

C A R C L E A N I N G M E T H O D
P A R T 1



WASHING

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Washing

The When , Why and How

Washing is the process of removing loosely bonded surface contaminants, such as dust, dirt, flies and road salt, from the exterior surfaces of your car. There are no golden rules about how often washing needs to be done, but a weekly routine will usually enable you to stay on top of the dirt and grime and keep your car looking good most of the time.

The most important thing to remember about washing is that more often than not you are working on dirty surfaces. Your choice of products and technique is therefore very important, as you want to be able to gently lift away dirt and grime without damaging the underlying surfaces or stripping away existing wax or sealant protection. For this reason, we recommend the use of a lambswool wash mitt in place of a traditional sponge, and the use of a gentle shampoo in conjunction with the two bucket method.

To Foam or Not ?

It has been very popular of late to incorporate into your washing process, some form of foam wash and whilst this is very common with many professionals, it must be stressed that it is not a required procedure and simply is a way of pre-washing very dirty cars. A normal hand wash can and will be just as effective. However it is very good and a lot of fun !!

So what you need are the following:



Foam Lance- Karcher
Fitment



Gilmour Foam Master
Hose



Foam guns -Halfords



Your choice of Snow
Foam

The above options depend on your budget and if you have access to a Karcher Pressure Washer or just a normal hosepipe. Regardless of which product you choose, the foaming product is the same. Snow Foam and warm water .

Snow foam can be bought from many online retailers and comes in a varying range of sizes and volumes. The foaming principle is the same on all of them. I use a combination of about 2cm of snow foam, 2 cm of Meguiars hyperwash and the rest of the bottle of warm water. Attach to the PW or hose and use once you have pre-rinsed the car. Then foam like mad, wheels, arches etc. Leave to work its magic. It should run down the car dragging all the muck off. Leave to dwell from anywhere from 3-8 minutes depending on if it is sunny or not.

If it is sunny reduce the time as you do NOT want this stuff to dry out. Then rinse off using your hose or PW. Some people advocate rinsing from the bottom of the car upwards, some rinse from the top downwards. Each method has its merits. Just ensure you have all traces of the foam rinsed from the car before proceeding with the bucket wash.



Two Buckets

Onto the hand washing element of the process. Next it is time to get the buckets out and wash as normal. I use the 'two bucket method'. This involves having two buckets, one for suds one for just plain fresh water. If you don't know why, then have a look at this picture and you will see why.

Soap bucket on the right, plain water on the left. That shows just how much grit and dirt particles are in the



water and if you use the same sponge and same bucket, you are in effect putting all those things back onto your car.

The idea behind this method is to load your wash mitt with suds, wash one panel of the car and then rinse the wash mitt thoroughly in the second bucket to release any trapped particles of dirt, before reloading the mitt with suds and moving on to the next panel.

This is where I also advocate losing your traditional sponge for a WASHMITT of some description. Lambswool wash mitts feature a deep pile that enables particles of dirt to be drawn safely away from the surfaces being washed. Moreover, because the pile is fairly loose, particles of dirt can easily be rinsed out. Believe me when I say you will thank me later !!



BUCKETS. A little word on these. So many options on the market but the underlying principle for good washing is this : you will need at least two for the wash and if you can swing it, have a third for the wheels (they tend to be a lot dirtier with brake dust). Clear buckets are great but if not, get colour coded ones so you know which is suds and which is rinse.



* Tip, if not colour coded then either mark on the buckets which is rinse and which is suds or work on temperature. Warm water for the suds and colder water for the rinse. That way when you put your hand in you can tell which is which



Finally grit guards. Not essential but they are a life saver sometimes as you simply scrape the wash mitt across them when rinsing and the dirt particles are removed and slowly drop to the bottom of the bucket. That way when you dunk the mitt in the suds bucket it is clear of any dirty particles which would normally go back onto the car. To the left are just a few models that you can buy online or in many high street retailers. My current setup are the yellow Meguiars Yellow Buckets.

What to use

The main tools you will need for an effective car wash are the two buckets, a decent lambswool washmitt, a good quality shampoo and loads of water. The wash mitts can either be a top quality one like the Meguiars version or even Halfords do them for less than a fiver. Buckets can be sourced online or even from places like Morrisons and HomeBase. For the shampoo Meguiars Hyper wash is great as it has a dilution ratio of 400:1. Autoglym do a great wash as well.



Meguiars Hyper Wash



Autoglym Bodywork Shampoo



Meguiars Lambswool washmitt



autofin car shampoo

The Process

Firstly, if you have not foamed the car, then you need to pre-rinse the vehicle. The principle being that you will soak and loosen any dirt before applying the washmitt to the bodywork. A pressure washer set at a low setting is best as you do not want to force water at the dirt, rather loosen it with a gentle stream. The same goes when using a hosepipe and fittings. When washing your car, work in sections and rinse out the washmitt regularly in the rinse bucket before getting more soap. That way all the good soap is on the car and the muck is in the rinse bucket. If it is strong sunlight wash the car in half before rinsing. Don't let the soap dry out or else you will get streaks and water marks. This advice also goes for the drying process. The washmitt that I use is lambswool on one side and the netting on the other. Principle is, I use the lambswool side for the bulk of the car and bodywork and the netting/bug remover for the glass and headlights/under side-skirts etc. Wash in horizontal strokes down the length of the car, avoiding circular motion as that will just create swirls on the bodywork if there are any trapped dirt particles.

If you haven't done the wheels already, then this will be when you can tackle them as described in the WHEELS guide. Just remember to do them after the first rinse and wash and to use a microfibre mitt as a lambswool one would be too soft. Again rinse afterwards to remove all traces of soap and shampoo.

Rinsing is very important as how you rinse the car will help you in the drying process. Either use a PW set again on a medium setting or a hosepipe with no attachments on the head and sheet the water off the car. This way the water will run off the car and leave less water spots and marks when you come to dry.

Drying

Once you have washed and rinsed the entire car, you need to dry the vehicle in the shortest time possible. Obviously in strong sunlight or on hot days, the quicker you can dry the better. I tend to rinse gently half the car whilst drying the other half to ensure no water spots.

Traditional methods would include a kitchen towel and chamois !! However once you see what these older products would do to the paintwork after all that caring washing, it is just not worth it. There are so many modern alternatives now on the market, both online and High Street, that you can pick up a great item that does the whole car in one go.

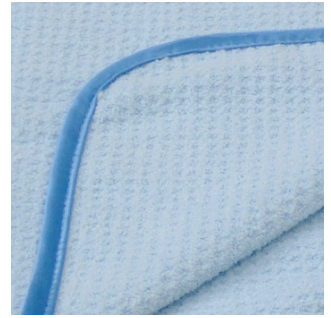
In contrast to traditional chamois leathers, heavyweight waffle weave microfibre towels are capable of absorbing many times their own weight in water, meaning that you can dry most cars without wringing out once. In addition, the ultra soft fibres and waffle weave design significantly reduce the chances of marking any exterior surfaces when drying off. A further benefit is that heavyweight waffle weave microfibre towels are considerably easier to clean and maintain than traditional chamois leathers. Below are three of my favourites and they are used constantly.



Chemical Guys Miracle Dryer



Eurow Waffleweave Towel



PoorBoys Waffleweave Towel

Many thanks to Rich at Polished Bliss for use of his wording & Pictures