

Car Care Specialties, Inc

116 South Main Street, Unit # 2, Lodi, NJ 07644-2251 TECH SERVICE (973) 767-0035 FAX (973) 767-0038
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HOW TO PROPERLY USE RENOVO PRODUCTS FOR THE CARE AND FEEDING OF CONVERTIBLE & SOFT TOPS:

There are two basic types of convertible, cabriolet or soft tops. Most American cars, Japanese cars and Targa Tops are a vinyl impregnated or vinyl coated fabric. The vinyl coating provides both waterproofing and protection against the elements. Most European manufacturers use a non-coated fabric and the owner must apply all waterproofing and protection to the fabric, once the factory applied protectant has worn off. For this article, I will refer to vinyl or vinyl impregnated tops as "vinyl" and the non-coated fabric as "fabric". Routine cleaning of either type is very similar.

Routine Cleaning of Fabric & Vinyl Tops: Any bird bomb hits on your top should be removed as soon as possible, as they are highly acidic and will quickly damage your top. Keep a bottle of no-salt seltzer water (available in any food store) in your car. If you are lucky enough to receive bird presents, take out your bottle of no-salt seltzer water, remove the top, place your thumb over the top and shake. You now have a little fire hydrant to quickly wash off the bird "gift". (Just be glad that flying dinosaurs are extinct.) The seltzer water is nothing more than water and carbon dioxide, so it will not harm the top or paint. Once you get home, you may then properly clean the top.

Any product used to clean should be gentle and any product chosen to protect your top should be specifically designed for your type of top. If the top is dirty, then use a gentle, pH neutral car wash and rinse thoroughly with lots of water and allow to air dry. You do not have to use car wash on a fabric top every time you wash the rest of the car. Plain water will usually suffice unless the top is soiled. If you continually use car wash or strong top cleaners, you will shorten the life of the existing coat of top protectant. A sticky, paper tape clothing lint roller is an invaluable tool to help maintain your fabric top. It is great to remove dust and lint from the fabric and clean the plastic window without scratching. Vinyl tops, on the other hand, may be washed with car wash more frequently.

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FABRIC TOP CARE

Cleaning & Protecting Fabric Tops: About once or twice a year (less, if your car never sees the great outdoors), you should thoroughly clean and then protect the top. In my humble opinion, the best time to do this is the beginning of Spring and start of Fall. This way the top is prepared for the harsh sun of summer and the ravages of winter. The simple method to determine the condition of the existing top protectant is the "water bead" test. If the top "beads water" evenly when wet, then the existing protectant is in good condition. If water does not bead evenly or it soaks into the top material, then it's time to apply a coat of Renovo Fabric Soft Top Ultra Proofer. To clean your top, use the specifically formulated fabric top cleaner, Renovo Fabric Soft Top Cleaner. Park your car in a shady area and insure that the surface is relatively cool to the touch. Do not clean in direct sun. Gently brush the dry top with a soft brush to remove any loose dirt.



Renovo Fabric Soft Top Cleaner: Shake the bottle, pour into a suitable container and spread a thin, even coat over the surface with a sponge, clean 2" inch nylon paint brush, disposable foam brush or small foam paint roller. Gently agitate the cleaner with a soft bristle brush, sponge or cloth. Stained areas may require the cleaner to remain on the top for approximately 30 minutes and gentle scrubbing with a soft bristle brush. Really stubborn stains may require an additional application of Renovo Fabric Soft Top Cleaner and additional gentle brushing. Be careful not to allow the brush to come in contact with the rear plastic window, as it may scratch the window. To remove the cleaner, either hose off using lots of water or wipe off with a wet sponge, continually rinsing the sponge in clean water.

Rinsing: I find that using a hose without a nozzle, allows the gentle flow of water to rinse out the cleaner, as I gently brush the surface. Continue rinsing until the top stops sudsing and the rinse water runs clear. Once the top is thoroughly rinsed, I like to take a soft brush and "brush" the nap of the top in one direction.

Lint Removal: Once the top is completely dry, remove any lint or brush fibers with a lint roller or the sticky side of plastic packing tape. Any lint left on the top will ruin the appearance of your coat of protectant or dye.

Protecting Fabric Tops: The fabric needs a coat of Renovo Fabric Soft Top Ultra Proofer (top protectant) to remain waterproof, provide UV protection and increase longevity. The Ultra Proofer should be applied immediately after cleaning, when the top is just dry. I use the top drying time to mask off all the glass, paint and the rear plastic window. This masking process is an important one. The Renovo Fabric Soft Top Ultra Proofer will not harm the paint but may be difficult to remove once it has dried. If you use a brush or small foam paint roller to apply the Renovo Fabric Soft Top Ultra

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Proofer, then you may use minimal masking. If you apply it with an air brush, then use lots of masking. Mask off the paint where it meets the top with a quality, paint type masking tape. (I use 3M Blue Masking Tape). Apply the tape to butt up to, but not over the top fabric. DO NOT use scotch tape, electrical tape or duct tape, etc., as these products may develop a lifelong affinity for your paint. When you try to remove these types of tapes, some of your paint may choose to join its new found friend. Mask off the rear plastic window with the masking tape or newspaper.

If you apply the Ultra Proofer with an air brush, then you should mask the entire car. You may use either two thin plastic drop cloths (the thinner the better) or newspapers to cover the paint. I prefer the plastic drop cloths as one will cover from the front of the car to the back edge of the doors and the other will cover the rear half. You may also use lots of newspaper taped together. Tape the plastic/newspaper to butt up to, but not over the top fabric. Loosen the windshield catches, lift up the top and slide the thin plastic drop cloth or newspaper over the windshield frame and the top of the windows as far back as possible. Lower the top to hold the plastic/paper in place. Open the doors and slip the drop cloth/newspaper between the top and the glass. Close the doors to hold the plastic/newspaper in place. All this is time consuming and tedious but well worth the time. Use additional plastic/newspaper and tape to cover any other areas of the glass and paint that remain exposed. If you use plastic drop cloths, they will cover the entire car. Just use masking tape to hold them down. If you use newspaper and it is a windy day, you may consider masking the entire hood and trunk, as the over spray travels quite far. There is no such thing as over masking! Once the masking process is completed, the top will probably be dry and ready for the Ultra Proofer.



Renovo Fabric Soft Top Ultra Proofer: Remove all traces of lint with a lint roller or the sticky side of plastic packing tape. Pour the Renovo Soft Top Ultra Proofer into a clean plastic cup or other suitable container and stir well. Apply the Ultra Proofer with either a 2" wide disposable foam brush, a nylon paint brush, a small foam paint roller or an air brush. Brush, roll or spray on a thin, even coat along each of the seams. Then, starting at the center of the front edge of the top, apply a thin, even coat to the entire top working from side to side towards the rear of the top. Immediately remove any drips on the paint, glass or trim with a wet cloth. Older or neglected tops may require a second coat applied after the first coat is completely dry. Remove all masking and allow the Ultra Proofer to dry for 24 hours before folding the top. Your top is now ready to endure the elements.

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RESTORING FADED FABRIC TOPS

Renovo Fabric Soft Top Reviver: If your fabric top has faded and is looking “washed out”, then you may consider re-dying the fabric. Renovo Fabric Soft Top Reviver is a permanent, water based dye that may be applied with either a disposable foam brush, a nylon paint brush, a small foam roller or an air brush and dries in 2-3 hours. Badly faded tops may require a second coat. Clean the surface thoroughly with Renovo Fabric Soft Top Cleaner. It is extremely important to thoroughly clean the fabric prior to applying the dye. If there are any traces of top protectant or dirt on the top, the dye will not be absorbed evenly and your top will have streaks or splotches. Fabric top protectants are designed to waterproof the fabric and Renovo Soft Top Reviver is water based, so it will not penetrate areas that still have a previous coating of top protectant. Shake the Renovo Fabric Soft Top Cleaner



well and pour into a suitable container. Spread the cleaner evenly over the entire top with a sponge, clean 2” inch disposable foam brush, nylon paint brush or small foam paint roller. GENTLY agitate the cleaner with a sponge, soft cloth or soft brush. Stubborn stains may require an additional application of Renovo Cleaner and additional gentle brushing. Be careful not to allow any brush to come in contact with the rear plastic window, as it may scratch the window. To remove the cleaner, either hose off using lots of water or wipe off with a wet sponge, continually rinsing the sponge in clean water. Once all traces of the cleaner have been rinsed completely, then allow it to dry completely. Use a quality paint masking tape and plastic drop cloths or newspaper to mask off the rear window, the glass and paint. Remove all traces of lint with a lint roller or the sticky side of plastic packing tape. (If you want your top to look like a fuzzy angora sweater, then skip this step.) Pour the Fabric Soft Top Reviver into a clean plastic cup or other suitable container. Start the application at the center section of the front of the top. Work from side to side, progressing towards the back, maintaining a “wet edge” as you work towards the rear. (The technique is similar to painting with water based paint). Immediately remove any drips on the paint, glass or trim with a wet cloth. If the top is badly faded, apply a second coat after allowing the first coat to dry for 24 hours. Allow the final coat to dry for 24 hours and then follow with a coat of Renovo Fabric Ultra Proofer to protect and prolong the life of your new looking top. Remove all traces of lint with a lint roller or the sticky side of plastic

packing tape. Pour the Ultra Proofer into a clean plastic cup or other suitable container and stir well. Apply the Ultra Proofer with either a 2” wide disposable foam brush, a nylon paint brush, a small foam paint roller or an air brush. Brush or spray on a thin, even coat along each of the seams. Then, starting at the center of the front edge of the top, apply a thin, even coat to the entire top working from side to side towards the rear of the top. Immediately remove any drips on the paint, glass or trim with a wet cloth. Remove all masking and allow the Renovo Fabric Soft Top Ultra Proofer to completely dry for 24 hours before folding the top. DO NOT use on vinyl or vinyl impregnated fabric tops. If you are in doubt as to your top material, consult the auto or top manufacturer.

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VINYL TOP CARE

Cleaning & Protecting Vinyl Tops: Wash the top thoroughly, as outlined in the routine cleaning section. If it is still dirty, then use Renovo Vinyl Soft Top Cleaner to deep clean the top. Do not use scouring powders or Comet on a vinyl top. (Your top is not as tough as your kitchen sink.) These types of products will get the top very clean for about two weeks and then it will start to crack and fail. The chlorine bleach leaches out the essential emollients in the vinyl and depletes the UV protectants. Park your car in a shady area and insure that the surface is relatively cool to the touch. Do not clean or apply protectant in direct sun



Renovo Vinyl Soft Top Cleaner: You may either use a paint or disposable foam brush or foam paint roller to apply Renovo Vinyl Soft Top Cleaner. Shake the bottle and pour the cleaner into a suitable container. Use the brush or roller to spread the cleaner evenly over the entire top. Gently agitate the cleaner with a sponge, soft cloth or soft brush. Stubborn stains or heavily grained top material may require additional applications of Renovo Vinyl Soft Top Cleaner and additional gentle brushing. Be careful not to allow any brush to come in contact with the rear plastic window, as it may scratch the window. On a heavily soiled top, you may allow the cleaner to remain on the top cleaning for up to an hour. To remove the cleaner, either hose off using lots of water or wipe off with a wet sponge, continually rinsing the sponge in clean water. Rinse until all traces of the cleaner have been removed. Do not use the Renovo Vinyl Soft Top Cleaner on fabric tops. If in doubt, consult the auto or top manufacturer.

Applying Renovo Vinyl Soft Top Ultra Proofer: Once the top has been thoroughly cleaned and is completely dry, remove all traces of lint with a lint roller or the sticky side of plastic packing tape. Shake the bottle, pour the Renovo Vinyl Soft Top Ultra Proofer into a clean plastic cup or other suitable container. Apply with either a 2" wide disposable foam brush, a nylon paint brush, a small foam paint roller or an air brush. Brush or spray on a thin, even coat along each of the seams. Then, starting at the center of the front edge of the top, apply a thin, even coat to the entire top, working from side to side towards the rear of the top. Immediately remove any drips on the paint, glass or trim with a wet cloth. Immediately remove all masking and allow the Vinyl Ultra Proofer to completely dry for 24 hours before folding the top. Do not use the Renovo Vinyl Soft Top Ultra Proofer on fabric tops. If in doubt, consult the top manufacturer.



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Rear Windows: Do not use glass cleaners on a plastic window, as they are too harsh and may actually damage plastic. Make sure that the window is clean and free of dust. Apply a very small amount of Renovo Plastic Window Polish to a soft, 100% cotton flannel or Blu-Velvet Microfiber Applicator Pad. Work into the plastic with a linear motion, left to right, right to left, until all that remains is a faint haze. Immediately buff off with a Blu-Velvet Microfiber Buffing/Polishing Cloth or another soft, 100% cotton flannel cloth to crystal clarity. Do not allow to self dry. Depending upon the condition of the plastic, you may have to repeat several times. One of the problems many convertible owners encounter is a crease in the plastic window from repeated folding. The easiest way to minimize this problem is to use a super soft, 100% cotton blanket or towel that is a little larger than the rear window. Place the blanket/towel over the window as you fold the top down, so that the blanket/towel is folded within the rear window. The blanket becomes the “meat in the window sandwich” to prevent the plastic window from creasing and also keep the two halves from rubbing against each other. If you have a crease in the window, try parking in a very sunny area with the sun shining directly on the window. The heat will usually

soften the window enough that the crease may disappear.