the plastic plug or with your launch controller clips.

OR

- another possibility is weak batteries in your launch controller. ALWAYS use good quality batteries, DO NOT USE CHEAP BATTERIES, it is counterproductive.

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Fact Sheet 001

Revised: 18th May 2009



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