

STAR-LINE CONNECTOR ASSEMBLY AND TERMINATION INSTRUCTIONS

Proper assembly of multiple-contact connectors, for the most part requires common sense. The simplicity of these instructions is perhaps the reason why they are easily overlooked or taken for granted. These 27 reminders can help eliminate connector failures caused by improper assembly.

1. Read the assembly instructions carefully before actually starting to assemble connectors. Besides the matter of instruction on correct procedures, there are two important reasons for this preliminary step: To identify the various component parts, and to check for any missing parts.
2. Cut cable jackets and sheathing squarely and to correct length, using only wire strippers that have been approved for the operation. In preparing the individual wires in cables and harnesses for assembly, make allowances in length for reaching the outermost circle of contact cavities in the connector insert. This, of course, means that the conductors and the insulation should be cut progressively longer as they extend out from the center of the cable or harness to assure sufficient length for any necessary forming.
3. Follow specifications covering maximum cable stripping lengths for efficient cable grommet sealing. All wires should be cut squarely so that they will fit into contact wire wells correctly.
4. Before starting actual termination wires, it is essential that cables and harnesses be laid out in a specified order in accordance with the wiring diagram. Proper layout will reduce the need for twisting and crossover of conductors. If the wiring layout is not correct, the termination operation will be difficult or even impossible and the chances for making errors will be increased. Cable and harness assemblies having a spiral layout also must be matched carefully to the correct contacts in both the male and female inserts.
5. Some cables have a soft filler or braid on the conductors which, compresses when external pressure is applied. As a result, the cable diameter may be reduced to a point where the sealing range of the grommet is exceeded. In addition, the seal may take a permanent set and further reduce sealing efficiency. To avoid leakage at the seal under these conditions, it is suggested that, where construction of the cable permits, a metal ferrule be slipped under the cable jacket at the stressed position. This ferrule will serve as a compression supporting member and enable the gland seal to withstand high external pressures.
6. Use only correct size sealing grommets to assure resistance to moisture and other contaminants. Make certain that cable jacket is smooth where grommet is to seal. Remove any grooves or ridges if present by sanding or scarfing.
7. Use only the proper crimping tools that have been set or calibrated with precision gages.
8. When contacts are to be soldered, avoid direct contact of soldering tools to inserts. An open flame or hot soldering tip can carbonize insulating materials and make them useless.
9. Make certain that all contacts are the correct size before attempting to assemble them into insert cavities. This point is particularly important when both power and control types of contacts are used in the same connector.
10. Be sure that grounding contacts are correctly located.
11. Seat all contacts properly so that they will not be damaged or become disengaged during connector mating operations.
12. Use only the proper insertion tools and be sure that they are aligned axially when pushing contacts into their fully seated position.
13. When inserts have more cavities than conductors, plug unused cavities with either plain contacts or special seal plugs designed for the purpose. Some connectors require both a contact and seal plug in unused cavities to meet military specifications and to assure complete internal environmental sealing.
14. After all terminated contacts are inserted in their respective cavities and inspected, the cable adapter or insert clamp nut should be tightened with a wrench. This assembly operation should be done by placing the components in a vise with smooth-faced jaws and using a strap wrench.
15. If for any reason terminated conductors have to be removed from an insert because of any assembly error or change in circuitry, be sure to remove the cable clamp or insert clamp nut first before extracting the contact and reinserting it. This step is important because any attempt to remove the contacts when the resilient insulator components are compressed will result in damage.
16. When handling cables, use adequate support to prevent damage to the internal wires. Gland nuts and grommets are intended for sealing purposes and should not be used as a cable grip.
17. If one of the connector poles is a grounding wire, make sure that it is grounded properly before the connector is actually engaged.
18. When connectors having the same configuration are to be mounted close together, different or alternate keying arrangements should be used to prevent mismatching or cross-mating and possible damage to the electrical system or human injury.
19. Always inspect all aspects of connector assembly operations before putting connectors into actual operation.
20. Crimping and terminating of conductors to contacts must be done carefully. Make certain that wire strands are fully bottomed in contact wells by checking through inspection hole provided.
21. Soldering conductors to contacts must be done carefully and a non-conductive flux should be used to avoid corrosion or hygroscopic action. Do not use solder salts or acids because they may affect the dielectric properties of insulation materials.
22. Be careful not to damage wire grommets or contact retaining collets when inserting or extracting contacts.
23. Never try to straighten bent contacts. Straightening cannot be done properly and the plating on contacts will very likely be marred. This will result in a high resistance connection and will expose the base metal to possible corrosion.
24. Do not attempt to remove inserts that are bonded or locked in place in their shells.
25. Be certain that all components of connectors are assembled. Each part performs a vital function and it would not be included if it wasn't useful.
26. Each assembler of connectors should be his own inspector. Assembly workmanship is a significant factor in determining the quality of multiple-contact connectors. Quality cannot be "inspected" into connectors; it must be "built-in" during each and every assembly operation.
27. When potting connectors be sure to apply potting only in mated condition to assure that contacts will align properly.