



## Equipment - There are not many items that are required for bulling.

- Two brushes. (One for putting on polish and one for taking off).
- A good duster or cloth. I personally don't like yellow dusters but if you must use one then it's a good idea to wash it first to remove excess dye.
- Black and dark brown shoe polish. Kiwi black and dark tan is probably the best to use. Some people use Kiwi Parade Gloss however this is best left until near the end of the bulling process as it contains paraffin that could potentially harm the leather.
- If you are starting on a brand new pair of shoes or boots, it is a good idea to work beeswax into the leather first. This will give the leather the suppleness that it needs and will help stop the subsequent layers of polish from cracking..



## Step 1 - Preparation

If you are using a new pair of boots or shoes it is best to start by breaking them in, (wearing them for a while), and then working a lot of polish into the leather by brush polishing them quite a few times.

This gives you a good base layer on which to start bulling. By wearing them in first you should have no problems with the polish cracking off.

## Step 2 – Basic Bulling Techniques

- First, take your duster and wrap it around your first two fingers.
- Now lick the end. (If you prefer you can dip it in water but don't use too much).
- Rub the duster in the polish until you have a small circle on the end.
- Now start to gently rub the duster in small circles all over the area until you start to feel resistance and the polish goes dull.
- At this point I personally spit on the shoe although again, you may dip the duster in a little water if you prefer. (Although spit gives a better shine - this is where the term 'Spit & Polish' comes from)
- You now carry on bulling in small circles. Keep on going until the leather starts to shine. All you do now is apply more polish to the duster and repeat the bulling. Please note that it takes quite a few hours work to achieve the mirror shine you are after.

## Step 3 – Finishing touches

- In order to achieve a deep, superior shine, I like to use brown polish such as dark tan from Kiwi. This is usually applied after every five layers of black.
- Once your shoe has a smooth layer, you will notice that the surface has a slight oily sheen across it. This is just a very small layer of polish left on the leather. By taking a small amount of cotton wool soaked in water and then bulling gently as before, this will be removed and your shoe is finished.
- Just blow any water that is left off your shoe and that's it.

## Different Approaches

Many people that I have spoken to use the method of burning a layer of polish onto the leather. Or a heated spoon to melt the polish on to the leather. Although this will give quick results, the resulting layer is more susceptible to chipping / cracking, and it is hard to get an all over smooth layer.

As with most things in life, you get what you put in and so, although bulling properly takes a lot more time, the end result is far superior.