A few years back I was preparing to teach a “Gizmos and Gadgets” workshop for one of the regional forensic meetings, and I was having trouble finding inexpensive tungsten wire-needle holders to include in a lab kit for the students.

Stephen Garten, a ballistic identification specialist with the ATF, who was an intern working with me at that time, found a wonderful website—www.FindingKing.com—that sells pin vises, needle holders and other handy precision tools.

From the homepage, click on “Jewelers Tools” and then “Pin Vises and Hand Drills” from the dropdown menu. On that page you can choose from a variety of tools sold for amazingly low prices. One of their products, “Item #: Kit-9137,” includes three different needle holders plus a fourth holder that can be used for micro knives. (You can also type “9137” in the Search field and it will take you directly to Kit-9137.) Each holder is sold separately, ranging from $3 to $5, but you can purchase all four for less than $9.

Thanks to Stephen for finding these holders. I owe you one—or maybe two!