

Prolix

gun cleaning products

by Technical Advisor Brendan Atkinson



For convenient use, Prolix gun cleaning products can be purchased in pump- or trigger-type containers. The Safari Pocket Cleaning Kit with cord is shown at left.

Over the years, I have tested many, many gun cleaning products. They all promised to do the job better than any other product and I reckon I have heard just about every claim that could be made. However, many of the more modern products are a *big* improvement on what has gone before. The subject of this review is a product called Prolix.

Developed by Phillip J Levy and associates (Levy himself was an industrial technician), Prolix was laboratory developed for firearms care and uses 111 Trichlorethane as a base solvent. This is mixed with a number of additives, some of which were used on the US

Space program. Prolix cleans the firearm and then leaves a protective film, which is actually dry to the touch.

Conventional cleaning methods usually require a strong solvent to get rid of crud. Then a protective petroleum-based compound would be applied, which is oily to the touch and prone to attract dust and grit.

A sniff of this product gives a hint that this Prolix is manufactured using the new citrus-based technology. As such, it is biodegradable and ozone safe. I have noticed this smell on some household cleaners that have proven to be quite effective too.

Prolix also acts as a lubricant and has a remarkable temperature range of -62C

(-80F) to 237C (460F). Its main advantage is that it is a dry lubricant. Its coating is also claimed to be remarkably impervious to heat and of course, will not cause the build-up of gunk that oil-based lubes tend to do.

The third task of Prolix is to act as a preservative against rust and corrosion. I placed two pieces of barrel steel out into the elements, which included a couple of rainy days: one was left bare and the other was sprayed with Prolix. The uncoated one showed signs of surface rust after just one day, but the coated one is still out there after a week, with no signs of damage! It's a simple test, but I reckon that's a fair indication that the stuff works as claimed.

Prolix contains no petroleum-based products; there is no grease or oil, nor silicones or graphites. There is nothing that can cause a build-up of compound and that has to be a good thing, wouldn't you reckon?

I took the bolt from my BAT DS Benchrest rifle and checked it over after a full weekend of shooting. While the body was relatively clean, around the bolt head was an accumulation of lug lube and lots of fine bits and pieces of residue. I removed the firing pin assembly and gave both it and the bolt body a good coating using the trigger spray bottle. As per the instructions, I gave it time to work in and then, using a soft toothbrush, scrubbed off any visible crud. I then wiped off the parts and applied another light coating to all surfaces. They were then left to air dry.

These bolts were sprayed with Prolix, left to soak and then lightly scrubbed with a soft toothbrush. They were then coated with another light spray and left to dry.



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This bolt has always had a slight tendency to 'grab' during use, unless some good lube was applied to the sides. The bolt is a very tight fit in the action. With the Prolix dried out (I gave it the touch test), I placed the bolt back into the action and was pleasantly surprised to find that it worked quite smoothly. Maybe I have found the right product for BAT bolts now! My Stolle bolts received the same treatment and obtained a similar result - smoother operation and no mess.

I gave the rest of my competition rifle's metal parts a good wipe over with Prolix, but stainless steel is not that hard to keep clean. The 'stainless' used in barrels can rust though (oh yes, it can!) and I was more interested in the preservative side of things.

Competition bolts are one thing, but on my hunting rifles (some of which are used weekly), things get dirty pretty quickly in a much harsher environment than the competition range. Prolix can be used as a full immersion cleaner and a plastic ice-cream bucket is ideal for soaking bolts in. It is amazing how much muck comes out of a bolt that you might have thought was 'clean'. The best part about it is that in addition to cleaning the metal, you are actually preserving it as well. In fact, I got a bit carried away and finished up cleaning all of my rifles' metal parts with this stuff. Now

my gun safe smells like an orange grove.

Handgun shooters in the US have endorsed this product and it is ideal for soaking the working parts of slide-type self-loading pistols. Owners of Glock pistols are advised to soak the barrel, recoil spring, slide and recoil spring tube in Prolix to remove all residues from the surfaces. Competition 'race guns' need a good lube that will not build up and cause jams and misfires and a dry lube is the best way to go - there are several video clips on the internet showing shooters using the Prolix product. It is interesting to note too that shooters in the US filter their Prolix after soaking use and just put it back in the bottle. That's one way to extend the life of it and save money.

Pocket Safari kit

Now here's a neat trick - the Safari Pocket cleaning kit contains a 35cm piece of polymer cord and a series of plugs to suit various calibres. The idea is that you thread a plug onto the cord, then a cloth patch and pull it through the bore. While this will not give a proper clean like a cleaning rod and brushes, it will be very handy for a quick night-time clean of the bore or perhaps even to remove debris in case the rifle is dropped during a hunt. A small 30ml bottle of Prolix is included.



A Remington and a PTG bolt fresh from the hunt, with plenty of accumulated crud showing. Oil-based bolt lubes will exacerbate this situation by attracting dust and grime.

Summary

It is always refreshing to try a product that actually *does* exactly what it promises. I have been using this stuff now for a couple of weeks and in all honesty, I cannot fault its performance. It's not the cheapest cleaner on the shelf, but if you use it sparingly, I believe that it is value for money. By the time you read this, it should be available in all good gunshops.

Prolix products are distributed by Gone Hunting Pty Ltd in Victoria. For more information, visit www.gonehunting.com.au



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