



Hodges Hobby House

"Your Pinewood Derby Headquarters since 1978"

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-  ***ALWAYS HAVE ADULT SUPERVISION WHEN WORKING WITH TOOLS!***
-  ***ALWAYS WEAR EYE PROTECTION WHEN WORKING WITH TOOLS!***
-  ***ALWAYS WEAR A DUST MASK WHEN WORKING WITH ABRASIVES AND POLISHING COMPOUNDS!***



Hodges Hobby House - Axle Polishing Instructions

My mini axle polish kit contains a bag of white pumice powder, one strip of crocus cloth (rather thick, reddish brown in color with a cloth backing) and a strip of 600 grit wet/dry sandpaper (rather thin paper with fine black grit and green or yellow coloring on the back). The full kit also contains a flat file.

Speed Axles III

My Speed Axles are very fast right out of the package, but can be improved with polishing, not sanding or filing. The nickel plating is rather thin and sanding (or too much polishing) could remove it. This is not desirable. See the last step in the next section for polishing instructions.

Scout Axles

1. Make sure the axle enters the wheel hole easily, If not, file the sharp edges on the chisel point. If you force the axle into the wheel hole, it may score the inner hub. This is not desirable.

Mount the axle in a 1/4 inch drill motor or a Dremel tool. Spin.

2. The Scout axles have a small mold separation burr on the inside of the head. This must be filed down for maximum speed. Apply a small file to the burr to remove it. Slant the file to slightly bevel the surface - like my Speed axles.

3. Cut the wet/dry sandpaper into narrower strips, hold in a loop and dip in a glass of water to slightly wet the paper and dip in a glass of water in the bottom of the loop. Apply to the spinning axle about 15 seconds. Inspect your work. Is the axle perfectly smooth? If not, repeat the wet/dry sanding.

4. Cut the crocus cloth into a narrow strip, hold in a loop and apply to the spinning axle as long as you like - until you can see no further improvement. No water is used with crocus cloth.

5. Mix a small amount of the pumice powder with water to make a paste about the consistency of oatmeal. A small pill bottle makes a good container. Place a small amount of the paste center of a strip of soft cloth (old tee shirt, flannel nightgown, etc), hold in a loop and apply as long as you like - until you can see no further improvement. If you have access to a buffing wheel, buffing with jeweler's rouge can be substituted for the pumice paste.

Jeweler's rouge is a polishing compound that is applied with a buffing wheel. It is usually sold with several other polishing compounds in a small box. I believe Sears carries it. Probably the best way to polish axles with jeweler's rouge is to spin the axle in a drill motor and apply the spinning buffing wheel to the axle. Double action!
Polish to a mirror finish.

