

Wagner & Griswold Society

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(Moderators: [Scott Sanders](#), [Jeff Friend](#))

Removing Paint (Read 236 times)

Charles Bowman

Removing Paint

Aug 17th, 2012, 8:34am

WAGS: Heartbeat of Cast Iron Cookware Collecting

I tried searching for this subject with no luck. Maybe my search skills aren't that great. But anyway, I was at an antique shop yesterday and they had a Griswold large logo #9 that I liked for \$30. It looked to be in good condition with no cracks or pitting visible, but had obviously been painted. Would a lye bath remove paint or would it take something stronger? Would it be safe to use paint thinner if you put it in lye afterwards? I really liked this piece, but did not want to spend money on it for fear of not being able to get the paint off.

Posts: 81

Roger Barfield
Forum Administrator
WAGS member
★★★★★

Re: Removing Paint

Reply #1 - Aug 17th, 2012, 10:36am

Lye will take it off, but check it carefully. Sometimes there are hairline cracks or other things under the paint.

Posts: 7399

Drew Frank
Ex Forum Member

Re: Removing Paint

Reply #2 - Aug 17th, 2012, 10:37am

Charles:

Some people use paint stripper of one sort or another. However, I've used lye baths to remove paint from a lot of CI; sad irons, kettles, etc with no problems. May take a bit longer, but it comes off. Matter of fact, just cleaned up a Wapak 1 sad iron that had a nice coat of black paint; and under it, a coat of red paint; and under THAT, a coat of grey primer... took two days.

Charles Bowman

Re: Removing Paint

Reply #3 - Aug 17th, 2012, 3:29pm

Ok. I wasn't sure if lye was strong enough. And I kind of thought someone might be trying to hide some cracks also.

Posts: 81

Cheryl Watson
Forum Administrator
WAGS member
★★★★★

Re: Removing Paint

Reply #4 - Aug 17th, 2012, 10:35pm

I just got a heavily painted(not disclosed) Trivet from feebay.... the lye is stripping it nicely... to disclose the defects! Paint is a way of hiding the true condition from the world.....
<sigh>.

Posts: 4009

Now that #11 Gris WI from feebay... the lye barely touched it... (2 weeks, double strength lye) only changed the color from black to gray.... That's when I had to reach for the ZIPSTRIP!.... Thank goodness no defects!!

So... I try the lye first, and then ZIPSTRIP if an area, or a piece, is resistant in the LB! 😊

Chuck Rogers
WAGS member
★★★★★

Re: Removing Paint

Reply #5 - Aug 18th, 2012, 8:24am

Cheryl, was the paint only on the base of the WI, or the entire piece? If it was just the base, it was most likely the japanning from the factory. That stuff is tough to get off even in the double strength lye bath. I haven't gone the zip strip route yet, as I've found other ways of removing it without another chemical. I little bit of time though.

Posts: 8632

Joe Brock
Ex Forum Member

Re: Removing Paint

Reply #6 - Aug 18th, 2012, 9:47am

Could I ask you what method you use Chuck as I have a painted WI base that appears to be japanned. It looks especially tough on the handle. I haven't put it in lye yet though. Thanks!

Chuck Rogers
WAGS member
★★★★★

Re: Removing Paint

Reply #7 - Aug 18th, 2012, 10:22am

No problem Joe. As always, a good lye soak to get off any gunk, and whatever paint (japanning) will come off. Use caution, as the japanning will be slick after soaking in the lye. Don't let it slip out of your hands. Also, I pull the base out daily, and just scrub off anything that's loose, then put it back in. I'm never in a hurry with these, which is not the case with most iron. 😊 Once I feel that I've gotten as far as I can with the lye, I'll scrub the piece like I'm going to season it, dry it off, and put it in the oven with the rest of the iron that I'm seasoning that day. I place it on the lowest rack, as the japanning will flake off in the oven, and I don't want it to fall on the clean iron. I'll oil all the iron, except for the base. I'll leave it in as I run the temp up in the oven, and let it bake with the rest of the iron. In most cases, the japanning will come off due to the heat of seasoning. Granted, I use high heat seasoning for my iron. If there is any japanning left, I put it back in the lye, and repeat the process. In some cases, there will still be some japanning left. This is when I pull out "the pick". It's a small automotive tool that usually comes in a set of 3 or 4 pieces. I'll post a pic so you can see them. I use one of these to GENTLY scrape the remaining japanning off. The key word here is GENTLY. This may take some time, but it's worth it. This is the most "involved" process that I use. Like I said, I'm not really patient, so I usually like to get things done without spending a lot of time on one step. With the WI bases, I've learned that it's needed if you don't want to use another chemical.

Once the picking is done, a good scrub, and just season like normal. Hope this helps.





Cheryl Watson
Forum Administrator
WAGS member
★★★★★

Re: Removing Paint

Reply #8 - Aug 18th, 2012, 12:59pm

Quote from [Chuck Rogers](#) on Aug 18th, 2012, 8:24am:

Cheryl, was the paint only on the base of the WI, or the entire piece? If it was just the base, it was most likely the japanning from the factory. That stuff is tough to get off even in the double strength lye bath. I haven't gone the zip strip route yet, as I've found other ways of removing it without another chemical. I little bit of time though.

Posts: 4009

It was only on the base, but DEFINITELY paint, of a flat black variety.... finally got it stripped, but what a job! The lye softened it enough though, that the Zipstrip was able to make short work of it!! 😊

Now I DO have a few WI bases with questionable japanning that I've been glaring staring at for the past couple of months, trying to decide if a full stripping is necessary..... I have concluded that it is! 😞

Chuck Rogers
WAGS member
★★★★★

Re: Removing Paint

Reply #9 - Aug 18th, 2012, 2:48pm

I haven't found a WI base yet that has really nice japanning on, so I've stripped them all. Sounds like someone used High Temp paint on yours Cheryl. That can be some tough stuff once it's cured.

Posts: 8632