

FLEX-HONE[®] RESOURCE GUIDE

Information on Tool Selection, Grit Selection,
Suggested RPM's and More

GENERAL APPLICATION AND SELECTION OF THE FLEX-HONE® TOOL



The Flex-Hone® Tool is a resilient, flexible honing tool used to improve the internal surface finish while also being able to deburr a bore or cylinder. It is comprised of abrasive globules laminated onto the ends of flexible nylon filaments. It's unique construction allows the tool to be self-aligning, self-centering and self-compensating for wear. The tool provides the benefit of removing loose, torn and folded metal and creating a substantially flat or plateau surface. An additional important application for the Flex-Hone Tool is burr removal from cross-drilled holes.

The Flex-Hone Tool is manufactured in 8 different abrasive types and 11 different grit selections in a wide selection of sizes to work on a broad variety of base materials and surface finish requirements. The tool is produced in diameters from 4mm to 36”.

TOOL DIAMETER SELECTION

Tool diameter is determined by the nominal bore size in which the tool is to operate. The Flex-Hone tool is always produced and used in an oversize condition. The degree of oversize creates a soft cutting action. For example, a **1” Flex-Hone size is ordered if a 1” bore is to be finished and the tool is provided oversized. If the bore size is between standard Flex-Hone sizes, the next larger standard Flex-Hone should be selected.** For instance, if the nominal bore is 1.093”, then the 1-1/8” Flex-Hone is ordered.

ABRASIVE TYPE SELECTION

If the base material is:	Brush Research suggests:
mild steel, stainless steel and cast iron	Silicon Carbide
aluminum, brass, bronze and softer metals. For Deglazing Nikisil cylinders, we suggest 240 AO	Aluminum Oxide
low carbon to medium carbon steels, stainless steel and cast iron.	Zirconia Alumina (Z-Grain). Z-Grain is also beneficial when you are looking for longer tool life than SC
medium to high carbon steels and heat-treated steels to 50 Rc. It is also useful in titanium, Inconel and Monel	Boron Carbide
high carbon steel alloys and more exotic space age alloys	Tungsten Carbide
for a final polish on many materials	Levigated Alumina
for carbide, ceramic, hardened tool steel and heat treated steels	Diamond

GRIT SELECTION

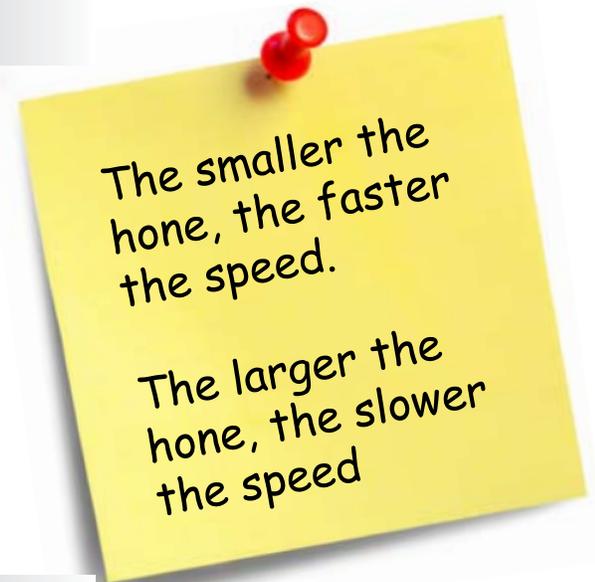
The amount of work to be performed and the degree of surface finish improvement required govern grit selection. Coarse finishes may require progressively finer Flex-Hones to meet final surface finish requirements. In very general terms, final finish will be in the following ranges. **This chart is intended to offer a starting point in selecting a grit but the final selection must be verified by actual trial.**

Grit	Finish Range
800-LA	Ra 3-10 (.05 - .2 Micrometer)
600	Ra 8-12 (.2 - .3 Micrometer)
400	Ra 10-20 (.3 - .6 Micrometer)
320	Ra 18-30 (.5 - .7 Micrometer)
240	Ra 24-32 (.6 - .8 Micrometer)
180	Ra 30-40 (.7 - 1.0 Micrometer)
120	Ra 35-50 (.9 - 1.4 Micrometer)
80	Ra 45-64 (1.2 - 1.6 Micrometer)
60	Ra 60-80 (1.5 - 2 Micrometer)
40	Ra 70-125 (1.7 to 3.2 Micrometers)
20	Ra 125-250 (3.2 to 6.3 Micrometers)

SUGGESTED RPM

The Flex-Hone tool is a low RPM tool. Specific RPM is dependent on the diameter of the tool and the application. General speed ranges are given but, again, machine trials are required to verify the parameters.

Hone Dia.	RPM
19" to 36"	60-120 RPM
12" to 18"	80 to 350 RPM
8" to 12"	300 to 500 RPM
4" to 8"	400 to 600 RPM
2" to 4"	600 to 800 RPM
½" to 2"	700 to 900 RPM
4mm to ½"	800-1200 RPM



SUGGESTED STROKE RATE

Stroke rate is a function of Flex-Hone diameter, stroke length and cross hatch angle specification, if any. High crosshatch angles require faster stroke rates. The larger diameter tools might feed as slow as 10-12 IPM while the smaller diameter tools with high cross hatch angles might require feed as high as 250 IPM.

SUGGESTED LUBRICATION

The Flex-Hone tool always requires the use of a lubricant or honing oil. Finer surface requirements dictate better quality honing fluids be used. Many fluids may be used general applications: water soluble oils, mineral oils, motor oils and cutting and tapping fluids are adequate to keep the tool from loading and to insure exposure of fresh cutting particles. Solvents should be avoided, as they tend to degrade the adhesive bond in the tool.

COMMON FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FLEX-HONE® TOOL

How easy is it to use?

It is very easy to use. The abrasive globules each have independent suspension that assures the Flex-Hone to be self-centering, self-aligning to the bore and self-compensating for wear. No time-consuming training or set up is needed.

What's the difference between a Flex-Hone and a Ball Hone?

There is no difference. The Flex-Hone and Ball Hone are both trademarked names for our tools. We market the tool under the name Flex-Hone, but a common name is Ball Hone. Some people also refer to the tool as a dingleberry hone, grape hone, bead hone, bottle brush hone, glaze buster/breaker hone, or flexible hone, but we do our best to dissuade the usage of those terms and to promote Flex-Hone. In any case, if it says BRM, you've got the best.

What RPM do I spin it at?

The RPM will vary with the size of the tool and will range from 1200 to 60 RPM. The smaller the hone, the faster the speed. For a 1" tool, for instance you will want to be at around 800 RPM, for a 3" tool, you should be near 700 RPM, for a 6" tool, you'll be nearer to 450 RPM and so on. These are just guidelines and optimal performance for each specific application will be found with a bit of experimentation and testing.

How do I know what grit/abrasive type I have?

The grit and abrasive type is identified by two key markings, one on the stem and one on the tip. The stem markings identify the abrasive type and the tip markings identify the abrasive grit.

Will it remove too much material?

No. The Flex-Hone tool is a surface finishing tool, not a material removal tool. We are reducing the rough peaks of a surfaces microstructure and typically we only remove a small amount of material.

Why is the tool I got larger than what I ordered?

Because the tool needs to be slightly oversized to function properly. The tools should always be ordered to the true ID of the bore to be worked, and then they are manufactured with the correct oversize.

I have a taper or a stepped diameter hole. What can I do?

Contact us. We can design and manufacture tapered Flex-Hone tools and stepped or multi-diameter Flex-Hone tools in any of our abrasive types and grits.

How long does it last?

This is a very frequently asked question and the hardest to answer as there is no true answer. For many end users, one Flex-Hone tool will last forever. For our high volume OEM customers, however, this is a bigger issue. The life of the tool will vary due to the following: Tool diameter, grit size, abrasive type, beginning roughness of the work piece, desired roughness of the work piece, stroke rate, rpm, material type, lubricant used, and many more. If you need more tool life for an ongoing application, please contact our technical staff to help you determine key points that may improve the longevity or number of parts worked per tool.

UNDERSTANDING SOME OF THE FLEX-HONE® BENEFITS

THE FLEX-HONE IS USED TO DEGLAZE CYLINDER WALLS.

What is Deglazing?

In a gasoline or diesel engine, the pistons ride up and down within the engine maintaining a tight seal via the piston rings. Over time, the constant rubbing of the rings against the cylinder wall can polish it to a very smooth finish. This creates problems in two ways. First, the lubricating oil in the engine will not adhere properly to the mirror smooth surface, and friction is increased. Secondly, while breaking in newly installed piston rings, a minute amount of wear must occur between rings and cylinder wall in order to seat the rings properly, and ensure a gas-tight seal. If the cylinder walls are too smooth, this wear will not occur, with the rings “skating” over the polished surface.

In order to correct the situation, a mechanic can take the engine apart, and deglaze the cylinders, usually using an abrasive. This creates a roughly 45 degree angle crosshatching of tiny grooves in the cylinder wall, and restores the engines performance.

THE FLEX-HONE IS ALSO USED FOR CROSS HOLE DEBURRING.

What is Cross Hole Deburring?

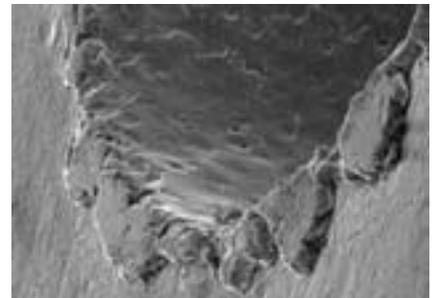
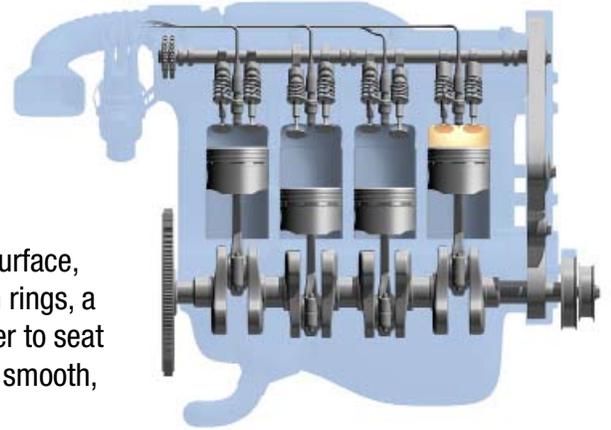
Metal is frequently machined using many processes in order to create pieces of specific shape and size. For example, metal may be welded, molded, cast, trimmed, slit or sheared. These procedures often create ragged edges or protrusions. The raised particles and shavings that appear when metal blanks are machined are referred to as burrs, and the process by which they are removed is known as deburring.

Deburring may be accomplished by one of several methods. Abrasive substances may be applied, or abrasive cloths may be used to rub the metal in order to remove thin shavings and small notches, as well as to polish the piece.

Deburring and polishing may be necessary for more than one section of a metal component, since burrs and shavings can occur on seams as well as edges. All surfaces need to be completely smooth.

Deburring is important for quality, aesthetics, functionality and smooth operation of working parts. It is also important for safety. Even a small notch can cause moving parts to catch, creating the potential for accident, injury or unnecessary delay in production. Rough edges can also cause injury when individuals are required to handle blanks. Each of these preventable problems can cost companies a great deal of money.

Deburring greatly improves the quality and functionality of metal and wood pieces, making it a necessary use of time and a cost effective process.



BURR



DEBURRED

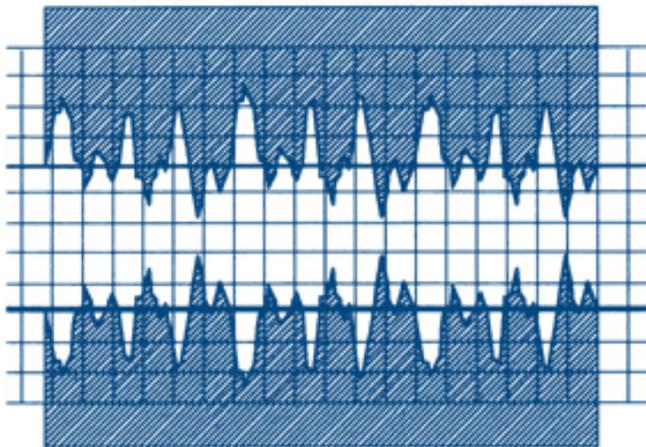
MORE FLEX-HONE® BENEFITS

THE FLEX-HONE IS USED TO IMPROVE SURFACE FINISH AND CREATE A PROPER PLATEAU FINISH.

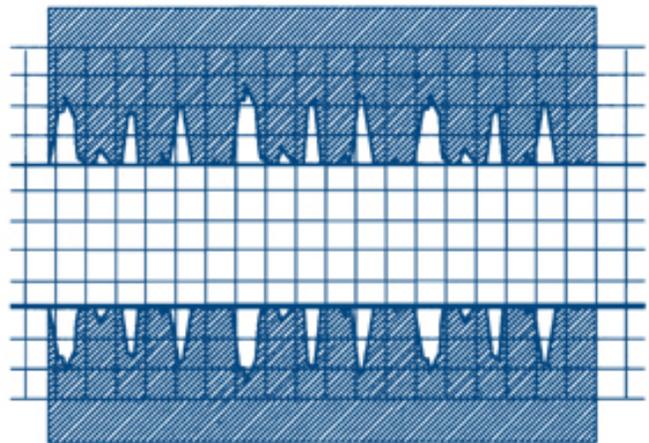
What is a Plateau Finish?

The Flex-Hone® Tool is available in a variety of abrasive types and grit selections to provide the optimum surface finish on any base material. Using the Flex-Hone® Tool for surface finishing allows the sizing tools to do their jobs quickly and accurately without fighting surface finish. The Flex-Hone® is also used in adhesive bonding applications where a rougher surface is desired for bonding integrity.

BRM pioneered the concept of a plateau finish and is a strong supporter of the benefits of a cross hatch, plateaued finish. The concept involves removing the peaks produced by prior machining operations and creating a substantially flat or plateau finish. A plateau finish created by the elimination of peaks allows rings and seals to seat without damaging their edges. The cross hatch pattern will aid in lubrication control and retention, reduce seepage in hydraulic and pneumatic applications and promote longer seal life.



Before Honing



After Honing

