

Cleaning Cuckoo Clock Chains

I clean a lot of rusty cuckoo clock chains. It is amazing how old rusty chains often end up looking very good.

I use a plastic container – Skippy Peanut Butter bottle.

Put a 1/8 to ¼ inch of Naval Jelly (phosphoric acid) in the bottom of the bottle

Add water to about 2 -3 inches and shake

Drop in the chains

Put the lid on the bottle.

Shake the bottle – then shake it again in five minutes

Open bottle after 10 minutes

Reach in with tweezers and pull out the chains

Wash thoroughly.

Hold chains in hand and spray with Simple Green.

Rub chains vigorously in hands. This will take off the black oxide the acid has attached. The wash water will appear very dirty.

Wash again with simple green until water is clean.

Dry the chains in terry towel.

Coat with liquid of choice – I use paint thinner – shake/blow off.

Dry in parts drier.

Chains will be reborn.

Don't leave the chains in the acid bath too long for it can take off a thin coating of brass.

On some very old steel chains with no brass, it will take the metal down to pure silver gray steel. That is one time I use WD-40 on clocks - coat the chains with WD-40 since the pure steel will rust quickly.

I use the acid bath over and over until the water gets dirty and/or it is not cleaning the chains very well. Discard and start over.

Enjoy

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