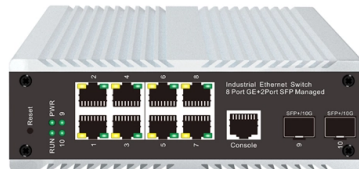


How to perform a pigtail fiber test



Article Overview

Fiber optic pigtails in use can be tested using an OTDR or a power meter with a temporary splice to measure insertion loss and verify signal integrity.

Methods for Testing Pigtails

1. Using a Power Meter and Light Source Connect a fiber pigtail as a launch cable from a calibrated laser light source to the fiber under test. Use a temporary fusion or mechanical splice to connect the pigtail to the in-use fiber. Measure the optical power at the far end with a power meter to determine insertion loss. Ensure the splice is clean and properly cleaved to avoid measurement errors. This method is similar to single-ended loss testing but introduces slight uncertainty due to the temporary splice . 2. Using an OTDR (Optical Time Domain Reflectometer) For longer fibers (>50 meters), an OTDR can be used. Connect a launch cable (pigtail) with a connector on the OTDR end and a temporary splice to the fiber under test. The OTDR measures backscatter and splice loss, allowing you to identify the pigtail's performance, connector loss, and any adjacent splice issues. Use a 1-km launch reel for short spans to accurately measure connector and splice loss, following proper backscatter coefficient settings for the fiber type . 3. Temporary Splice Considerations

- Use a good cleaver for reliable fusion splices.
- If using index-matching gel, renew it occasionally to maintain accuracy.
- Splice protectors are not required for temporary testing . 4. Standards and Acceptance Criteria
- For single-mode fibers, a splice loss of ≤ 0.30 dB is typically acceptable; if three attempts fail, the maximum should not exceed 0.35 dB

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Website: <https://www.chromadecksigns-eastrand.co.za>

Email: sales@chromadecksigns-eastrand.co.za

Phone: +32 2 318 5792

Address: Avenue Louise 500, 1050 Brussels, Belgium

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