Fiber Optic Cable		Single Strand Filament	
Advantages	**Disadvantages**	**Advantages**	**Disadvantages**
ORDER & CONTROL Having the strands start in a cable allows you to manage and control the individual strands as your project grows. This is especially useful when creating Ceiling Stars or Starscapes. By keeping the strands bundled, from the light source to just a few inches or feet from the 'Star' gives your better control and protection of the individual strands.	**MORE TIME** To extract a single strand you must first cut away the protective cable. This takes time.	**TIME SAVINGS** The primary advantage to single strand fiber optic, is easy access. No protective cover to cut away saves time. This time savings can add up during a big project. Although each strand needs to be individually directed to the end destination.	**VULNERABLE:** The longer the span, the more vulnerable. If a single strand spans any distance (typically from the light source to the end effect) without a protective covering, this leaves the strand vulnerable to damage and breaking.
PROTECTION If you need to have a long distance between your light source and the end effect, the cable protects the strands. You save money and repair time. (I learned this one the hard way!)	**EXTRA TOOL** You will need a hobby knife to cut the protective cable.	**COST SAVINGS** The production of the single strand filament does not require bundling them into cable. This can result in a cost savings as opposed to bundled Fiber Optics.	**LACK OF ORDER or CONTROL** If your project requires hundreds (or thousands) of light points, Single Strand fiber optics can become difficult to manage and control.
VARIED EFFECTS Certain projects and applications use the filaments in their cable format. This gives you a different effect than just one strand.	**MORE EXPENSIVE** The additional step of putting the mono-filament into cable adds to the overall cost of the Fiber Optics.	**LESS WASTE**: Each 'star' is threaded individually, therefore there is very little waste.	**LIGHT LEAKS** If the unprotected strand becomes scratched, 'nicked' or bent, this will create 'light leaks' at these damaged spots.
NO LIGHT LEAKS The cable helps prevent breaks and bends that cause light 'leaks'.	**MORE WASTE**: Because the length of the cable must equal the longest distance traveled by the furthest 'star' the balance of the fibers (in that particular cable) tend to be wasted as they are traveling to 'stars' that are closer to the light source.		**TENDS TO TANGLE** The plastic is very slippery. If you're not careful single strand filament can easily become tangled, and knots are common.
EASY STORAGE The cable can be easily coiled and stored without too much concern for nicking or bending the fiber optic filaments.			**LOOSE THE END** You need to keep track of the end of the strand. I can't tell you how many times I've dropped the end after making a cut, only to spend the next 5 minutes looking for it. TIP: Put the end of the fiber between your lips after making the cut.
Cable Summary: We prefer to use fiber optic cable for star ceilings that are installed in rooms with suspended ceilings. You will have more waste than single strand, however it's easier to manage.		**Single Strand Filament Summary:** Less expensive per fiber foot and less waste make this an appealing option for those with patience. Works well in star ceilings that are installed in sheetrock. Did we mention that patience is required?	