

## *PBL's Real Cars*

### **Car Show Tips:**

**Before starting any car-care project, remove all jewelry, which might scratch surfaces.**

**Vacuum before washing your car so you aren't blowing dirt over a freshly cleaned car, aren't pulling the vacuum cord through puddles and aren't vacuuming mud you've created.**

**Make sure you clean the engine before you wash the rest of the car.**

**Cover your ignition wires so they don't get wet.**

**Warm up the engine.**

**Before cleaning, wet everything down, including fenders adjacent to the compartment.**

**Don't get hood insulation wet if your car has one.**

**If your car doesn't have a hood insulation, degrease and wash underside of hood**

**last to keep the degreaser from dripping on you while you are working under the hood.**

**Spray the engine compartment with Degreaser.**

**But be careful of the sensors and other electrical components.**

**Include the engine block, fire walls, fender wells, hood hinges and latches.**

**Wait a few minutes for the degreaser to work.**

**While you are waiting, degrease the door hinges.**

**Simply, open the door, spray one hinge with degreaser and carefully flush off with water.**

**Be careful not to get the interior of the car wet. Repeat the procedure on each door.**

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Now back to the engine.

It should be ready to be flushed off with water by using a hose.

First start with the underside of the hood, then move on to the block, the fire wall and fender wells. Inspect area for any remaining grease.

Apply degreaser and flush again if needed.

Blow dry if you have an air compressor.

And last, spray compartment with a water based dressing.

Countless classic car owners open their hoods to show off their show quality chrome, mirrors, and perfect sparkle, unaware that spectators and judges alike are turned off by rusty manifolds.

Buy some manifold dressing to easily make an engine of difference.

Hood latches discolor and impair the appearance.

Spray clean, dry, and then apply your manifold dressing.

While you have the touch ups out, see how many other nuts, bolts, and latches you can restore to a new look.

Next examine the fan blades for discoloration or spots missing paint.

Grab your paint pen and touch them up.

Or if you have time, spray paint the blades.

Don't forget to check out the radiator from the engine side.

Those pesky bugs sometimes heat pressure themselves, and you need to squirt them heavily with your cleaner to gently remove them.

All the wire and hoses need to be cleaned, and a fresh "brand new" look obtained.

The tire spray stuff (black magic) applied onto a rag, might remove a lot of dullness in a hurry.

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### **The rest of the car is next.**

**Hose off the entire car before you begin washing the exterior.**

**Spray down the car for about 3 minutes, take a short break and spray your car with water again.**

**This helps cool off warm metal and softens up and rinses away any loose debris that could scratch the paint.**

**Don't wash your car in direct sunlight, especially on a hot day and sunny day.**

**Hot metal will cause water droplets to dry much faster, which can leave water spots on the paint.**

**Choose a cool and shady place. If this is not possible, try washing in the early morning or late afternoon.**

**Wet down the entire car to avoid staining of painted surfaces.**

**Spray All Purpose Cleaner and scrub with Wheel brush and Detail brush.**

**Rinse with plenty of water.**

**Again, wet down the entire painted surface.**

**Repeat process and rinse.**

**Some areas may need repeated cleaning.**

**Don't use too much car-wash concentrate in your bucket of water or it will leave a filmy residue on the glass.**

### **Whitewalls and wheels:**

**With your hose at a fairly high pressure, spray down the wheel wells.**

**Often they have turned a bit gray from road wear and tear.**

**Flush wheels with water to remove loose dust. Spray a wheel cleaner on the wheel. (Don't spray on dry, hot wheels with product.)**

**Let stand according to the directions on the product.**

**Flush with lots of water. Repeat if necessary.**

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Do not apply any foam tire cleaner, where you "Spray and walk away". All you are doing is putting a shiny, temporary coating on dirt and grime.

To help clean wheels, and especially lug nuts, use a soft-bristle paint brush.

But put electrical tape on the metal of the brush to prevent scratching.

Spray Whitewall Cleaner on tires.

Brush with a Nylon or Brass Whitewall Brush.

Next, flush with water and flush out the fender well.

Move to next wheel, repeat the process if necessary.

To protect wheels from over-spray when applying protectants to the rubber, make a "wheel mask" out of cardboard.

Cut a circle of corrugated cardboard to the diameter of your wheel rim so it fits snugly.

Cut two 5-inch slots about 1 - 1 1/2 in. apart in the center of the cardboard to serve as a handle.

Cover the cardboard with duct tape to make it waterproof and durable.

### **Waxing:**

Wash your waxing pads and towels with a liquid fabric softener to reduce the chance of scratching body panels during the next wax or polish.

Hard water spots often can be removed with a soft terry-cloth towel dampened with white vinegar.

When removing wax or polish, use a soft towel and shake it out frequently to shed dried wax.

It is better to use more speed than pressure because excessive pressure can cause abrasion and scratches in the paint.

In drying your car, use a non-abrasive material such as a 100% cotton towel or chamois. It must be a real deluxe chamois, not the one from the dollar store that feels like sandpaper.

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Drying includes lifting the hood and deck lid, and opening the doors to get the interior surfaces where water is trapped.

Then take your vehicle once around the block to air-dry.

After your car is cool and dry, look for swirl marks, scratches and any other imperfections.

For a dull and neglected finish, use a Clear-Coat Body Scrub.

Apply the body scrub at one section at a time.

After it has hazed over (about 5-8 minutes depending on humidity and temperature) wipe off in circular motions with a high quality 100% cotton towels.

Remember to always be turning over the towel and using a clean side at all times.

This is a good time to gently rub the finish with your hand to see if it smooth as silk.

If you are not satisfied with the finish you can reapply the body scrub to get the desired result.

If you have light swirl marks and light scratches, use a Professional Swirl Remover.

Apply it in the same manner that you applied the Body Scrub.

Do one section at a time and completely remove all residues of the swirl remover before continuing.

Next, apply the polish, this creates a deep gloss.

Use either a Show Car Glaze or a Deep Crystal Polish.

Apply the polish while working it into the finish.

The more you work polish into a finish, the more of a shine you get.

Take your time, and work one section at a time.

Use a clean 100% Cotton Towel at all times so not to scratch the surface you worked hard to achieve.

Apply 2-3 coats of polish to get the "show car" quality finish.

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Wax is applied to the surface to protect your work.  
The best way to apply wax is in thin coats.  
Apply 2 or 3 coats and wiping off with a 100% Cotton Towel.

If you get wax around the car's name badge, lettering or in crevices your soft towel won't reach, remove it with a soft bristle toothbrush or paintbrush.

If your car has a clear-coat finish, waxes and polished won't increase color richness or depth because that top coat has no color.  
But you can improve surface gloss by filling in the swirls and hairline scratches with wax or polish.

Don't use a professional-type electric buffer with two handles at 90-degree angles because they spin at 2600 rpm or more and can burn through the paint.

Rub cream leather conditioner into the seats with your hands, like a skin lotion, because cloth soaks up the conditioner and wastes too much.

### **Find everything you missed:**

Open up the gas bay door.  
Clean it well, and throw the rag away. Then, clean the license plate.

Third, check all emblem areas, and shoot some spray cleaner on your paint brush (or q-tip) to touch up edges and crevices.

Fourth, Spiff up behind the mirrors, under the chrome bumpers, around the window trim, inside the hood grooves, and elsewhere as needed.

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Now what about all the rusty and discolored bolts you may have noticed?  
Too late now to remove and replace.

Pick up some "point saving" black and silver paint pens at the hobby shop.

A couple dabs here and there will make nuts and bolts look like new.

Last step is back to the grill area. Sit down and stare at the radiator. How did all those bugs get there? Use cleaning spray, a small taped handle paint brush, and a couple toothpicks to very carefully dislodge all those nasty bugs.

Remember upon arrival at the show, to brush off any pebbles that may have accumulated on the bottom edge of the wheel wells.

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**Instrument gauges, clock, radio, rear view mirror, ash tray, steering wheel, & horn assembly:**

**The ash tray should be spotless, empty it and inspect for rust or burns. As the ashtray may be costly to replace and hard to find, rub in a little silver manifold dressing to mask the burn and blemish marks.**

**When cleaning your rear view mirror, don't forget to clean the backside. Next clean out the glove box completely. Check around the ignition lock for paint scratches. Spray on a Q-Tip your favorite cleaner to remove accumulated dust from around the instrument gauges.**

**To clean hard-to-reach places, such as air vents, use long-stemmed cotton swabs.**

### **Dash, air vents and sun-visors:**

**Dust the dash, cracks, crevices, console, etc.**

**Brush out the air vents.**

**Take an inexpensive artist's paintbrush and give it a light shot of furniture polish.**

**Work the brush into the crevices to collect the dust.**

**Wipe the brush off with a rag and move on to the next one.**

**Remember to flip the sun-visor to lean the other side, and seek out the discolored or rusty fasteners.**

**For a fast immediate cover up, just smear in a dab of silver manifold dressing on the rusty fastener.**

**If the dash and headliners look dull a bit dull, squirt a mist of clear tire blackener on your rag and slowly work it in to enhance the luster shine.**

**Use vinyl trim dressing on dash boards, doors and console.**

**If you have leather seats, use only specifically designed leather cleaners on your leather seats.**



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Any solvent-based cleaner will speed the aging of leather. And keep conditioners and cleaners away from leather seat stitching to prevent shrinkage.

### **Vinyl and Leather:**

A good interior protectant is especially useful for the many vinyl and leather portions of the car's interior. Not only do they provide protection from dirt and grime, as well as the sun's harmful rays, but they also offer an attractive shine.

### **Seats and Seat Belts:**

Make sure you clean the entire backside of the seats. Analyze the seat belts, if fair shape wedge them along side the seat, if they are nice, lock them over the seat.

### **Doors and Hinges:**

Look inside the hinge area. Shine up door sills, and add some luster to door panels. Look closely at old rubber around the glass, especially between the dash and windshield, plus dull weatherstripping.

### **Windows:**

To remove cigarette smoke from windows, use a 50/50 solution of ammonia and water.

If you have a rear window defroster, use a window cleaner designed for automotive glass.

Ammonia can break down the heating elements in your rear window, those thin lines, which are small wires used for defrosting.

When you clean the rear glass, scrub gently, and in the direction of the defroster grid, not across it.

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### **Carpeting and floor mats:**

To remove grease or oil stains on the carpet or seat fabric, apply cornstarch to the spot.

Let it sit an hour, then vacuum.

If you have other carpet or seat stains, spray carpet cleaner, scrub and use carpet brush.

Take a clean terry towel and rub over area to soak up cleaner.

Wrap masking tape or duct tape inside out around one hand.

Then massage over the entire carpet area, to ensure picking up the fuzz balls, hair from unknown origins, and small change.

Decide how dirty your floor mats are.

If vacuuming will not clean them, wet them, and spray on carpet cleaner and scrub with carpet brush.

Then, rinse until the water runs clear.

Use a wet/dry vacuum to suck up the water.

Then hang mats over a fence or clothes line to dry the rest of the way.

To remove lipstick, blot the spot with white vinegar and rinse with fresh water.

For coffee, saturate with club soda and blot with a clean rag.