

# Blackening Small Parts and Tools

By Curt Arndt – Chairman, Austin Healey Concours Committee



***Two “King Dick” adjustable spanners I did using this process***

O.K. here's a list of things you'll need:

\*Birchwood-Casey Gun Bluing or Super Blue (Inexpensive at Walmart). ***Better yet is a product called Oxpho-Blue, Liquid Gun Blue #082-024-016 (16 oz. size), made by Brownells, Inc.*** I found their website and ordered it by mail.

[http://www.brownells.com/.aspx/pid=1072/Product/OXPHO\\_BLUE\\_reg](http://www.brownells.com/.aspx/pid=1072/Product/OXPHO_BLUE_reg)

\*White Lithium spray grease

\*Rubber (latex surgical) gloves

\*Cotton balls



\*A pair of Hemostats

\*Small disposable plastic cups (bathroom size 3.5 oz)

\*Acid brushes

\*Plastic tray to hold parts

\*#0000 steel wool

\*Something to bake parts in (No, not the kitchen oven or stove). I use a small one burner hot plate with a round metal (baking) pan to hold parts. Others have used old discarded toaster ovens.

\*Fine wire wheel. I have a 6 in. wire wheel with .006 in. steel wire. This is as fine as it gets and is what you might use to burnish the steel if you were bluing a gun.

\*Paper towels/rags

\*Old toothbrush

First clean the parts well by bead blasting or acid dipping them first and then burnishing with the fine wire wheel so that the part shines. I use a six inch stainless steel wire wheel on my buffer with .006 fine wire. Then wash the part in very hot soapy water using the ultra fine steel wool to further polish the part, rinse well and dry immediately with the paper towels. From here on out use the rubber latex gloves to handle the parts so as not to contaminate them with the oils from your hands.

Place the parts in your plastic container and pour a small amount of bluing into the small disposable cup. Then take a cotton ball, lock it into the hemostat and dip/soak it with the bluing solution and start wiping the parts, they should turn black immediately. One thing that will help is if the parts are still hot to warm from the washing process. You'll also need to re-dip the cotton ball or use a new one regularly since the bluing solution will weaken with use in a short time.

Once the parts are evenly black, they should be in the bluing solution for at least two minutes, rinse them with plenty of cold water to remove and dry again with the paper towels. You will now probably notice that the parts will "flash rust" almost immediately.

Important! – The next step is the key to having superior results.

To stop and reverse the rusting process, you will need to follow the next steps right away. Place the parts in the round metal pan on the hot plate and spray them with the lithium grease. Let them bake/cook in the pan for at least fifteen minutes using the acid brush to wipe the grease into the crevices in the parts. Keep the temperature setting very low and if the grease starts smoking the hot plate is too hot. Let the parts cool and then wipe the grease off with the paper towels and use the toothbrush to clean the grease out of the bolt/screw threads.

This is fun stuff and relatively easy. If done correctly the results are just like the originals and are as good if not better than having them done professionally. Enjoy.