

Regia Anglorum:

War Gear Maintenance Advice Sheet



Please note, this is an advice sheet and not a ruling! It is not exhaustive and there are other ways of maintaining your kit which are not talked about here.

‘Little and often’ is a key phrase for kit maintenance! It is better to give your gear a light, quick once over every time you use it, rather than once at the end of a season! This helps pick up any damage from combat, and also allows you to pick up and problems early on and address them before they get worse!

War gear can be divided into 3 main areas:

- 1) **Metal bits**—Must be rust and burr free. There must be no sharp points or edges.
- 2) **Wooden bits**—Must be splinter and crack free.
- 3) **Leather & raw hide bits**—Must not have any sharp edges. N.B. Shield rims must be securely attached.

Maintenance Kits

To make sure you have the kit required to look after standard war gear it is recommended you have the following in your tool box. **PLEASE NOTE THESE ARE NOT MANDATORY ITEMS.**

- Leather shammy
- 3-in-1 Oil
- Leather balm
- Teak oil
- Files
- Impact adhesive (or similar glue)
- Vaseline (or similar petroleum jelly)
- Wire wool (Medium)
- Gary flex blocks
- Sand paper (80 or 120 grit for sanding wood ONLY)
- Small peening hammer
- Wire brush (weapons)
- Wire Brush (Maille)
- Stove Black
- A small blade such as a Stanley knife
- Leather cut offs (bits of old belt are perfect)
- An old tea towel/rag



Here are 2 links of a few suggested products to include in your maintenance kit. These links are for reference only and other brands etc. are available.

- 1) **Amazon Wishlist :** https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/1NFFX3M9O3PP?ref=wl_share
- 2) **Pinterest list (no Amazon):** <https://pin.it/4BXjiUV>



Metal Bits



Step 1: Clean and inspect

Wipe off any moisture or dirt with a rag/cloth. Look, and carefully feel, for any rust, burrs or damage.

Step 2: Repair

Burr removal:

- **Peening**—you can use a ball peen hammer to gently tap out a burr. This method reduces the amount of material you lose from the blade.
- **Filing**—you can use a small file to remove the burr. Be careful to maintain the profile of the blade and use an appropriate file. If the file is too big or coarse, you will remove too much material. Always *push* with a file, never pull back as this will damage the teeth of the file and wear it out more quickly. You also need to use the entire length of the file with each stroke so that it wears out evenly.

Rust removal:

- **NEVER USE LOW GRIT SAND PAPER.** Low grit sand paper creates small striations in the metal which will retain moisture and encourage rust.
- For bad rust use a wire brush to get rid of the worst of it, and then use a course wire wool and polishing compound.
- For surface rust spots and patina you can use a fine Garyflex block.

Step 3: Polishing

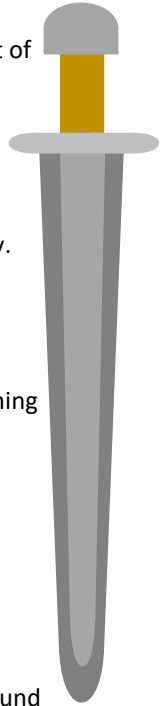
A polished metal surface will allow water and moisture to run off, rather than cling to the metal and cause rust.

Note: it will not prevent it completely.

- Start with a medium wire wool and polishing compound (such as Autosol). **Tip:** The polishing compound does not need to drench the surface, a few small blobs will be enough. You can stop at this stage if you are happy with the finish. For most post use maintenance, this is the only step you will need.
- For an extra fine finish, use a fine wire wool and polishing compound and then use a bit of leather (an off cut of veg tan leather belt works well) and polishing compound. Polish until compound is gone, and wipe down blade with a, clean leather shammy.
- For any Metal that has been blackened, you can use stove black to replenish the colouring removed by polishing.

Step 4: Protection

- Apply a very thin layer of Vaseline (or other similar petroleum jelly) before putting the blade into storage will prevent moisture getting at the metal and causing rust.



Maille

The best way to keep maille rust free is to regularly wear it! The action of links moving against each other will knock off the rust. If your maille does become rusty, there are a few things you can do!

- 1) Put the maille in a strong fabric sack and throw it about (great way to work off stress!!) You can also make a motion like polish a bowling ball!
- 2) Clamp the maille to a work bench and scrub it with a course, wire brush.
- 3) You can use chemicals such as brick acid in extreme situations. **BE CAREFUL AND FOLLOW MANUFACTURERS INSTRUCTIONS.**



Wooden Bits



Step 1: Clean and inspect

Wipe off any moisture or dirt with a rag/cloth. Look, and carefully feel, for any splinters, cracks, delamination or other damage.

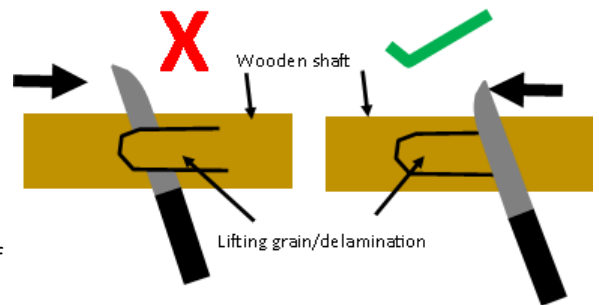
Step 2: Repair

Standard care:

- Use a bit of 120 grit sand paper to gently rub down the wood to get rid of any small dents/splinters.

Repairing delamination/large splinters

- Carefully use a knife to remove the lifted section of wood. Do not cut under the flap of wood or pull it off as this will cause a split along the plane of the grain. Instead take your knife and run it down the surface of the wood taking a small amount of material off at a time until you have no more loose wood.
- Gently sand the area smooth.
- As a temporary measure, you can whip around an area of minor delamination with thread/cord. However, this is a temporary fix and the shaft will need to be replaced as soon as possible.



Shield boards

- If there is a small hole in your shield board you can repair it by filling the hole with PVA or an expanding wood glue. Once the glue is dry, remove any excess and sand the area until it is level. Neatly cover the area with a small, fabric patch (try and make this as discrete as possible)
- Anything bigger than a 10p piece will likely mean your shield will need to be replaced. As a rule of thumb if your shield has more than 2 holes you should replace it.

Step 3: Protection

- Apply liberal amounts of Teak or linseed oil with a rag or brush and allow to soak in (Follow instructions on bottle).

Leather Bits

Step 1: Clean and inspect

- Use a damp cloth to remove mud or dirt. If there is any thick mud, you can use a nylon or soft wire brush to gently remove it (be gentle to avoid damaging the leather).
- If the leather is wet, allow it to dry gradually in a warm room. **DO NOT** put wet leather directly in front of, or on, a heat source such as a fire or radiator as this will damage it and cause it to shrink and harden.
- Shield rims; leather sword grips; scabbards, belts, shoes

Step 2: Repair

- If necessary, patch sections of damaged shield rim with a small amount of leather.

Step 4: Protection

- Use a leather balsam (such as Belvoir leather balsam) and gently rub it into the leather. Do not use olive/vegetable oil as this may cause the leather to go rancid and/or stretch.

