

**INSIDE**  
Is your walking gear  
letting you down?  
Read on to learn how to  
clean and reproof all major  
items, thus prolonging their  
life and saving cash!

# HOW TO RESCUE YOUR GEAR



## Why bother?



There is more and more gear available every year, with improvements here, tweaks there. Sometimes you just want to say, but what's wrong with the stuff I've got? Actually, the chances are, if you shopped wisely (and we're sure you did), very little.

Treated with respect and given some attention, modern outdoor gear can and should last for quite a few years before it becomes non-functioning.

Looking after your kit is not a glamorous job, but it will save you money in the long run by prolonging its life. It's also better for the environment too. Keeping gear going is much better for your karma (not to mention wallet) than sending it to the tip. All of the proofing and cleaning agents we have used in these pages are water-based and not harmful to the environment.

## How do I care for my gear?

Caring for outdoor gear falls into two basic camps: cleaning and proofing. Cleaning is the obvious act of getting rid of dirt, while proofing involves restoring an item's water-repelling properties.

### Cleaning

Effective cleaning of any outdoor gear will prolong its lifespan by preventing the build-up of abrasive grit and dirt, stop bacteria from sweat from multiplying, help the fabric to move sweat the way it was intended, and also help to maintain water repellence. Properly clean gear will also make you more attractive. Do we *really* have to talk about the benefits of not walking around covered in dirt and stinking?

### Proofing

Most items of outdoor kit have a degree of water repellence. Over time this naturally deteriorates due to abrasion and/or a build-up of grime. Restoring this water repellence to a like-new state is what we aim for. There are a few different ways to achieve this depending on the item to be cleaned - from waxing your leather boots to tumble-drying your jacket. We aim to show you the major ones here.



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#### HOW TO RESCUE YOUR GEAR

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# RESCUE YOUR LEATHER BOOTS

The 'brown boot' is timeless, and when cared for correctly there is almost no modern material that matches leather's performance...

Keeping your walking boots clean will help the leather to 'breathe' and so prevent your feet from getting too sweaty when you're on the move. Regular cleaning will also prolong the life of footwear, not to mention make it look nicer and stop it smelling like a farmyard. Maintaining the leather's condition

also helps to keep the material supple and avoids it cracking due to drying out. Cleaning and proofing little and often is the key here. Once your leather boots have started to crack it is the beginning of the end, whereas a good pair of properly cared for leather boots should last you many years.

## HOW TO CLEAN YOUR BOOTS



**1** Remove the laces to enable you to get into all of the nooks and crannies.



**2** Thoroughly wet the outside of your boots with a hose on a sprinkle setting or similar. You don't really want to submerge or jet-wash your boots - that will only damage the leather.



**3** Rub the outside with a dedicated footwear cleaner. Granger's G-Max Footwear Cleaner (below) is a good choice. Use the spongy tip to help work the suds into the grain of the leather.



**4** Use plenty of clean water to rinse off any excess cleaner.



**5** Leave the boots to dry naturally away from any heat sources.



Granger's Dirty Scrubber can also be used for cleaning all types of footwear and outdoor gear.

## HOW TO RESCUE YOUR GEAR

### HOW TO CONDITION YOUR BOOTS



**1** Apply conditioning product then rub it sparingly into the surface of the boot in a circular motion with a soft cloth. You will need less than you think. If you use too much it will only clog the pores and inhibit breathability.



**2** You should use the cloth to really get the product into the grain of the leather. This will help to prevent the leather surfaces from cracking.



Product-wise, there are several different options for leather boots. Granger's G-Wax is a traditional-style wax that seems to last for ages, while for ease of application we reckon Paste Wax is the way to go.

### WHAT ABOUT GORE-TEX?

Nowadays it can actually be quite hard to find a pair of leather boots that doesn't have the additional protection of a waterproof and breathable membrane such as Gore-Tex inside, in much the same way that say a good-quality waterproof jacket does. But these membranes still need a bit of TLC to keep them performing at their best so your feet don't

get too sweaty. Don't panic, though - it's not a difficult process and it's best tacked onto the end of a good cleaning and proofing session. You don't really need to clean the inside of your boots every time you clean the outside, though; once every few months should be fine, depending on how much you use your boots.

Remove the insoles then shake out grit and stones before swilling the inside of boot out with warm water.



#### TOP TIP

If you're smart you should be able to reduce the effort needed to clean your boots. At the end of a walk, take a detour through some long, wet grass if you can find any. It should act like a gentle brush and shift mud before it has had time to really stick and bake on.



Fill boots with crumpled-up newspaper and allow them to dry somewhere not too warm.





# RESCUE YOUR FABRIC FOOTWEAR

They're lighter, faster and often more adaptable than leather boots – but fabric boots and shoes need care to stay that way...

Footwear that uses fabric and mixed materials is generally lighter and less 'stuffy' than anything made from leather, making it a good bet for those warmer walking days and times when you don't need the full protection of a leather boot. But fabric footwear also has much less natural water repellency than leather, meaning that to keep your fabric footwear in tip-

top outdoor shape, you will need to look after it a bit more than you might your sturdy leather numbers. Once again, little and often is the key here. It's best to spend five minutes giving your footwear a clean each time they come back muddy, rather than waiting for your fabric boots to turn into concrete-like blocks of hardened sludge.

## HOW TO CLEAN YOUR FOOTWEAR



**1** Remove the laces so you can give your boots a deep scrubbing. You can also give the laces themselves a clean if you like. If it's not a deep clean you're after, leave the laces in place.



**2** Get the surface of your boots wet. Don't submerge them, though, as this may saturate the fabric. The 'gentle sprinkle' setting on the average garden hose should do it.



**3** Scrub the surface of the footwear, say with the spongy tip on a bottle of Granger's G-Max Footwear Cleaner or a Granger's Dirty Scrubber, giving a good coating of product.



**4** Rinse off excess suds using the aforementioned hose.



**5** Stuff with crunched-up newspaper and dry naturally away from heat sources.



Granger's G-Max Footwear Cleaner: a good choice for fabric boots.



## TOP TIP

Keeping fabric footwear water-repellent is an easy process and something that really shouldn't be overlooked. Once water droplets no longer bead off in a satisfying stream and the fabric 'wets out', saturated with moisture, it's time to reproof.



There are three different proofing products you can use here: an aerosol, a spray and a liquid with a sponge nib (this is what we used for a more accurate and even coverage).

“Fabric footwear has much less natural water repellency than leather”

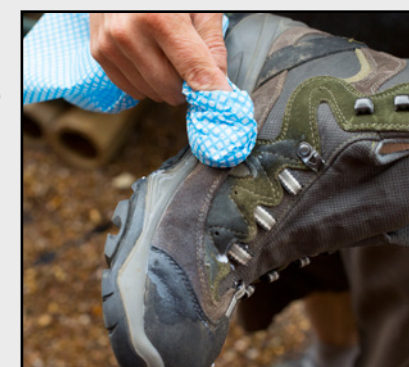
## HOW TO PROOF YOUR FOOTWEAR



**1** We're assuming that you've diligently followed our cleaning process (left), and so your boots are all shiny and clean, and dry.



**2** Now take a reproofing product such as Granger's G-Max Universal Footwear Proofer and give the footwear a light coating all over.



**3** Gently dab away any excess reproofing with a clean cloth to stop it running everywhere.



**4** Leave to dry naturally away from heat sources – fires, hairdryers, blowtorches etc.







## RESCUE YOUR WATERPROOF

Has your jacket lost its magical water repellency? Here's how to get it back...

No matter how much you spend on a waterproof jacket you'll need to care properly for it to keep it performing as it's supposed to. And whether your jacket is made from Gore-Tex Pro Shell, 3-layer eVent or a fabric with fewer syllables in its name, the care principles are the same.

The key to performance is the garment's ability to shed water from its surface. Remember how when you first stood out in the rain in your new jacket,

the water seemed to be actively repelled by your coat? Those droplets beading and rolling off the fabric? That was caused by a durable water repellent coating (DWR), and it's a garment's first line of defence.

Take a look at your jacket now. When you're standing in the rain does the water seem to absorb into the fabric and soak the outside? That is called 'wetting out' - and means it's time to clean and possibly reproof your jacket to reboot the DWR.



## HOW TO CLEAN YOUR WATERPROOFS

Despite being mostly used for repelling rain, waterproof jackets still get dirty...



**1** Clean your machine. Washing powders and liquids strip away DWR coating, so clean out the detergent drawer and hatch, then run a hot cycle with some tea towels, but no detergent.

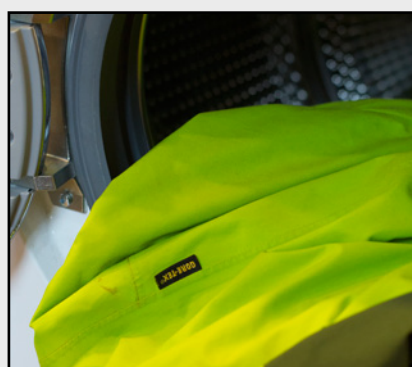


**2** One you've cleaned all traces of regular detergent from the washing machine, zip up all pockets and fastenings on the garment and put it into the machine.

**3** Pure soap flakes work fine, or you can use Granger's Performance Cleaner. But if you need to reproof as well (see right) there's also Granger's 2 in 1 Cleaner & Waterproof.



**4** Wash the jacket according to its care label. Normally a 30 deg C synthetic cycle should be fine without causing damage to anything. Do make sure you check first though.



**5** Drying the jacket is critical in reactivating the DWR coating. Run the tumble dryer until about 15 minutes after the garment has dried. On a low setting this should take 30-50 minutes.



**6** Once your jacket is dry, flick a few drops of water onto it. If it beads up and runs off, you have reactivated the DWR coating. If not, return the jacket to the dryer for a bit longer.

## HOW TO REPROOF YOUR WATERPROOFS

You don't necessarily need to reproof your jacket each time that you wash it. For at least the first few washes from new the DWR coating should remain after cleaning and just needs to be reactivated with heat. If you are reproofing there's not much more to it than the cleaning process. Here's how it's done.



**1** Your jacket needs to be clean for the reproof to stick to the fabric, so you'll need to do that first. If you use a 2-in-1 cleaner and proofer you can avoid two cycles in the machine. But again, the machine must itself be cleaned.

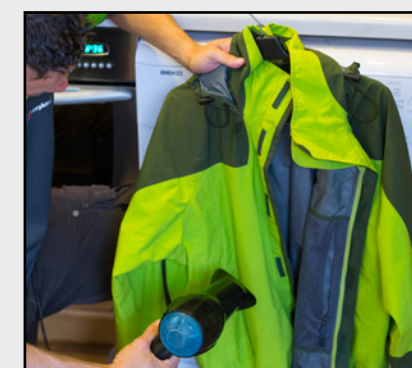


**2** One you've cleaned all traces of regular detergent from the washing machine, make sure all pockets and zips are closed before adding your jacket to the machine.

**3** Pour some dedicated reproofing agent into the detergent drawer of the machine. Granger's Performance Proofer will do the job.



**4** Run your machine on an appropriate cycle. Granger's works at 30 deg C and that's usually fine for most outdoor clothing. Do check the garment's care label first though.



**5** Granger's Performance Proofer will work without the application of heat, but to guarantee a more durable DWR coating it's a good idea to tumble-dry the jacket as well - or even use a simple hairdryer (see below).



**6** Flick or spray some water onto the jacket and marvel at how the water just runs away. If it doesn't bead up, apply some more heat by returning the garment to the tumble dryer for a little while longer.

## TOP TIP

**NO TUMBLE-DRYER?** If you don't have a tumble-dryer you can usually dry jackets on a radiator, with a hairdryer or an iron on a low temperature. Always read the care label on your jacket first though.



## BUT MY JACKET'S MADE FROM GORE-TEX...

Despite it having a waterproof and breathable membrane lining, you do still need to care for your jacket. The breathability of this membrane is severely impaired once your jacket's DWR coating wears away and the fabric begins to 'wet out' (get saturated).

The DWR coating on the face (outer) fabric of your jacket repels rain and stops it from sitting on the surface. Once that face fabric clogs with water, any moisture vapour (sweat) pushed through from the inside of the jacket then has nowhere to escape to as the pores of outer fabric are blocked with water - and probably dirt.

Many people think that when they begin to get wet on the inside of their expensive jacket after a few months of regular use, the Gore-Tex (or similar) membrane is defective and has started to leak. But what users are most likely experiencing is simply a build-up of condensed sweat vapour on the inside of the jacket. All of this can be fixed with some regular cleaning and proofing.





# RESCUE YOUR MERINO

It's the natural wool product that revolutionised outdoor clothing. Here's how to retain its qualities...



Merino wool - that most magical of natural materials - is ever more popular in the world of outdoor kit. It's naturally wicking (sweat-removing) and has some voodoo-powered anti-stink properties that mean you can wear your merino base layers for days on end without having to walk around with your arms folded.

Not smelling does mean that you don't have to wash your merino clothing quite as often as your synthetic base layers; but it will still need a clean every now and then. Here's how...



Chuck your merino base layers into the washing machine and pour in the appropriate amount of Merino Cleaner into the soap drawer. Wash the garments on a 30 degree cycle. Any hotter and you're likely to see some shrinkage. It's also better for the environment if you avoid hot washes.



## TOP TIP

**Moths love merino. But they hate cedar wood. And mothballs. Nobody uses mothballs these days, though, do they? Anyway... if you don't want your fancy merino base layers whiffing like a week-old bag of whelks then you're in luck. Granger's Merino Cleaner uses cedar extract to help repel those hungry moths.**



## HAND WASHING

If you don't have access to a washing machine, or just feel like a bit of a challenge, you can hand-wash your merino base layers. Just fill a sink with warm water and add the correct amount of cleaner as directed on the bottle. Make sure to rinse using plenty of clean water afterwards. Hand-washing never works quite as well as cleaning clothing in a machine, though, so we wouldn't recommend that you do it all of the time. You can't get a deep clean - and that can often lead to a build-up of sweat salts in the garment.



## HOW TO RESCUE YOUR GEAR

# RESCUE YOUR SOFT SHELL

A bit of clever cleaning will keep your trusty soft shell top breathable against all odds...



The soft shell is rather a divisive bit of kit in the outdoor world, with some traditionalists shunning the need for a jacket that is not properly waterproof. However, traditionally designed for use in colder, snowier, more alpine conditions, soft shells are now pretty ubiquitous. In the UK, a decent soft shell should actually be suited to most conditions walkers find themselves in. Only when it's too warm for a jacket or bucketing down

with rain are they not really useful.

Soft shells are all about being breathable - usually at the expense of being waterproof. Maintaining that breathability is therefore essential. The best way to do that, as ever, is to keep the thing clean and freshly proofed.

## TOP TIP

**If the durable water repellent (DWR) coating hasn't failed, it will if it meets a load of Ariel. So remove any old detergent from the washing machine: clean the soap drawer then do a hot wash with tea towels but no detergent.**

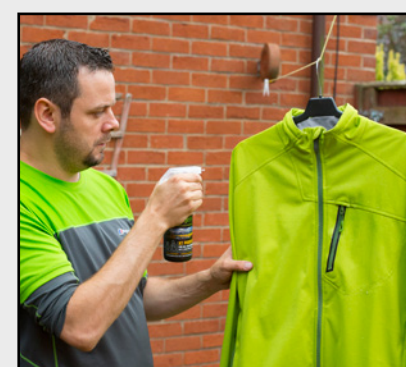


If your soft shell only has a small mark, try using the spray cleaner just on the soiled area.

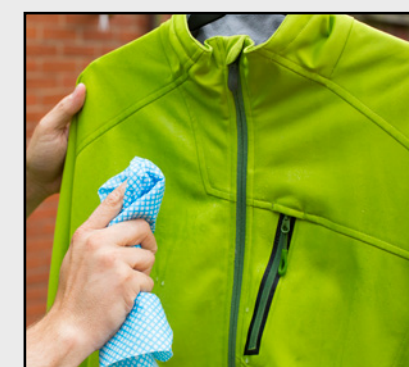
Close all pockets and zips and bung the jacket into the machine. Use Granger's Performance Cleaner in the load. Run a relatively gentle cycle. Check the garment care label first, but a 30 deg C synthetic cycle will normally do it. We'd recommend leaving soft shells to air-dry unless the care label specifically says it's okay to tumble-dry them. Soft shell fabric can wrinkle up in a tumble-dryer.

## HOW TO PROOF YOUR SOFT SHELL

Reproofing your soft shell is what will really help the garment to remain breathable when confronted with some rain. In addition to actually repelling moisture, the reproofing process will help moisture escape from inside. As tumble-drying a soft shell can be problematic, reproofing is a little different from your regular 'hard shell' technique, albeit a bit simpler. Granger's XT Proofer works best on damp clothing is it's water-based itself. The item should also be clean for the proofer to adhere properly. So, once it's been cleaned, it's time to get straight on with the proofing. The best way to reproof a soft-shell is with some straightforward spray-on. Here's how...



**1** First ensure the jacket is clean, then hang it where you can easily spray it all over and leave it for a while to dry. A clothes hanger on a washing line works well.



**2** Granger's XT Proofer is ideal for jobs like this. Simply spray the clean, damp garment all over from a distance of 10-15cm. Dab off any excess spray with a clean cloth.



**3** Leave the item to dry naturally, and there you have it - a squeaky-clean soft shell!





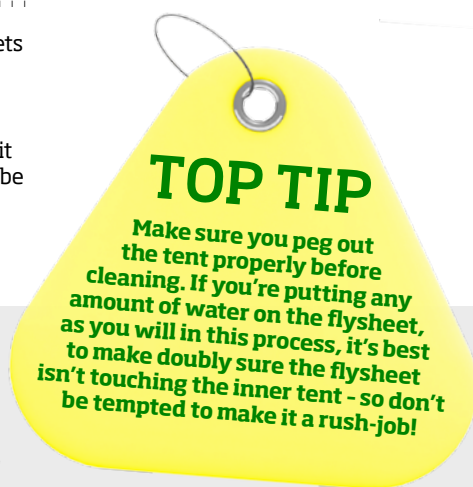
# RESCUE YOUR TENT

DIY care for your home away from home...

The need to clean a tent is something that is easily overlooked. It's as if it ever really gets dragged through mud and up against rocks. And you're not very likely to spend all day sweating into the flysheet - unless something's gone very wrong. That said, tents do need a bit of TLC. After all, nobody wants a leaking tent.

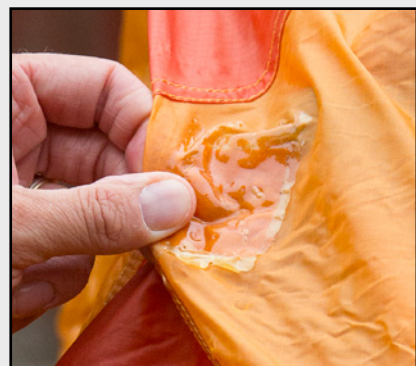
Aside from more traditional-style repairs to seams and zips, tents do still require a bit of cleaning and waterproofing to help them shed rain effectively. Their fabric can also be harmed by prolonged exposure to UV light.

Here's how to keep your portable pad in tip-top condition...



## HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR TENT

You'll need a bit of space where you can pitch the tent, access all sides for cleaning and leave it up long enough for it to dry out. So check the weather forecast before getting started! Tents that pitch outer-first are great here as you only need pitch the flysheet for cleaning.



**1** As you pitch the tent it's a good opportunity to check for damage to seams, zips, elastic, Velcro, poles, eyelets etc, and to fix any problems.



**2** Use a soft, dry brush to get rid of any clumps of mud on the flysheet.



**3** Granger's makes a Tent and Gear Cleaner that's perfect for the task. Dilute it as per the instructions in a bucket of water then wash the tent with it, using a sponge or soft cloth to apply.



**4** Use a hose on sprinkle setting to rinse off the suds and any lingering watery mud.



**5** Leave the tent up for as long as it takes to naturally air-dry.



## HOW TO RESCUE YOUR GEAR

### HOW TO WATERPROOF YOUR TENT

The ability to keep the rain off is perhaps the essential characteristic of a tent. Giving the waterproofing a boost every now and then is therefore a good thing. For the proofing agent to adhere to the flysheet fabric the tent should be cleaned properly, and dry (see left). There are a couple of options here. By far the easiest is to use Granger's Tent and Gear Spray On Proofer. All you need do is spray the entire flysheet from a distance of 10-15cm and rub any droplets of the proofer into the fabric.

A more intensive alternative comes in the form of Granger's Tent and Gear Proofer. This silicone-based product will be more durable but a bit more involved to use. Simply paint the tent fabric with the proofer using long, even strokes, being careful to rub any droplets that form on the surface in with a cloth. Whichever method you employ, you will need to leave the tent to dry thoroughly before packing it away.



**1** Spray the tent's entire flysheet from a distance of 10-15cm, making sure the fabric has an even coverage of product.



**2** Rub any droplets of the proofer into the fabric using either a dry sponge or cloth.



“Always make sure your tent is completely dry before storing it”







# RESCUE YOUR DOWN

Look after your down-filled jacket or sleeping bag and it'll be good for years...

Down filling: two simple words that can engender visions of being toasty-warm when all we can hear around us is the chatter of teeth from those less well-prepared in a chilly situation. Gram for gram there is nothing warmer for its weight in the world of outdoor gear. Down jackets and sleeping bags pack away to tiny proportions and weigh much less than their

synthetic-filled cousins. Once again, however, all of these miraculous insulating properties do have their downsides (pun sort of intended). It can be quite fragile stuff if not treated well and is about as insulating as a wet tissue once it gets damp. When looking after your down it's these critical elements that you need to watch out for.

## CLEANING

The first rule of cleaning down is don't clean your down. No, really. If possible you should try hard not to wash down sleeping bags and jackets too much. Cleaning down-filled items can really shorten their life spans by breaking down the feather filling. If your jacket or bag begins to smell a bit, try airing it thoroughly before committing to a wash.

## SPOT CLEANING

If a down jacket or sleeping bag has had something spilt on it, have a go just at the area affected, to avoid soaking the whole item. Use some Granger's Universal Spray Cleaner to attack any stubborn dirt.

## DEEP CLEANING

If it's no good and the thing is just too rank for any smells to leave of their own accord, it's time to think about a proper wash. You can clean down jackets and sleeping bags in a regular washing machine, although the fragile down feathers can be damaged with the severity of a washing machine cycle. You may also struggle to get a sleeping bag into your home washer; the wet weight of a bag can overwhelm some machines. Here are the techniques for both hand-washing and machine-cleaning...



## HOW TO HAND-WASH YOUR DOWN

A bath is the best place for this. There is lots of room to move the item around, and there is obviously easy access to running water. Just be sure that nobody else needs the bath for at least a few hours!



**1** Half-fill the bath with warm water and add the recommended amount of dedicated down cleaning product, such as Granger's Down Cleaner.



**2** Introduce the item to be washed. Move it around in the water with your hands. Head off and make a cup of tea. Return and agitate once again. Drink tea. Agitate. Repeat.



## HOW TO MACHINE-WASH YOUR DOWN

Close all zips (if applicable) and place the garment in a washing machine with down clothing cleaner. Granger's Down Cleaner has been formulated to not strip away any of the natural protective oils that coat the down filling, while also helping with 'lofting' (fluffing up) of the

down after the item is clean and dry. A regular 30 deg C wash cycle is normally sufficient, but do check the item's care label. Use the gentlest spin cycle possible to try to protect the feathers. It's best to use a tumble-dryer for this (see below).



**3** After an hour or so in the soapy mix, drain and refill the bath with clean water. Agitate the item to draw out soapiness. Rinse with a shower head if you have one. Gently massage the item and refill bath until all suds are gone.



**4** After emptying the bath, try to get the majority of the water out of the item by gently pushing down. Do not wring it out or squeeze as this will only damage the down.



**5** Find a tumble-dryer. A bigger dryer will give the item more space to move around and help the filling to 'loft' (fluff up). The best (albeit laborious) approach is to stop the dryer every 5-10 minutes and fluff up the item by hand.