

Matt finishes, cleaning and maintenance

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Description

This Technical Service Bulletin describes the best practices in caring for Matt Finishes. More and more vehicle manufacturers are using Matt Finishes within their range of options and great care should be taken during use and cleaning of this type of finish. The information hereby given is based on the use of the Sikkens brand products and should not be used as a reference document for original finishes.

General Remarks

This paint system is the equivalent to systems recommended by all of the major motor manufacturers, and is applied in state of the art facilities under strict quality control standards.

Vehicles are often subjected to continual and regular cleaning using a wide range of chemical cleaners and varied cleaning types of equipment.

In the majority of cases this causes no problems but instances do occur when the cleaning process can damage the paint film, usually irreversibly.

Whatever the choice of cleaning, either mechanical, or manual, the surface dirt should be removed by a non-contact method such as power washing, preferably with cold or lukewarm water.

Cleaning Method & Maintenance

When: When a vehicle is freshly painted the paint film is at its most sensitive with respect to attack by chemical cleaner and the cleaning process. It is recommended that freshly painted vehicles be allowed a minimum of 7 days before being subjected to any form of chemical cleaning process, ideally extended to 21 days.

Method: Thoroughly rinse the vehicle with clean cold water preferably using a hose or a pressure washer to remove any loose road traffic film and dust particles. The use of a high pressure steam washer is not recommended.

The vehicle can then be washed by using a PH neutral based soap and soft sponge to minimise the risk of any type of abrasions. Use a cleaning soap that is PH neutral possibly a good quality wash n wax will be ideal for this operation. At all times avoid excessive rubbing of the paint surface as this could lead to the surface becoming more glossy in appearance than other areas.

Rinse thoroughly with clean cold water preferably using a hose or a pressure washer. Allow the vehicle to dry naturally until only a few water drops are present on the surface. To remove the remaining water drops and to prevent any water marking dry gently using a soft chamois avoiding excessive rubbing of the paint surface.

Note: Avoid washing the vehicle in direct sunlight and or when the vehicle surface temperature is excessive i.e. above 25°C.
 Any contamination found on the paint surface should be removed immediately i.e. bird lime or insects etc. Thoroughly soak the affected area with clean water preferably with a hose or high pressure washer to soften the contaminated area and remove gently using a soft sponge and PH neutral soap. For difficult to remove contamination it may be necessary to use a solution designed specifically to remove insects etc found in car care shops. Care should be taken not to allow any type of solution to dry on the paint surface as this could damage the surface even further. Always follow the manufacturers instructions on use.

* **Never use a car wash or any type of brush to wash/clean Matt Finishes.**

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Cleaning Method & Maintenance (continued)

Maintenance: It is not possible to carry out any type of polishing or waxing to the Matt Finish. Polishing or waxing of the matt finish will only lead to areas being left glossy due to the rubbing technique and abrasive compounds found in polishing materials.

Regular washing is the only way possible to maintain the paint surface as describe above. Remove contamination as soon as it becomes visible using the method detailed above to prevent damage.

Particular care should also be taken when opening and closing doors, bonnet and boot lid as excessive rubbing around handle areas will also lead to the area becoming glossy.

Please note that once an area becomes more glossy the only remedy is to repaint the affected area(s).

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