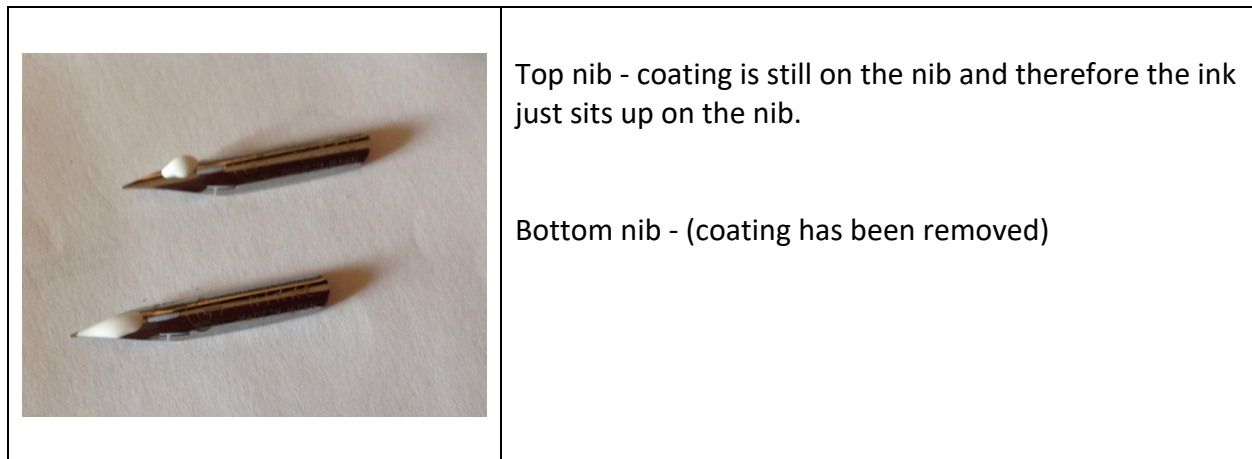


WHY MY PEN WON'T WORK /ABOUT NIBS

The pen, the paper, the ink and the calligrapher need to be working in harmony. If that does not happen, then the whole writing experience is not at its best. There are different reasons why suddenly you have been betrayed by your calligraphic nib.

Reason #1 – New Nib

Perhaps you have just purchased a new nib. Seems easy enough doesn't it? Just insert that new nib into a nib holder and go. Unfortunately, new nibs come with a coating that keeps them shiny and new for the customer. This coating repels liquid. That is why the ink is just sitting up on that new nib and will not flow to the tip. And then that glob of ink just plops onto your page. Yes! This does happen!



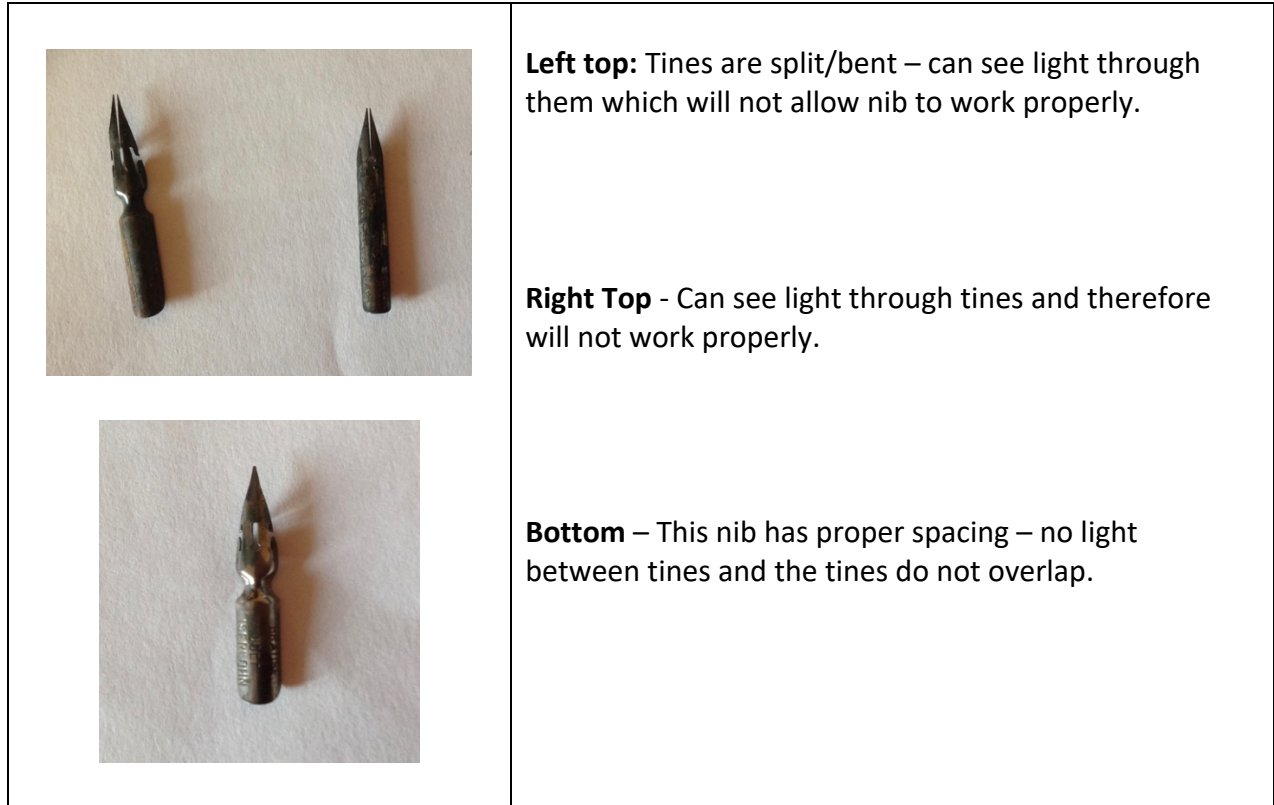
So, it is time to prepare the new nib.

There are several ways to do this.

1. (Not recommended by my colleagues). Use a naked flame. With this method, the nib is simply passed back and forth through a naked flame. Be careful not to get the nib too hot.
2. Soak the new nib in water with dishwashing liquid for 30 seconds. Then, gently scrub with a toothbrush at the surface of the nib. Rinse.
3. Use any window cleaner that has ammonia. Soak first then you can gently scrub away at the nib after a few seconds. Rinse well.
4. Use any kind of toothpaste. Coating the nib with toothpaste and then scrub with a toothbrush. Rinse well.
5. Put your new nib in your mouth and let your saliva do the work, (again not recommended by colleagues – better to use saliva on a cloth & wipe nib with it.)
6. Drop the nib in a jar cap full of isopropyl alcohol and swish it around. Alcohol dissolves the lacquers or oils on the nib, and dries quickly.
7. Stir the nib (while in a pen holder) in boiling water for 3 to 4 seconds and then stir in cold water for 3 to 4 seconds.

Reason #2

The nib is not clean. The nib can be affected by dried ink, lint particles from cleaning cloths or rusting.





1. Gently clean the nib using just water.
2. Do not use a cloth that leaves tiny fragments of lint on the nib.
3. Try cleaning methods used for a new nib if the water method does not work.
4. Check to make sure that you cannot see light between the tines of the nib. If there is light, the nib is either distorted or dirty.
5. Sometimes the nib needs a slight sanding to remove burrs. This is also for a nib that has dulled. Only do as a last resort if you are unfamiliar with this.

It is possible that the problem cannot be fixed if the nib is distorted.

Reservoirs

1. Reservoirs need to be placed correctly on the nib in order to function. Too high or too low will result in poor ink flow. You should not have to press any harder for the ink to flow.

	<p>On the left are a reservoir which would be placed under the nib. The photos show the underside and the part that braces around the nib. The third picture is the reservoir placed on the nib.</p> <p>To the right is a nib with the reservoir above.</p> <p>It is possible to make your own reservoir to be placed on a nib that doesn't have reservoirs available to purchase for that particular model. See below.</p>	
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2. The reservoir allows the calligrapher to write without having to refill the nib as often. Allow the reservoir to do its job.
3. What happens if the ink is not flowing easily? Do the following:
 - Remove reservoir
 - Check to see that the nib itself is clean and will allow the ink to flow without the reservoir. Make sure that it will move across the paper freely and then reattach the reservoir.
 - Work on reservoir placement and tightness. Tightness can affect the flow.

- The wings of the reservoir may need to be adjusted. The metal on some are flexible requiring only fingertips and others may need long nosed pliers.
 - Reservoirs are not usually interchangeable between brands of nibs.
4. You can make your own reservoirs from soft metal. Check out different websites to see how this is done. It is possible to make a template from a reservoir that you already own. Pop can metal works well and can be easily cut. This can be a fun experiment and helps the calligrapher to better understand how a reservoir functions.



In the photo on the left, I have taken a reservoir that I already had and flattened it. I can then take it and use it as a template to create new reservoirs. Some may have to be adapted to better fit whichever nib you are going to use. This is great if you prefer not to fill your nib as often.