

# Lampholders

## Coupling rings

We were sent a tip by Inverclyde Council on a means of preventing mains lampholders such as ones fitted in microscope lamps falling apart. The key part that holds a lampholder together is the *coupling ring* (sometimes also known as the *union ring*) (Fig. 1). When the coupling ring screws tight (Fig. 2) the main parts of the lampholder are clamped shut. The danger is that the ring can come loose either because it wasn't sufficiently tight in the first place, or had been unscrewed by children.

By fitting a shakeproof washer with internal serrations (Fig. 3) between the coupling ring and the outer part of the lamp shade (Fig. 4) and securing these parts with the shade ring (fitted internally within the lamp shade), Inverclyde were able to produce a lampholder that cannot fall apart. Suitable large diameter shakeproof washers (internal type) are available from your local BSL depot. The only suitable size we could find was M27. M25 or M26 might be a better fit, but we couldn't trace them.

There is a special part which, when fitted, prevents a lampholder being opened. This is a coupling ring which has a grub screw to lock the ring in position (Fig. 5). The part name is 'Heavy BS Union Ring with Grub Screw' (product code BC4). It is supplied by S Lilley & Son Limited. A pack of 10 costs £5.68 and carriage is £3.50.

## Cord grips

The type of cord grip shown in Figure 4 is not wholly dependable. This is a plastic grip which screws into the brass lampholder. Being plastic, the grub screw cannot be screwed down absolutely tight for fear of cracking and therefore tends to work loose. (The term 'cord' stands for the 3-core flexible insulated cable supplying the lamp with electricity.) Moreover because the cord is gripped by a plastic screw biting into the insulated sheath of the cord, this may result in a failure of the insulation. Summarizing the defects of this cord grip: (1) it tends to work loose quite readily; and (2) it damages the cord long term.

What are the options? Either put up with this cord grip as it is, but if you do, it needs to be frequently checked, possibly every three months, to see that it is tight, or replace the entire lampholder with one that would seem to have a superior design of cord grip, such as Lilley product number 3000E 'Cord Grip



Figure 1 - Opened lampholder, showing parts (Lilley & Son product 3000E).



Figure 2 - Main parts held together by coupling ring.



Figure 3 - Main parts held together by coupling ring.

BC B22 Lampholder with Shade Ring and Earth', and is sold directly by Lilley in packs of 10 (£11.43 per 10). This part can be supplied with a heavy lock ring using order code B22LR, adding £2.49 per 10 to the total lampholder price. Carriage is £6.50.

This cord grip (in 3000E) has a split wooden collar that exerts uniform compression right round the cord (Figs. 1 and 5). The collar is secured by a brass ring that screws into the lampholder and can be tightened by pliers. It is less likely to work loose than the type illustrated in Figure 4.

### Address:

S Lilley & Son Limited  
80 Alcester Street  
Birmingham  
B12 0QE  
Tel: 0121 622 2385  
Email: [sales@s-lilley.co.uk](mailto:sales@s-lilley.co.uk)

BSL: see phone book or use this website ([www.bslbrammer.co.uk/PDFs/tools.pdf](http://www.bslbrammer.co.uk/PDFs/tools.pdf)) for local depot.



Figure 4 - Lampholder secured with shakeproof washer.



Figure 5 - Lampholder (3000E) secured with grub screw in coupling ring.