

Applying Car Wax

Waxing your car with car wax is an essential part of car maintenance, but few people know how to do it well. Here are a few answers to the most common questions car owners have about using car wax.

What function, exactly, does car wax perform?

[Car wax](#) creates a barrier between your cars paint and damaging substances like bird droppings and tree sap, protecting the paint. It also reduces oxidation and protects against fading brought on by exposure to UV rays. Some modern waxes have additives that also help to clean the car and buff away tiny scratches. But the most visible effect is the creation of rich, deep color and a high shine.

How often should I apply car wax?

Every two to three months, depending on the type of wax you use. Spray on waxes hold up worse than liquid or paste waxes. Your climate also makes a difference: If you park your car outside, live in a very hot area, have a lot of blowing sand, or expose your car to any other conditions that could affect the condition of the paint, you should wax more often. The best way to tell whether your car is due for a wax is to watch how water beads on the finish. If the drops are large or the water forms sheets instead of drops, your car needs a waxing.

What is the best way to wax a car?

Start by washing and drying the car. The car should be absolutely dry before you start waxing. Water and wax do not mix. If the car is parked in the sun or for some other reason the paint is hot to the touch, cool the car off before you wax. Heat burns wax onto the finish, with ugly and hard to remove results.

If your car has detailing you do not want to wax, cover the parts with masking tape. Then with a damp sponge, apply the car wax to your car, going in small circles (if you have an older car) or long strokes along the lines of the car (if you have a newer car). Do not let extra wax get caught in the seams and joins of the exterior, and avoid waxing any dull plastic detailing. Follow the same path across the car to buff off the excess wax, using a lint free soft towel. When the excess wax is gone, get the softest cloth you can find and go over the car one last time to polish it. Peel off the masking tape, and you have a freshly waxed car!

About the Author

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