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Osmiroid

Special subject: Osmiroid fountain equipment – nib care.

As new Osmiroid calligraphy equipment is now hard to get from anywhere nowadays, with all available fountain sets being sold out. It is time to apply the tips and help in this file to any Osmiroid equipment you own and extend its lifespan.

The particular area for ‘extra care’, is obviously the nib units, as these are the most prone to problems.



Gold nibs shown here, but stainless steel are also available.

They can become blocked-up with old-dried ink, or from much use the nib tips may wear out, becoming round or slant tipped. Or if dropped, the nibs may become bent and buckled out of shape, rendering them useless for writing.

So, here is what can be done to re-invigorate your Osmiroid writing gear.

You may actually just wish to get a different size of nib fitted instead of your existing nib size, here is a chart showing the sizes still available ([from us](#)) in replacement nibs.

Sizes in Millimetres. Osmiroid Gold nibs.

0.5mm Italic Ext Fine	0.6-0.75mm Italic Fine	1.0mm Italic Medium	1.25mm Italic Broad	1.5mm B2	2.0mm B3
2.5mm B4	3.0mm B5	3.5mm B6	4.0mm B8	5.0mm B10	
3.0mm SH5	3.5mm SH6				

‘SH5’ and ‘SH6’ are Osmiroid SHADOW nibs, having a dual line ink effect every stroke (see our [Osmiroid webpage](#))

Now these nibs are still available and work on our ‘[Osmiroid Dip pen sets with dip handles](#)’, which we sell today. But it is a little known fact that they are actually interchangeable with fountain pen unit nibs. You would only need to learn how to extract an old nib and re-insert a new one, into the fountain nib unit!

Extraction of a nib enables a number of things to happen;

1st the nib and its plastic insert can be cleaned. Old ink tends to clog some parts of the inside of the nib, also the plastic insert has a filigree design, that is unfortunately a natural harbour for ink deposits. Even if your pen is flowing OK, it may still benefit from a good clean-up of any old dried ink.

2nd A damaged nib can be replaced with a newly purchased one.

3rd A different size of nib can be used when re-assembling the nib unit.

Now here is the way to be sure of doing the extraction and re-insertion correctly. This picture has a separated ink unit, into its 3x basic components, these are the only parts we are dealing with here;



Picture

1.

In this following picture we show a close-up of the nibs ink slot, note that underneath it, the plastic insert also has an ink slot (this helps ink to flow down the nib when used), but the **important point** is that the inserts ink slot can be seen to be directly in the centre of the gold nibs hole, thus aiding the ink supply directly.



Picture 2.

The second pointer to watch out for is the alignment of all 3 parts, that is the outer unit housing, the nib and the inner insert.



Picture 3.

This second picture shows just how the unit should look before any extraction and obviously is the position all the 3x parts will end up in after correct re-assembly, back together again. So these positions; of the nibs ink slot – paired with its insert piece underneath, should align exactly. Plus the 3 parts when fitted in the right position, all align exactly. If after re-assembly you find the nib and its plastic insert riding up higher than the base unit, then it will need extracting again, with a more firm re-insertion to align these parts smoothly.

Before starting with any extraction be sure to inspect the whole unit to see if these '**alignments**' are intact, if all is correct then **extraction of the nib can begin**.

- With the main tube unit in one hand, held between the first finger and thumb.

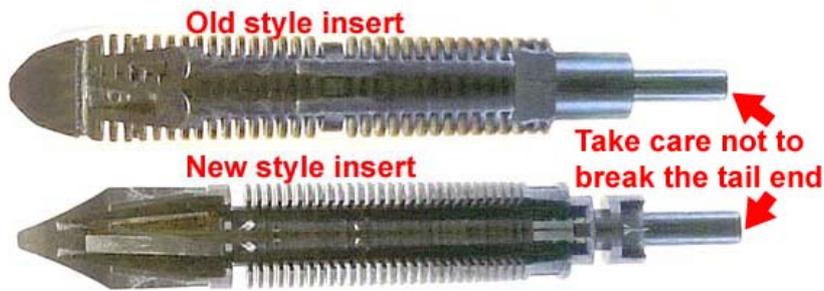


Picture 4.

For the other hand you will need 1 or 2 of those money counting finger rubbers, (normally available in newsagent shops), one on your first finger, the other on your thumb. By trial of using just one for the extraction of the nib, you will find out if it would be better to use 2 money counting rubbers. It may be easier using 2 rubbers, as this dulls any awkward finger pain felt during pulling out the nib. Doing this at Ornasonova, we use just one, placed on the first finger, with the free thumb placed on top of the metal nib. As these plastic parts are delicate, **some care** is needed to be sure not to initially apply too much pull

energy, what is needed is just enough to loosen the nib & its plastic insert a little. Going slowly

reduces the possibility of damage to the insert part. The tail end of the plastic insert is very thin plastic and if it gets bent or dinged whilst doing the extraction, no new parts are available, so we said '**some care**' is needed above, to make removal of a nib easy, without damaging the basic unit equipment.



Picture 5.

At this stage the nib and insert being pulled/eased out of the unit, they can now be cleaned up. This is best done with an old toothbrush or any small stiff brush like it. Simply turn on a warm water tap and in the water, brush the inner side of the nib and the delicate filigree sides of the plastic insert. It may take a while to get all the ink off, this can be seen from a clear water flow, without any ink colouring it.

Inspect the parts for any hard and stuck ink, to be sure all old ink has been removed.

Before re-assembly of all 3x parts again, be sure to clean away any dried ink in the main unit tube.

This will make sure the clean nib and insert will fit back together again, smoothly.

A wet twisted tissue or cloth is good for this purpose.

- **For the re-assembly this is the way to do it.** First align your nib with the plastic insert in exactly the right position. This means, when viewed from the side both parts align with each other (as shown earlier in [picture 3](#)), then if the insert is in the right position and not needing rotating to centre it, (as shown in [picture 2](#)), both parts held at the tip end, between first finger and thumb can be inserted the same way it came out. Firm pressure is needed to make sure it goes right down the units tube. A quick check to see if all 3x parts align correctly (as shown in [pictures 2 & 3](#)), then you can be sure that ink will flow without problems.

- **Troubleshooting ink blocked unit problems:**

Mostly, new or well cared for units will extract easily. # However, ink blocking the interior of the unit can be the major cause of non-working units. With a glass of hot water, immerse the whole unit in it, attempt to cause it to sink, and jiggle it about in the hot water by stirring it with a spoon or something like it. Return to it in a few minutes and repeat. The water will change colour into the dissolving inks shade rapidly. If you wish to throw away the water and start again with fresh-clear water, you can assess the state of the unit each time you change water and see paler shades of dissolved ink coming out of the unit. Jiggling speeds the process, so continue with it as much as possible. Leaving the unit in the water overnight can help really stubborn cases, for instance when acrylic ink has been used – wrongly to fill & run the pen, without cleaning it out after use with water. Lastly a really good rinse under the tap will allow you to see if the ink has cleared enough to try extracting the nib & insert from the unit, [as shown above](#). In the very worse cases, a jewellers vibrator tray and some ready made ink dissolver in water will be needed to get the old-ink softened enough to be able to extract the nib. # Technical drawing pen equipment as used by draftsmen, also use this technique and have gear that vibrates the ink remover in a wet tray. The vibrator tray plugs into the mains power or batteries and causes the water tray to vibrate rapidly – loosening old/solid ink.

- **Troubleshooting ink flow problems:**

Additional detail to look out for:



The stainless steel nib units sold in the last few years of Osmiroid factories existence, had 2 colours of plastic nib inserts. They were made to accommodate the smaller sizes of nib – up to B2 size and the larger series of nibs B3 and B4. For the smaller size nibs the inserts were of ‘black’ plastic. For the larger sizes (B3 & B4), the inserts were made using a grey shade of plastic. This is easily recognized by simply looking under the nib unit. They may also have a different size of ink slot, with the larger nib size (grey) insert being more able to convey ink to the nib in larger quantities. On close inspection the ink slot cutout does look very similar, but it would only need a micron of difference in the cutout channels width or depth to increase ink flow. So, if you find that when using a nib, it has a diminished amount of ink coming out of it, or vice versa, an excess of ink flows out – then its possible that the nibs insert may be the problem. Swapping it over for one of the others, either a ‘black’ or ‘grey’ plastic insert, is worth a try if it cures any ink flow problem you may be getting.

A complete guide is available on our [website free downloads page](#), for reloading inks into these pens.