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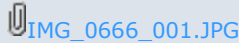
Wagner and Griswold Society Information > Cast Iron (general info) > Cleaning and Restoration
(Moderators: [Scott Sanders](#), [Jeff Friend](#))



Sandy Glenn
Forum Administrator
WAGS member
★★★★★
Posts: 6499

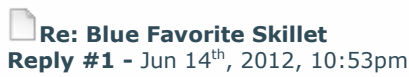

Blue Favorite Skillet
Jun 14th, 2012, 10:52pm

I've been asked to clean one of these and am unsure best way to do it since it's black iron on the inside and porcelain on the outside. Will lye damage the porcelain? Or would electro be the best way to go?





Sandy Glenn
Forum Administrator
WAGS member
★★★★★
Posts: 6499



Re: Blue Favorite Skillet
Reply #1 - Jun 14th, 2012, 10:53pm

2nd picture - Thank you for your help.





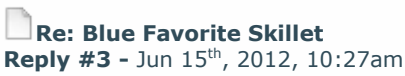
Chuck Fredrickson
WAGS member
★★★★★
Posts: 677


Re: Blue Favorite Skillet
Reply #2 - Jun 15th, 2012, 12:07am

Sandy - that blue baby looks really gunked up, lye will not damage the porcelain. I've used it on old porcelain aebleskivers with no issues at all. My thought would be the lye bath first.

~chuck

Cheryl Watson
Forum Administrator
WAGS member
★★★★★


Re: Blue Favorite Skillet
Reply #3 - Jun 15th, 2012, 10:27am

I have always been advised to not put the porcelain coated skillets in the lye bath. I would opt for the electro first, and see if it does the trick.

I also experimented with the dawn power dissolver on a porcelain coated piece.... NOT a good idea, as it will dull the finish!

Chuck Fredrickson
WAGS member
★★★★★


Re: Blue Favorite Skillet
Reply #4 - Jun 15th, 2012, 11:40am

Porcelain/enamel finishes are negatively effected by acids and anything abrasive. Lye is a strong base.

Eazy-Off has been the go to oven cleaner for years, oven interiors are porcelain/enamel. It's also recommended for glass-ceramics, enamel, stainless steel and chrome. The choice of scrubber has a lot to do with good results on enameled pieces.

I have never tried Dawn, but I would guess it's a bit acidic - no real knowledge, but the way it performs on rusty old iron sort of makes me think that way and it's why it's so well touted as a cleaner of cast iron.

~chuck

John Arsenault
WAGS member
★★★★★


Re: Blue Favorite Skillet
Reply #5 - Jun 15th, 2012, 11:50am

Chuck, I agree! I have cleaned some Enamel in Lye and the only part that was dull was where the crud was. Acid in the fat-crud? The rest of the pan where there was no crud was untouched by the lye, nice shine to the finish!
John A

I only leave in for a short time and check on it. Most crud comes off pretty fast on enamel.

Chuck Fredrickson
WAGS member
★★★★★

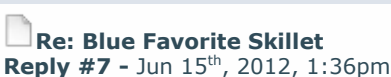

Re: Blue Favorite Skillet
Reply #6 - Jun 15th, 2012, 12:07pm

John, you make a good point on the speediness of it. I keep a can of oven cleaner handy simply to touch up those eableskivers. Works like magic.

Sandy I think you can hit the lye to get the crud off the iron and the enamel parts will come out as clean as they'll ever be.

~chuck

Brian Vick
WAGS member
★★★★★

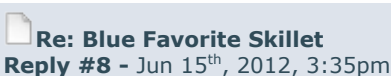

Re: Blue Favorite Skillet
Reply #7 - Jun 15th, 2012, 1:36pm

I've never had a problem with lye on porcelain The rumor was it dulled it but never happened to me!

OB 

Posts: 1867

Sandy Glenn
Forum Administrator
WAGS member
★★★★★


Re: Blue Favorite Skillet
Reply #8 - Jun 15th, 2012, 3:35pm

This is really confusing... to me anyway. This older thread has been revived about how a lye bath can damage the porcelain coating on an "easy clean" lid:

Posts: 6499

<http://www.griswoldandwagner.com/cgi-bin/yabb/YaBB.pl?num=1147178959>

Is that not the same type of porcelain on the Favorite blue skillets? If so how could it be detrimental to one and not the other? I'm just trying to understand and can't quite seem to grasp it.

Brian Vick
WAGS member
★★★★★

 **Re: Blue Favorite Skillet**
Reply #9 - Jun 15th, 2012, 3:57pm

Sandy,

I can understand your confusion 🤔 I just cleaned 2 easyclean lids both in the lye tank both came out fine. I have done quite a bit of dru, le cruset and other porcelain as well with no damage. There could be some of the easyclean porcelain was a different composition and I recall some members have had problems with their porcelain dulling this isn't much help but just my experience.

OB 🗨️

WagnerWare the other
cast iron!

Posts: 1867

Tom Neitzel
Forum Administrator
★★★★★

 **Re: Blue Favorite Skillet**
Reply #10 - Jun 15th, 2012, 5:50pm

I think it depends on what the porcelain really is. I wrecked the "porcelain" on a modern John Wright steamer in the lye bath. It pitted areas and removed the gloss. I have cleaned some old 'skiver pans in lye without a problem.

I think the term is kind of generic like glass. Some glass, "Pyrex", you can put in the oven, some you can't. There's hard glass and soft glass. It's all called glass.

You can always put in in the bath and check it fairly often, like every hour or two.

Tom

Posts: 4559

Mike Shonfield
WAGS member
★★★★★

 **Re: Blue Favorite Skillet**
Reply #11 - Jun 16th, 2012, 8:05pm

Sandy, I hope you will report back with pics on what you used.

I have had the same dilemma for a year now with a green porcelain Griswold #7 self basting lid with pan. The lid is fine but the pan is really black. Both too are not porcelain inside.

I have also read and been afraid of using lye. Something in the lye reacts with something in the porcelain and at the very least the shine is lost. Of course oven cleaner is just diluted lye.

I tried someones suggestion of using a few polident tablets. Some black came off but perhaps some shine too. I have been thinking about trying lye and watching closely. Maybe you want me to go first. 🗨️

But Tom maybe correct. There are probably different qualities of porcelain.

Posts: 1329

Jeff Seago
WAGS member
★★★★★

 **Re: Blue Favorite Skillet**
Reply #12 - Jun 17th, 2012, 9:22pm

Sandy I wish I would have caught this sooner but I ruined a blue skillet and lid just like the one that you posted by putting it in lye.

Posts: 4823

Jeff Seago
WAGS member
★★★★★

 **Re: Blue Favorite Skillet**
Reply #13 - Jun 18th, 2012, 8:20am

To clarify: I ruined a skillet like this and a blue Griswold #8 skillet cover.

Posts: 4823