

Cleaning Jacks and Switches

It's good practice to periodically clean input jacks and switches. Use of the jack, in particular, leads to contamination which can cause signal problems. The combo jack is more susceptible to contamination than the typical open frame 1/4 inch jack so it's a good idea to clean the 1/4 inch input on a regular basis.

It's best to use a spray type contact cleaner--Deoxit D5 or Deoxit D100 are good choices. They are available from Radio Shack or from partsexpress.com (part number 341-200 or 341-205). A photo of D5 is shown below.

To clean the 1/4 inch input jack, spray a little Deoxit into the jack. Use the "straw" provided with the Deoxit to get the spray into the jack. Use just a tiny amount, a large amount won't clean the jack any better. The photo below shows the process. Then, take a 1/4 inch plug and plug and unplug in the jack a few times. This distributes the contact cleaner and provides the wiping mechanism that cleans the contact surfaces.



Deoxit D5



Cleaning the jack

The filter switch is also in the signal path, so when it is contaminated, there can be signal interruptions and other odd behavior. The Deoxit can also be used to clean the switch. The first step in cleaning the switch is to remove the white switch cap. This is done by using a sharp object (like the blade of a knife) to "grab" the side of the switch to lift it upwards, away from the panel. Once the cap is removed, you can see the shaft of the switch. Spray a little Deoxit down the shaft of the switch into the body of the switch and then work the switch up and down to distribute the cleaner and clean the contacts. Pop the switch cap back into place and the cleaning is complete. The photos below show the steps.



Prying out the switch cap



Switch cap partially out



The switch shaft