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Using a Clay Bar

Using a clay bar will remove embedded surface contamination that still remains after a maintenance wash. Sometimes the contamination removed is not always visible on the paint to the naked eye. After using a



clay bar on your paint you will be left with a surface that is as smooth as glass and properly prepped. It is now ready for polish or for you to apply layers of protection. Not only can you clay your vehicles paint, but glass, wheels, lights and more. A common misconception about using a clay bar is that it has an impact on removing swirls and scratches, it does not.

It is recommended that you use a clay bar roughly twice a year, or before details where you plan on polishing the paint. If your car is subject to industrial fallout or heavily contaminated areas, using clay bar more often may be required.

Before using a clay bar, your car should be washed and dried to remove a majority of contamination on your vehicle. The more contaminated the paint is the more likely imperfections can be added during the clay bar process.

There are two common types of clay lube, quick detailers and a combination of water and shampoo solution. The clay bar lubricant provides a slick surface for you to glide your clay over. If you use the clay on paint without clay lube, you'll notice that the clay won't slide across your paint and you can easily add marring and leave behind pieces of clay on your paint which can be a pain to remove.

Many detailers use a quick detailer as their clay lube. We recommend using one that has some cleaning power and little or no protective properties. This helps loosen the embedded contamination from the paint and yields great results. Poorboy 's Spray & Wipe is a good clay lube because it's a great cleaner and creates a slick surface to work on.

Another popular option is to use a mixture of Optimum No Rinse and water. It has cleaning agents that help lift contamination from the surface, provides a slippery surface to glide your clay over and cleans up nicely. Simply add 2 ounces of ONR to a gallon of water and you have yourself a great clay bar lubricant.

How-To Clay

Step 1: Wash and dry your vehicle

Step 2: Break off a small piece of clay that you will be working with and shape it into a flat surface

Step 3: Working in small 18" x 18" sections, mist the clay bar lubricant over your working area, so that every square inch is covered in clay lube



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Step 4: Gently glide the clay bar over your working area using overlapping passes going left to right or up and down. Note: You do not want to rely on a lot of downward force to clean the paint. You should allow the clay to absorb the contamination. Stubborn contamination can require a good amount of time, clay lube and passes to remove.

Step 5: Continue working on an area until all contamination is removed. You can tell this has happened because the clay will slide effortlessly across the paint and you will not hear any contamination being picked up by the clay.

Step 6: Wipe off the excess clay lube with a microfiber towel

Step 7: Continue steps 3 - 6 until the entire car has been properly clayed Note: Reshape your piece of clay after each section so that there is a clean fresh surface exposed. If you cannot reveal a fresh surface, break off a new piece of clay. To increase the life of your clay bar, spray the bar with a clay lube and store it in a clay bar storage container .

Facts and Tips

- If you drop a piece of clay, throw it away!
- Working on a small area ensures that your clay lube will not dry up too fast
- Do not use too much pressure when gliding a clay bar across the lubricated surface
- Using a quick detailer that leaves behind a slick surface is often good as a clay bar lubricant
- For most vehicles, we recommend using a fine grade clay bar
- A medium grade clay bar will almost always leave behind some marring that needs to be polished to remove
- Optimum No Rinse mixed with water is a common clay bar lubricant amongst professionals
- You can often tell if there is contamination still on the surface by listening closely as your clay
- Avoid using a clay bar in direct sunlight so that your clay lube does not dry up quickly
- Cutting your clay bar into small pieces helps preserve your clay in the event you drop a piece.
- Always try to reshape your clay to expose a fresh, clean piece of clay
- When storing your clay bar, mist some of your clay lube in the bag or container to keep is soft and flexible
- When storing your clay bar, mist some of your clay lube in the bag or container to keep is soft and flexible
- It's good practice to re-wash your vehicle after using a clay bar to remove any loosened contamination and to remove excess clay bar residue
- Clay not only works well on your paint, but also your glass, wheels, plastics and other surfaces

After your paint has been clayed it is good practice to give the car a re-wash before proceeding to the next step, which is polishing your paint. Re-washing your vehicle can ensure that any loosened contamination is removed and that all of the clay bar lubricant is removed. The wash should go much quicker since there should be nearly no contamination on the vehicle and you should be able to sheet dry very effectively since your paint will be ultra-smooth. After the rewash, then you want to polish your paint.