

Gun Oil and Gun Cleaner: What are the Differences?

Gun oil and gun cleaner are two very different products and should be used at distinctly different times during the firearm cleaning process.

Here we will discuss the importance of both gun oil and gun cleaner and the difference use cases for both.

Learning how to properly shoot a gun is critical. However, as a gun owner, it is also imperative to educate ourselves on how to clean and lubricate our firearm safely and with the proper products available on the market.

What should I use on my firearm?

What is Gun Cleaner?

Gun cleaners are blended with special ingredients [to lift the residue or dirty components](#) built-up on the gun. They also include carbon dioxide that helps to propel the cleaner onto the firearm.

Gun cleaners remove carbon, dirt, grease and oil from the gun barrel, action, bolt or other mechanism on the firearm.

Gun cleaner ingredients can include:

- **Acetone:** An ingredient used in most nail polish removers
- **Heptane:** An oil dissolving agent
- **Toluene:** Used in paints, sealants, rubber, printing ink, glues and disinfectants.
- **Methanol:** A solvent used to blend with other chemicals

If there are extra ingredients listed on the label, they are most likely coloring or odor agents that do not help with the cleaning.

Best Uses of a Cleaner for Our Firearms

Regular use of a gun cleaner will keep the firearm in great shape as well as keep us safe from any possible harmful materials that may have settled on the firearm. If not cleaned properly, the residue left after shooting can eventually pit, corrode or even destroy our guns.

1. Softens the Debris

Gun cleaner penetrates into the dirt on our gun by softening the material. Over time, if not cleaned properly, the residue left on the gun after a day of shooting will harden and stick to its parts.

Choosing a cleaner with a specialized formula will save you from having to spend hours removing hardened residue.

2. Prevents Corrosion

Taking the time to clean your gun after each use will prevent excessive powder build-up and corrosion. Finding a cleaner that is potent and well-formulated will penetrate rapidly and deeply making sure that your gun is clean and safe to use.

Bore cleaning products are also very important aspects of a gun owner's guide to safe use. It is important to ONLY use a cleaner, NOT oil, in the bore cleaning process.

3. Suitable for All Environments

Many cleaners work well in all types of environments and are suitable for use on many different firearms.

Cleaners to Use on My Firearm:

- **Gun Medic Cleaner:** The Medic formula is an ["All-in-One" formula](#) that leaves a thin layer of lubrication on the firearm.
- **No.9 Gun Bore Cleaner:** A cleaner most widely used to remove powder, lead, metal fouling and rust.
- **Foaming Bore Cleaner:** This product dissolves and removes copper and power residue after each shooting session.
- **Hoppes Black Copper Cleaner:** The Black product is designed for modern firearms and removes high levels of copper.
- **Elite Gun Cleaner:** Here we have a cleaner that conditions metal and cleans carbon, copper and lead fouling. It is also odorless and biodegradable.
- **Elite Foaming Gun Cleaner:** This cleaner is best for bore cleaning action and comes in a foaming cleanser formula.

Gun cleaners also require time to dry. Once your firearm has dried completely, then proceed to apply the gun oil. Cleaners can sometime strip away the oils from the gun. So, make sure to take the time to find a well-formulated oil product to apply next.

What is Gun Oil?

Gun oil is a lubricant. Oil protects metal from corrosion. Its purpose in the mechanical world is to reduce friction between moving parts.

Just as in the engine of a car, [gun oil for a firearm](#) is a lubricant for all of the mechanical parts located in and on your gun. Applying a specially formulated, penetrating oil to your gun cleans and protects it from corroding and rusting.

Gun oil ingredients can include:

- **Kerosene:** light fuel oil made by distilling petroleum
- **Mineral oil:** colorless, odorless, light mixtures of higher alkanes from a mineral source
- **Ammonium hydroxide:** a colorless aqueous solution

Best Uses of an Oil for Our Firearms

Firearms exert a tremendous amount of force when shot. After a long day of shooting, the moving parts inside and outside of the gun need to be properly lubricated.

1. Protection from the Elements

Gun oil should be used to protect your firearm from the environmental elements to prevent rust.

Many people who live in humid environments or in salty air ocean-side climates may need to use a cleaner more often. A wet climate may cause more rust on the firearm as opposed to dry and less humid conditions.

2. Simple Application Process

Applying the oil after a cleaner is done with a needle or swab applicator.

The lubricant is dabbed in small spots onto the frame/action, slide assembly and exterior of the barrel. Remember, do not use oil in the bore cleaning process. That is one of the major differences when using a cleaner vs. an oil.

3. Prep for Storage

Using a specialized gun oil also preps it for storage. Add a lubricant to the gun before storing the firearm. This will prevent it from rusting and corroding while it sits safely in its case until the next use.

Oil to Use on my Firearm:

- **[No.9 Lubricating Oil](#)**: The ingredients in this oil are ideal for firearms, fishing reels and other precision mechanisms.
- **Gun Medic Lube**: This is an “All-in-One” lubricant to be used after a cleaner has removed the shooting debris.
- **Elite Gun Oil**: Here we have an oil with long-lasting coating technology to lubricate firearms as well as to protect against corrosion.
- **BoreSnake Oil**: Use this product as a lubricant, cleaner and protectant to avoid rust on your firearm.
- **[Black Lubricant](#)**: This lubricant manages high heat temperatures in high round shooting situations.

Do not over apply gun oil. When a firearm receives too much lubricant after the cleaning process, it could potentially attract even more contaminants causing reliability issues.

A Clean and Well-Oiled Decision

Gun ownership is more than just a sport or a chance to simply carry a firearm. It is important to stay educated on the difference between gun cleaner and gun oil to preserve the reliability of a firearm.

Since 1903, Hoppes No.9 has been specially blended to remove carbon, lead and copper with a nonflammable and biodegradable formula. The synthetic blend has also been crafted to meet the cleaning and lubricating needs for modern firearms and many other mechanisms.

We will help to educate you on how to use, care for and clean a new firearm.

Visit our website at www.Hoppes.com.

We promise to make a great experience for everyone when it comes to taking proper care of a gun!

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