

Making the Surplus!

Homemade Bore Cleaner - "Ed's Red"

Click on any of the images below to see a larger version of the image.

If you are reading this article then you probably shoot Military Surplus Rifles. The key word being "rifles", the plural of rifle.

I have quite a few rifles and if I shoot on a regular basis I find myself going through almost 2 - 32 ounce bottles of Hoppes No. 9 per month. That adds up to over \$30 per month! Imagine that, I am spending over \$350 per year just on bore cleaning solvent.

Like most males I love the smell of Hoppes No. 9. I just don't like the price tag that it carries. For what I spend on bore cleaner, I could buy another couple rifles each year.

I had spoken to a couple of my friends that have been making their own bore cleaner for years. They gave me a small bottle to try out. I tried it and it does not smell at all nice, but it really works well.

If you have been shooting for years, you may have heard of Ed Harris. The recipe used in this article is all over the Internet. I have included a copy of the original article written by Ed - [Click Here for the Original Article](#).

The two tables shown below compare the cost between commercial bore cleaner and Ed's homemade bore cleaner. After giving it a try and comparing the cost - I am sold on this formula. Matter of fact this article is the first in a series of articles called "**Making the Surplus**". Each will focus on home brewed concoctions and the like with one theme in mind - to help you save money!

Table 1

Commercial Bore Cleaner		
Product	Measure	Cost
Hoppes No. 9	32 ounce	\$14.00
Total Cost (w/tax)		\$15.00+/-
Cost Per Ounce		\$0.46

Table 2

Homemade Bore Cleaner		
Ingredient	Measure	Cost
K1 Kerosene	32 ounce	\$2.45
Aliphatic Mineral Spirits Federal Spec TT-T-2981F	32 ounce	\$2.49
Acetone	32 ounce	\$4.96
Dexron II, IIE, or III Automatic Transmission Fluid (ATF)	32 ounce	\$1.29
Total Cost (w/tax)		\$13.00+/-
Cost Per Ounce		\$0.10

CAUTION: FLAMMABLE MIXTURE -- HARMFUL IF SWALLOWED -- KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

Contents: petroleum distillates, surfactants, organometallic antioxidants and acetone.

- 1) *Flammable mixture, keep away from heat, sparks or flame.*
- 2) *FIRST AID, If swallowed DO NOT induce vomiting, call physician immediately. In case of eye contact immediately flush thoroughly with water and call a physician. For skin contact wash thoroughly.*
- 3) *Use with adequate ventilation. Avoid breathing vapors or spray mist. It is a violation of Federal law to use this product in a manner inconsistent with its labeling. Reports have associated repeated and prolonged occupational overexposure to solvents with permanent brain and nervous system damage. If using in closed armory vaults lacking forced air ventilation wear respiratory protection meeting NIOSH TC23C or equivalent. Keep container tightly closed when not in use.*

Note: *If you are planning on using this cleaner inside, in a poorly ventilated area, leave out the Acetone.*



All of the required components are available over the counter and can be easily found in your neighborhood. I found all four in two stores - the hardware store and the auto parts store.



In any hardware store, you will find the Kerosene, Acetone, and Mineral Spirits in the paint department.



The recipe is made of of equal parts of each chemical. I was able to purchase 3 of the

chemicals in pre-measured 32 ounce containers so I decided to just make a large batch.

Per the recipe, I added the 32 ounce ATF first, followed by equal parts of the other three chemicals.



Please be really careful and mix this recipe outdoors. The fumes are very strong. Also as you can see I am wearing protective gloves.



I measured the final ingredient, Kerosene and poured it into the mixing bucket.



I mixed the recipe.



As you can see why it gets its name, **Ed's Red**. The ATF really turns the mixture a dark red color.



I had some dirty rifles, so I took the mix into the garage (open) to give it a try.

Note: After this picture I poured the mixture into an empty and clean gas can for storage. Also with the gas can spout it is easy to fill smaller containers - like empty Hoppes No. 9 bottles! Make sure you store you Ed's Red in a container that can store petroleum based solvents. Preferably not plastic.



I ran two patches through the rifle bore and it was clean. Granted it was a chrome lined SKS, but I have never put such little effort into cleaning the rifle.



On the second pass the patch came out clean (*as shown in figure 11*).

Again, it is not Hoppes No. 9 when it comes to the fragrance. But the cost and how it works makes it smell pretty good in my book!

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