

Applying Car Wax

Applying car wax is an important step in caring for your car, but few owners do it properly. This guide answers some of the most frequently asked questions new car owners have about applying 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 protects the paint from ultraviolet induced fading and reduces oxidation in the paint. Some modern waxes have additives that also help to clean the car and buff away tiny scratches. However, the most obvious effect is a high shine and a deepening of the cars color.

How often will my car need a new coat of car wax?

Depending on what type of wax you opt for, you will need to wax every two to three months. Paste and liquid waxes last longer than spray waxes. The environment also matters: 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 over half an inch wide or if the water forms sheets instead, your car needs another coat of wax.

How should I wax my car?

Start by washing and drying the car. Water and wax combine badly, so make sure the car is completely dry before you wax. 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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