

Kerosene Lamp Wick Gives Twice the Light!

My problem with a kerosene lamp is that I cannot read fine print! There isn't enough light. If I turn the wick up for more light, the wick chars and the lamp chimney gets sooty. Then the light level drops back to what it was -- or even less!

The lamp on the left looks brighter - but is it? To find out, I used a photography light meter to measure light output. I put it at the end of a 12-inch ruler, then put the other end of the ruler up against the lamp chimney. The lamp on the left produced approximately one f/stop more light than the one on the right. **That's twice as much light!** I added a 4" x 6" mirror behind the lamp on the left and got an ADDITIONAL 50 percent more light. (Mirror not used in photo.)



Here's a cheap way to just about double the light output of a kerosene lamp! The kerosene lamp on the left has the trick wick! It's a brand-new, regular wick that was soaked in Distilled White Vinegar -- then dried. It produces a flame about 1.25 inches high before it makes soot. With the flame that high, a NEW wick didn't char. (An old wick that had been lighted before did char.)

How expensive is it? Distilled white vinegar costs less than \$1 per pint at your local grocery store. Lamplight 3/4" wide wicks are made in Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin. (www.lamplightfarms.com)

Any downsides? Yes - a bigger flame uses more kerosene. More light = more fuel. Normally a kerosene lamp with a 1" wick will burn 45 hours on 1 quart of kerosene. I didn't check how much more kerosene was used, but it could double.

How good is it? I can read a paperback book with small type, using the lamp on the left. Try this with your kerosene lamps, hurricane lanterns, and kerosene lanterns.