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Article Published Date: 01/28/2008

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First let me start off by stating that this is **NOT** a "How To Clean the AR-15 or M-16 Rifle" article. I do not show you step by step how to take everything apart and how to clean and lube your rifle. I could not really improve upon what the Army and Marines offer in TM9-1005-319-10. I have included an excerpt from this manual of [18 pages of cleaning and lubrication instructions](#) in [Adobe PDF format](#) for you to download and print out if you do not have it already.

What this article is about is what tools are available today that make cleaning the AR rifle easier and help you do a better job. These tools are not necessarily what you may carry in your pack while deployed as a soldier in Iraq or Afghanistan. They are what you should have on your cleaning bench at home.



Figure 1

CTK Ultimate Gun Vise

Cleaning any rifle or carbine is made easier by having a great stand that securely clamps down on your firearm while freeing up your hands to do the job at hand. I prefer my [CTK Ultimate Gun Vise](#) when I am cleaning an AR style rifle or any rifle for that matter. I originally reviewed this gun vise back in April of 2005. Here it is just under three years later and it is still knocking along and works and looks like the day I got it. God only knows how many gallons of Ed's Red and other gun solvents have seeped over its surface. I used a plastic gun vise made by another company for several years and it slowly but surely disintegrated and fell apart on me. I know that they are a sponsor of the site so my word may be less than believable, but I have tried many other products and they are in my garage covered in gunk, broken, and gathering dust.



Figure 2

Break-Free Powder Blast Gun Cleaner-Degreaser

Manufacturer Product Description

Removes powder, other firing residues, oil, grease and plastic streaking with a blast of solvent, citrus oil, and carbon dioxide (CO₂). It is non-toxic and non-abrasive for a safer environment. Safe to use with all types of firearms. This works immediately and leaves metal parts greaseless, oil free and with a pleasant citrus odor.

If you want to cut down on how long it takes you to clean a rifle or pistol there is nothing like using Break-Free Powder Blast Gun Cleaner-Degreaser. Matter a fact most of the time after spraying everything down there is not much left to clean. For any gas operated

weapon or especially a direct gas impingement type of weapon like the AR this cleaner really helps break down the carbon residue left behind from firing. It is perfect for dry cleaning of the gas system (not leaving any oil to capture carbon fouling). I just spray a bit into the gas tube from the receiver end. The little flexible tube installed in the spray nozzle really helps make this easy. Then I run a AR pipe cleaner (covered below) and my gas tube is clean and ready for my next bout of shooting. It is a little pricey but it does not take a lot to do the job so it lasts a while. Most gun stores and [Midway USA](http://www.midwayusa.com) carry it in stock.



Figure 3

Spraying down my AR with Break-Free Powder Blast Gun Cleaner-Degreaser .



Figure 4

AR-15 Chamber Guide Part # ARR069

Manufacturer Product Description

Required to correctly clean the AR15 rifle, fits in the chamber to clean the rifle from the breech end and prevents damage to the barrel crown, rifling and chamber, use your standard cleaning rod and enhance your accuracy and weapon life.

I like to use a cleaning jag when cleaning the bore of a rifle. The AR is no exception. The AR is though a difficult beast to wrangle a patch and the cleaning rod with a jag on the end. My fingers just do not fit very easily into the receiver. I have found that the AR is the one rifle that using a chamber or bore guide is a must when cleaning. I picked up the guide I am using in the article from [Cheaper than Dirt](http://www.cheaperthandirt.com) for under \$20 and it is very well made and is a very tight fit with my receivers. Whatever chamber guide you choose it will make it easier to clean your bore.



Figure 5

Trying to insert a patch for a jag to push through.



Figure 6

Inserting the chamber guide.



Figure 7

Now easily pushing a patch though with a jag.



Figure 8

Break-Free CLP (Bore Cleaning Solvent, Lubricant, Rust Preventative)

Manufacturer Product Description

Break-Free CLP is a unique formulation of synthetic oils and proprietary ingredients which combine to accomplish 3 important tasks simultaneously: Clean, Lubricate and Protect (CLP). Penetrates metal surfaces to clean all residue and contamination. Long-lasting lubricating film dramatically reduces adhesion of sand, grit or other abrasives, and corrosion inhibitors prevent the formation of rust.

What is CLP?

MIL-L-63460 is a United States Military Specification for a type of cleaner, lubricant, and preservative for weapons and weapons systems. This product is for use in cleaning, lubricating and short-term preservation of both small and large caliber military weapons.

CLP is a highly penetrating, mobile liquid and is intended for field application to satisfy the complete need of cleaning, lubricating, and short term preservation of military weapons. CLP facilitates the effective removal of firing residues, gums and other contaminants from weapon components while providing lubrication and short term preservation for reliable weapons operation. CLP must function, as specified, within a temperature range of -51 to +71 °C (-60 to +160 °F).

CLP was developed and is manufactured by Break-Free, a company based out of Jacksonville, Florida.
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cleaner,_Lubricant,_Preservative

The U.S. Army states the following about CLP:

CLP - Cleaner, Lubricant and Preservative - does three things at once:

1. It contains solvents to dissolve firing residue and carbon.
2. It lays down a layer of Teflon as it dries to provide lubrication.
3. It prevents rust from forming.



Figure 9

Cleaning and lubricating my chamber with my CLP!

CLP is just a great all around product especially for the person not wanting to use a lot of different cleaners, solvents, chemicals, etc to clean and lubricate a firearm. After using Powder Blast I spray CLP into my chamber and on my patches that I push down my bore with a jag. Then I run my bore brush through the length of the bore to loosen things up. CLP quickly cleans up anything the Powder Blast left behind and all I have to do is keep pushing CLP wet patches down until they come out clean. Then I push a few dry patches through and I have a clean and lubricated bore.



Figure 10

**Dewey Rifle Chamber Brush and Rod AR-15 223 Caliber 8 x 32 Female Thread
Manufacturer Product Description**

Specifically designed for the proper maintenance of your AR chamber. Allows cleaning of recesses and hard to reach areas that attract grit and powder residue. This combo includes the Dewey Fixed Handle 9 1/2" Brass Rod and the Dewey Chamber Brush. A must-have for owners of AR-style rifles.

The AR chamber is a very difficult area to clean. First you need a two part chamber

brush. The front part is an oversized brush that cleans the inside of the chamber (where the case of the cartridge is inserted when the weapon is loaded). The rear part of the brush is a large brush that clean the face of the breach or chamber. Last you need a fixed handle short cleaning rod. For this it is really hard to go wrong with products made by Dewey. The rod and brush combo I use can be found at [Midway USA](http://MidwayUSA.com).



Figure 11

**Dewey Rifle Chamber Brush Double Diameter AR-15
Style 22 Caliber 8 x 32 Male Thread Bronze**

Manufacturer Product Description

Specifically designed for the proper maintenance of your AR chamber. Allows cleaning of recesses and hard to reach areas that attract grit and powder residue. A must-have for owners of AR style rifles.



Figure 12

Inserting my chamber brush.



Figure 13

**Dewey Rifle Chamber Mop 223 Caliber AR-15 8 x 32
Thread Cotton**

Manufacturer Product Description

Easily remove oil, grease and excess solvent from your chamber with these cotton chamber mops that feature a brass core and coupling.

Once you are finished cleaning the chamber, it is time to remove all of the grit and dirt you freed up, and any excess solvent. I used two different products for this task. The first is a Dewey Ar-15 chamber mop that you insert and twist around a couple times and you have a clean and serviceable chamber. Another really ingenious product I use in conjunction with my chamber mop is a product made by CJ Weapons, the Barrel Extension and Lug Recess Swabs. They do make a special cleaning rod for this but if you already have one like I do all you need to do is stick the swab on the end of a .223 cleaning brush and insert into the star like lug recesses and spin around. Both the Dewey chamber mop and CJ Weapons Swabs can be found at [Midway USA](http://www.midwayusa.com).



Figure 14

Inserting my chamber mop.



Figure 15

CJ Weapons Barrel Extension and Lug Recess Swabs

Manufacturer Product Description

CJ Weapons Barrel Extension and Lug Recess Swabs AR-15 223 Remington Package of 20



Figure 16

My CJ Swab installed on the end of a .223 cleaning brush.



Figure 17

My CJ Swab inserted in my Barrel Extension and Lug Recess.

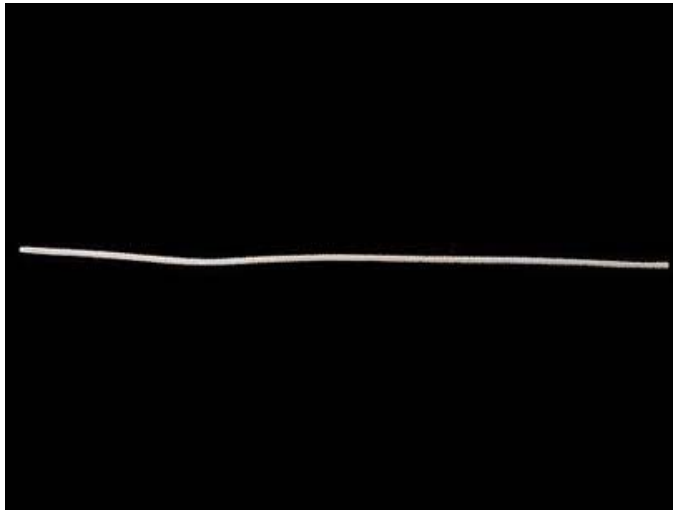


Figure 18

**Pipe Cleaners for AR-15 Gas Tube Package of 20
Manufacturer Product Description**

Extra long pipe cleaners for cleaning the entire inside diameter of the gas tube. Pack of 20.

Last but not least most folks that shoot an AR or M-16 probably know about using extra long pipe cleaners that are available from just about any place that sells AR cleaning supplies. A package of 20 runs less than \$6 and you really cannot effectively clean your gas tube without one. I use a pipe cleaner to clean all of the holes in the bolt carrier, including the gas key and hand guard retaining ring.



Figure 19

Cleaning my gas tube.



Figure 20

I use a pipe cleaner to clean all of the holes in the bolt carrier, including the gas key and hand guard retaining ring.

I am sure I have only scratched the surface of specialized cleaning tools for the AR type rifle. Cleaning can be a difficult and is most certainly an important task if you want to maintain a rifle in useful order. The list I have given above is a good start.

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