

# Kerosene Lamp Info

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## **Fuel:**

Use #2, water-clear kerosene; tinted/scented lamp oil gives less light, can gum up the wick or smoke up the chimney excessively. Lower grades kerosene with higher number will work but may cause similar problems with wicks and the chimneys will be dirty sooner.

## **Cost of Fuel:**

May cost as much as \$2.00/gal. Using 5 traditional lamps and a lantern 5 hours /night in the winter will use about 1 gallon/month.

## **Transferring the fuel:**

Use a cheap bulb siphon and ONLY use it for kerosene (gasoline residues in a kerosene lamp is extremely dangerous). Try not to siphon any of the sludge and throw away the last 1/2 cup in the can. Siphon outdoors to minimize problem spills. If you spill over several thickness' of newspaper, do not burn in wood burning stove (chimney fire).

## **Lamp:**

Do not overfill kerosene reservoir. You need air space between the bottom of wick holder and top of the kerosene for good wicking. When installing a new wick, soak it in kerosene first. You will then burn the kerosene and not the wick. If the top of the wick is dry only ht wick will burn. Trim the wick occasionally while using it and the first time you use it. A wick trimmed straight across will give a wide, flat-topped flame and will smoke excessively; too pointy of a wick produces a thin flame and little light. You should cut off the corners, and round the top of the wick a bit. After many hours of burning, the top of the wick will get ragged and charred. The flame may even have two lobes. Trim the char off into the shaped that works best for your lamp. There are two kinds of lamp owners: those who've burned themselves and those who will. Always check before touching the chimney. You cannot see heat.

To light a kerosene lamp, remove the chimney, turn the wick up a bit, and light and replace the chimney. As the wick begins to smoke, turn it down, just enough to keep from smoking. Adjust the wick for max light without smoking.

Extinguish a kerosene lamp by holding your hand just behind and above the chimney top. Adjust the angle of your palm to direct your breath straight down the chimney. Blow against your palm and a quick puff will blow it out.

## **Maintenance:**

Cleaning the chimney. Remove soot with a facial tissue and wash in hot, soapy water(Dawn?). Rinse in very hot water, to which baking soda has been added to eliminate spotting and then air dry. Wicks: Take stub of wick with you when buying a new one. There are circular wicks, and flat wicks, which come in different widths and thickness'. One that is too thick or thin will not feed through the wick adjuster and may even damage it. It is better to use one that is too narrow than one that is the wrong thickness or width. A narrow wick will not produce as much light, obviously.

## **Chimneys:**

Keep spares on hand. A lamp without a chimney is worthless. Thin glass cost less but break easier; frosted diffuse the light but are less bright. Tall, thin straight chimneys produce a thin, very bright flame, while bulbous chimneys produce wider flame and maybe more total light. Different chimney styles means adjusting to trimming the wick differently. You may eventually have to put on a new wick adjuster through normal usage or by damage by improper wick. You will have to replace the whole burner. Keep an extra one or two on hand. The best lamp has a heavy glass base which allows you to see how much kerosene is left. The weight of the base gives stability.

## **Aladdin Lamps:**

They are more expensive than traditional lamps. They use pressure to volatilize the kerosene and a mantle to distribute and intensify the flame. They use twice as much kerosene as a traditional lamp and the mantles have to be replaced frequently. The parts of one model of Aladdin lamp may not be interchangeable.

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*Source: Rhema Publishing, Inc - P.O Box 789 Suwanee, GA 30024*