

How To Choose Your Gun Cleaning Kit

A gun is only safe in the right pair of hands, but safety means much more than good shooting at the right time.

You must pay attention to what you're doing when cleaning your guns, follow the proper procedures and, just as important, use the right tools!

Poorly manufactured tools can ruin parts of the gun and also wear out faster. If you are in a long term post-crisis situation, the wrong gun cleaning kit can be just as bad as none at all.

So, with that in mind, let's take a look at the best tools on the market, based on my personal experience, not just a number of stars on Amazon.

What to Look for When Choosing Your Gun Cleaning Kit

When choosing a good quality cleaning kit for your firearms always buy the best quality tools that you can afford. If you just want to get a cleaning kit to be used only at home then purchase a universal multiple set. These cleaning sets usually come in a wooden or metal case and have a small diameter cleaning rod plus all the necessary cleaning tools for pistols, rifles and shotguns.

For those shooters that like to store their cleaning supplies in a chest, they are available. A good chest would be one that is made of wood, has a removable tray, a storage drawer, and two padded Y-yoke inserts to hold [your rifle](#) or shotgun.

In order to fit as many weapons as possible, there is also an

adapter fitting so that you can thread on the necessary brushes, jigs, and mops. These universal cleaning kits usually range from 10 to 12 piece kits, 28 piece kits, 32 piece kits, and last but not least a 68 piece kits.

The size of the kit will be determined by the number of weapons and the caliber of the pistols, rifles, and revolvers that it can be used for. If you own shotguns, these universal kits also have the [necessary cleaning tools](#) for all of your favorite gauges.

Field Cleaning Kits

For those individuals who need to clean rifles, shotguns, and handguns in the field, there are individual small compact cleaning kits that are lightweight and easy to use. If it is for a handgun, there will be a small pouch that contains a cleaning rod, a cleaning brush, and all other supplies necessary to clean your handgun.

There are also sets available for shotguns and rifles. All of these cleaning sets will contain solvent, patches, lubricant, and a quick wipe down towel for wiping down all exterior metal parts to protect them from the elements.

For those individuals who want a very small and very compact cleaning system, try pull through cleaning kits that use flex wire with pull handles instead of a multiple section cleaning rod. The other type of pull through cleaning kit, the BoreSnake, uses a nylon pull through cord that has metal brushes and a cone shaped bore guide.



To use this cleaning system first drop the cone shaped bore guide down through an opened rifle or shot gun receiver till

it exits out of the muzzle. Then pull the BoreSnake through the barrel of the weapon. These cleaning kits come with all the necessary cleaning tools, solvents, and lubricants that would be necessary to clean a particular firearm.

No matter which cleaning kit you choose, you should also keep on hand extra supplies on hand to replace those supplies that become dirty or contaminated while cleaning guns. An example of these supplies would be:

- Cotton cleaning patches, double-ended nylon cleaning brushes, brass cleaning brushes of the caliber necessary for your rifles, shotguns, pistols, and [revolvers](#).
- Mops for your shotguns in the gauges that you own.
- Rags for cleaning very dirty areas on your firearms.
- To help keep from getting your weapons scratched or dinged on the workbench, a good rubber cleaning mat is always a good idea.
- A set of dental picks is also important to keep on hand for gun cleaning. You can buy a set of 12 picks for about \$6.
- A set of 10 different sized hemostats can cost you about \$8. These tools are good to hold something when you don't have a spare hand to hold it in place.
- Pipe cleaners are ideal for cleaning gas tubes and other tight areas.

What Are the Best Gun Cleaners, Solvents and Lubricants to Use?

The following are products that I have personally tried and used over the years. They have never let me down and they have always protected my firearms. Cleaning products have come a long ways from the old Hoppe's number 9 solvent and gun oil.

Today the use of synthetics and Teflon have made it easier to clean and lubricate your firearms in one step instead of many

steps. The use of cleaners, scrubbers, and lubricants is a personal choice. In many cases it is a test of trial and error.

Gun Cleaners and Lubricants

Break Free CLP

This is a super cleaner, lubricant, preservative containing Teflon and other specialized chemicals. It penetrates and displaces corrosion, dirt, firing residue and water better than ordinary solvents.



[amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/Safariland-Break-Free-CLP-Cleaner-Lubricant-Preservative/dp/B000068888)

This cleaner keeps on working after application and prevents grit from adhering to it. Therefore, coated parts actually become self-cleaning. Guns and parts treated and cleaned with it are never “degreased”—so there’s no chance of rust forming.

CorrosionX

This is another combination cleaner and lubricant for all weapons. This product cuts through stubborn bore deposits for a more thorough cleaning.

This product lubricates better in all temperature types from the hottest to the very coldest than products fortified with Teflon. This product bonds to all metals like a magnet to

prevent rust even when used in some of the worst weather conditions.

Solvents

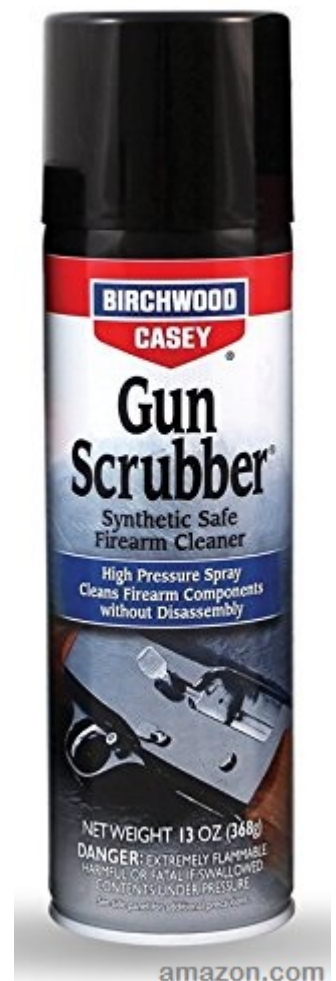
Hoppe's Number 9 Solvent

In my opinion one of the best solvents to use in firearm cleaning is Hoppe's number 9 solvent, which has been around since 1903. This solvent was designed to remove primer, powder, lead and metal fouling while preventing rust. When using this solvent, remember to have plenty of fresh air in the cleaning area.

Aerosol Gun Cleaners

Birchwood Casey Gun Scrubber

This gun scrubber is an excellent cleaner for cleaning semi-auto rifles and the semi-auto pistols. Just spray on and then wipe off with paper towels or rags. This product will remove dirt, grease, and grime and leave your weapon with a clean finish that looks like new.



Be sure to clean your weapon over a towel of some sort or over a trash can. This will let the dirt, over spray, and runoff end up on the towel or in the trash can. The excess chemicals evaporate and just the dirt is left on the towel or in the trash can, not on the weapon.

This stuff cleans so well, it is extremely important to lubricate after cleaning as the surfaces will be left without protection. Also, be aware this gun scrubber is flammable, so don't smoke or have any ignition source nearby when using it. When using this gun scrubber, it is also important to wear safety glasses and to work in a well ventilated place.

Gun Oils

Hoppe's Gun Oil

These products are excellent at oiling and preserving gun steel. They come in drop bottles, spray cans, and lubricated towels that are kept in an airtight box. Hoppe's also has an oil with Teflon for those individuals that like this mixture.



[amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Birchwood Casey Gun Oils

These are synthetic oils that are excellent for lubricating and protecting all metal surfaces on firearms. It is a great

lubricant for all weather conditions. This product will reduce metal on metal friction on all metal mating surfaces.

It will not gum up or lose its viscosity under extreme temperature variations from -55°F to 300°F. The natural solvency of Synthetic Gun Oil cleans as it oils, while its low evaporation rate assures protection against rust. This product comes in pump spray bottles, spout cans, and aerosol cans.

What to Beware of When Buying a Cleaning Kit

Beware of false advertising or claims on gun cleaning kits and supplies

Before doing any purchasing of gun cleaning kits or supplies do your homework and research these items. There are a lot of false claims that manufacturers and suppliers of gun cleaning kits & supplies make to sell their products.

Do not fall into their trap. If a new cleaning kit or supply appears on to the market, try to find a friend or other reliable person who can give you a good and decent report on the products in question.

No matter which cleaning kit and supplies you choose to use, it is very important to make your final evaluation based on the results you get. If you happen to find a good kit or supply, then you can safely pass this information along to the manufacturer as well as others interested in this topic.

Paying too much for a cleaning kit that does not meet your needs

A lot of people do not know how to evaluate a good gun cleaning kit. Some people fall into the brand name trap. When this happens, you get what you paid for. Sometimes these kits

are just a collection of poor quality cleaning tools and supplies seeking to capitalize on the reputation of previous products made by the same company.

If you do some research, you will find older cleaning kits that used excellent tools, cleaning solutions, and lubricants, while newer versions are considerably lower in quality. To make matters worse, some of these newer kits are made overseas, and they are nothing more than over-priced junk and a price rip-off in the bargain.

Buying a cleaning kit that uses cheap, poorly constructed materials, and accessories

When you find one of these cleaning kit you definitely do not get your money's worth. Here are just a few problems you may encounter:

- The cleaning rods might be too loose even when they are screwed in tight, and cannot be used.
- Cheap cleaning rods also have a tendency of bending and stripping the connecting sections.
- The bore brushes maybe cheaply constructed and they will lose their scrubbing diameter in just a few trips down the barrel.
- Patch cleaning jags may bend, lose the patch in the barrel, or the jag itself may get jammed in the barrel and must be removed when broken.

Using these kits, or even high quality ones can be dangerous to both the firearm and the shooter if you try to take shortcuts during the cleaning process. I once made the fool choice of purchasing a cheap cleaning kit, and the cleaning rod got stuck in the barrel of the firearm and had to be knocked free since pushing and pulling on the rod did not free the rod.

I didn't have a hammer or anything else to tap on the back of the cleaning rod handle, so I compounded the mess made by my "penny wise" approach by using my hand to lightly hit the cleaning rod. Then I got mad and hit it very hard just once. The cleaning rod handle shattered and my hand was impaled on the cleaning rod.

I did not get a good feeling when I looked down and saw a cleaning rod going clean through my right hand, and will never again use my hand in place of a hammer let alone a cheap cleaning kit! This little gun cleaning incident took me years to live down with my fellow marksman and hunters. To this day I still have a little "reminder" of this incident – every time the weather is damp and cold there is a dull pain in my right hand.

Only Ask Qualified Sales People for Advice

In most good gun shops, sporting goods stores, and gun shows, the employees are well-versed in gun cleaning kits, cleaning supplies, and which lubricants to use in nearly all weather conditions. This is their main business, and they are up to date on all the necessary information.

If you buy your supplies in one of the big generic discount stores or department/superstores, you will be very lucky to just find a salesperson to help you. Finding one that might know anything about gun cleaning kits or shooting supplies can be impossible.

If you cannot go to a gun show or sporting/gun shop to get some good quality advice before approaching other kinds of stores, then at least do some research online. The last thing you will want to do is go into a discount store with no ideas about what to buy and wind up with a bunch of clerks that can't help you either.

Before you spend your hard earned money, do your homework, and ask questions of people who own and use the cleaning kits and accessories you are thinking about buying.

Beware of cheap, poorly made cleaning kits and cleaning supplies. These cleaning kits and accessories could do damage to your firearms or injure the individual that is doing the cleaning. The best cleaning kit and accessories to buy are those that are a good value, are safe to use, and will give you years of good service.

Interested in improving your safety? [CLICK HERE](#) to find out more!

*This article has been written by **Fred Tyrell** for [Survivopedia](#).*