

How to Properly Clean an Air Gun

One of the most often asked questions we receive is about cleaning air guns. I am only concerned with precision International target air guns, so that is what I will be discussing here. Certainly, the procedures I will describe could not hurt any air gun, but they may require more effort than is necessary for the common sporter.

One of the most common questions is: "Should I clean the barrel at all?" The answer is a very emphatic yes! It is quite easy to demonstrate the benefits of cleaning with before and after test groups from a machine rest. How often should you clean an air gun? Anywhere from 150 to 1,000 shots may be appropriate for your gun. It is nearly impossible to wear out a precision barrel, but the original accuracy can disappear by not cleaning at all. I saw one gun that took over 400 patches, but the accuracy was restored.

The barrel cleaning method I recommend is as follows:

1. Put the gun in a cradle or vise. You can hold it on a table or on your lap, but it is much easier if it is held for you.

2. Open the breech.

3. Feed a "pull through" from the breech to the muzzle.

A "Pull Through" is nothing more than a piece of monofilament fishing leader doubled and tied into a large loop that is longer than your barrel by enough to leave a small loop at each end.

4. Tie a piece of string that is longer than the barrel to the loop of the "pull through" on the breech end and to the trigger guard.

5. Use 7/8 to 1-1/4 inch cotton patches.

6. Use a solvent that is non-petroleum based.

Most common solvents are either petroleum based or have a petroleum based vehicle. An easy test is: "Can you make it burn?" If you can ignite it, keep it away from your air gun. I recommend TSI-301. It is the only solvent we use in our shop for air guns or firearms.

7. Put a rag across the gun under the breech to keep excess solvent out of the action.



A cloth placed under the breech will keep excess solvent out of the action.

8. Wet a patch with solvent and pull it through your barrel.

9. Remove it from the "pull through" at the muzzle and pull the "pull through" back to the breech using the string you tied to the trigger guard.

10. Repeat several times.

11. Pull three or four dry patches through the barrel and examine the last one. It should be almost perfectly clean.

If not, repeat the steps above alternating several wet and several dry patches until the barrel comes clean.

12. Wipe the exposed metal surfaces of the gun with a rust preventative. Again TSI-301 is recommended.

That is all that is necessary for normal care and cleaning.

You should expect to have to shoot 10 to 20 shots from a clean gun before it settles down to normal performance.

There is not much else you can or should do to keep your precision air gun performing its

best. Some manufacturers pack a small tube of grease with their guns. It is for use very sparingly on the linkage of pneumatic guns. The **Feinwerkbau** factory also recommends that very active shooters have the seals changed and the piston inspected annually.

I do not like to be negative, but there are some **don'ts** that I feel strongly about.

1. I would never try to clean a precision air gun from the muzzle with a cleaning rod.

2. I do not believe in felt pellets. They don't build up enough pressure to be effective, and I have seen them become stuck in the barrel. They don't hurt the barrel, but the measures required to remove them may damage it.

3. If you are cleaning a **Feinwerkbau** P70 or 603, be extremely careful not to get any moisture, lubricants or solvents on the compensator.



Use a "pull through" long enough to leave extra at both ends of the gun.



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