

Ask Jon Eakes

Cleaning bits and blades

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When you want to take resin or glue off of drill bits and saw blades you don't want to use just any solvent to do the job.

In fact one of the resin cleaners that we hear about in DIY books is to use an oven cleaner. It certainly does remove burned on resin efficiently. Unfortunately it also eats the braze weld that holds on carbide teeth, so you should never use it with a carbide saw blade.

Acetone works quite effectively on resin but is very flammable to have sitting around.

My favourite trick is to use ammonia which is just as effective but slower working. I just put the blade in a pie or pizza pan, cover it with ammonia and then cover all that with plastic to not smell it. It smells terrible but at least it is not flammable. Leave it overnight and in the morning you can simply wipe off the resin with a paper towel.

The surprising discovery I made when I talked to carbide manufacturers is that resins from softwoods left sitting on blades can actually corrode the carbide itself! So clean your blades right after you use them, not three months later. That sap not only creates drag, it can shorten the life of your blade teeth.

You can stop rust in an infrequently used shop by a light oil or wax job after cleaning.

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