

GUIDE TO BOOT POLISHING: TIPS AND TRICKS

PARTIAL ARTICLE FROM : **DREW'S BOOTS**, 2642 Roosevelt Blvd, Eugene, OR 97402 <https://drewsboots.com/pages/about-us>



Leather is a hard-wearing and stylish material that can keep its original charm and warm appeal with regular care and maintenance. Treat it like you would your skin, and you can enjoy many years with a supple and strong leather boot.

If you want to give your boots the proper care to extend their longevity, many boot polish products can nourish and recolor your dry and dull boots. Explore our boot polishing tricks and tips to keep your boots in good shape for years to come.

WHAT IS SHOE POLISH?

Shoe or boot polish can come in many textures, including creams, pastes, and liquids to give leather footwear a noticeable polish and shine. Some can even provide waterproof protection for the leather fibers and extend the life of your boots.

Boot polish is usually evenly applied to leather boots using a microfiber cloth or brush. Several coats of polish and buffing can help produce a high shine.

WHY POLISH BOOTS?

Leather boots are often billed as durable and long-lasting (and they are), but this assumes that you care for the material from the start to enhance its longevity. Boot polishing is essential to owning a pair that requires patience and regularity.

Like many aspects of owning a boot such as using a shoe tree to keep its form, boot polishing is necessary. Here are a few benefits of polishing leather boots:

- Polishing protects your shoes from scratches and stains with wax to keep unwanted substances from penetrating or damaging the leather.
- Polishing is not only functional but also helps improve the shoe's appearance by bringing it out its natural glow and beauty.
- Polishing can get out scratches and scuffs due to the abrasive agent that can buff out small and light scratches and can even cover, seal, and nourish these areas with some shoe polish products.
- By forming a protective barrier over the leather material, shoe polish can ensure you extend the life of your leather boots and spend less time and money replacing boots.
- Polishing your shoes can be a meditative practice. It connects you with the boots that have been with you in demanding jobs. This practice helps you care for them as they have cared for you. It can be a relaxing process that can keep your footwear in good shape.

HOW OFTEN TO POLISH SHOES

For best results, we recommend polishing your boots every 4 to 6 weeks. However, this may vary depending on your needs. For example, polishing too much can damage your boots, creating an excessively moist leather that can degrade the fabric, stain it, and even be a breeding ground for bacteria and fungus. It can also clog your leather, making it not as breathable.

If you don't polish enough, there are drawbacks, such as having a boot that doesn't shine as bright as it could. Not polishing boots can also affect your appearance and confidence. A lack of polish can cause your shoes to crack and make you buy new boots sooner than you have to.

Here's a general guideline of how often you have to polish your boots depending on the leather material:

- Leather boots can be polished once a month
- Nubuck boots can be polished 2-3 times a year
- Suede boots can be polished once a year
- Cowboy leather boots can be polished every 3 months
- Military boots can be polished once a month
- Logger boots can be polished every 1-2 months
- Hiking boots can be polished twice a year
- Waterproof boots can be polished twice a year
- Snakeskin boots can be polished every year

WHAT YOU NEED TO POLISH BOOTS



Polishing leather boots is easy if you have the right supplies on hand. These supplies may depend on the type of leather.

- Shoe polish
- Clean cloth
- Horsehair brush
- Welt brush or a soft-bristle toothbrush
- Warm water

TYPES OF BOOT POLISH

The best shoe polishes can nourish and strengthen dried or worn leather. Boot polish comes in three varieties: creams, waxes, and liquids. You can even use cream and wax polish together to recolor and give your boots a radiant shine.

WAX POLISH

This polish is made from waxes and pigments that create a protective layer between the leather and elements that can damage its look and function. Unlike cream polish, it does not restore color but does provide a good shine and covers scratches.

Although this polish can produce a high shine on boots with a shiny finish, it is harder to apply due to its firm consistency.

CREAM POLISH

Cream polish is softer than wax polish and is available in various colors. They also contain leather conditioner, which can nourish, soften, and recolor leather fibers. If you have boots with a unique color, cream polishes are best because of the color variety.

LIQUID POLISH

Liquid boot polish is easy-to-use and effective at polishing boots. Most liquid polish products come in a squeezable bottle with a small sponge applicator attached. Liquid shoe polish is convenient but will not deliver the same shine as other products.

BEST CLOTH FOR POLISHING BOOTS

Polishing cloths are an effective tool to restore leather shoes' shine. Remember that many use different materials, including socks if they're in a pinch. Ultimately, look for a soft, absorbent, and quick-drying cloth. You can even make your own polish cloth with a soft cotton t-shirt.

HOW TO CLEAN LEATHER BOOTS BEFORE POLISHING

A major step before polishing your leather is to fully clean your leather boots. You need a nice and clean surface to work on. If your boot has dirt, dirt, grime, and other material, it won't let the polish do its work.

1. Prepare the cleaning area with newspaper or rag and remove the laces.
2. Use a horsehair brush to brush off the debris. Use a welting brush to clean the welting properly.
3. Use a brush, cloth, or sponge to clean the leather with saddle soap. Wipe the soap away and let the boots dry for at least 15 minutes. Clean the laces with an old toothbrush with warm water and soap.

BEST WAY TO POLISH BOOTS



There's no one way to polish boots. Although the process is similar, you can use different supplies and pay closer attention to detail depending on the level of care you have time for or what the boot requires.

Although many premium polishing products can give your boots that mirror shine, short of a spit shine, there are also ways to keep your boots in good shape without these products.

Here are some general boot polish tips:

- Select the appropriate polish for your boot's color
- Apply an even and thin coat of polish
- Let the boots air dry in a dry and warm place
- Use a polish brush to buff out the excess polish and smooth the surface

BAKING SODA

Baking soda is more than just a must-have in the kitchen. Apart from its potential health and beauty uses, baking soda can also be an efficient shoe shiner. It works by dissolving dirt, grease, and other debris from surfaces. In addition, its crystalline structure is a mild abrasive that can remove stuck-on material without damaging the surface.

Baking soda is commonly used to brighten shoes and even deodorize them. However, this may cause some darker shades of leather to whiten. Create a baking soda boot paste with equal parts (2 tablespoons of baking soda and water) and use it on lighter-colored boots.

The baking soda paste can be made by mixing the water and powder. Use a clean cloth or cotton pad to rub the homemade paste into the leather surface. After gently rubbing the entire shoe, let the boots air dry for about 5 minutes.

Then, use another damp cloth to clean the baking soda paste from the boot. Finish off by using a clean cloth to buff and polish the boot gently. Allow the boots to air dry.

OLIVE OIL

Don't have baking soda on hand? Olive oil is another kitchen alternative that can condition leather. The application can soften the dry or scratched leather boot, nourishing its fibers and increasing its flexibility and durability to protect it from drying and cracking.

TOOTHPASTE

Toothpaste can do more than just remove stains from your pearly whites. It may even be gentle and effective enough to treat leather's tough-to-remove stains. A non-gel and non-whitening toothpaste can also brighten and remove organic compounds like dirt, grass, or food.

Use a dab of toothpaste on the affected area and spray a bit of water to make it easy to apply over the leather. Gently clean your boots with a soft bristle toothbrush to dislodge debris and remove the toothpaste paste with a moist towel.

A horsehair brush can be used to brush the shoe evenly. Allow them to air dry. Toothpaste, like baking soda, has a brightening effect, so it should not be used on darker-colored boots but on lighter color boots instead.

ORANGE PEEL

Don't throw those orange peels away quite yet. If you're out of your standard boot polish, orange peels can give your boots a shine without using other boot care products. Orange peels can be directly rubbed on the boots. After applying the orange peel. Let the boots air dry for about 15 minutes, wipe with a clean and moist cloth, and let it dry.

COMMERCIAL BOOT POLISH

Keeping your boots in excellent shape for years is easier than ever with the wide availability of many premium commercial boot cleaner, polish, and shine products. There are many reasons to consider commercial polish over a homemade one but any boot polish is better than no boot polish.

Wax polish, leather oil, cream polish. You've got plenty of options to choose from depending on the material.

One of the biggest tips for a good boot polish is testing the product, whether it's homemade or commercially produced, on a tiny area of your boot where any color change isn't as noticeable. This ensures you know its effects on the material over time. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for proper application.

HOW MANY COATS OF POLISH ON BOOTS?



The number of coats your boots need depends on many factors, including the type of boot, the boot material, and how thick your coats are. Boot polish coats can be anywhere from 1 to 10 or more for a glossy shine. We recommend 3-5 for a solid polish.

HOW LONG DOES BOOT POLISH TAKE TO DRY?

Boots can dry in 15 to 20 minutes, but people will often let them air dry for a few hours or even overnight to properly dry the polish. It also depends on the number of coats applied and the type of polish you use.

Avoid shining shoes before the polish completely dries because this won't produce the best shine. If you want a quick shine before you head out, we recommend waiting to start and complete your shine until you have more time to let them completely dry.

HOW TO REMOVE SHOE POLISH FROM LEATHER

There is a thing as too much shoe polish. If you have applied too many coats of polish or you used the wrong color polish, it's okay. Don't freak out. There are ways to fix this problem without wearing poorly polished leather shoes.

Here is what you need:

- Saddle soap
- Cotton ball or soft cloth
- Horse hair brush

We recommend using a leather boot cleaning solution to remove the tough polish stain and soften the leather.

A boot polish remover is a special product with the ammonia necessary to remove the polish or other strains from leather dress shoes and boots. Test a small amount of the product on an inconspicuous area since some products can darken the leather material.

After removing the excess boot polish, use a leather conditioner to keep your shoes shiny and lustrous.