

## ***Processing 120 film***

### **Equipment**

#### ***Primary Preference***

Lipped plastic reels for Paterson-type tanks

Stainless steel reel and tank

#### ***Second Level Preference***

Jobo reels

Paterson reels with the ball bearings removed

#### ***Backup equipment***

White cotton gloves

Changing bag

### **Stainless Steel versus Plastic**

120 film is wide and is very influenced by temperature - it becomes soft as the temperature rises.

Some film has a quite thin base and this film is susceptible to buckling. The temperature effect is magnified

Standard plastic Paterson reels are intended to grip and apply twisting pressure to load the film. This works against using them on 120 film when the film is thin or the temperature rises.

The lipped reels have a driving force but the lip appears to reduce the effect.

Stainless steel reels simply feed from the middle with no extraneous pressure.

#### ***Stainless Steel and Soup Temperature***

If you intend to do either E-6 or C-41 colour film processing, it is easier to maintain temperature using the stainless steel tanks than either Paterson or Jobo plastic tanks. These methods assume that you can keep the soup at a given temperature within a narrow range.

### **Cotton Gloves**

- Some people have sweaty hands.
- Sweaty hands lead to fingerprints on film.
- Cotton gloves eliminate this.
- But cotton gloves require extra practice because you lose tactile sensitivity.

### **Loading the lipped reel**

While in the light:

- Make sure that the reel is opened out for 120 film.
- Make sure the film feed openings on both sides are lined up.

In the dark:

- Unroll the film paper backing off the spool until you come to the film.
- Hold the reel in your non-preferred hand.
- Take the end of the film between your thumb and forefinger of your non-preferred hand – emulsion facing down.
- Gently hold the film by the edges with your preferred hand.
- Feed the film into the film feed opening on both sides of the reel. Do not push the film hard. Feel and feed gently

- Push the film in for about 15cm.
- Here you have two options:
  1. If the reel is running freely, push the film through the whole of its length onto the reel. This may require the odd pull back and wriggle to overcome resistance.
- OR
- 2. Use the ratcheting style and feed the film by the forward-reverse twisting of the reels.
  - When the load is complete, rip the film of the backing and feed the last of the film onto the reel.
  - Place the reel on the core and put it into the tank.
  - Put the lid on the tank.

## Loading a stainless steel reel

While in the light:

- Make sure the film holding clip is in the centre of the reel.

In the dark:

- Unroll the backing off the spool until you come to the film.
- Hold the reel in your non-preferred hand.
- Find the clip that holds the film and place your thumb (of the non-preferred hand) over it.
- Using your preferred hand, line the end of the film up with the clip – the emulsion side will be facing down.
- Using your thumb, drag the end of the film under the clip. Your preferred hand will be applying feeding pressure on the film.
- Feel along the film to see if the film is even within the reel. Push it gently to centre it.
- Hold the film gently by the edges using your preferred hand.
- Encourage the film to curve over into the slots. Do not apply too much pressure. The natural curve of the unrolled film will help you.
- Hold the reel up in the air so that the film falls vertically from its position in the reel.
- Rotate the reel with your non-preferred hand, gently feeding the film into the slots.
- Use two of your fingers from the non-preferred hand to rub along the back of the film as you roll the reel. You are feeling for bumps and unevenness.
- If you feel a bump then gently unroll some of the film from the reel until the bump has gone. Then recommence rolling and feeding.
- Continue until you reach the end of the film.
- Rip the film of the backing and feed the last of the film onto the reel.
- Insert the reel in the tank and put the lid on.

## Film Processing Times

The most useful source for film processing times is:

<http://www.digitaltruth.com/devchart.php>

The film manufacturers have their data sheets for their film on their websites.

