

## Synthetic Harness Maintenance and Detailing

While it is possible to just simply hose down a synthetic harness, even while it is still on the horse, it may be necessary to put more work into one that is very dirty.

### Clean Material – dish soap or Murphy's Oil Soap

Using some dish soap or Murphy's Oil Soap, you can soak the strapping parts of the harness, but I choose not to leave the padded parts in the water. I will dunk those padded parts to wet initially, but I generally use a rag to wipe down the harness and an old toothbrush to get into tight areas. Dismantle and unbuckle each piece of the harness as you go.



I personally think that synthetic material doesn't release dirt as easily as leather, so you may have to go over the harness again with the toothbrush once the harness is dry, so you can see where the rag missed. (Some people do clean their harness in the dishwasher [sans saddle], but I'm not sure I want horse "smutch" in my dishwasher!) Check for excessive wear, broken keepers, cracked material, bent buckle tongues, broken stitching, and worn buckles. Get any broken parts fixed. Buff the harness with a soft rag and certain parts may produce a sheen.



### Clean Bit – mild liquid dish soap & water

Remove bit from the bridle. SOAK it with soapy water while cleaning the rest of the bridle. Wipe with a soft rag. Do not use a scrub pad on the bit, as it will scratch it. Rinse well and dry.



### Polish the Metal – Flitz Metal Polish\* (the best polish we have found!)

Even stainless or chrome harness can be polished with metal polish for a great shine! Follow directions on the package. Avoid getting the polish on the material. If you have brass, it should be bright, and have more "gleam" than "gold tones". Plan on lots of time to do this step, because it will take time to do well! Brass will tarnish in twelve hours, so it needs to be polished again before judged classes.



Check your harness for dirt after the first wipe down. You may have to go back and wipe out accumulated dirt.

### Clean Patent "Leather" – Pledge or Endust wipes or on a cloth. No Armor All or Vaseline.

If you have patent blinkers, spray the dusting spray on the cloth and immediately apply it to the patent material, buffing to a shine.

### Hang Your Harness – IVC Harness Racks\*

Any harness stored for a long time should be taken apart and hung on a harness rack(s) to maintain its shape. Cover with clean fabric. Old sheets or towels work well.



Be careful not to lose any keepers while cleaning your harness, but if you do, we sell replacements!



Certain parts of a synthetic harness may shine if you buff it with a soft cloth.

\* Product carried by Iowa Valley Carriage

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