

Seam Ripper Replacement Cap

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If you're like me, you probably have a handful of these little seam rippers that, while still functional, have lost their caps. They remain sharp, but without the caps, the handles are too short to use comfortably, so these rippers tend to get pushed to the back of the drawer, where the unprotected blades can pose a hazard for unwary fingers.

I know these things are cheap and easily replaced, but I do hate to throw out anything that is still useful, and I wanted to see if I could find a suitable substitute for the lost and broken caps.



I considered repurposing a cap from a discarded stick pen – if it had fit, it would have been the perfect solution. But all the caps I tried were much too large, and the seam ripper just fell out. I needed a different idea: time to think outside the box.

There's no real need for the new caps to have a closed end; a snug-fitting tube will work if it's long enough to provide a sheath for the point of the blade – much like the narrow tubes used to protect the ends of artists' paintbrushes. All I need is a tube of the right diameter to stay in place.

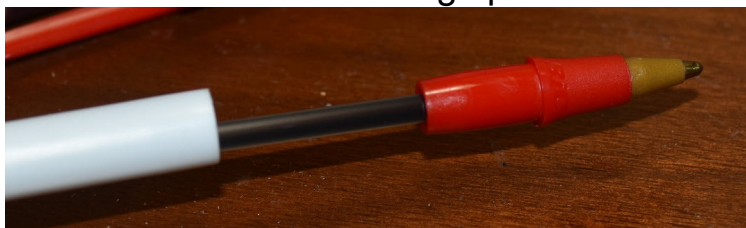
In the past, I've used lengths cut from narrow plastic drink-



ing straws to protect the ends of my paintbrushes, for which they're a perfect fit. But they're not a solution for the seam rippers, because even if I could have found a straw the right diameter, I wasn't confident that they'd be durable enough.

As it happens, I had also saved some discarded barrels from worn-out stick pens, which turned out to be just the right size and diameter. These Bic-style pens are the best ones, because they have just enough give to cut cleanly without cracking. (Some stick pen types are more brittle, and will break when cut.)

Start by removing the ink tube and the writing tip from the barrel of the pen. You can discard these as you won't be needing them.



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All that's left is to cut a section of the tube long enough to completely cover the blade of the seam ripper.

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I've found that a tube of 1.5" to 1.75" is about right for my small seam rippers. To cut the tube, I used a cutting tool with a replaceable utility knife blade.



This tool is perfect, making a clean, straight cut through the pen barrel without crushing it.

The section of pen barrel can then be snugged over the blade end, forming a sheath, or, when the ripper is in use, a handle extension. Perfect! It's not the prettiest fix in the world, but it's a serviceable way to keep both the worn-out pen and the coverless seam ripper out of the landfill. Now all I need to do is figure out how to sharpen the blades. . . .

