IMAGE QUALITY & SETUP

No Diaphragm? Center Your Light Anyway.

A quick reference for budget vet and student microscopes with no field or aperture diaphragm.

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A card with a hole does the diaphragm's job

Many clinic scopes have no diaphragm, so the usual Köhler steps don't apply. A stiff card with a 1/4 in hole over the light port lets you find and center the light in about a minute.

SCAN FOR VIDEO

Do This

Focus a slide at 10x first
Any slide with good contrast works.

Condenser up, then back a hair
Raise it all the way, then lower it just slightly.

Card on the light port
Center the 1/4 in hole over the light. It stands in for the missing field diaphragm.

Lower the condenser until the hole is sharp
The blurry glow turns into a crisp, bright disc.

Center it with the screws
Turn the two condenser centering screws until the disc sits in the middle.

Condenser up, card off
Raise the condenser back up and take the card away. Pull an eyepiece: the light should be centered and even.

Avoid This

Dimming with the condenser
Lowering it to cut glare leaves the image flat and uneven. Use the brightness dial.

A thin or light-colored card
Light leaks through and washes out the disc. Use a dark, stiff card, or stack two.

A hole that's too big
A big hole fills the view, so there's no edge to focus or center.

Forcing the centering screws
If the disc won't center or won't stay put, that's a service call.

Leaving the card on
It's a setup tool. Take it off before you read slides.

THE HABIT, EVERY TIME

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4
Card on the port	Focus the hole	Center it	Card off

Questions or want a hands-on refresher for your team?

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