How long should a fiber optic patch cord typically be stripped

Overview

Good fiber optic stripping techniques in your cable assembly process are crucial. See best practices for how to strip fiber optic cable buffers & jackets.

Key Takeaways

A fiber optic patch cord is typically stripped to expose about 1 to 2 inches (25–50 mm) of the fiber for connector termination, depending on the connector type.

Standard Stripping Guidelines

The exact length of fiber to strip depends on the connector type and the termination method: LC, SC, and ST connectors: Usually require stripping about 1 to 1. 5 inches (25–38 mm) of the outer jacket to expose the buffered fiber for proper insertion into the ferrule and adhesive application. MTP/MPO connectors: Often require slightly longer stripping, around 1.

5 to 2 inches (38–50 mm), to accommodate multiple fibers and alignment within the connector housing. Buffer and coating removal: After stripping the outer jacket, the primary buffer coating (typically 900 µm) is removed to expose the bare glass fiber, usually leaving about 10–15 mm of bare fiber for polishing or cleaving.

Best Practices

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Avoid over-stripping: Exposing too much fiber increases the risk of breakage and contamination, which can lead to signal loss or connector damage. Use proper tools: Fiber strippers designed for the specific fiber diameter (250 µm or 900 µm) ensure clean, precise stripping without nicking the glass. Clean thoroughly: After stripping, clean the fiber with lint-free wipes and isopropyl alcohol to remove debris and prevent insertion loss.

Follow manufacturer specifications: Each connector type may have slightly different requirements for jacket and buffer stripping lengths, so always consult the connector datasheet.

Summary

For most single-mode and multimode patch cords, stripping 1–2 inches of the outer jacket and leaving 10–15 mm of bare fiber is standard practice. Proper stripping ensures reliable connector termination, minimizes insertion loss, and maintains long-term network performance.

Article Content

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On single-fiber cables (as diagramed above), this jacket OD is usually 2-3mm in diameter, and can be stripped using common wire-strippers of the appropriate gauge.

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