

5/05
after the Rain

Here in Southern California we have had more rain than ever recorded and everyone has had enough of it. I know records are made to be broken, but this is plain crazy! Now after having four months of straight rain, it looks like it may taper off and we can finally get back to a normal weather pattern.

With all the rain, our cars have really taken a beating. It has been hard to even wash your car to keep it clean in-between the rainstorms because they were happening so frequently. Just the thought of washing your car in the rain makes us all a little frazzled. It does look like the weather is going to return to normal and our cars will be needing attention, so its time to really give your car a good detailing. This time every thing needs attention, the paintwork, the floor mats, wheels and tires and the fender wells will get you started.

So, the decision has been made that the car is going to receive a complete detail. If you decide to do the car your self and you want to do the very best job possible, you can plan on spending most of the day(if not all day) cleaning your car. The first thing you want to do is wash your car. Use a good quality car wash soap, wash and dry as you normally would. Start from the top and wash your way down, this will keep the water in the bucket cleaner. It's wise to wipe off the car to preventing water spots forming while your cleaning the wheels and tires. One thing you want to do is clean the fender wells, look for any debris that has lodged its way in-between the plastic fender wells and the body panels, you could be surprised at all the stuff your carrying around with you. Sticks, bags, and gravel, are just some of the things that you can find down there.

Once you have washed and dried your car you need to assess the paint finish, run your hand over the paint and feel if it has any texture. Look very closely at paint and decide if the paint needs a simple coat of wax or if you need to call a professional? They're many different ways of tackling less than perfect paint. One-way is to get the polish machine out along with all the compounds, and buff out the paint. This procedure is not for the inexperienced. There are hundreds of different polishes and compounds, along with different foam and/or lambs wool

pads. If your cars paint needs this kind of work, it's time to call a professional detailer.

I know that most of you enjoy working on your own car; having a little fun in the garage keeping your car looking good. With that in mind, here are some helpful hints you'll be able to use. Unfortunley, I can't recommend one simple process that will work for every car because all cars are different. The color and the condition will make a difference on what product you should use. All cars will need a good washing. After this is complete, use tar remover to remove all road tar, bugs and anything else that was too stubborn to come off with soap and water.

Next you need to follow the clay bar process. If you haven't done this before, it is a really simple process. Use the Clay bar along with a quick detailer spray. Mist a ¼ of the hood, take the clay and rub it on the paint in a back and forth motion; like a bar of soap. This process will remove the surface contaminants. This will leave you with a smooth surface that is free of oxidation and ready for the next step.

If you have a late model car or the paint finish is in good condition, you can move directly to the waxing or sealing process. If you feel that your paint is lacking luster or shine you should apply a coat of glaze before you wax. Glazes are used to restore the gloss of your paint along with reduceing small surface scratches. Once you're happy with the way your car looks, it's time for waxing.

Get your favorite wax, use a foam applicator pad and wax away. Spend some time working the wax into the paint evenly. Once your finished, use a micro-fiber towel to wipe off the wax. After you're done it is always a good idea to move the car in the sunshine and double-check your work. This is the time to use your detail brush to remove any unwanted wax left in the nameplates and cracks. This is also the time to double-check your windows. I hope this works out great for you. Good Luck.

Wax on Mark