

ANTIQUER'S FORMULA FOLIO #2

by

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A COLLECTION OF FORMULAS AND PROCESSES FOR
CLEANING, PRESERVING, RESTORING AND REPAIRING
ANTIQUES, ETC.

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1. HOW TO CLEAN ALABASTER STATUES AND BUSTS: -

Alabaster is a marble-like stone, composed of lime sulphate, found in colors, with the most desirable being a dull white.

Busts and statues having an accumulation of dirt or grime can be cleaned by using a mild solution of soap (Ivory, or a similar type) and water to which a small amount of household ammonia (1 tablespoon of ammonia to 1 quart of water) has been added.

In the event the item is discolored by stain (iron rust or other stain) prepare a dilute solution of oxalic acid (available in powder form at most drug stores). Dissolve one-half ounce of oxalic acid in one pint of water and brush the solution over the piece to be bleached. Do not leave it on the alabaster for more than 2 1/2 minutes as it could produce injurious effects. Finally, rinse with clear water, either under a faucet or by using a well soaked cloth. If the first application does not remove the stain, repeat the procedure. Do not use any other acid as damage could result.

WARNING: Keep acid away from the eyes and mouth. If it should come into contact with any part of the body, rinse with clear water immediately.

2. HOW TO REMOVE STAINS AND CLOUDINESS FROM BOTTLES AND CRUETS: -

To remove cloudiness or mineral stains from a bottle or cruet, fill it about half full of water; then, add ammonia, the equivalent of half a cup or more if the item is large. Shake lightly to insure an

even mixture. Let stand over night. Next, pour out the contents and rinse. If necessary, repeat the operation. An antique dealer reports success in removing stains from perfume bottles by putting potato peelings in the container, adding water, and letting the mixture stand in the bottle for 2 or 3 days.

3. HOW TO MAKE GLASS SHINE: -

Cut Glass can be made to sparkle by washing it in warm water to which a detergent (enough to produce a good suds) has been added. After being washed thoroughly inside and out with a sponge or dish cloth, rinse in warm water to which a small amount of ammonia has been added. Place in a rubber dish rack or on a dish towel to dry. Later, polish the glass with a lintless cloth or towel. The same method can be utilized for crystal and other hollow ware.

4. RULES FOR WASHING FINE CHINA: -

Fine china is somewhat fragile and should be treated with kindness and respect--especially when being washed.

A rubber mat should be placed in the sink before the washing process is attempted, to prevent chipping. Use a mild soap or detergent and wash with a soft brush.

Avoid soaking fine china for long periods of time as the ingredients in the decoration will soften and show discoloration. Soaking it also injurious to gold trim or decorations. Never use boiling water to rinse the ware for it could cause crazing (fine lines or cracks in the glaze).

Cups occasionally become stained from the constant use of coffee, tea or chocolate. The stains can usually be removed by rubbing with a damp cloth dipped in baking soda. If a cup is badly stained, add 2 or 3 tablespoons of clorox or a similar bleach and fill the cup with water. Let stand for 2 or 3 hours.

5. HOW TO CLEAN COPPER: -

The item to be cleaned should first be washed with soap and water, then dried. Burned or black spots caused by grease can usually be removed by scouring the affected areas with a commercial powder such as Ajax or Old Dutch Cleanser, Next, lemon juice should be applied and then rubbed.

Corroded spots can normally be removed by rubbing the affected surface with a hot solution of vinegar and salt or with hot buttermilk.

A homemade polish can be made by mixing 1 cup of salt, 1 cup of vinegar and 1 cup of flour, to form a paste. Rub the mixture over the item until the copper appears bright. Wash with warm water and soap, then dry and go over the surface with a soft dry cloth.

6. HOW TO CLEAN ENAMELWARE: -

Enamelware is a substance, either opaque or semi-transparent, such as glass, used in the coating of metal or porcelain surfaces, then fired.

If an enamel pan has burned food in it, place a tablespoon of baking soda (not washing soda) in it and fill with water. Place on a stove and bring to a boil for a short time. If the surface is stained, do not use steel wool, but go over it with "whiting" (this can be purchased at paint stores) or use Bon Ami. If whiting will not remove the stain, mix a small amount of whiting with kerosene--enough to form a paste--then rub it over the surface.

Foods which contain acid, such as citrus fruits, rhubarb and tomatoes, should never be stored in enamelware containers, as a chemical reaction could take place and cause food poisoning.

7. HOW TO CLEAN ITEMS MADE OF HORN OR IVORY: -

Items made of horn or ivory can be cleaned by washing them in warm, soapy water and drying promptly. Ivory naturally turns yellow with age. Piano keys can be cleaned by going over the surface with a cloth dipped in denatured alcohol.

8. HOW TO CLEAN PEARLS: -

Pearls are fragile items--heat will ruin them and acid will dissolve them. Pins and rings should be washed in mild soap and water. Necklaces should never be washed as water tends to rot the thread. Each individual pearl of a necklace should be rubbed with a soft chamois skin to remove the thin coating or dirt acquired when being worn. This cleaning method applies to both natural and artificial pearls.

Never use ammonia on pearls.

9. METHOD #2 FOR CLEANING PEWTERWARE: -

Abrasive polishes or scouring powders should not be used in an attempt to clean pewter. If a bright finish is desired, mix whiting and denatured alcohol to form a paste. Rub it over the surface until brightness appears, then wash the article in soapy water. For a dull finish, rub with a mixture of rottenstone and olive oil.

Pewter which has age often has bad spots. The imperfections can often be removed by dipping grade "00" steel wool into olive oil and then rubbing the surface with it.

10. HOW TO CLEAN WATER COLOR PAINTINGS: -

Water color paintings can be cleaned of dust and grime by going over the surface lightly with the inside of a loaf of stale bread. Another method is to use art gum in light overlapping strokes. Some people use commercial wallpaper cleaner, obtainable in most grocery stores. However, this method is not recommended as chemicals in the preparation could prove harmful.

If the painting has great value, it is best to leave the cleaning to experts at art galleries or museums.

11. HOW TO CLEAN ZINC: -

Tarnish can be removed from zinc by rubbing the surface of an article with vinegar diluted with a small amount of water. Allow the vinegar to remain for several minutes, then wash off with water. Rub the surface with a soft cloth to polish.

12. HOW TO REMOVE STAINS FROM FABRICS: -

- (A). INK: Rinse fabric in cool running water immediately, if possible. Next, wash in hot suds to which several drops of household ammonia have been added. If the stain persists, soak for a half hour in hot soapy water. In the event the stain still remains, add 1 tablespoon of clorox or similar bleach to each quart of water, and let soak for a short time.
- (B). SHOE POLISH: The stain can often be removed by washing in soapy water. Should a grease stain remain, use cleaning fluid and wash again.
- (C). CHOCOLATE: Scrape off as much as possible, then sponge with cleaning fluid before laundering.
- (D). BLOOD: Soak item, or the stained portion, in a solution using 2 tablespoons of salt to each quart of cold water, then launder. For old stains, add 2 tablespoons of household ammonia to each gallon of hot soapy water; soak for 15 to 20 minutes, then launder.
- (E). CHEWING GUM: Place the portion of fabric involved in cleaning fluid. Soak until gum loosens, scrape off and then launder.
- (F). GLUE: Glue will dissolve when soaked in hot sudsy water.
- (G). SOFT DRINKS: Recent or fresh stains should be soaked in cold water. Old brown stains should be soaked 15 minutes in a solution of 1 tablespoon of clorox to each quart of water. If material is wool, use 1 gallon of water to which 2 tablespoons of Peroxide (Hydrogen Peroxide) have been added. Rinse, then launder.
- (H). GRASS: For white fabrics, wash in hot suds and rub well. If stain persists, soak 15 minutes in a solution of 1 tablespoon of Peroxide (Hydrogen Peroxide) to each quart of water.

For colored fabrics, the spot should be soaked 30 minutes in a solution of 1 pint of Peroxide (Hydrogen Peroxide) to which 1 teaspoon of Sodium Perborate has been added. Both of the above chemicals are available at drug stores.