

Ask Jon Eakes

Steel Wool - Aluminium Wool - Bronze Wool - Stainless Steel Wool

Last Updated: Sunday, November 11th, 2012, Created: Friday, January 11th, 2002

Many years ago when I was active in my cabinet shop I had a place where I could purchase Stainless Steel Wool. This was the best stuff for finishing off oak between coats of finish because if little pieces got caught in the pores of the wood and I failed to get them out, they would not eventually turn black or rust buried deep inside that finish. I also used the same stuff to mix with caulking to plug holes against field mice. They couldn't chew through it and it never rusted. So of course I recommended both of these uses for Stainless Steel Wool recently on the TV only to have people tell me that they can't find it anywhere. So we set out to find some and we ended up finding much more. In the boating industry, there is a lot of use of Bronze Wool for cleaning bronze, brass and copper. In the airplane industry there used to be a lot of use of Aluminium Wool for cleaning aluminium, but that has since been replaced with synthetic pads that don't leave any aluminium shreds to bother the rest of the airplane construction. You got it, Stainless Steel Wool for cleaning just about anything that the others won't clean. The idea is that you should use cleaning wool of the same hardness as the metal you want to clean, use a harder metal, like regular steel wool on copper or aluminium, and you just get scratches, not polishing. As far as using the Stainless Steel Wool for Oak as I used to do, well the synthetic pads have also replaced that use, again to avoid any shreds at all. I will have to shift over when I use up all my old stock. So I located the special metal wools, but it is sold to big industries, not the local renovation centres. We did discover however that the bronze wool is sold in many boat stores, and since they all come from the same place, you may be able to get a special order for Stainless Steel, unless you want to use bronze for those mice which should work as well. One viewer is trying this stuff to keep bats from nesting in his cedar shake roof as the old steel wool just left rust marks on the shakes.

Keywords:

Finishing, Aluminum, Cleaning, Steel Wool, Copper, Bronze, Alternative, Metal

Article 1644

www.joneakes.com