

Car Care Specialties, Inc

116 South Main Street, Unit # 2, Lodi, NJ 07644-2251 TECH SERVICE (973) 767-0035 FAX (973) 767-0038
TOLL FREE ORDER LINE (877) 796-8300 WWW.CARCAREONLINE.COM

How to Protect Your Car's Paint - CCS Newsletter

A paint protectant is nothing more than a clear, sacrificial coating for the painted, clear coated, powder coated, polished, chromed and almost all other areas of your car except the unpainted rubber trim parts. It is far better to have bird presents, insect remains, acid rain, ultraviolet rays, ozone, tree sap, road tar and all the other road hazards attack your coat of paint protection rather than attack your paint. The paint protection may be refreshed with little effort and cost, whereas replacing paint will be financially painful.

There are two major types of paint protection products. The first is a wax which is an organic compound with Carnauba wax being the finest wax for automotive paints. The second major type of paint protection is a polymer sealant (read plastic) that is refined from either oil or natural gas.

CARNAUBA WAX

Carnauba wax is the protective coating of the leaves of the tropical Carnauba plant. Pure Carnauba wax is the consistency of a brick. To be useful as a car wax, solvents, lubricants, gloss enhancers and numerous other additives must be blended with the wax. There are also numerous grades of Carnauba and the top grades are expensive, so a high content percentage may not tell the whole story. The top grades are #1 white and # 1 yellow (no, it does not come in blue). The better waxes on the market are about 30% to 35% (post-melt) #1 Carnauba. The advertised percentage of Carnauba may not be all that it seems. Pre-melt and post-melt percentages tell two very different stories for the same blend. Carnauba wax is sold in flake form much like corn flakes. Fill a one quart container with "corn flakes" of Carnauba wax and fill another identical one quart container with a solvent and then combine the two into a two quart container. The combination will only fill the two quart container to about three quarters. Pre-melt percentages state that you have 50% Carnauba and post-melt percentages state you have 35% Carnauba. If you see a percentage over 35% you are probably looking at pre-melt percentages.



A quality Carnauba wax will produce, in my humble opinion, the best depth of shine of any product on the market. You may also apply several coats of a quality Carnauba wax over a period of time without getting "wax buildup". Do not apply two coats of wax in the same day. The solvents in the second coat of wax will strip off about 90% of the first coat. Thus, for two times the effort, you will have about 1.1 coats of wax. To "layer" Carnauba wax, wait a few (4+) days between coats to allow the wax to harden off and then wash the vehicle with a very dilute car wash to "shock" or harden the wax. Now the solvents in the second coat will only remove about 10% of the first coat. Each coat will deepen the shine and add layers of protection to your paint. The downside to Carnauba wax is that a very strong car wash or dish detergent will strip your nice coat of wax. Always use the minimal amount of car wash in your wash solution to help your coat of wax last a lot longer. I use a half a capful in several gallons of water.

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There are two forms of car wax, paste and liquid. They differ basically in the amount of solvents. Rock hard Carnauba is diluted with solvents to either the paste form or further diluted to the liquid form. When you apply a paste wax, the friction of application helps melt the wax and evaporate the solvents. A liquid wax contains significantly more volatile solvents that evaporate out when the wax is applied. A liquid wax will never give the same depth of shine or longevity of a paste wax. The excess wax, left over lubricants, excess bonding agents, solvent residues and other goodies left over forms the "haze" that is buffed out to reveal the coat of wax. Paste waxes are difficult to apply by machine. If you wish to apply your coat of wax or sealant by machine, choose a liquid product. A good coat of wax will also add "depth of shine" and reflective gloss to the finish but cannot transform a neglected or abused paint from a pile of rubble into a Pebble Beach Concours winner. For a wax to be effective, it must be applied to a freshly washed and clean surface, as it will enhance the gloss as well as the defects of the surface. If you are not happy with the look and gloss of your paint, apply a pre-wax cleaner before you wax to insure maximum gloss.



CLEANER WAX

A cleaner wax offers the ability to apply a pre-wax cleaner and a coat of wax in one operation. One product is unable to perform either function as well as two separate products. Cleaner waxes are great to use when time is critical or the vehicle does not deserve a two step process.

POLYMER SEALANT

The polymer sealants tend to last longer, yet do not give the same depth of shine, as do the Carnauba waxes. As a general rule, depth of shine and longevity are opposite ends of the same scale. Polymer sealants are also usually less sensitive to strong car wash. They do seem to be somewhat more hydroscopic (absorb water and become cloudy) than the organic waxes. If you are using a polymer sealant on a European paint and have hazing or clouding issues, about the only thing that will work is to strip off the polymer and apply a coat of Carnauba based wax. There are also highly advertised, Teflon-based products on the market. It is my understanding that it requires a 600 plus degree environment to bond Teflon to your paint. Thus, unless you are applying it with a flamethrower, you may not be getting all you paid for. (In the same vein, just be glad you are not getting all the government you are paying for). The polymer sealants will also tend to build up with several applications and this buildup may turn off-color over time. The solution to this problem is to strip everything off and start again.

POLYMER SEALANT / CARNAUBA BLENDS

Several companies have blended a polymer sealant base with a small amount of Carnauba wax. Carnauba wax and polymers do not like each other so any blend will have a very small amount of Carnauba. It is said that some companies show the vat of polymers a picture of a Carnauba plant (just kidding, they dip a leaf into the vat). The object is to try to increase the depth of shine of the sealant while maintaining the longevity of the polymer.

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APPLYING WAX OR SEALANT



Prior to applying any wax or sealant, thoroughly wash the car with a quality car wash to remove any dirt and dry thoroughly. One of the keys to applying any car wax or sealant is to apply it sparingly. Assuming that the paint has just been washed and dried and is free of grit and does not need glazing/polishing, apply the wax or sealant with a Blu-Velvet microfiber covered applicator pad or a 100% cotton terry cloth covered sponge or a foam type applicator pad. An even better method of paste wax application is to use your fingers (this does not work well with liquid waxes or liquid sealants). Hold your fingers together to form an "applicator". Rub the wax thoroughly into the surface. Your fingers will give you the tactile feedback to let you know when the wax has been worked into the surface. The heat of your body will also melt the wax and help it flow onto the surface. This is NOT a situation where a little is good, so a lot must be better. Your paint will only accept X amount of wax or sealant. If you apply 100 times X then you will have to remove 99X in the form of dried powder. It will make waxing more difficult, require more buffing and create clouds of white dust.

Make sure the paint surface is cool. **Rule of thumb #1:** If you can hold your hand comfortably on the paint, then it is cool enough to wax. If you cannot comfortably hold your hand on the paint then it is too hot or cold to wax. Work in the shade, preferably in a garage. Get a small amount on your fingers (or cloth/pad) and apply to the paint surface, rubbing in a linear motion. Work into the paint in a front-to-back, back-to-front motion (the way the air flows over the car). Don't go around in circles the way dear old dad taught you. If you are using a pad and airborne grit gets under the pad, you have made sandpaper. If you are working in a circle, you have made a 360-degree scratch (or swirl mark). Since a scratch or swirl mark is most visible from a 90 degree viewing angle, a circular scratch is visible anywhere. If you work in a linear motion and scratch the surface, the linear scratch is only visible from a small viewing angle. Using only your fingers to apply wax will give you the tactile feedback to know when surface grit is about to scratch your paint.



Most waxes or sealants work best when this slight haze is allowed to dry. Complete the application on one section of the car such as the hood, trunk, fender, etc. Buff out the haze from this section with a [Blu-Velvet Ultra-Soft Microfiber Buffing & Polishing](#) cloth or 100% cotton flannel cloth using a linear motion front to back, back to front, the way the air flows over the car. Certain waxes require you to buff immediately after applying to a small 12" X 12" section. [Zymol](#) and [P21S](#) are classic examples of this type of wax. If you allow Zymol / P21S to dry before buffing, you will need a belt sander to remove them (just kidding). If you allow these waxes to dry, simply apply a little more wax and the solvents in the new coat will help soften the dried wax and allow you to buff off the residue. Always read the directions on the can to determine the proper application method.

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Buff the slight haze with a [Blu-Velvet Ultra-Soft Microfiber Buffing](#) cloth or a soft 100% cotton flannel cloth. Keep using new sections of your cloth, continually shaking the cloth to remove grit and change your cloth frequently. Repeat the application and buffing procedures. When the car has been completed, rebuff the entire car with another clean cloth. The wax or sealant has had time to harden off and this extra buffing will bring out a rich, deep shine. If there are areas that are hazy or cloudy and you are using a Carnauba based wax, the wax has become hydroscopic and has absorbed a little water. Mist the cloudy areas with a small amount of [One Grand Showoff](#) or [Meguiar # 34](#) and rebuff. This should remove the clouding. In certain very high humidity situations, the wax may not dry properly. The cure for this problem is to allow the car to bake in the sun for a day or so and then rebuff. The heat of the sun will usually dry the excess moisture and the buffing will bring out a deep shine.

All cloths you use on your car should be high quality microfiber with a microfiber silk edge binding or 100% cotton flannel and should be washed in the washing machine using Micro-Restore Detergent or a detergent with no fabric softeners or bleaches. DO NOT add any fabric softener to the water. Dry in the dryer and DO NOT use a dryer anti-static towel as they contain coatings that are transferred to your car cloths and may cause streaks. If you have ever had your wax streak and you could not figure out why, your dryer towel was probably the culprit. These are some of my favorite waxes. There are positive and negative attributes to each one. There is no such thing as the "right" wax or sealant for every situation. If your car is a daily driver and is left out in the mud, rain and sun all day, then you may consider [Blitz Wax](#) for a great combination of depth of shine and longevity. If on the other hand you have a "garage queen" that sees sunlight on weekends only, you may consider using either the [P21S](#), [Sonax](#) or [Zymol](#) waxes to achieve the best depth of shine. I have rated each product using a 0-10 scale for depth of shine (DOS) and 0-10 scale for longevity (LONG). These ratings reflect only my experiences with each product on my vehicles and are for reference only.



[ONE GRAND BLITZ WAX](#) ...The ultimate Carnauba paste wax that works equally well on all paint colors and types of paint. Blitz produces a deep "wet look", durable shine and protects against the harmful elements. Contains no cleaners or abrasives. Very easy to apply and very easy to remove, yet long lasting. Apply additional coats about a week apart to produce a deep, deep shine. This is my favorite wax for a daily driver. DOS - 9 LONG - 8

[ONE GRAND CLEAN-N-WAX](#)... A chemical based one step cleaner and wax that cleans, polishes and waxes in one easy step. Removes light oxidation and helps remove very minor swirls or scratches. Clean-N-Wax is an excellent product to maintain large surface areas such as RVs, tractor trailers, boats, buses, aircraft and fleet equipment. DOS - 6 LONG - 6

[ONE GRAND SHOWOFF QUICK DETAILER](#)...A solution of liquid waxes and gloss enhancers to give your car that "just waxed" look. Mist on and buff off for a brilliant shine between coats of wax or to remove "water spots" after washing. DOS - 10 LONG - 0

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P21S CONCOURS LOOK CARNAUBA WAX...Produces, according to independent testing, the best depth of shine (100 out of 100) of any wax on the market and lasts a little longer than Zymol. Apply to a 12" x 12" area and immediately buff out. Does not chalk or leave residue on rubber trim. My co-favorite wax for a "garage queen" or a frequently waxed car. Multiple applications over a period of time will result in a super "wet look" that appears as if you could "dive in". DOS - 10 LONG - 4

P21S 100% CARNAUBA PASTE WAX...This new wax breaks the "carnauba barrier" with a 100% carnauba-base formula (meaning it has no helper waxes such as bee's wax). Until now all pure carnauba-based formulations were extremely difficult to apply and remove. The breakthrough technology employed by P21S 100% Carnauba Paste Wax means that it applies and buffs off with incredible ease. You may apply the wax to a larger area, allow it to haze and then buff off. The result is an absolutely incredible gloss, ultimate depth of shine and UV protection. You may layer several coats (a week apart) for an even more "looks like you can dive into it" deep shine. Does not chalk or leave white residue stains on rubber, plastics or matt finish paints. This is an extremely forgiving wax. (Our co-favorite wax for a "garage queen".) DOS - 10 LONG - 4

HARLY PASTE WAX...Made from the highest grade of Number One Yellow Carnauba, the worlds hardest and finest wax. Relatively easy to apply, yet a little difficult to remove. Contains no extenders, cleaners, admixtures or abrasives. This is a purist's wax. DOS - 8 LONG 8

3M SHOW CAR PASTE WAX...Contains both fluoropolymers and carnauba wax to produce a durable finish. For best results, apply to a small area and immediately buff off; otherwise the wax residue may be somewhat difficult to remove. May cause slight clouding on certain European paints. DOS - 6 LONG - 7

MEGUIARS #6 CLEANER/WAX...A quality one-step product that will clean, polish and protect all in one application. Removes light oxidation, adds depth of color and leaves a durable finish without streaking. Safe for all acrylic, enamel, lacquer, urethane and clear coat finishes. DOS - 6 LONG - 6

MEGUIAR'S #20 POLYMER SEALANT...A blend of paint nutrients and polymers for maximum longevity and reduces static so paint is not a "dirt magnet". Some European paints have had hydroscopic reactions (clouding) with this product. A great product for very dusty climates. DOS - 5 LONG - 9.5

MEGUIAR'S #26 HI-TECH YELLOW WAX...A blend of polymers, Carnauba and other waxes to provide maximum protection while enhancing depth of color. Will not streak or chalk on any previously cleaned and polished paints. Available in paste or liquid. This wax will last on daily driver cars but does not give the shine of Blitz. May cause clouding on certain European paints. DOS - 6 LONG - 7

MEGUIAR'S #34 FINAL INSPECTION...A lubricating, gloss enhancing spray that adds shine, slickness, depth of color and protection in one step. Great for spot cleaning and maintaining a high-gloss shine between coats of wax. DOS - 9 LONG - 0

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SONAX PREMIUM CLASS CARNAUBA WAX...This all pure, number one grade, carnauba wax formulation applies and buffs off with incredible ease and is very forgiving. You may apply the wax to a small area, immediately buff off or apply to a larger area, allow it to haze and then buff off. The result is the ultimate depth of shine and UV protection. You may layer several coats (a few days apart) for an even more "looks like you can dive into it" deep shine. Does not chalk or leave white residue stains on rubber, plastics or matt finish paints. DOS - 10 LONG - 4

SONAX NANO TECHNOLOGY LIQUID WAX...The Sonax chemists have developed the first workable nano-technology Carnauba Liquid Wax. The newly engineered micro fine wax particles will penetrate and seal the smallest paint pores to provide an unmatched layer of protection for your paint. Nano Technology Wax may be applied either by hand or machine. Briefly allow the coat of wax to dry. Buff off the haze with a Blu-Velvet Microfiber Buffing/Polishing Cloth to reveal the shine with no white residue. The cross-linking of the nano particles strengthens the bonds of the Carnauba molecules to increase the longevity of each coat of wax. If you wish to apply your wax with a machine, this is the product for you. DOS - 8 LONG - 7

MENZERNA POWER LOCK POLYMER SEALANT...Power Lock offers the best longevity of any polymer sealant I have tested. The cross-linking polymers offer a maximum longevity and a surprising depth of shine for a polymer sealant. Apply a thin even coat by hand with a Blu-Velvet Microfiber Applicator or by machine with a soft, foam pad. Allow it to haze and then remove with a Blu-Velvet Microfiber Buffing & Polishing Cloth. DOS - 6 LONG - 10

ZYMOL CARBON/CREME WAX...Carbon formula is for dark colors. A totally abrasive free wax containing nutritive oils, enzymes and pure Carnauba to replenish both new and older paints. May be used on chrome, alloy wheels, rubber or plastic trim and Plexiglas with no chalk residue or staining. This is the "pina colada" experience in a can. Produces arguably one of the best depth of shine on the market, but does not last. Some have said it lasts about as long as it takes to apply it. DOS - 10 LONG - 3

ZYMOL CONCOURS GLAZE - 8OZ JAR...A special Estate Blended Formula containing 47% (pre-melt) Brazilian #1 white and yellow Carnauba to provide possibly the ultimate depth of shine. Each container is hand poured, numbered and signed. Warm the wax in the palm of your hand and apply to a small area (12" x 12") and immediately buff off with a Blu-Velvet Microfiber buffing/polishing cloth or a soft, 100% cotton flannel cloth. Wax as often as you wish with no wax buildup. DOS - 10 LONG - 4

If you have any questions or if you need any further information, please call me at 201-796-8300. You may also find additional how to articles on our website, www.carcareonline.com.

Very truly yours,
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