

# **Caring for Your Cable Railing**

# Preserve the Beauty and Integrity of Your Cable Railing

With proper care, your Cable Bullet railing will stay strong and look great year after year. Read through this guide for details, but here are some general rules for care:

**Stainless Steel:** Maintain the protective layer by avoiding harsh chemicals and keeping the surface clean.

**Anodized Aluminum:** The finish is not a coating but a durable oxide layer—treat it with pH-neutral cleaners.

**Black Oxide:** Protect the finish with regular oiling or clear coatings to prevent rust and fading.

## Caring for Stainless Steel Cable

**Stainless doesn't mean stain-free.** Stainless steel resists corrosion thanks to a thin, self-healing “passive layer” that forms when its chromium content reacts with oxygen.

But when that layer is damaged—by harsh chemicals, mechanical abrasion, or extreme heat—or when chromium levels drop too low to maintain it, the surface can no longer protect itself. This exposes the iron in the alloy, making it vulnerable to rust and corrosion.

**2205 stainless steel** offers improved corrosion resistance compared to 316, but it's not invincible. Regular care is still essential to keep it looking and performing its best.

### HOW TO AVOID RUST:

- Clean and protect your cable at the first signs of stress.
- Pay special attention to set screw channels (tensioning mechanisms) before installation and during seasonal maintenance.

## Maintaining Cable Tension

**Will I need to re-tension my cables?** Yes, you will likely need to re-tension your cables after the initial installation. Don't worry, this is normal!

If you've installed cable railing on a new structure you may need to re-tension your lines after the structure or posts begin to settle and shift. Metal expansion and contraction, and stress on the cables can also result in lines needing to be re-tensioned.

**Perform the following 1 month after installation and no less than once yearly thereafter:**

**Inspect cable tension:** Tighten any cables that have started to sag using a 3/32" Allen wrench.

**Clean set screw channels:** If buildup is present, clean and lubricate with Boeshield T-9.

**Check for corrosion:** Pay extra attention to high-exposure areas, especially in coastal or humid environments.

# Cleaning Frequency

## 1. AFTER INSTALLATION

Perform a general cleaning immediately following installation to counteract any damage to the factory protective layer that may have occurred during installation. Pay special attention to seams, post bases, and anywhere materials may have been scuffed.

## 2. REGULAR MAINTENANCE

Performing a maintenance cleaning annually is commonly required, but maintenance could be needed as frequently as every 3–6 months. This will depend greatly on your railing's environment. Check early and often to gauge how your unique environment is affecting your railing. The best time to treat your railing is at the first sign of corrosion. Failing to adequately clean and protect your railing can result in rust, compromise its integrity, and present a safety concern.

# General Cleaning

for T316 stainless steel, Duplex 2205 stainless steel, anodized aluminum, and black oxide components:

3. Use a soft nylon brush to remove dirt and debris.
4. Wash with warm water and mild dish soap.
5. Rinse thoroughly with clean water to remove any cleaning residue.
6. Dry all exposed surfaces with a lint-free cloth or blow dryer to prevent water spots.

## WHAT TO AVOID

**Harsh chemicals and abrasives:** Avoid acidic, abrasive, or high-pH cleaners (e.g., vinegar, bleach, Comet, acetone), as they can degrade finishes, cause discoloration, or lead to corrosion.

**Citrus-based and acidic cleaners:** Acidic cleaners, including citrus-based formulas, can degrade the protective finish of anodized aluminum and black oxide, leading to dulling or etching. Stick with pH-neutral or aluminum-safe cleaners such as Alconox Liquinox or Brulin 815 GD.

**Chlorine and chlorinated water:** Chlorine exposure can cause pitting, discoloration, and weaken protective layers. If exposure is frequent, consider applying a protective sealant.

## HOW TO PROTECT

Apply Boeshield T-9 Rust and Corrosion Protection Waterproof Lubricant or other protectants rated for use on anodized aluminum and stainless steel to all components of your cable railing, including the cable, in order to prevent rust and corrosion. Treat the tensioner set screw channel to prevent it from gumming up and to ensure smooth tensioning over time.

**Optional:** Use Corrosion Inhibitors – If exposure to chlorine is frequent, consider applying a protective coating, such as Teflon or silicone-based sealants.

# Occasional Cleaning for Tougher Stains

## TREATING STAINLESS STEEL

**Warm soapy water and a soft cloth:** Effective for most stains.

**Stainless steel cleaner and polish:** Removes fingerprints, water spots, and restores shine.

**Phosphoric acid-based rust removers (use with caution):**

Can help remove stains but may weaken the surface if overused. Always test in an inconspicuous area first and follow up with Boeshield T-9.

## FOR STAINLESS STEEL RUST

**For light rust:** Apply Boeshield RustFree to a soft cloth and whip off rusty and spotted areas. Avoid spraying directly on the surface to minimize the risk of spotting.

**For heavy rust:** Spray directly on the rusted surface and scrub with a mildly abrasive pad. Wipe off and repeat as necessary.

## TREATING ANODIZED ALUMINUM

**Ammonia-Free Windex:** Helps remove water stains. Test in an inconspicuous area first.

**Mild phosphoric acid-based cleaners (use with caution):** Can assist with stain removal but should be rinsed immediately to avoid etching.

## TREATING BLACK OXIDE CABLE


**Oil-based sealants:** Apply gun oil, mineral oil, boiled linseed oil, or WD-40 Specialist Long-Term Corrosion Inhibitor to maintain the finish. Buff off excess oil after 10–15 minutes. Reapply every 6 months or as needed.


**Clear Acrylic or Polyurethane Spray:** Use a matte or satin clear coat (e.g., Rust-Oleum Clear Spray or Everbrite Protective Coating) for longer-lasting protection against moisture and UV exposure.


## ADDITIONAL TIPS

- Use soft cloths or sponges (avoid steel wool or rough brushes).
- Rinse thoroughly with clean water to remove any residue.
- Consult a professional metal refinisher for repairs for deep scratches or worn areas.



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