

6 Steps to Clean Firefighting Footwear

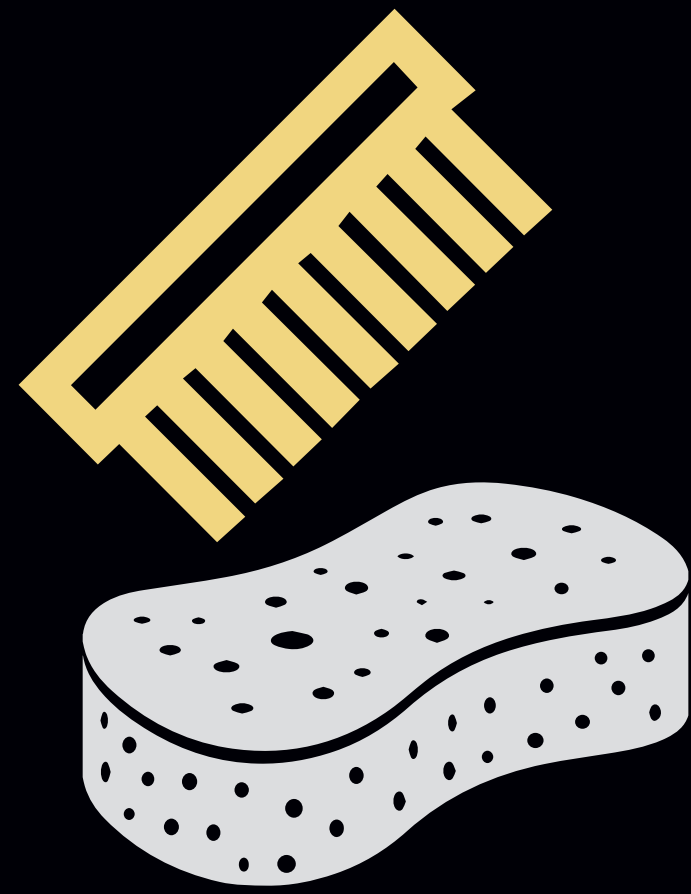


The fire service recognizes that clean PPE can help keep you safe. NFPA 1851 requires the user to evaluate PPE after each use to check for any damage and to determine the appropriate cleaning level. Also included in NFPA are instructions for cleaning at the scene, known as "preliminary exposure reduction," and an advanced cleaning at least twice a year or whenever on-scene cleaning is not sufficient. While it's important that you read the detailed instructions found in NFPA 1851, Standard on Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting, here are six steps to assist in cleaning your footwear.

1. CLEAN BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE SCENE

Gently brush or lightly sponge off footwear to remove the large, gross contaminants following overhaul. If an on-scene cleaning is not sufficient, the footwear requires an advanced cleaning.

NOTE: Step 1 constitutes a preliminary exposure reduction, which should be done at the scene. Steps 2 through 6 constitute an advanced cleaning, done at least twice a year or when on-scene cleaning is not sufficient.



2. INSPECT

Wear exam gloves and eye protection during this process. Note any physical damage that will need to be addressed before the footwear is able to be returned to service.



3. WASH

For advanced cleaning, use a soft sponge or rag with warm water to remove surface dirt on the exterior of the boot, and then rinse thoroughly. A very mild dishwashing detergent should be used sparingly and then the footwear rinsed off as soon as possible.

It is permissible to use a soft bristle brush to scrub any dirt or debris off the surface. Do not submerge the boots into water.

To clean the interior of the boots, fill the boot about three-quarters full with warm water and a mild detergent. Use a soft sponge or rag and scrub the interior of the boot, then rinse with clean warm water. Footwear should never be machine cleaned using equipment that produces mechanical action by tumbling or agitation.



4. RE-INSPECT

Once the boots have been through the cleaning process, inspect again and if there is visible soiling present, repeat Step 3.



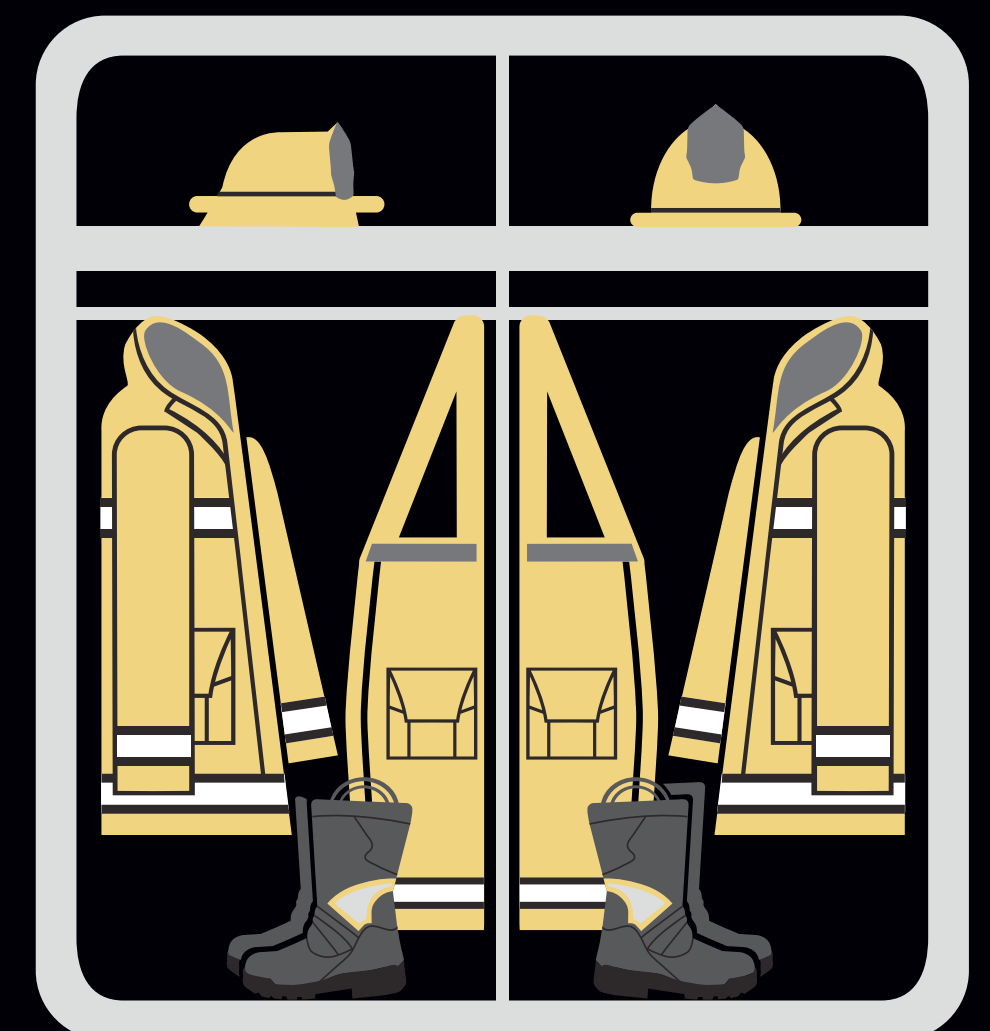
5. DRYING

Dry the boots in an area with good ventilation; never dry in direct sunlight. Footwear should never be machine dried using equipment that produces mechanical action by tumbling or agitation. The boots **MUST** be thoroughly dry before returning to service.



6. STORAGE

Store clean footwear in a dry, well-ventilated area out of direct sunlight and away from indoor light sources, which can also produce harmful UV rays. Do not store in extreme hot or cold temperatures, nor in airtight containers.



ONLINE RESOURCES

MSAfire.com/Globe | PPE101.com | NFPA.org

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