

Building A D-104 Mic/Hamshack Lamp

By [Dick Sylvan, W9CBT](#)

Ever since I was a young ham back in the late 1940s, I have always admired the appearance of the old Astatic D-104 microphone with push-to-talk stand. I never owned one, but recently decided to look around for an old inoperative one to make into a lamp for my ham shack. It was not easy finding one, but I finally was able to get my hands on one in fairly decent shape. The base was scratched up pretty badly so I refinished it with gray spray paint. After it dried, I rubbed it down with 00-steel wool to give it a nice satin finish.

First, strip out the insides of the mike -- remove the cartridge, PTT switch inside the upright post and the preamp in the base -- not too bad a job. Now it's time to drill out the microphone portion. Put the mike in a vise with the neck up (don't scratch the chrome), and drill down through the neck with a drill that just fits the hole in the neck. The hole gets narrower about one-half inch down and must be enlarged for the threaded tube. Continue drilling right through the top of the inverted mike. This is probably the hardest part of the project.



Get a length of the type of threaded brass tubing used in lamps, it's about 3/8" in diameter. The tubing is cut to length after you locate a light bulb socket with a switch. I wanted a chrome finish light socket -- that is easier said than done. None of the major DIY outlets carry a silver-colored socket. I finally located one at a lamp store. A black plastic one would work fine, too.

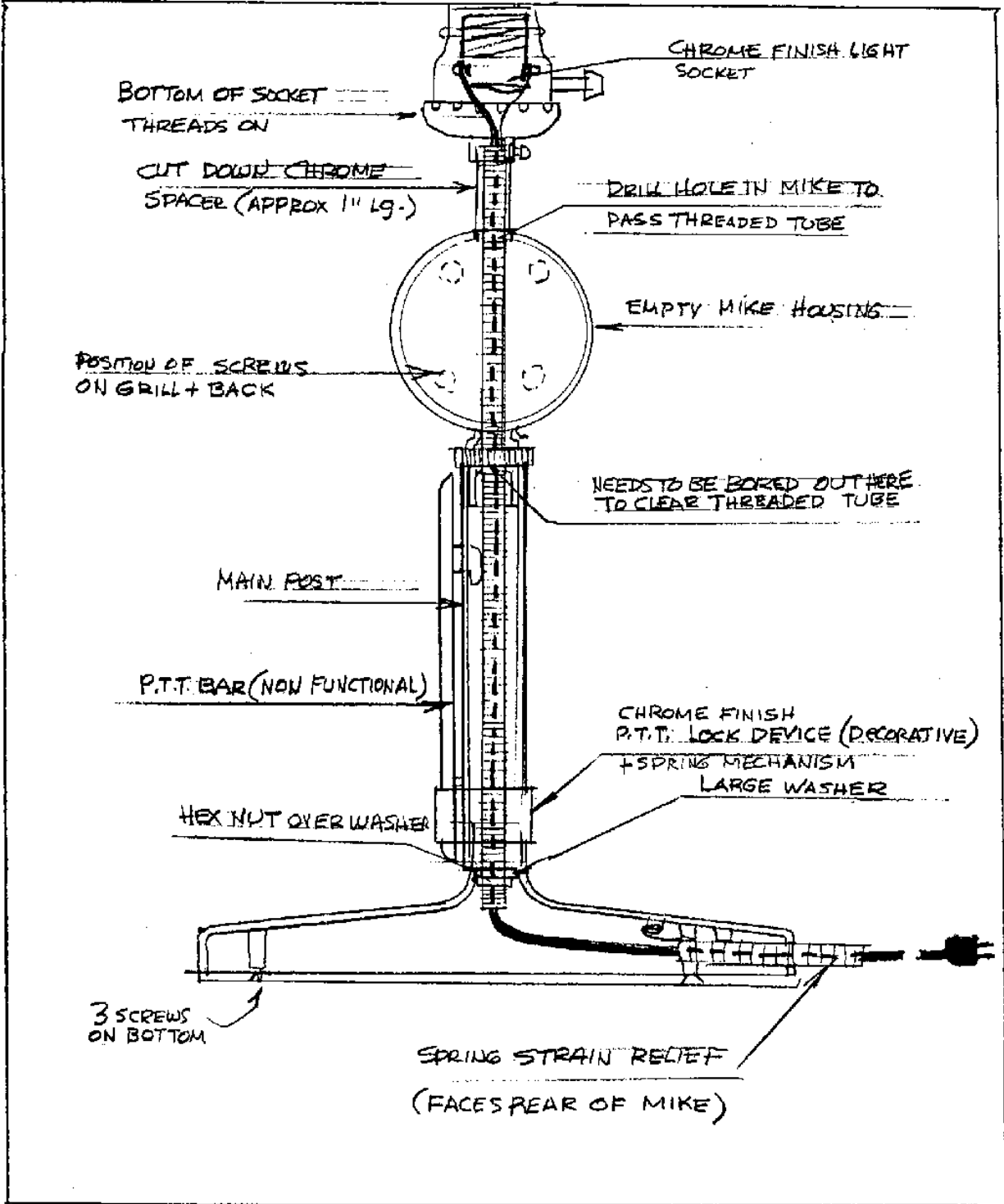
You need a small spacer section of chrome tubing (about 1" long) to slip over the threaded tubing, when I couldn't find any, I cannibalized a chrome mike plug that worked nicely.

(The sketch shows the position of all components)

Next, screw the socket onto the threaded tubing followed by the chrome spacer. Insert the threaded tubing from the top of the mike down through the stand, and install a large washer at the bottom. The tubing can then be measured for proper length. Cut the tubing to length and reassemble the socket and spacer tube. It is locked onto the mike with the washer and hexnut that fits the threaded tubing. Now it's time to wire the lamp.

Take some black electrical line cord (approx. 6') and thread it through from the base of the mike. I used the original chrome spring strain-relief the mike cable used, it adds a nice touch.

The wire goes up through the tubing and is wired into the socket. That's all there is to it! I have been enjoying the D-104 lamp glowing in my ham shack and reliving the earlier days of ham radio.



LAMP CONVERSION FOR D-104 MIKE	W9CBT
	4-27-02 DICK SYLVAN