

Dr_x Beasley's™

MATTE PAINT CARE GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION TO MATTE PAINT FINISHES

Matte finishes turn heads. We all expect cars to look super shiny, so when a car with zero reflectivity passes by, you can't help but stop and look! But with that awesome aesthetic comes a reputation for being impossible to take care of. People will say you can't clean matte without ruining the finish. They'll say it scratches more easily than glossy. They'll say you can't reasonably use a matte finish car as a daily driver.

None of this is true.

The truth is, matte isn't impossible to care for. It's just different to care for! With a matte finish, the usual detailing approach won't work — you'll need to switch things up a little to handle the unique needs of the surface. Thankfully, it's not hard. In this guide, we'll go over why matte finishes require special care, what products NOT to use on them, how to properly protect and maintain matte, and common myths and misconceptions about matte finishes.

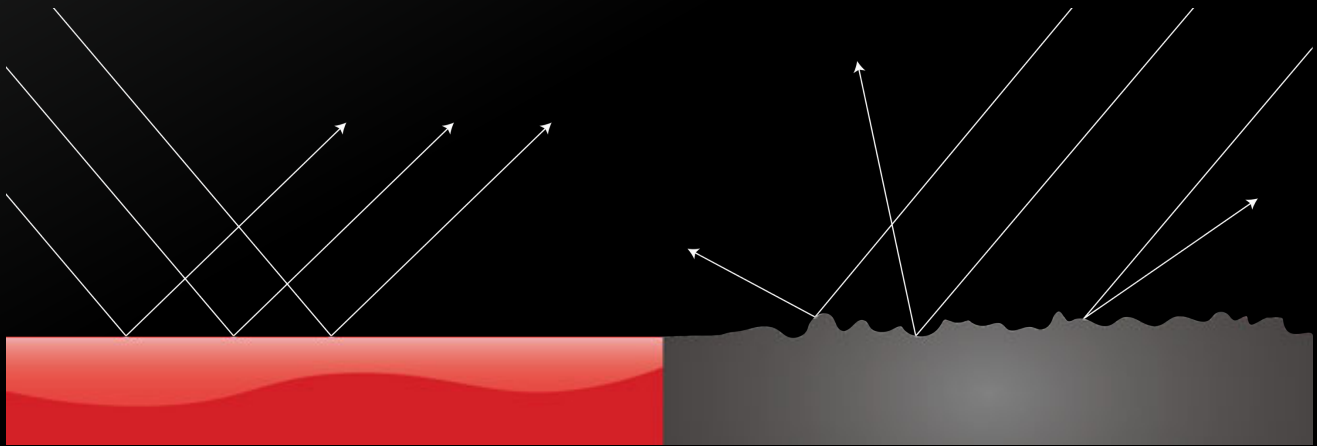
Let's dig in.



WHY MATTE LOOKS MATTE

First, let's define what a matte finish is. For our purposes, **a matte finish is any finish less reflective than gloss.** Under this definition, satin, eggshell and semi-gloss are considered matte.

To understand why matte finishes require special care, you need to understand why they look the way that they do. Let's zoom in on some matte paint and examine the clear coat at the microscopic level:



So in comparison to the smoothness of glossy paint (left) matte paint is relatively bumpy. It all has to do with the way light waves reflect after hitting the clear coat. On a smooth surface, light reflects at a consistent angle, because the light rays are all hitting a flat surface with no height variations. Because the light is reflected at the same angle, it is easily captured by our eyes, forming a distinct image similar to a mirror. This is called a **specular reflection**.

On a bumpy surface like a matte finish, the opposite happens. Light waves hit a surface with a wide range of height points, meaning each ray is reflecting at a different angle, scattering the reflection. Since the rays aren't all angled in the same direction, your eyes only pick up some of the reflection, preventing a clear image from being perceived. This is called a **diffuse reflection**.

WHY REGULAR PRODUCTS HURT MATTE PAINT FINISHES

Now that you understand why matte finishes look the way they do, you can start to understand why 99% of car care products aren't compatible with matte.

Most cars have glossy paint, and most people want that gloss to shine through as much as possible. Since a smooth surface is what produces gloss, car care products have been designed to either fill in or sand down to flatten things out.

So if you've got a finish like matte that needs a bumpy surface to look right, using these kinds of products can keep that from happening. This applies to products at all stages of detailing. Here's a quick run-down of products you don't want to use on matte:

X MOST WASH SOAPS

Most wash soaps contain wax or polymer content that fill in matte finishes.

X DETAILING CLAY

The bumps on matte finishes tear up clay bars, causing little bits to get stuck in the finish. Doesn't look good!

X WAXES, SEALANTS & MOST COATINGS

Waxes and sealants fill in matte finishes, while most ceramic coatings do the same.

X POLISHES

Polish works by sanding down the clear coat to produce a gloss, so if you were to do the same to matte, you'd permanently lose the bumps that create the diffuse reflection.

Thankfully these types of products can all be re-engineered to work with matte finishes instead of ruining them.

By eliminating fillers, you can create soaps and sprays that clean without disturbing the diffused look. By using a chemical solution to decontaminate instead of physical detailing clay, you can remove embedded contaminants without destroying the matte appearance. By engineering coatings that adhere to a matte finish's hills and valleys, you can avoid filling them in and get protection without compromising the matte sheen.

Now that you know what products not to use and what products to use, let's get into how these products are used.

HOW TO CARE FOR A MATTE PAINT FINISH

Protect your finish with a matte-safe ceramic coating as soon as possible!

This will help resist permanent stains and make cleaning easier going forward.



WASHING A MATTE FINISH: BASIC CARE GUIDELINES

Before you put the coating on, though, **you'll want to clean the vehicle as well as possible**, or otherwise the coating won't bond properly — sort of like how tape has a hard time adhering to a slippery surface.

Here are some tips are for washing at home! Looking for a detailer to do this work? Check the back for more info on finding matte-friendly detail shops!

- Avoid automatic washes if possible. The harsh bristles and soap they use can be harmful to matte paint finishes.
- Never use household items like dish detergent and window cleaner to wash a matte vehicle — these can harm the finish over time.
- If washing at home, use only a matte safe wash soap with soft wash mitts and a Grit Guard-lined bucket for rinsing. This will help prevent scratches.
- When washing, pre-rinse vehicle first to remove loose contaminants before introducing soap foam.
- For optimal cleaning, foam and rinse vehicle twice during the wash.
- Avoid washing in direct sunlight as dried water may cause spotting on paint.
- Use clean, soft microfiber towels to dry. Using other towels may cause scratches.



PROTECTING A MATTE FINISH: BASIC CARE GUIDELINES

Once you've gotten done washing for the first time, you'll want to get the finish protected with a ceramic coating. This coating, as we said earlier, will help the paint resist permanent stains and self-clean for easier washing, so it's crucial for keeping the finish in good condition.

Here are some tips on applying a ceramic coating to a matte finish:

- Only use ceramic coatings explicitly designed for matte finishes. Be cautious of coatings that claim "compatibility" with matte.
- Apply to one small area at a time, rather than tackling the whole vehicle at once.
- Be sure to get full coating coverage on each small area you apply to.
- Be sure to wipe away all coating excess after applying to a small area.
- Do not apply ceramic coatings in direct sunlight.
- The coating will continue to cure for the first week after application. Avoid washing or getting vehicle wet during this period. A matte-safe coating maintenance product can be used to protect the coating in the first week.

MAINTAINING A MATTE FINISH: BASIC CARE GUIDELINES

With paint protected, you'll have a much easier time maintaining your finish going forward. What does that maintenance look like? Here's the regimen we recommend.

DAILY MAINTENANCE (TOUCH-UPS)

- If your vehicle spends any time outside, be sure to inspect the finish daily for contaminants like bird droppings or water spots. The coating will help prevent these kinds of stubborn stains from sticking, but you still want to remove them as soon as possible with a **matte-safe detail spray** or **spot cleaner**.
- If your vehicle is garaged but sees dust build-up, use a **matte-safe detail spray** to remove any light contaminant particles that have accumulated.

BI-MONTHLY MAINTENANCE (REGULAR WASHES)

- Wash your vehicle once every 2 weeks or as needed with a **matte-safe wash soap** to keep the matte paint finish in good condition. This will also enhance the protection of the ceramic coating.

QUARTERLY MAINTENANCE (REJUVENATION)

- Every few months or so, apply a **matte ceramic coating maintenance spray** to reinforce the coating's protection and rejuvenate its water repellent properties.

Follow this regimen and your matte paint finish will look
consistently amazing.

MATTE FINISH FAQs

Have a nagging question we didn't cover? Here are some answers to the most common matte paint care questions.

DOES MATTE PAINT SCRATCH MORE EASILY?

NO. Matte paint is no harder or softer than its glossy equivalent. Matte paint actually hides scratches better than glossy paint, since light is scattered and diffused rather than concentrated and reflected.

HOW DO I REMOVE SCRATCHES?

Scratches on matte paint finishes can often be hidden by simply cleaning the scratch itself. If you want to remove the scratch completely, however, you will need to have the area re-painted.

CAN I USE MATTE PRODUCTS ON SATIN PAINT? GLOSSY PAINT?

YES. Matte care products like those from Dr. Beasley's are matte-safe in the sense that they do not alter the natural appearance of the paint they are applied to. That means finishes across the reflective spectrum are compatible, from satin to semi-gloss to full gloss!

MATTE FINISH FAQs CONT'D

CAN I USE THEM ON MATTE WRAPS AND PPF?

YES – BUT... Most matte paint care products will also work with wraps and paint protection film. There are, however, certain types of products where a solution engineered for wraps and PPF is needed. This is the case for **ceramic coatings** and **spot cleaners**, so be sure yours is formulated specifically for film.

HOW CAN I DECONTAMINATE MATTE WITHOUT DETAILING CLAY?

To decontaminate a matte paint finish, a chemical decontaminant is required. These products work by lifting out and breaking down contamination embedded in the finish.

WHAT DO I USE ON THE WHEELS AND TIRES?

A **matte safe wash soap** is a great way to clean your wheels and tires while you wash, but for more embedded contamination we recommend a dedicated **matte-safe wheel cleaner**. A **matte-safe wheel sealant** and **tire conditioner** are also recommended.

HAVE MORE MATTE QUESTIONS?
LOOKING FOR A MATTE DETAILER?

GIVE US A CALL OR SEND AN E-MAIL!

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