



## **The Differences Between Wax and Polish**

People who are about to clean their cars often use these two terms—wax and polish—interchangeably. But that does not mean that wax and polish are the same. In fact, they are completely different. And using one, when you should use the other, could result in expensive damage to your car's paint, according to Chuck Bennett of Zymöl Enterprises. Zymöl is the world's leading producer of premium car cleaners and waxes.

"Over the last decade, there have been major changes in the way manufacturers paint their cars and trucks," Bennett said. "And those changes in paint processes make it very important that people use the right products to clean their cars, enhance their vehicle's appearance and, of greatest importance, protect the paint from the sun and other environmental hazards."

A good place to start is to review the differences between wax and polish. "They serve entirely different purposes," Bennett notes. "Traditionally, most polishes have contained abrasives that are suspended in a paste or liquid. They actually grind away dirt and oxidation—or unsightly dead paint. Unfortunately, polish also lifts good paint right off the car."

On a car with a standard finish, polish will grind away some of the paint and transfer the color of the vehicle to the applicator. Use too much polish, or too much pressure, and it is possible to go right through the paint. You will end up exposing the primer or, worst of all, bare metal or fiberglass.

However, many people who use excessively abrasive polishes on new cars and trucks may not realize the damage they are doing because the applicator does not take on the color of the car, according to Bennett. "Most newer vehicles today, and many older cars that have been restored, have a clear coat applied over the color coat. This is a layer of paint without pigment that is designed to give the finish greater depth and gloss." Tackle the job of cleaning a clear-coated

car with an abrasive polish and you will not see the car's color transfer to the applicator. That, however, does not mean that you have not removed an excessive amount of paint, or clear coat. It only means that you cannot see the paint you have removed, since it is devoid of color pigments.

"An abrasive polish applied to a clear coat will do a tremendous amount of damage," Bennett said. "It's really like scratching a mirror. You not only see the scratch in the glass, you also see it reflected in the mirror coating. You actually end up seeing two scratches despite the fact that only one scratch is present. Use a polish on a vehicle with a clear coat finish and you will have thousands and thousands of fine scratches reflected right back at you. It severely clouds the finish."

In short, most car owners do not want to use a traditional polish. But if they think "polish equals wax" when they go to the store, they could end up in real trouble. Fortunately, there are high quality cleaners that can remove the dirt and oxidized paint without causing all the damage now associated with traditional polishes. Zymöl makes several products that clean beautifully without damaging the surface including a new polish due out in 2009. And it is necessary to clean the surface of the paint thoroughly before adding wax.

Once the vehicle is clean, it is the job of the wax to enhance the appearance of the finish and protect the paint from the sun and other environmental hazards. "Wax keeps airborne contaminants from reaching the paint," noted Bennett. "If these airborne agents get to the paint, they can start a chemical reaction. In addition, wax refracts, or diffuses, ultraviolet and infrared radiation from the sun. Without a coat of wax, the paint absorbs too much of the sun's energy, overheats, dries out and oxidizes. A waxed car will actually have a lower temperature at the surface of the paint than a car that has not been waxed."

For people who are serious about protecting their automotive investment while deriving maximum pleasure from their vehicle's appearance, Zymöl makes a full line of exceptional products designed to keep cars, trucks and motorcycles looking new.

In lieu of polish, Zymöl Cleaner Wax or HD-Cleanse will clean without scratching the finish. It will remove dirt, road grime and oxidized paint, allowing the natural gloss of the paint to show through.

Zymöl's waxes then add to the depth of this shine while providing unparalleled protection for the paint. Since it contains exceptionally high concentrations of Carnauba, nature's hardest wax, Zymöl wax can be buffed to a brilliant shine. And, unlike many other waxes, Zymöl does not employ harsh petrochemical or petroleum-based solvents to make the Carnauba, which in its natural state is literally as hard as a rock, usable. Instead, Zymöl softens it by using natural montan oil. While petrochemicals may be less expensive, they can also soften some paints. As a result, Zymöl provides exceptional protection and an unequalled shine, without risking long-term damage to the finish.

To get more technical information or to have your car professionally detailed contact your local Zymöl Licensed Detailer today!