**Proper Gun and Ammo Storage Long-term**

Long-term gun and[ammo storage](https://www.amazon.com/s?k=ammo+storage&crid=2AHJI6UKV8MVR&sprefix=ammo+s%2Caps%2C238&ref=nb_sb_ss_ts-doa-p_1_6) must be done properly to protect your assets.

A basic rule of thumb is to store guns and ammo in a cool, dry place. Of the two, dry is far more important than cool. The steel components of a gun need not become soaked for [rust](https://www.cheaperthandirt.com/gun-care/rust-prevention/?utm_source=blog.cheaperthandirt&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=importance-proper-gun-and-ammo-storage) to begin. Just a little moisture can initiate oxidation, which becomes visible rust in a couple days’ time.

Warm days and days with high humidity can accelerate the process. Especially when humidity is combined with salt-laden air near seawater or certain industrial sites or products or sweat-soaked garments. This also goes for the steel cartridge cases.

More concerning to ammunition is the copper. Copper is a component of the brass used for many cartridge cases. Copper is also used as the jacket on most bullets. Exposure to any kind of moisture — including humidity and residual oils present on human hands — can initiate copper corrosion. Unlike rust, copper corrosion shows up as greenish, icky goo.

**Protection from Corrosion**

Try not to accumulate moisture. You should mount a gun safe on boards bolted to the floor, rather than to the floor itself, to prevent exposure. Also, secure some desiccant packets, which absorb moisture from the air, and distribute them liberally in your ammo and gun storage containers.

**Firearms:**

Guns should be cleaned and oiled prior to storage. If any rust is found, it should be removed with solvent and a rag or, if more severe, 0000 grit sandpaper, then oiled to prevent further damage. At the very least you should wipe down your guns with a quality firearm lubricant. For a lot of us, that means [**Hoppe’s No. 9 Gun Oil**](https://www.amazon.com/s?k=hoppes+9+solvent&crid=BXHY5QEIOAMO&sprefix=hoppes%2Caps%2C114&ref=nb_sb_ss_ts-doa-p_1_6) or [Ballistol.](https://www.amazon.com/s?k=ballistol&crid=11BTLJ8W1S8QS&sprefix=ball%2Caps%2C129&ref=nb_sb_ss_ts-doa-p_1_4" \t "_blank)

A quick swab through the bore as well is important so you have at least a bit of lubricant coating the bore. Your sweaty, salty hands and fingerprints are an open invitation to rust, so at least take a minute to wipe down your guns.

To be thorough, however, requires that we sit down at the bench and clean and lubricate our guns properly. That means cleaning the exterior with a quality cleaner and a lubricant. Then swabbing the bore and lubricating it properly.

If you’re shooting a revolver be sure to clean the cylinder and crane. Don’t forget the magazines. If you have wood-stocked rifles or shotguns give the wood a rub down with Ballistol or a good [**gun stock wax**](https://www.amazon.com/s?k=gun+stock+wax&ref=nb_sb_noss).

**Some Suggestions:**

1. Do not store your guns in gun cases or pistol rugs.  The linings are actually quite absorbent and will tend to pull moisture from the air into the material and literally surround your gun with moisture.
2. Do not store your guns in the original cardboard or plastic box. Again, cardboard will absorb moisture as will gun boxes with soft or formed foam cut outs. Best to keep the box elsewhere for transport to the range or for use when selling your gun at a later date.
3. Do not store your guns in holsters. Whether nylon or leather or kydex, it’s best to store your handguns in a rack in your safe. Again, we don’t want any way for moisture to surround our guns.
4. For those with over-crowded safes or fancy wood stocks, you may want to consider storing your guns in [**gun socks**](https://amzn.to/2zdNcyv). I know we just said no material around the gun. But the silicone impregnated socks do not absorb moisture and will protect your guns from dings and bumps in the safe as well.
5. Modern technology has brought new solutions for corrosion prevention. There’s a new series of bags on the market that boast the ability to provide complete corrosion protection for a minimum of five years. Size and shape choices of the Anti-Corrosion VCI Gun Bags mean they can be deployed as ammo can liners, pistol, and magazine containers, or even long guns. This is accomplished through the release and containment within the bag of gases that prevent oxidation. Tough and sealed tight with Velcro, these bags provide serious protection.
6. Place handguns in a rack so each gun has a place and they are not banging against each other.
7. To keep the interior of the safe dry a simple solution is to use silica gel beads to absorb moisture. Commercial packaging often includes a test strip that indicates when the beads have absorbed all the moisture they can hold. The beads can then be placed in the oven and dried or recharged in two to three hours.

**Ammo:**

The biggest enemy of powder and primer compound is heat. So try to store your ammo at household temps or cooler and keep it out of the sun. It should go without saying that “keeping your powder dry” is also critical.

Military [ammo cans](https://www.cheaperthandirt.com/search?q=ammo+cans&lang=default&utm_source=blog.cheaperthandirt&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=importance-proper-gun-and-ammo-storage), the metal kind, are best for protecting ammunition, but aren’t immune to moisture. Use desiccant packets inside ammo cans—they’re not a failsafe, but they can help with controlling humidity. Be sure the rubber seal is intact so the can is as watertight as possible.

Rotate boxes so that older ammo is shot up first.

Annually, flip ammo boxes over to disperse slight caking that may have begun in the powder.

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 “Keep your powder dry” is an old rifleman’s way of extending a caring salutation. It’s sound advice.