

Cleaning & lubricating your machine – beginning steps

Please keep in mind the following steps are ONLY for vintage and antique sewing machines. This material is not meant for or recommended for any modern mechanical or computerized machines, as the materials and procedures are much different.

Materials for cleaning and lubricating a machine:

- The only chemicals I personally recommend for cleaning (there are exceptions, but they are too great to cover in this beginner series) are Krud Kutter original formula and Bluecreeper. Both are great at removing build up and old lubricant, but are safe enough to use around the surface of the machine.
- Shop towels are best, but in a pinch, clean microfiber towels, old tshirts, and similar materials work great. Regular paper towels are an absolute LAST resort, as they tear easily and leave lint in your machine.
- Tweezers, pics, and similar tools to remove lubricant and debris stuck in places (such as gear teeth).
- Qtips
- Cheap toothbrushes for scrubbing gears and other internal parts
- Pipe cleaners
- Air compressor
- Sewing machine oil
- Petroleum jelly, SuperLube or Triflow grease (I do not recommend any other lubricants than these for gears!!). Petroleum can be used on metal gears, SuperLube and Triflow must be used on plastic-nylon gears.

Cleaning your machine:

- Go through to find any loose lint, thread, build up of any kind that you can remove with an air compressor tweezers. You want to remove the loose stuff before tackling the old lubricant and anything sticky.
- Use Krud Kutter lightly sprayed on shop towels, qitps, and toothbrushes as needed to clean all metal parts you can reach on the inside of the machine. You can wipe down shafts and bars even if they appear clean.
- If you have stubborn lubricant that doesn't immediately come out, you can soak it and remove it in layers. Bluecreeper is excellent for breaking down old lubricant, but sewing machine oil will also work if needed.
- You really want to make sure all moving parts are clean before proceeding to lubrication.

Lubricating your machine:

- Starting at the top, assuming you have access, you want to apply ONE DROP of sewing machine oil to any point of the machine that has one part moving against another part. Usually these will be joints or where shafts meet up.

- ❑ It is important to **ONLY** deliver one drop of oil in each place to avoid over oiling
- ❑ Work your way around the machine to the needle bar area, and the bottom of the machine.
- ❑ If your machine has gears, you'll need to apply grease lubricant. For metal gears, you can use petroleum jelly, but SuperLube and Triflow Grease are also okay. For plastic-nylon gears, you **MUST** use either SuperLube or Triflow. Petroleum will break down the gears over time.
- ❑ Remember to constantly turn the handwheel (watch your fingers!) when lubricating so that the oil and grease are distributed.



Our ultimate goal to help those in our VSMM program reach the level of mastery they desire. Mastery of any skill is different for everyone, and it is not a fast or easy process. It is a consistent investment of time to develop a mental library of knowledge, intuition, patience, and creative thinking.

Our hybrid program gives folks new to vintage machines a starting point with our on-demand library, but we also host a weekly and monthly sessions to address hurdles specific to each person and machine, dive deep into specific areas of sewing machine issues, and enjoy the company of others with a common interest.

For more information: www.SewingDocAcademy.com/vsmm

Have a vintage or antique machine but not sure it's worth saving? We offer a FREE email evaluation of your machine! This is a \$50 value for FREE! Visit www.SewingDoc.Academy.com/evaluation for more info!