

Car Care Tips > CARSTAR

After your vehicle has been repaired, you want to keep it looking good. With some simple maintenance suggestions and tips, you can keep the restored exterior and interior looking like you just picked it up.

For Your Vehicle's Exterior

- Avoid washing your car in the sun.
- Rinse off as much dirt as possible before washing.
- Clean tires first then clean wheels to eliminate brake dust and road salt corrosion.
- Never use household soaps or detergents.
- Wash in straight lines with overlapping strokes to reduce the standing water you need to dry off.
- Be sure to wash the inside bottom edge of doors, lift gate, hood and trunk to eliminate the trapped dirt and moisture that can cause premature rusting.
- Rinse dirt from moving parts, such as suspension components.
- After driving in salty conditions, always wash your car to prevent corrosion, fading and rust.
- Get a complete vehicle detail at least once a year.
- Do not "dry wipe" your car as it may cause scratching.
- Don't place grocery bags, luggage or other objects on the car top or trunk.
- Avoid extreme heat and cold by keeping your car parked in the shade or a garage.
- Avoid gravel roads when possible, which can cause paint chipping.
- Do not park directly under trees, which may drip sap onto your vehicle.
- Immediately rinse gasoline, oil, antifreeze, and transmission fluid and windshield solvent spills off your finish – but do not wipe.
- Flush dirt, bugs and leaves from the front of your radiator with a brush and garden hose to prevent cooling system problems.
- Remove leaves from your car as soon as possible to prevent the release of acid that can permanently stain your automobile finish.
- Avoid brush-style car washes as they collect dirt which may scratch the car's finish.
- Use the lowest setting in do-it-yourself car washes to avoid "blasting" grit into the car's finish.
- Never wax your car in direct sunlight to prevent the surface temperature of your car from causing the chemicals in the wax to damage your finish.
- Look for car wax which contains long-lasting synthetic carnauba wax, which is safe for your car's finish.
- Mask off all textured moldings and bumper parts before rubbing on wax to avoid discoloring or other damage.

Keeping Your Car Clean Inside

- Use a vinyl protectant regularly to prevent fading and cracking and apply protectant with a rag to avoid spraying directly on the dash.
- Vinyl dashes can also be cleaned using furniture polishes like Lemon Pledge, which leaves a nice smell, too.
- Vacuum regularly to remove dirt, salt, leaves and other items that can damage carpets and floor mats.
- Leather interiors should be cleaned with leather products that are designed to penetrate the pores – avoid high-alkaline content which can bleach the color.
- Use only upholstery cleaners designed for cars, not household cleaners.