

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

P A R T 2



WHEELS & TYRES

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Wheels

Care

Wheels are an important part to people on their cars and as such many people, including myself, spend a bit of time cleaning, waxing and protecting them. They can be washed before/during or after the main car is washed. The main things to consider are:

* How dirty are the wheels and would you be better taking them off the car and cleaning them or doing them in situ

* What are the best products for different finishes etc

How you deal with the wheels will be determined by how much time you have and what finish/protection you want from the job. For example, I usually wash my wheels in situ because a) they are pain to take off every time and b) I have all the tools and the right cleaning products to do a good job whilst the wheels are on the car. Saying that, every 4 months or so, the wheels come off and get a thorough clean to get rid of all the tar spots and built up salt, brake dust etc.

What to use

I use two products depending on how severe the amount of dirt and brake dust is on the wheels. Meguiars Wheel Brightener is a great product, but you have to follow the ratio to the letter as it is a very strong cleaner and will damage badly kerbed or flaking wheels if used incorrectly. The other one I use is Bilt Hamber Auto wheel. This is a water based product and it has the iron-x formula. This essentially means as it comes into contact with any iron particles, it turns a great purple colour which shows you where it all is and gets to work dissolving it. Well worth the money invested in something like this product.



Meguiars Wheel brightener



Bilt Hamber Auto Wheel



Elite Spoke Brush



Wheel Woolies



Wash Mitt



PB Wheelback brush

The other important tool for effective wheel cleaning is your brush. Or in my case, about 3 of them . If you are doing the wheels in situ, you will need a long handled spoke brush to reach to the back of the wheel rim but one that is non-metallic so you do not scratch your wheels. Above are two of my favourites, the Wheel Back brush from Polished Bliss and the Meguiars Alloy Spoke brush from all good high street retailers. To complete the process you will also need a wash mitt (use a microfibre one instead of a wool one), pressure washer or hose and your normal two buckets of soapy water and clean water..

Cleaning the Wheels

I hose down the wheels and then spray on the cleaning product and then agitate using various brushes. This also includes giving your brake calipers a good clean. Once done, hose off all the product and wash as normal. Hose off once again. Then towel dry to remove all the excess water with a waffle weave towel or something similar. Ideally I try and give the car a quick run down the road to remove all water marks on the discs. If you still have tar spots on the wheels then using a bug and tar remover will help, but you will need to wash the wheels again before proceeding with the sealant step.

Sealing the wheels

All the cleaning you have done will be a waste of time if you dont properly seal the wheels from future brake dust and road grime. My favourite product at the moment is PoorBoys Wheel Sealant. Not the cheapest by far, but it is very effective and a lovely pink colour.

The process is simple.

Once the wheels are clean and dry, using a foam applicator , apply the sealant to the rims and rub in well. Let it dry to a haze and then using a microfibre cloth, buff off dry. Dont buff too hard as you will just remove the sealant. Remember to get into every part of the wheel including the spokes.



Dressing the tyres

All cars benefit from having the tyres clean and dressed. There are literally thousands of tyre shine products on the market today, but many are simple "gloss" products whereby they look great when applied, but fade within days if not hours and are 'dressy' items i.e they dont protect or last.

The products I use, cleans the tyres, protects and lasts for days. In fact a week or two later when I wash the car, the water is still beading off the tyres !!



Blackfire Long Lasting Tyre Gel



Gtechniq Tyre Gel



Elite Tyre Sponge

This product also comes with a handy grip applicator sponge. If you dont have one, just cut up a cheap jumbo sponge into a small piece and apply by hand. Take care to not rub over the wheel you have just cleaned and only dress the side wall of the tyre. This is mostly common sense, as a shiny dressed tyre holds no grip at all and so these products should not be used on the tread. (Also wear gloves or wash your hands immediately after using these products as they stain quite quickly).

* A little tip is to keep your tyre gel product of choice and applicator pad/sponge in a clear plastic resealable bag. A freezer bag will be ideal. That way you keep the product away from all your other cleaning products and it keeps the sponge from drying out.