

FINE CAR CARE

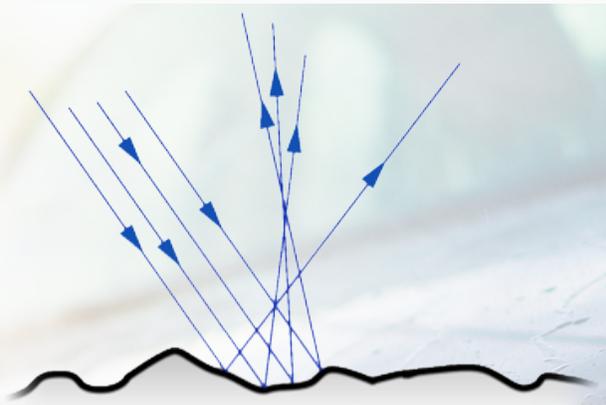
Number 1

Exterior

This is the first of a series of articles on how to care for the cosmetics of your Porsche or other cherished autos in your garage. You don't have to be a concours fanatic to enjoy taking care and enhancing the beauty of your fine automobiles. There are many options available to you and we will present our favorites based on what has worked for several years. Porsches have phenomenal paint systems and even old paint can be brought back to show condition with care and use of the right products and techniques. Before you start this journey make the investment to have the dents removed from the sheet metal.

A couple of basics include don't believe those TV commercials you see on cable at 2:30 in the morning. Secondly always try something new on your wife's car before tackling the Porsche. There have been fantastic advancements made in car-care product chemistry over the last few years. Most of the major brands are good so pick one and standardize on that line of products. The chemistry is designed to work together and polymer chemistry locks the products together for a very durable and flat surface. Expensive products are not necessarily the best and we will address that issue.

It is not the wax that makes the car shine, it is the flatness and cleanliness of the paint surface that act like a mirror to reflect the light. The illustration shows how light comes to a surface in nice parallel lines. If it hits a non-flat surface the reflections are diffused which makes the surface look dull. The key to a great shine is perfectly clean and totally flat layers from the paint up to the flatness of the wax.



The wax is a protectant not something that make the surface shine. To get the surface perfectly clean you must firstly remove all of the old wax and dirt from the surface. Wash this time only with a liquid dish soap that has detergent content. Using a lubricant such as spray detailer or speed shine along with an auto detailing clay will take off all of the previous wax and surface contaminates. Just keep the surface wet as you are rubbing with the clay. This is much like clay we played with as kids. Keep rotating and kneading the clay to a clean area. If you accidentally drop it – throw

it away since the contaminants will scratch the surface. You can do a Porsche in less than 30 minutes so this is not a big task. Now that you have a clean surface it is time to polish which is the most important part of the task. If there are bugs or road tar (or paint) you can use Simple Green or Würth Citrus Degreaser which will not harm the paint surface.

If the surface is without scratches and is just slightly oxidized then you can use a mild polish and apply by hand. If it is scratched or full of tiny swirl marks like a spider web then you will have to move to a more aggressive approach. These micro-spider scratches (holographic scratches) are the result of commercial car washes, dirty rages or water that grinds the dirt along the surface. Even experienced detail shops are guilty of inflicting damage. They can be taken out but with great care and practice.

Let me share my favorite products based on experience and without any commercial affiliation.

P21

This is a hand-applied product that has both a polish and separate wax that has both long lasting qualities and is very easy to apply and remove. One of the basics when bringing any rag or applicator to the paint is to move with the way the wind travels over the car rather than a circular motion. This includes routine washing.

Menzerna

This is a high quality German product which requires a RA machine. A rotary action orbital polishing machine allows us amateurs to do professional polishing without the fear of burning the paint. A standard rotary polishing machine in the hands of a beginner will sometimes burn from the edges of the pad. This RA system is great for bringing a good surface to a high level of shine without a lot of work.

Maguire's

This company has been around for a long time and was acquired by 3M a few years ago. The recent transfer of new polymer technology to the car care products has been noticeable. Maguire's has developed a micro-fiber based correction system that removes the micro-scratches and then bonds a wax to the finished surface. I attended their training seminar a few years ago and was amazed at how even heavy scratches were removed with a little patience.

Würth

This is another German company whose products are used by the professional automotive trade. A new line of polishes is available in different levels of aggressiveness and a wax that bonds to the surface. This produces a high gloss appearance that is the best I have tested. The Würth representative guided me through restoring the 25 year old paint finish on my 356.



Contact | Pat Yanahan | pyanahan@comcast.net | 312.718.0732