

How to Repair the Finish on Wheels that have been Damaged by Improper Cleaning

Problem: "The wheels show whitish discoloration....and small streaks ". This problem is not unusual and may be the result of several factors. The most common cause is your friendly local car wash. Many automated car washes use an acid to clean the wheels and tires. This acid cleaner will rapidly remove dirt, but may also attack the clear coat on many wheels. The result is a cloudy, whitish or dull appearance.

Many times, using a paint glaze such as 3M Hand Glaze or Meguiar #09 or One Grand Omega Glaze to clean the affected paint may clear this up. The OEM finish on many wheels is simply a silver paint with a clear topcoat. They may also be polished alloy with a clear topcoat. These combinations are not too different from the paint on the body.

Clean the wheel thoroughly with a quality wheel cleaner and dry completely. Apply your choice of glaze to a soft cloth and rub out the clouding. Buff out. If this does not do the trick, put a generous amount of 3M on your cloth and add a small amount (about the size of your pinkie nail) of P21S Multi Finish Restorer Polish. Rub out the clouding with this combination. The P21S Polish /3M combination will usually get the job done. If it has, follow up with a coat of quality wax.

Some painted/clear coated wheels will "yellow" under hard use applications. This is fairly common with track wheels that are subject to hard braking. The tremendous heat generated affects the clear coat and causes it to turn yellow. The 3M/P21S Polish trick will help to some degree, but not usually restore them to original appearance.

If the finish has not improved much at this point, you may consider using a more abrasive cleaner such as Meguiar #02 Fine Cut Cleaner or Meguiar #01 Medium Cut Cleaner. Apply either one to a soft cloth and *GENTLY* rub into the wheel. Use carefully as you may put hairline scratches if you rub too hard. When the desired finish has been achieved, follow up with 3M Hand Glaze to "finish out" the surface and then wax.

A wheel that has resisted all of the above may require repainting and or repolishing and repainting/clear coating. If the wheel is completely painted, then repaint the entire wheel. If only part is painted, and the polished areas are in good shape then only treat the painted areas. If the existing paint is in good condition, other than discolored, slightly rough up the paint with 1200 grit sandpaper. Wash thoroughly with a Prepsol type product to remove all grease. Spray the wheel or area to be painted with a quality primer such as Wurth Rustop Primer. If the wheel is European OEM silver or gold or black (the Wurth Gloss Gold Wheel Paint matches the BBS gold finish), then use Wurth Gloss Wheel Paint. The Wurth paints match beautifully and are super hard. Spray several *LIGHT* coats of paint, allowing each coat to dry for two hours, prior to the next coat. Allow to dry for a few days, clean thoroughly and spray several *LIGHT* coats of Wurth Gloss Clear Wheel Paint

If the surface of the wheel is pitted, or the paint has flaked off in patches, then all paint should be removed prior to repainting. The easiest and in my opinion, the only way, is to have them blasted with a plastic media. Most blasting shops have the plastic media, but don't like to use it because it is relatively slow (time = \$). Some people use glass bead. Other blasting media will dimple the wheels. Aluminum oxide leaves a distinct texture to the surface. Once all the old paint has been removed, clean the wheel with Prepsol, prime and then paint.

If you have any questions or if you need any further information, please feel free to contact us.

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