

## THE BUTLERS GUIDE TO SHINY FOOTWEAR

### **Equipment:**

Selvyt. (Polishing cloth.) (Follow link) [www.militarykit.com/pr...\\_cloth.htm](http://www.militarykit.com/pr..._cloth.htm)  
ladies Tights.(no fishnets or other patterns)  
2 x tins of kiwi polish.  
2 x good bristled boot brushes labelled on and off.

### **Glossary of terms.**

Selvyt = pronounced Silvette. It is actually a diamond duster and used as a lens cleaner. Far superior to the humble yellow duster.

Diddley = A slang name for the Selvyt.

Bobbing = A word used in the cavalry for the process of shining using a Selvyt.

Bulling = A general military term that means the same as Bobbing.

### **Preparation:**

Protect your work area, brush polishing can throw bits of polish around.

Some people like to wear latex gloves to keep the polish stains off their hands.

Always work with a damp Selvyt. Tie a piece of string or a nylon stocking to one corner of it, about 12 inches long.

Fill your tin lid with clean cold water.

Always brush polish your footwear first. It feeds the leather and helps to remove grit and polish flakes and helps you build up your layering.

Whatever footwear you are bobbing you must break them in first to let them attain their natural creases, this will help reduce flaking when you walk.

When finished, be sure to dry the lid thoroughly. It will rust if you don't and the last thing you want in the polish is rust particles.

### **Execution:**

Remove excess dirt from your boots/shoes if necessary then apply a good quantity of polish from your brush polishing tin using your on brush. Never use the same polish to brush polish and bob as it gets grit in it.

Remember to pay attention to the welts removing all dirt.

If your eyelets are a bit worn and brass is showing use a black marker on them.

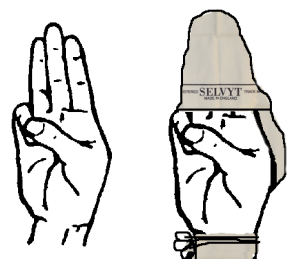
Using your off brush, polish the shoe vigorously till a nice shine appears

Using your tights, rolled in a ball rub over the boots/shoes as this gives a very good shiny finish that is quite acceptable for day to day wear.

Arrange your hand in the style of a boy scout salute, i.e. three fingered.

Wrap the Diddley around your three fingers making sure the writing is on the outside

Use the string/stocking to secure it around your wrist.



Dip your Diddley (please don't snigger) in your water get it nice and wet and then dip it in your bobbing polish.

Apply to one section of your boot at a time rubbing in circles this is to build up the polish layers on your boots/shoes.

Keep applying polish and water and soon you will begin to see a dull shine.

As your polish builds up on the leather it will start to shine that is when you start to reduce the amount of polish you apply, just dab your fingers in the kiwi lighter and lighter enlarging the polishing circles. A lot of people have problems finishing of and can leave a smeary or even scratched appearance. If this happens to you then try finishing using the water bobbing method.

### **Water bobbing.**

Equipment is cotton wool balls and cold running water.

Take your boots/shoes into the bathroom and use a sink.

Run the cold water and put a cotton wool ball under it.

Rub the wool ball on your boots/shoes in a circle and a shinier finish will start to appear. Keep rinsing and changing cotton as it will pick up polish flakes that will scratch your boots/shoes.

When you are happy with the finish make sure you remove all water from your boots/shoes as it dries and leaves white marks if you don't.

You can if you wish bob over this finish with your diddley and try an even deeper shine.

When you are happy with your boots/shoes the next bit is a real cringer.

Wear them!! Put them on lace them up and do a quick stroll round the block.

Why you crazy butler I hear you ask

Your boots/shoes will crack along your natural creases if you go out with them like that you will impress no one.

When you have the natural crease cracks formed do the following:

Brush them hard with the off brush.

Brush polish them with the on brush.

Brush them vigorously with the off brush.

Rub them with your tights.

Then bob them up again this time the creases will have less polish in them and the rest of your boot/shoe won't crack as much.

### **Don't do's.**

Clear floor polish Even a cadet instructor will spot that bluff.

Set fire to your polish. Never understood that one, it depletes the natural oils and wax

Gloss paint. Oh yes I've seen it done looks great ends in tears.

Morello a German shoe product actually very good but I've seen toecaps fall off on parade. Works well on welts and heels.

Pledge. I've seen this widely used by kings troop RHA as a finishing method.

Note: In the cavalry we tend to use our whole hands once proficient at bobbing and you get a feel for when it is right to reduce your polish and water quantities. I am telling you this method because it easier for a beginner to start off with three fingers and I Know any cavalymen reading this will laugh but you got to start somewhere. I first learned when I was an 11 year old army cadet with a yellow duster and one finger. My basic training at Bovington did not teach me any different and it was not until I became officers orderly that the other more experienced orderlies taught me the proper way to bob boots/shoes with a diddley.

As you get better at it you will develop your own style of what works for you. This is only a rough guide to get you started.

This guide was originally designed for soldiers ammunition boots as worn on parades but the basic principles can be used on shoes, riding boots, leather belts, chin straps, saddles and tack, in fact any leather goods and some plastic leather like goods.