

ANTIQUER'S FORMULA FOLIO #1

by

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A COLLECTION OF FORMULAS AND
PROCESSES FOR CLEANING, PRE-
SERVING AND REPAIRING ANTIQUE
ITEMS

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1. HOW TO REMOVE GLASS STOPPERS -

- A. If a glass stopper is stuck fast, hold the bottle in the left hand and strike the stopper sideways and hard with the edge of the open right hand. A few such strokes generally prove successful. However, if the stopper still remains tight, grease it with a little sweet oil and lay the bottle on top of a stove with the stopper end toward and near the heat.
- B. Another method is to take a piece of heavy string about 3 feet long; put two turns around the neck of the bottle or decanter. Hold the container in one hand and one end of the string in the other. A second person holds the second end of the string. Draw the string tight and move the container back and forth rapidly. Heat is gradually built up in the neck of the bottle causing expansion which in turn permits the stopper to loosen.

2. HOW TO REMOVE STAINS FROM MARBLE -

Marble stains usually fall into three categories, the first is:

- A. ORGANIC STAINS (tea, coffee, soft drinks, ink, iodine, tobacco) often vary in color and spread into irregular shapes. Most stains of this type can be removed by bleaching with 18 to 20 volume hydrogen peroxide (obtainable at drug stores). The peroxide should be mixed with powdered whiting (available at paint stores) to form a thick paste. Spread the paste over the area to be cleaned and then add a few drops of household ammonia to start a reaction. Keep covered for several hours with a canvas or household type of plastic. Remove the mixture by wetting. Repeat if necessary.
- B. METALLIC STAINS. These stains are caused by moisture coming into contact with metallic objects such as lamps, ash trays, etc. The stain is usually orange or brown in color. If noticed promptly it can often be removed by rubbing the spot vigorously with a clean dry cloth. In the event the stain is old, a reducing agent, sold at most hardware stores or chemical supply houses, can be used. Sometimes a weak solution of Oxalic Acid (one ounce dissolved in a quart of water) wiped or brushed on the marble for a couple of minutes and then sponged or wiped off with clear water will do the job. Repeat if necessary.

C. OIL STAINS. Wash the marble surface with a solution of ammonia and water. Rinse with plenty of hot water. A special preparation can often be purchased from marble or monument dealers for this purpose. If it is not available, make a paste of equal parts of Amyl Acetate and acetone and apply to the marble surface. Allow to stand until dry and rinse with hot water. Repeat if necessary. Rinse with a solution of hydrogen peroxide and ammonia; then rinse with clean hot water and dry.

3. HOW TO CLEAN PEWTER --

Place one gallon of water in a pan. Dissolve one-half cup of Sal Soda (Washing Soda) in the water and let come to a boil. Immerse the pewter and let boil for 15 minutes. Next, take out the item (or items), rinse well and polish with silver polish. Never buff pewter for it destroys the patina of the surface and gives it a new look.

4. PEWTER SOLDER: Also Solder for Britannia Metal -

A. PEWTER SOLDER: (1) Melt together tin (30 parts) lead (15 parts) and bismuth (3 to 9 parts). (2) Melt a piece of pewter, damaged beyond repair, and pour into narrow bars. Use as needed.

B. BRITANNIA METAL SOLDER: Melt together lead (10 parts) and tin (16 parts). Cast into bars and use as needed.

5. HOW TO REMOVE STAINS FROM LAMP FOUNTS AND DECANTERS -

A. LAMPS. Place alcohol and a quantity of B.B. shot inside a dirty lamp fount. Shake and rotate the shot until the surface appears to be clean. Drain out the alcohol and shot and rinse with clean alcohol.

B. DECANTERS. Wine stains can often be removed from bottles and decanters by filling them with clorox, or other commercial bleach preparations, and letting the solution stand in them for several days.

6. HOW TO CLEAN BRASS KETTLES: Also How to Polish Brass Items -

A. BRASS KETTLES. If a kettle is badly tarnished or burned from being used over a fire, find a container large enough to accommodate it. Measure the amount of water needed to cover the item and add a tablespoon of lye for each quart of hot water used. Let the bucket soak over night in the lye bath. Then take it out and rinse well. The object is then ready for polish. WARNING: Use rubber gloves and goggles when using the lye solution. If it comes into contact with the skin, wash under running water immediately. KEEP CHILDREN AND PETS AWAY! ! !

B. CLEANING BRASS. Unless it is badly corroded, brass can usually be cleaned by rubbing vigorously with fine steel wool which has been dipped in a good metal polish. If an item is badly corroded, first soak it in the lye bath described above.

7. HOW TO CLEAN BRONZE AND COPPER COINS WITHOUT RUBBING -

Coin collectors and dealers claim that rubbing destroys the surface and the value of old coins. The best method of cleaning bronze and copper coins is to soak them in refined Olive Oil for several days. The oil contains two acids which do not harm the metal surface. It penetrates through the grime and when it eventually reaches the metal, the two separate. No rubbing is necessary. When the cleaning process is completed, wipe the coin with a soft absorbent cloth. A film of oil is left on the coin and serves as a protective coating.

8. HOW TO CLEAN OIL PAINTINGS -

The canvas should first be removed from the frame. Then, use ordinary wallpaper cleaner to remove the dust and accumulated dirt. It is advisable to go over the entire surface two or three times, using fresh cleaner for each cleaning process.

The next procedure is to apply "Salamander", a commercial preparation obtainable at most art supply stores, by brushing it over the surface. This preparation restores oil to the paints and varnish; and, to a great extent, the original colors to the canvas. After an application of "Salamander" the painting should be allowed to dry for three or four days in a dust-free place.

9. HOW TO SAND GROOVES EASILY -

A handy, flexible sanding block for grooves and moldings can be made easily by wrapping a strip of sandpaper around a 3" to 4" length of small diameter rubber tubing. It can be squeezed to any desired shape and run lengthwise along the groove or molding.

10. HOW TO REMOVE STAINS FROM BOOKS -

A solution of Oxalic Acid, Citric Acid or Tartaric Acid, may be used without danger as these acids do not attack printing ink. They will remove marginal notes in writing inks, stains, etc.

11. QUICK WAY TO REPAIR DRAWER RUNS IN CHESTS -

Drawers in antique chests or sideboards are often hard to open or close because of worn drawer runs. A clever method of repair used by some furniture restorers is to detach the runs from inside the piece, turn them over and reattach in the same position. The next step is to lubricate the runs with wax or soap and replace the drawers. In most cases, the drawers work smoothly.