

Makerbot: Changing the Filament

When the Filament has run out, or if you would prefer to print in a different color, you need to change the Filament reel. Here is how.

1. Remove the Old Reel:

The first step to removing the old reel is to make sure the 3D printer is turned on.

Then, using the release button, lift the section containing the reel. It should be located at the back of it, and is easiest and most safely reached from above the machine, not through the printing area. You may need to push and hold the button or small lever next to the handle in order to lift it properly. Make sure when it's lifted fully it locks in place and will not fall back down before releasing it.

After that, using the menu on the machine, choose the options for the filament and choose the option to unload the filament.

Once the machine has finished disconnecting the filament from the extruder, slowly rotate the reel clockwise to remove the filament still in the machine and wind up the reel.

The peg the reel is on should have two small nubs keeping the reel on it. Pinch these nubs and slide the Reel off the peg.

Store the remaining filament in a bag in an appropriate location.

Adding the New Filament:

First, now that the peg is clear and while the filament section is still in the open position, select or acquire a new reel of filament.

Locate the free end of the filament, and then put the new reel onto the peg in such a way that the reel rotating counter clockwise will feed it into the extruder. There should be a small click as the nubs from earlier move in place to keep the reel attached.

Now, make sure the hose that the filament will travel through is plugged into the top of the extruder.

Then, slowly feed the free end of the filament into the filament slot until you feel some level of resistance. This slot on our extruder is outlined in red or has a red 'mouth' for the intake. You should be able to see the filament going through the tube and into the extruder before feeling the resistance that stops it.

Next, using the printers menu options, go into the filament options and select load filament. If the device does not automatically begin feeding filament into the extruder, then gently feed the filament into the mouth or intake until it does so.

When the filament begins to come out of the extruder, you may stop the loading procedure.

Then carefully lower the filament section back into it's normal, closed position.

Clean the printing plate and you are ready to print again.

Troubleshooting:

Below are troubleshooting tips in no particular order.

If you are having trouble feeding the new filament, check the end of it that would be going into the extruder. It may have melted, deformed, or simply just be slightly off. Trimming the end and possibly cutting it or trimming it at an angle so that it has a point feeding into the extruder has been known to fix the issue and help feed the new filament into the extruder.

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