

Notes on the use of the Plaubel Roll Film Holder

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Parts Identification

The instructions don't have a parts identification diagram so things can be a little confusing. Firstly the whole assembly is referred to as a 'rollholder'. There is a hinged 'back' on the rollholder. Finally inside the rollholder there is the 'film cage'. These parts are shown in Fig. 1 and 2.

Look at the knobs, there is one with no numbering, this is the 'film key'. The one with numbers is the 'counting wheel'. The small lever between the two knobs is the 'lever'. Note that the lever has a small knob on one end. To release the lever, push the knob end towards the counting wheel. You will also notice that on the pivot for the lever there is a coloured dot with a line through the pivot. This line is the reference mark for the exposure counter.

Loading the Film.

The instructions for loading a film into a holder with no red windows, refers to winding on the film until the start of the film is visible. This is not within my comfort zone, as I worry about fogging the first frame of the film. Instead I have developed the following system:

- Open the back of the rollholder by pulling back the two springy tabs.
- Pull out the film key and give it a quarter turn or so. It should lock in the 'out' position. It may take a few attempts to get it to stay in the 'out' position.

- Pull out the film cage. I find it easiest to pull on the film spool. You need to lift the non-hinge end of the cage out first, then it slides out.
- Remove the exposed film. Note that the pivots at one end of the spool are springy.
- Remove the empty spool. Put it aside for now.
- Put the new film into the supply side (the one with the two pivots). The free end should come out from the bottom, and go towards the outside of the film cage. You should see the BLACK side of the paper.
- Put the empty spool into the take-up side of the film cage (the side with just one pivot)
- Pull out the paper from the supply spool until the large arrow which goes across the paper is at the top of the supply spool.
- The paper goes around the rollers at both ends of the film cage (black side out). It will not quite reach the take-up spool.
- Slide the film cage back into the rollholder. Slide the supply spool end of the film cage into the rollholder first, then push the film cage into place. Ensure the paper is still on the rollers, and has not drifted off during the loading process. The end of the paper should be sticking up near the take-up spool.
- Insert the film key by pulling it out once more and giving it a small twist to allow it to slide back in. You will need to jiggle the take-up spool and turn the film key so that it engages with the spool. You may need to briefly press the lever to release the mechanism.
- Pull a little more paper out so that the end can be slotted into the take-up spool.
- Give the film key a turn so that the paper is definitely held in the take-up spool.
- Look down between the two spools, you will see two windows which are used by the rollholders with the red windows. While looking at this point slowly turn the film key until the big arrow (the one we used previously) is centred in the small windows. If the mechanism stops you will need to briefly push the knob end of the lever towards the counter wheel.

- Close the back. Make sure that both pins have been locked into place
- Pull out the counter wheel and turn it to set the counter. For a 6x9 back we want to set it to $7\frac{1}{2}$. For a 6x6 back we want to set it to 11. Remember the reference mark is the line across the pivot for the lever. In both cases if it cannot be set exactly to the required position, then set it to slightly less (i.e. before the required position). You will need to hold the lever in the ‘pushed’ position to get the counter wheel back down.
- Wind the film key until you get to 0. You will need to push the lever when the mechanism stops at the intermediate numbers. Note this is done so that there is no confusion between a freshly loaded rollholder, and a partially exposed film.
- Set the film reminder dials on the back.

Using the Roll Film Holder.

Fit the rollholder to the camera. Don’t forget to remove the darkslide before taking a picture. I generally wind on just before exposure. To do so briefly push the knob end of the lever towards the counter wheel. It will latch in a partly pushed position. Slowly turn the film key until the mechanism stops. Do not use too much force in winding as it is quite easy to make the mechanism skip over a stop, especially with a rollholder which has seen a lot of use. It can be useful to watch the lever while winding, until you learn to feel the action of the mechanism. As it approaches a stop it will ‘drop’ into the notch on the counter wheel. At this point wind more carefully. The lever will slide along until it hits the stop. You will quickly learn the right amount of force to ensure that you do not force the mechanism past the stop.