

RUST PREVENTION

Technoid:

I recently moved to Hawaii where the humidity is consistently above 80%. As you can imagine, this can play havoc with the shotguns after a shoot. There's no such thing as just leaning the gun in the back of the closet. I'm afraid to keep the guns in a soft case because they all hold moisture.

Do you or your readers know of any "bombproof" ways to keep moisture away from the guns? I'm afraid I might deplete the stock of WD-40 if I keep going at this rate!

Thanks RS

Dear RS:

Believe me, you are not alone. Here is what I do to rust proof working guns that will be shot fairly frequently. This is not for guns that will be stored for a year at a time.

1) I keep my guns in a giganto steel Browning gunsafe. A steel box is probably bad from the rusting point of view, so I have also installed a "Golden Rod" in the safe. A Golden Rod is simply a small tubular heat source (about equivalent to a 15 watt bulb, but it doesn't burn out every couple of weeks) that raises the dew point of the air inside of the safe. It was designed for that purpose. Just as long as the air inside the safe is a bit warmer than the air outside the safe, you will avoid condensation. It seems to work and just about everyone around here uses one.

As you so correctly note, keeping your gun in a gun slip is just about the worst thing that you can do. It traps the moisture and turns it into its own little steam bath.

2) I use Birchwood Casey's "Sheath" as a rust preventative. It is not a multipurpose cleaner, lubricant, protectant. It was designed from the ground up to prevent rust. I am sure that there are other products designed to do the same thing, but Sheath is available at gun stores, works well and is not as sticky as the more aggressive Pachmeyer's Rust Preventative (really a tool and die maker's die preserving product).

Once per year I pull the wood of my O/Us and SxSs, check them, clean the insides, blow everything out with Gun Scrubber and then I spray everything with Sheath before reassembly. That seems to work on the insides of things.

As to the outsides, I simply spray Sheath on a cloth and wipe things down. They tell you to spray it on directly, but I don't want to soak the wood with the stuff. A little Sheath on a Kleenex pushed down the bores with a dowel works for those.

If you shoot and handle your guns often, I doubt if you really need "Sheath" on the outside. Just about any light oil on a cloth will do. Do not spray oil directly on to the gun as you can soak the wood and discolor it.

As to WD-40: You hear and read a lot of pros and cons about this product. I use WD-40 strictly as a water remover- nothing else. Many gun owners feel that WD-40 not only does not prevent rust, but actually causes rust. I don't believe that, but I do think that there are MUCH better rust preventative products on the market. It is just as easy to reach for a can of Sheath as it is WD-40, so that is what I do.

Remember, the best way to keep a gun from rusting is to take it out into the sunshine and shoot it every day! Trust the Technoid.

Best regards,
Bruce Buck
Shotgun Report's Technoid