http://www.ebay.com/gds/Quick-Tips-on-Getting-Your-Lighters-Working-Again-/10000000055683047/g.html

Here are some quick tips to repairing butane lighters and flint lighters that are not working or sparking. These suggestions work about 95% of the time. If they don't work for you, buy a new lighter or have it professionally repaired if possible.

Type of butane fuel you are using:

Just like with the gasoline for your car, some butane fuels are cleaner than others. Choose a butane fuel that has been recommended for jet torch or flameless lighters. The brands I recommend are Whip-it ,Vector ,Newport ,Lucienne (quadruple refined),Colibri Premium Butane, Prometheus Butane or Dunhill butane. They seem to be the cleanest and work better than others. Additionally, I recommend that you never use most of the other brands most often found at a drugstore. Your local tobacconist or premium lighter retailer should have premium butanes in stock. I personally use VECTOR,WHIP-IT or NEWPORT (BEST FOR COLIBRI LIGHTERS) - other cheap inferior fluids tend to gum up the internals of the butane release valve. Colibri lighters require ultra refined butane (4x or better).

What's the difference in butanes? Well, the difference is the amount of oil present in the butane. The higher the oil content in the butane, the quicker your lighter will gum up. The higher the quality, the better for your lighter and its components.

Just a little bit of common sense prevails here. If you put oil in your butane lighter, the oil will eventually clog up the butane release valve. Your lighter will not light properly if the butane valve is stopped up with oil or any other foreign matter. (The butane release valve, as I call it, is the place where the butane comes out to be ignited and cause a flame).

Refueling your butane lighter:

Always bleed your butane tank before refueling. Bleeding your butane tank releases all the air that has been trapped in the tank and any unused butane that hasn't been used.

Again, some common sense really works here. Butane is a gas and it has to be transferred from the butane canister to your lighter through the fill valve on your lighter. Just remember that you must first bleed the air and old butane (if any left) out of the lighter's fuel tank so that the residual air/butane in your lighters butane tank wont displace the amount of new butane fuel the lighter can hold. Consequently, your lighter won't light or will "sputter" and the less it will light if air is present. Remember, air doesn't necessarily ignite by itself. The proper mix of butane and air works perfectly every time.

Here is how to bleed your butane tank on your lighter. Turn your lighter upside down, and using a small screwdriver or some other small metal device (never use a ball point pen because the ink will blow out all over the place), depress the refill valve on your lighter. Let all the air and butane escape.

Use some common sense here. Always bleed your butane lighter tank away from any flames and people and please do not smoke when you are doing this. You could catch something on fire.

If your butane lighter has a flame adjustment valve, turn the valve to its lowest level. Sometimes lighters have a "memory" and if you do not turn the lighter adjustment valve down when refueling, the lighter might "remember" that this is the lowest setting. Your adjustment valve may not work properly and the flame may be too low for you. (NOT ALL LIGHTERS REQUIRE TO TURN DOWN FLAME ADJUSTMENT BEFORE FILLING - (MOST COLIBRI LIGHTERS DO NOT REQUIRE THIS)

How and Why to Bleed a Lighter Before Refilling

Butane lighters offer a great deal of efficiency and reliability but there are occasions on which they will fail to light. This could be for many reasons but the most common is that there is air trapped in the reservoir. The air, of course, interrupts the fuel supply to the jet which results in a lighter that either fails to light altogether or which lights and then immediately goes out; this may happen over and over.

Most often, a lighter that is failing to provide a sustained flame may have air trapped in the reservoir, fuel supply line or both. On some lighters, one will be able to see these components. Most high-end cigar lighters, however, have cases which makes this impossible. To determine if this is the problem, one can simply hold down the fuel release and listen for the hissing sound of gas escaping. It there is no hiss audible, there is likely a fuel problem and the lighter will need to be professionally serviced/ repaired.

One can hold the lighter up to their ear while holding down the ignitor button to ensure that fluid is flowing out of the reservoir. There may be a sputtering sound which generally indicates that air is being discharged from the fuel line. This can be done until the sound is an even hiss which means that fuel is flowing evenly from the lighter and that it is ready to ignite.. Be careful when holding lighter to face and ear as to not actually light the lighter.

Never attempt to adjust any of the valves, aside from the flame height knob, without professional assistance. This will generally void the warranty and make the situation much worse than it was to begin with, the last thing one wants with an expensive lighter!

Bleed tank before refilling :

1.) Use a small screwdriver or something to depress the fill valve on your lighter.

2.) Depress the valve to release the remaining fluid in the lighter. Make sure lighter is upside down with the fill valve facing upwards . Make sure lighter is away from your face or any type of open flame. Be careful as the gas coming out is extremely flammable. Make sure all fluid is out and if you do not hear any more hissing the lighter is now empty and ready to refill .

3.) Keeping lighter upside down with the valve facing up, it is now time to re fill your lighter. Use a high quality ULTRA REFINED butane in your lighter. The lighters these days have a small passage way and filter system and anything under 4x refined or premium fluid can ruin the valve in your lighter. I recommend Ultra Refined fluid with at least 4x refined. My personal choices for butane fluid are Vector, Lucienne, Newport or Whip-It as they are clean with 0 Impurities and work the best.

Push the Butane bottle nozzle onto the fill valve and push down on the valve . Hold down steady for a few seconds then you can give a couple short bursts to make sure lighter is full.

Give the lighter time to reach ambient temperature (WARM UP THE BUTANE) before trying to light. If it does not light it may be because the fluid reservoir is not up to ambient or warm enough temperatures to light properly.

Quartz lighters not sparking:

At times your quartz butane lighter may not spark and ignite the butane when you depress the ignition button. (You know the clicker) If you hear a click, then the quartz is working. If you do not hear a click or see a spark when you depress the ignition button you need to buy a new lighter or have it serviced / repaired.

Look and see if the lighter is sparking. Please be careful and keep the lighter away from your face when you try this. It may ignite and burn you.

If the lighter is sparking, then check to see if it is sparking towards the burner area if it is a model of lighter with one or more burners (Jet Type) or towards the top of the butane release valve on a (soft flame style) lighter. If it is not sparking towards the burner area (JET STYLE) or the top of the butane release valve(SOFT FLAME STYLE), this is why the lighter doesn't work. The spark is not igniting the butane. Again, using a small screwdriver re-adjust the electrode. (The electrode, as I call it, is the little wire where the spark comes out). Be careful and adjust the electrode wire towards the middle where the butane release valve is or towards the outer holes on a jet flame lighter .Most likely it will work more often if the electrode sparks towards the outer holes on a jet flame lighter . Just move the electrode a little and test for the best

results. Little adjustments are all that is needed. After each adjustment, try lighting the lighter. If you break the electrode you will need to buy a new lighter or have it repaired.

Flint lighters not sparking:

Always check to see if you have a flint in the lighter. If you don't, then put a new flint in and your lighter will probably work. If you do have a flint and your lighter is still not sparking, then try turning the flint around to the side that has not been used. It may also have an old flint stuck in the flint pathway as this is a common problem with older style flint lighters that have been stored with the old flint installed.

Also, look at the flint wheel (this is the little steel wheel with tiny raised spots that rub against the flint to cause a spark). Is it "gummed" up? If so, take a brush, like a toothbrush (one that you won't use again of course) and brush the flint wheel to get all the flint residue cleaned off. If you have access to a dremel tool you can use this with best results with a small brass wire brush.

Another possible reason for a flint lighter to stop working is that the flint may not be connecting with the flint wheel. If this is the case, simply take the flint out and stretch the flint spring a little bit. **Caution: do not over stretch the spring**. Another problem with flint lighters is that if the old flint is left in the lighter for a long time, the old flint can become fused in (turned to powder and become hard) and the lighter cannot accept a new flint. A fused in flint however can be removed by taking the lighter a part or sometimes able to remove with a pick through the flint channel through the bottom of the lighter. This is mostly a common problem on Vintage Lighters stored with flints installed. Remove old flints when lighters are stored !!!! If you do have a fused in flint, i recommend to send in for repair to have it removed. Fused in flints can also damage and split a flint tube and it allows the flint tube to soak up lighter fluid and it will not light.

I do the repairs to remove fused in flints . Please feel free to contact me (CLICK HERE) .

VINTAGE FLINT LIGHTER

The most common reason for a Vintage Flint lighter to not work is the old vintage flint gets fused into the flint tube. This can cause damage to the lighter and render it a NON working lighter if the flint tube gets split or damaged from the pressure of the expanding flint over time (worst case scenario). Most of the time 90% it has not done damage and can be readily removed if you know what you are doing. To remove the fused flint it takes knowledge of taking apart the lighter. Most lighters have a curved flint tube so removal of the fused flint will require to take the lighter apart. I always try to access the problem flint from the top of the lighter as that is where it gets fused in. You sometimes have to actually use a dremel and a tiny drill bit on the really bad ones. Most of the time you can just take a small long thin screwdriver or a rod (PAPER clip)

that will fit and pick the old flint out (will turn to powder). Sometimes you have to push hard to get it to break up... I then use compressed canned air to blow out the flint tube to clear the remaining powder and flint. Make sure to Take the flint screw and spring and test that it goes all the way in from the bottom before you put the lighter back together .

(FUEL TYPE FOR FLINT/FLUID LIGHTERS)

I recommend using a good liquid lighter fluid that burns clean. I recommend and personally use Zippo or Ronsonol as they both work great. **Do not use lamp oils, Gasoline, Alcohol or anything else except liquid lighter fluid as they can ruin your lighter and cause problems .**

FLINTS

Always use a quality flint in your in your lighter. I prefer Ronson or Zippo Flints as they always work great in standard type lighters. Dupont, Dunhill and other high dollar lighters may require a different flint and by not using what is recommend can void the free repair warranty. Some St. Duponts, Dunhills use a wider than standard flint in their lighters. Some also use a longer than standard type flint.
Read your lighters manufacturers instructions for the proper flint to use.

If all else fails then hey, you can always buy a new lighter !!!!

Cleaning your lighter:

From time to time your lighter needs to be cleaned. Take a cotton swab or a pipe cleaner and wipe it around the area where the flame comes out (burner area) . You can also use a little rubbing alcohol on the cotton swab but make sure it does not hurt the finish . Be very careful when cleaning around the spark area not to move or bump the electrode (wire that spark comes out) as if is not aligned properly , it can make the lighter not light . Be careful to do this when the lighter doesn't have a flame, after all, you could catch the cotton swab or pipe cleaner on fire. I recommend to remove the butane or lighter fluid from lighter when cleaning .You can also use some Nevr-dull wadding polish to polish up the metal as it is non abrasive and will remove dirt and grime from the outside. I dont recommend cleaning the outside of most vintage lighters as it will remove the wonderful patina that has been created over time and collectors like the antique original look that it may have from being old.

SOME LIGHTERS HAVE A CATALYST COIL FILAMENT OVER THE BURNER AREA (GLOWS WHEN LIT) . Please be careful when cleaning your lighter. If your lighters does have a catalyst filament coil on it you can damage or break the filament when trying to clean as it is very sensitive and fragile . Just avoid the area and clean as best as possible.

After cleaning this area, gently blow out any dirt, dust, or tobacco particles .I use canned compressed air. Again, please be careful and don't do this when the lighter has a flame or do not blow the compressed air onto the sensitive catalyst coil if your lighter has one .

Buying a new lighter:

When you are shopping for a cigarette lighter, I always suggest that you buy a flint type lighter because they tend to work more often than not and they simply last forever. For Cigar Lighters I do recommend a double or triple flame jet flame type lighter. For Pipes they make special types of lighters that can direct the flame downwards into the pipe.