

**SHOTGUN CHAT ROOMS ARE WONDERFUL PLACES. YOU CAN GET GOOD ADVICE, BAD ADVICE AND FIND ENOUGH CONFUSION TO LAST A LIFE TIME – PARTICULARLY WHEN IT COMES TO GREASING OR OILING YOUR FAVORITE SHOTGUN. FRANKLY, I'M AMUSED AT LISTENING TO FOLK GET SO WRAPPED UP IN THE GREASE OR OIL GIG.**

Does anyone know anyone who ever wore out a gun at an accelerated rate because they used one or the other? No hands. I thought so.

I suspect most of us have pulled the trigger on a gun one time or another and immediately been doused with wet lube as the gun cycled. Man, is it a pain in the butt to get that stuff off shooting glasses! It

seeps out of the action onto hands and wood, and, like grease, can hold any bit of grit that comes along. So, let's start with the simple idea that a little goes a long way.

Another aspect some readers may want to consider is rust prevention. Unfortunately, that is a different premise that won't be addressed in this article – that's protection, and we are sticking to lubrication here. So, I'm gonna tell you where to put it. I don't care what it is, grease or oil, just get a reasonable quantity in the right spots.

**WHERE TO PUT IT**

In an over under, we want to lube the camming surfaces and rotation points. Almost everybody knows that the radius of the frame and the radius of the forend iron need to be lubed. That doesn't mean everybody does it, but anyone who wants to keep their gun healthy will get something on those surfaces. If left dry, galling can occur very quickly with some steels. They seem fairly impervious to the lack of lube, but wear will be accelerated. Grease might have the performance edge here, but I've used wet lubes and never had a hint of galling.

The trunnions, commonly referred to as a "the pin", although a hinge pin technically extends across the receiver, are another commonly



**WHETHER 'TIS NOBLER TO  
GREASE OR TO OIL**

THAT IS THE QUESTION, SAYS **DAVE HOLMES**

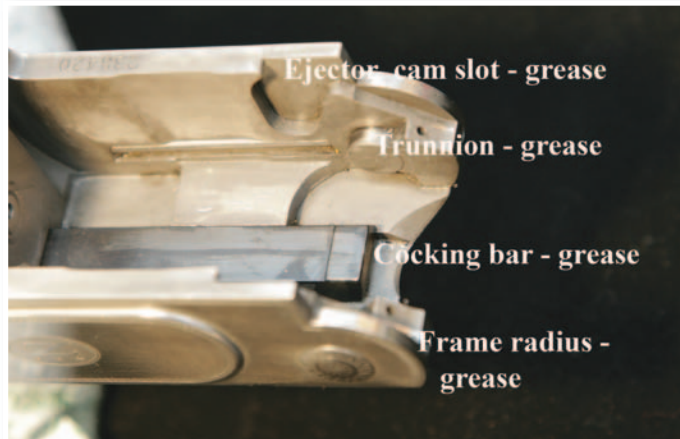
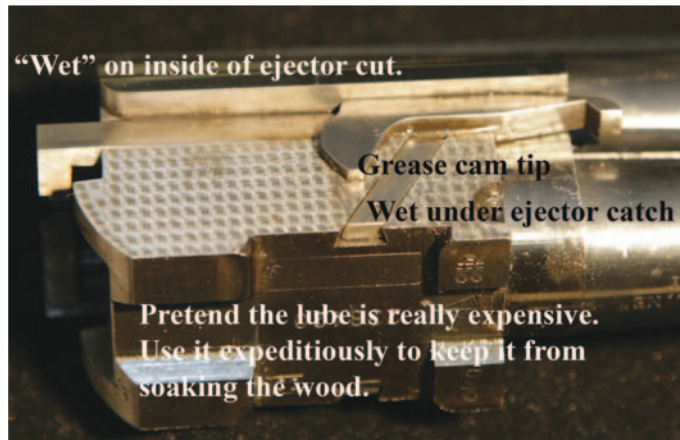
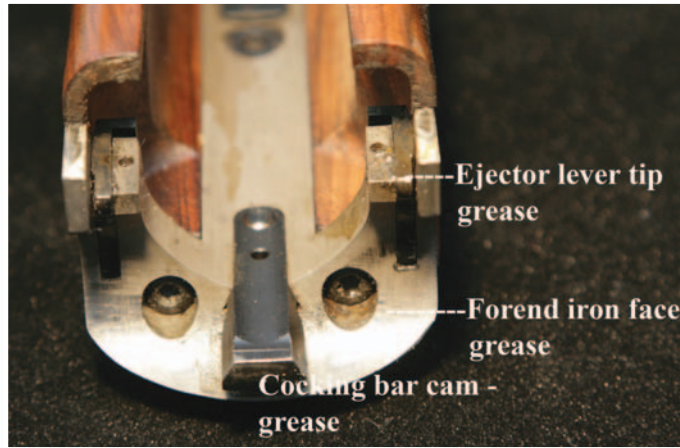
treated area – as they should be. The area that gets missed is the recess in the frame walls, somewhere behind the trunnions. This cut out serves to cam the ejectors and can benefit from a bit of lube. Somewhere in the bottom of the frame you'll find the cocking rod, the face of which will be acted upon by the cocking cam found protruding from the forend iron. These surfaces need a bit of the slick stuff.

On most models, the forend iron will have ejector levers on both sides. These are camming surfaces as well, and a light touch of lube will ease their burden.

Monobloc design may vary slightly, but all will have ejectors. Those ejectors will benefit from the occasional drop of lube deposited on the inside of the shank where it can work its way between ejector and monobloc. Wet lube here helps flush out any carbon build up. Camming surfaces on the outside of the ejectors also need to be lubed. Resist the temptation to slather lube all over the monobloc. Only the areas that rub need it.

The locking recesses, in whatever form they are found on your particular monobloc, may benefit from the occasional very light coat of wet lube, but they don't need too much of a good thing.

Drop trigger guns make it very simple to lube the mechanism. Most of us spray the trigger group with our favorite formula – then blow it off – leaving just a thin film of lubrication (if the right product is used, rust prevention is a given). Over unders without drop triggers will require the removal of the stock to access the parts. That's a bit more of a nuisance, but it only needs be done once or twice a year (unless the gun gets soaked), so it isn't that big a deal. Spray and blow



**WET LUBES, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED REPEATEDLY FOR MILITARY USE. WE NOW HAVE A PLETHORA OF LUBES AVAILABLE. SOME ARE SIMPLY LUBES, OTHERS ARE LUBRICANTS AND PROTECTANTS AND STILL OTHERS FIT THE CLP STANDARD – CLEANERS, LUBRICANTS AND PROTECTANTS.**

is again the favorite application technique. No compressor? Me neither. Spray, shake it off and sponge any excess from the sides of the trigger parts. No need to repeat anytime soon.

One area often overlooked is the locking lever. Considering that it has to rotate every time the gun is opened, it doesn't hurt to give it a bit of consideration. I simply hold the gun barrels down and put a drop or two of lube under the lever. The lube runs forward to the fence. Then I'll work the lever to work the lube onto the shaft where it can work its way down the pin and into the frame. Wipe off the excess from the surface and smooth operation will be the order of the day.

Another area that is often overlooked is the lug the forend attaches to. Just a touch on the back surface there can make life a bit easier.

Last, but not least, many a shooter has found to their chagrin that lubing threads on choke tubes is a good idea, especially if the seal between bore and tube allows residue to blow between the tube and threads. There it can quickly generate rust that locks a choke tube in the barrel about as effectively as silver solder. Some tubes can start rusting in if there is rain in the forecast! A light film of grease on the threads can seal the gap, keep thread residue (hence rusting) to a minimum and help you stop swearing – all at the same time. If you never lube your chokes, make sure you always leave your favorite tubes in the barrels – so you'll at least like what you have when you can't get them out!

If you asked 20 shooters what their favorite lube is, you may well get 17 different answers. The market is awash in suitable products. I can't substantiate any



claim that a grease was specifically developed for gun use. Lubrication is lubrication and greases intended for other applications are perfectly fine for gun use also.

Wet lubes, on the other hand, have been developed repeatedly for military use. We now have a plethora of lubes available. Some are simply lubes, others ARE lubricants and protectants and still others fit the CLP standard – cleaners, lubricants and protectants. If you live in Seattle, you may want to look for a protectant combination to help combat rust. If you live in Phoenix, you might not worry about that much. If you clean your gun every time you shoot, it probably doesn't matter anyway. If, on the other

hand, you are like me and enjoy shooting guns far more than cleaning and lubing, then one of the multi-faceted products might have some added benefit.

**PRECISE APPLICATION**

I must confess that, although I have all the lubes around the house I'm likely to need for the foreseeable future, I recently bought some more. It's not that I'm unhappy with the products I have, but bored with the clumsiness of the containers and the application of the contents. So I bought a wet lube and a grease based solely on the convenience of the packaging. The wet lube is in a bottle with a 'nipple' so it can be dropped precisely where I want it. The

grease is in a syringe, so I can 'inject' it where needed – instead of smearing it all over. When the syringe is empty, I'll pack it with the lube I already have. I have no doubt the products will work as intended – I'm now gun lubed for life.

I apologize for the lack of firmness and any controversy contained in this article – but there just isn't a need for argument as long as something gets used (grease or lube). Get it in the right spots in the minimal quantities discussed, clean it out and replace it before it gets too grungy and you'll maximize the life of your favorite sporter!

(P.S. In case anybody missed it, WD40 has many uses, but lubing guns isn't its forte.) ■

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