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How to perform proper case priming

Proper priming is a critical operation in the reloading process. For ammunition to perform efficiently, consistent ignition is vital.

The case must be primed before adding new powder, so propellant powder is contained at the bottom of the case.

1. **Check to make certain you have the right size** – Primers for U.S. cartridges come in two diameters — large (0.210") and small (0.175") — and two general types — rifle and pistol. Rifle primers have more rigid cups and a hotter flash than pistol primers.
2. **Before handling primers** – Always wash your hands to remove oils or lubricant. Powder-free latex medical gloves can help you safely handle primers with greater dexterity.
3. **Clean the Primer Pocket** – Check for any powder and primer residue that may have contaminated the primer pocket, and remove it with a Forster Products **Primer Pocket Cleaner**.
4. **Chamfer any military crimp from the Primer Pocket** – Never prime military cases without first removing the crimped area that held military primers in place. Use a Forster Products **Primer Pocket Chamfering Tool**.
5. **Primer Seating** – To push primers into the primer pocket of your cartridge case, use the Forster Products **Co-Ax® Press**, a multipurpose handloading machine, or the Forster Products **Co-Ax® Primer Seater**, a tool dedicated exclusively for priming. Insert each primer, open side up, into the priming tool's cup.
6. **Separate any cases with primer pockets that are too loose to hold a primer securely** – This situation can occasionally occur if the previous load fired with that cartridge case was too "hot."

As you become more proficient in reloading, you will fine-tune your own process based on your tools/equipment, the type of shooting you do, the guns you reload for and the goals you have for your handloaded ammunition. We suggest that you continue to read, learn and understand various methods so that you can refine the system that works best for your needs.

Warning: Always store primers in their original, compartmentalized packaging. Handle them with care and respect. Primers that touch each other are more dangerous than single primers. Primers are explosive.

Safety: Please follow all pertinent safety procedures such as wearing safety glasses and hearing protection; being in a well-lit and well-ventilated workspace; having all reloading tools in top working condition; and no flames, sparks, or static electricity.

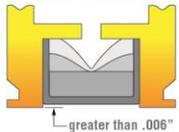
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Primers are small metal-clad cups that hold priming mixture, an anvil, and a foiling disc. Primers fit into the case's primer pocket, creating a spark when hit with the firing pin. Consistent powder ignition is mandatory for ammunition to perform efficiently.



A Primer on Primer Seating

INCORRECT: This primer cup doesn't rest solidly on the bottom of the primer.



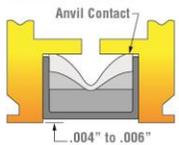
Since some primer cups are .120" high, seating the crown more than .006" below the case head will force the anvil through the crown. This may render the primer useless.

INCORRECT: This primer cup is seated too high.



A high primer is erratic in performance. It is also dangerous and could explode in the chamber of a rifle when the breech block closes before it is locked.

CORRECT: This primer cup is seated exactly as it would be with the Forster Products Co-Ax® Press.



The crown is .004" to .006" below the surface of the case head, the anvils are on the bottom of the primer well and the primer mix is properly stressed by the anvil for sensitivity. It is also safer than either of the two seated primers shown above.