

The Basics: Washing Your Car

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A couple people tugged at my arm to write a monthly tid-bit on Concours preparation. I'll be honest, I did not feel like I was an expert to impart valuable information, but they convinced me I did know a thing or two about prepare your car for a show.

This first article will deal with the basics, washing the baby.

When I wash Bevees, I do it one of two ways. The first way is to use plain water. This is the preferred method if the car has just been sitting in the garage and collecting dust. I use a wash mitt that I throw in the washing machine between car cleaning gigs. I do not use a chamois, some people prefer them, but I have found they trap fine particles of dirt in the pores. This can cause small scratches in the paint. I learned this at a tech session at McGuires one rainy afternoon, boy was I shocked, we have all been raised on the powers of the Chamois. I then dry the car with good 100% cotton terry towels. Make sure the towels have been washed once and do not use a rinse of softener on them. The rinse is an additive that can cause streaks, and retards absorbency of the towel. Using a rinse is not detrimental by any means, just a nuisance you learn to avoid.

If I have been using my 911 for tours, rallies or in the rain there is usually some road grime. I use a small amount of car wash soap to get the grime off. It is advisable not to use regular detergent. Detergent takes the wax off the car, this is because wax is a specialized form of grease (ugly name but basic fact). Regular detergents are developed to cut grease – therefore bye-bye wax. Car wash soaps are very mild and specially formulated not to take the wax off your cars surfaces. A good thing to remember for any automobile you are washing, whether it be your Porsche, Jag, Chevy or SUV.

When you wash your Porsche, make sure you get the valance, running boards and under the rear bumpers. These areas actually collect more dirt than any other place on your Porsche – unless of course you've been parked at the beach with a group of mischievous seagulls using your precious Porsche for target practice.

Rinse the surfaces thoroughly with a hose and immediately start drying the surfaces off. It is best to do this in an area out of the sun. I usually pull the car into the garage and dry her off in there. The reason to pull the car out of the sun is to keep those nasty little water spots from adhering to the paint. They are ugly and a nuisance to get rid of.

When drying your Porsche don't forget to use those 100% cotton terry towels, keep a few of them available. Once one towel gets damp, get another one until that one gets damp. If you find one of those nasty little water spots, use one of the damp (not wet) towels to rub it gently out. Don't forget the valance, running boards etc.. It is easy to forget these and you want to make sure you don't have a beautiful sparkling top and anything below the doors is spotty and streaked.