

BEFORE you shape your crown. The reason being that you want some hardness around that side, because you want a very straight even edge right where the crown meets the side of the tip. Without spitting on it, you aren't going to be able to see it that well. Shape it into a countour of a dime then you'll find you have to spit on the side of the tip again and polish it up one more time, and you're there .

Some shafts will warp; there's no getting around it. All that you have to do is sight the shaft. In sighting the shaft, hold it where you're sighting against something dark; you'll get a much better view of it that way - find the high spot, then holding at the joint, put your hand on the high spot, the tip on the table, and you can press that thing right in. you just sort of iron it out with your hand, press it right in, sight it again - see that you've got it straight - and 90% of the time, that shaft will stay straight. It may not- you may have to go through it several times; if it doesn't stay straight, then it's just a bad piece of wood and you're going to have to get a new shaft.

Now, on the butt of the cue, you really only have two areas to be concerned about - the finished area and the wrap area. On the finished area, I like to take just some Pledge - spray it on, take a soft paper towel and wipe it off. That's just the hand oils and grime from the table that get on there. On the wrap - if you're playing with Irish Linen wrap - alot of people are concerned because they get dirty - well, forget it - they are designed to get dirty; they're designed to absorb the moisture out of the hands, pick up the dirt from the table, etc. It's just going to happen - you can't keep it clean, so don't be concerned. Some people like to try and clean a wrap. I advise against it for two reasons: 1. You're putting moisture into the cue - you can't clean a wrap without putting moisture into it. That's bad. 2. You're going to be destructing the Irish Linen, because if you get in there with a toothbrush or whatever, trying to get all that dirt off, you're going to be tearing the fibres of the linen. When it happens, if it happens, about the only thing you can do to get it smooth is go ahead and rub it down with some 600 sandpaper and then take some paraffin; or wax paper, and scrub the wax paper over the thing real hard, then get a piece of a grocery bag - brown bag - and rub that wax in real good. By now you've got it all pressed down and you have a decent feeling again. But I really recommend against anybody cleaning their wrap, because all you're going to do is make a mess. It's better NOT to do it at all.

If the butt should warp, there's not much you can do about it. Any good cue maker has taken all precautions to prevent it, so if it happens, it's one of those unfortunate things and if it's severe enough to make you want to get a new cue, that's what you ought to do.