

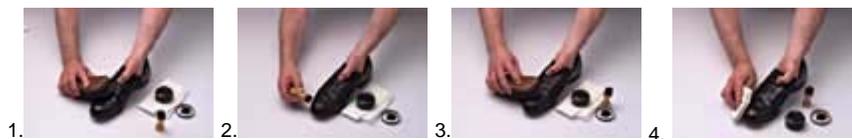
# How to Shine Shoes



Want to keep your shoes looking as good as new? Learn how to shine them like a pro.

## 🕒 Steps:

1. Clean dust and dirt from the surface of your shoes or boots with a shoeshine brush or damp cloth. (Image 1)
2. Select a can of wax or creme shoe polish that matches the leather you want to polish.
3. Use a shoe polish brush to apply a conservative amount of polish to the surface of the leather. Brush in circular motions until the leather has a dull coating. Get into tight spots using an old toothbrush. (Image 2)
4. Wait 15 minutes while the polish dries.
5. Brush shoes or boots with a shoeshine brush. (Image 3)
6. Buff to a gleaming shine with a clean cotton cloth, such as an old sweat sock or T-shirt. (Image 4)



## ✳ Tips:

- If you're in doubt about how to do the best job for your shoes, talk to a shoemaker, who will usually explain the process for no charge.

## ⚠ Warnings:

- Don't polish suede, roughout or patent leather.
- "Instant" or "EZ" shoe polishes generally do not last and can harm shoe leather.
- Don't try to use black polish to change the color of brown leather. If you want to do this, hire a professional shoemaker to dye the shoes.

## ★ Tips from eHow Users:

- **What not to put on your shoes or boots** by *Dave MacD*  
DO NOT put Mop and Glo, Pledge, or any other cleaning agent on your shoes or boots. Yes, it will make them very shiny, but it will eventually flake off and look horrible. Also, the chemicals are bad for the leather.
- **Mirror finish** by *eHow Friend*  
What I do is to first apply the shoe polish with a finger. I then let it sit overnight to dry. The next morning I take a used nylon tight, cut off to half an arms length. I then buff the dry polish. I take 100% cotton balls or an old 100% cotton T-shirt, I put water in the lid of my can of KIWI and then add a couple of drops of rubbing alcohol. This speeds up the process. One has to be carefully not to add too much. I then drip my cotton balls or T-shirt in and apply in small circles. The first time takes a while. Usually I watch a movie while doing this. After I have a good shine, I then finish by running water on the boot and rub in circular motions with the shirt or cotton balls. The shoes come out so good one can read a newspaper in the shine. It comes out like glass. It works like a charm. This worked so well many military members came to me to show them how to get such a great shine.

# Spit-shining Shoes

"Ah, yes, I remember it well...." :)

By Bill Bahr, USMA '69, Best of the Line

First prepare your hands and fingernails. Rub your hands lightly with hand lotion. Take a bar of soap and run the fingernails of your polishing hand over the bar, so as to accumulate soap and prevent polish from later getting under your nails. Some will prefer not to do this in the belief that the hand lotion and/or soap will possibly affect the polishing cloth and interact with the polish, thus reducing the shine. Obviously, if you're not worried about staining your hands, just omit this step.

Then grab a piece of soft cloth from a sheet, t-shirt, or washed diaper about twelve inches by twelve inches (or larger). Fold the cloth in two. Pick up the cloth, holding it from underneath by your first two or three fingers. With your other hand, grab the cloth from underneath tight around your polishing fingers, giving it a twist. Then, while rotating your hand, bring the tail of the cloth over the top of your polishing hand and grab it between your thumb and the rest of your fingers. You will thus be left with a nice smooth surface under fingers 1-3 with which to polish. Dip the cloth into polish, and then dab polish onto the toes of the shoes. Some folks let the first application dry for about five minutes or so (some do this in sun or under a little heat (radiator, hairdryer, or heatgun) so that the polish is slightly soft). Then remove the polish with the cloth (DON'T use a brush on the toes!). Then dab polish onto the shoes again. This time continuously work it in, in a circular motion, adding more polish as necessary. Every once in a while, dip the end of the cloth into water (you can put a little into the lid of the polish can). This will hopefully encourage the polish to stick to the leather instead of the cloth. On each successive application, use less and less of both polish and force so as not to dissolve or rub away the layer(s) of polish you have built up. On the final pass, you may want to use cotton balls dipped in a little water to give your shoes a mirror shine. Obviously, you will need to repeat this process quite a few times to get results you and your cadre will be happy with. Realistically, this may take several hours per shoe.

**Note:** Chris Bahr uses a light coat of neutral polish for the final layer. Others, for the final layer, occasionally breathe heavily onto the shoes while still others actually use spit (hence the name "spit-shine"). For other spit-shine ideas, you can checkout [www.cadetstuff.org](http://www.cadetstuff.org) (which includes pictures), <http://usmilitary.about.com>, [www.bahrnopproducts.com](http://www.bahrnopproducts.com), and other websites. I would strongly advise against any "instant shine" efforts. Not only is it likely that your military superiors will quickly detect them, but they may they actually damage your shoes.

Bill Bahr  
USMA '69, Best of the Line....:)