

5 ITEMS TO COMPLETE YOUR GUN CLEANING KIT

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All gun owners should have a basic cleaning kit and know how to properly clean their firearm. One thing that every new gun owner wants to know is how to clean their firearm. Almost every new gun owner I train asks me to show them how to clean their firearm. It does not matter if it is a rifle, shotgun, revolver, or pistol.

Even though new gun owners want to know how to clean their firearm, almost all of them arrive at their firearms class or their training session without a cleaning kit! This is because many salesmen do not explain the importance of maintaining their firearm, nor do they try to up-sale them a cleaning kit. Typically, the new gun owner leaves the store with a new gun, matching ammunition, and a lot of questions.

There are many basic gun cleaning kits on the market. A basic gun cleaning kit usually includes a cleaning rod, rod attachments, gun oil, cleaning solvent, and various size patches. If someone is an avid shooter, especially if he or she shoots various types of firearms, there are additional items that should be part of their cleaning kit to complete it.

It is important for anyone who shoots a firearm to have a complete cleaning kit, whether you only take one shot through it or 1,000 shots. A complete cleaning kit allows the gun owner to completely clean their firearm by reaching debris and residue that a basic kit cannot reach. Always verify your firearm is unloaded, safe and clear, and ammunition is nowhere near your gun cleaning area. These items include bronze/steel wool, adapters and cones, brushes and picks, choke wrench and grease, and a bore scope.

Bronze/Steel Wool



Bronze or steel wool is an invaluable tool to keep in your gun cleaning kit. Extra-extra fine, extra fine, or fine bronze or steel wool have many uses. One of the best uses

of this material is for removing rust. If you have a blued gun such as a traditional rifle, shotgun, or a revolver, you have had or will eventually get rust on the barrel or receiver.

Bronze or steel wool, the finer the better, and a little gun oil can easily remove rust without damaging the finish. All you have to do is put a little gun oil on the rust and rub back and forth with the wool. It is important to remember to only rub the barrel, receiver, or anywhere else rust might appear, down the length of the gun or from the butt of the stock to the muzzle. Do not rub perpendicular to the barrel.

Extra fine bronze or steel wool can also be used to smooth out small burrs that might appear on the moving parts of the action. Once again add gun oil and polish the parts. This should remove rough areas or any burrs that develop on the parts of your firearm.

Adapters and Cones



Adapters and cones are very helpful in cleaning firearms. Adapters are small components that go between the cleaning rod and the rod attachments such as brushes, jags, and slots. Many times, cleaning rods and rod attachments often have different threads. This means the attachments will not screw onto the cleaning rod. Adapters screw into the cleaning rod and then the rod attachment screws into the adapter.

Adapters also allow larger rod attachments to be used on smaller cleaning rods. This prevents you from having to have two rods because the adapter allows you to use

the one you already have. For example, shotgun rod attachments and cleaning rods are usually larger than rifle and pistol rods and components. An attachment allows the gun owner to screw a special adapter in a rifle rod so the larger shotgun attachment will fit.

Cones are required when cleaning a barrel from the muzzle to the breach. Whenever possible, barrels should always be cleaned from the breach to the muzzle. Sometimes this is not possible due to the design of the firearm. When this occurs, cones are inserted into the muzzle of the unloaded firearm barrel, so the cleaning rod does not damage the crown or the opening of the muzzle.

Brushes and Picks



Brushes and picks are essential in getting at hard-to-reach residue, dirt, and grime. Brushes can be made of steel, bronze, or nylon. Steel and bronze brushes should only be used on metal parts. Nylon brushes can be used on all parts. Brushes are great for removing residue around the forcing cone of a revolver or cleaning the bolt face.

Picks are great for getting into tight and small areas. Pick sets come with different angle picks and sometimes a “dental” mirror. These cleaning tools can reach what other cleaning implements miss. Picks are one of the best tools for cleaning and removing debris from extractor claws and hooks.

Choke Wrench and Grease



It is always a good idea to keep a choke wrench and choke grease in your gun cleaning kit. This is because all chokes should be removed before cleaning a shotgun. Having a choke wrench handy when cleaning can prevent the gun owner from getting lazy and cleaning the gun with a choke still inside, because he or she does not have a choke wrench within reach.

By removing the choke before cleaning the shotgun, the individual maintaining their firearm can clean the choke threads in the barrel, the threads on the choke, and entire choke. Before screwing the choke back into the unloaded firearm barrel after cleaning, a thin layer of choke grease should be rubbed into the threads on the choke.

If you do not remove the choke before cleaning, the choke can become stuck in the barrel. In extreme cases, choke wrenches or even the barrel can get damaged by trying to remove a choke that has not been removed in years.

Bore Scope



Bore scopes are great tools to use for inspecting barrels, chambers, and other hard to see areas. Bore scopes have a monitor and a flexible optic cable with a camera. Most optic cables have lights around the camera to light up dark areas. This is useful in looking for obstructions or damage in the barrel rifling that could affect accuracy.

Firearm bore scopes can be very expensive. A cheaper alternative is a plumber's scope. Models can be found online for as low as \$30 and up to several hundred dollars. Of course, the cheaper you go, the poorer the imaging you will get.

As you mature in your gun ownership when it comes to target shooting, competition, or hunting, you should also mature with your equipment. It would be no different than someone starting out as a mechanic. He or she may start out with a basic tool set but as they gain experience and knowledge, their collection of tools will increase. This applies to shooters also. The more you clean your firearms, the more experience you get. The more experience you get, the more techniques you learn. This ultimately leads to having the proper tools for the job to properly maintain your equipment.

The more you clean your gun, the better you will become at it. This equates to a cleaner and more dependable firearm whether it is for self-defense, hunting, or just for plinking!

