

Spinning Wheel Maintenance

General rule of thumb is to use 30W or 40W oil on those parts of your wheel where metal meets metal, neat's foot oil on leather, and oil or mechanics' grease where metal meets plastic bearings or wood.

****Never, never oil sealed bearings****

General Hints:

If your wood wheel is not sealed or varnished, be sure to wax or oil it 2 times a year to keep the wood from drying out.

Keep your wheel away from heat and moisture (and don't forget grass can be damp).

Ensure all wheel parts are aligned properly.

If your wheel slips along the floor consider a rubber mat or feet.

Your flyer should be seasoned for every few hours of spinning.

If you hear a squeak... do not ignore it! It is a sign of wear and tear. Fix the problem. Don't live with it. Of this I speak from experience.

Release tension on drive band in between spinning sessions.

Ensure brake band groves, drive band groves, groves on bobbins and orifices on bobbins are clean and grime-free.

A. Flyer

Ensure shaft holes (eye and orifice) are clear and clean. Clean with Q-tips and 70% isopropyl alcohol*. Run steel wool through orifice and eye. Lubricate exterior of both with oil.

Flyer shaft: With a dry cloth rub off excess oil and grime, clean with steel wool, then lubricate with oil.

Hooks: All present, accounted for and secure.

No rough edges on hooks, orifice or exit holes.

Flyer bearings: Should be cleaned and lubricated.

**only use as much alcohol as is necessary and be careful not to strip your varnish or ruin wheel's finish.*

B. Drive Band

Plastic drive band should still have elasticity and no yellowing.

String drive band should not be worn. It should also not be joined with a knot (Spliced joins only. You can top splice with Fray Check if you think it needs to be secured a bit better). If slipping, season with beeswax. Replacement string should be of a cord that is thick and softly twisted.

C. Brake Band

Try replacing elastic band with a pliable spring. Choose a spring that is neither too stiff nor too easily pulled out of shape. The spring should be able to go back to its original shape even after you stretch it out to its maximum i.o.w. the wire should not remain stretched. Ensure spring is right length (cut & recoil end if necessary). Check how wheel handles, and if “take-up” is too strong go back to using elastic.

If choose to use elastics, replace once and a while to ensure pliability.

Try replacing string brake band with 25 lb. test fishing line. See how wheel responds. Which gives you greater control? Whichever you decide to use — ensure no wear or grease spots develop on string over time and that fishing line is always pliable and not yellowed.

D. Treadle

Use oil (graphite is another possibility as lubricant here) on metal parts.

Use neat’s foot oil on leather.

Suggested Reading:

- ☞ Field, Anne **Spinning Wool, Beyond the Basics**, Shoal Bay Press, New Zealand, 1995.
- ☞ Field Anne **The Ashford Book of Spinning**, Shoal Bay Press, New Zealand, 1986.
- ☞ Raven, Lee **Hands On Spinning**, Interweave Press Colorado, 1987.