

The Luthiers Mercantile Wedge Index Pin - SPFIW

In order to simplify off-setting the fingerboard nut slot, index pin has been machined with a 0.006 inch off-set from pin center.

First choose which end of the index pin fits your template (it does not work with other suppliers templates). One end suits our new single scale templates, the other, our 'legacy' dual scale templates. If you are slotting left to right (as in the diagram below) position the pin with the notch upward for the first slot (the nut position) and then down for the rest of the slots. Starting from the left, the notch is down for the first slot, and up for the rest.



Why offset the nut slot? Our fret slotting templates, used in both our Manual and Power slotting systems, are machined with the first slot as the zero fret. Using a "zero fret" is not typical, but common enough to warrant attention. No off-set is necessary if you are using a "zero-fret".

A zero fret is installed on this Lichy guitar. The center of the zero-fret sits directly above the slot that the fret is inserted to. Assuming no compensation is introduced here, then the center of the zero fret is positioned at the true beginning of the scale length.

Typically (when no zero-fret is installed) the slotted fingerboard is cut at the first slot and the face of the nut sits adjacent to the fingerboard there. But doing this without offsetting would put the end of the fingerboard (the nut face) half the width of the slot too close to the bridge end. The goal is to position the nut face at the start of the scale, referencing the zero fret.

Using the standard slot width of 0.024 inch, the fingerboard/template combo must move 0.012 inch away from the first slot in order to align the nut face with the actual beginning of the scale.

To do this offset, the wedge index pin is inserted into the template zero fret (first) notch and the nut slot is cut. The pin is removed, rotated 180 degrees, and inserted into the next notch. The first fret slot is cut. These shifts move the fingerboard/template a total of 0.012in = 0.006in left of center + 0.006in right of center aligning the nut slot edge with the nut face at the scale start.

If you don't wish to offset your nut in this way, start with in the orientation that best fits your templates and then stick with this orientation all the way through the process.

