

Taking care of your RV finish



The Chemical Company

Following these procedures can provide a long-lasting, high-gloss finish to your RV. These same procedures can also be applied to your everyday automobile producing the same long-lasting results.

Keeping your RV looking its best at all times involves keeping the paint finish clean and in good condition. This means periodic washing and polishing, as well as getting the finish repaired as soon as possible when the paint is damaged or affected in any way.

The purpose of the paint finish is to provide an aesthetically pleasing appearance and to protect your vehicle from the environment. Your RV is exposed to many environmental conditions that have an adverse affect on the paint finish:

1. Road salts and sodium chloride
2. Road tar / bugs
3. Bird droppings / tree sap
4. Industrial fallout / acid rain / pollution
5. UV exposure and moisture

The most common problems resulting from these conditions are corrosion, staining and chemical spotting. These problems can be minimized through regularly scheduled washing and polishing.

Washing your RV

Make sure the RV's surface temperature is not hot, under 90°F, and not in direct sunlight. A shaded area is ideal for washing your vehicle as direct sunlight causes water and soap to evaporate too fast resulting in water spotting.

- Use a mild soap. Most auto care stores will carry a car wash shampoo.
- Do not use combination wash-n-wax products as these waxes can cause build up.
- You should have a minimum of two sponges or wash mitts; one for the wheels and undercarriage and one for the painted finish.
- Brushes or wash mitts that are made of plastic bristles are acceptable for use on tires and wheel wells only. Use of these on your RV's paint will cause damage to the finish.
- Wash the wheels and wheel wells first as this removes heavy dirt and debris and prevents it from splattering on already cleaned panels.
- Wet the entire area to be washed down to remove loose dirt and grime, then hand wash one area at a time using your dedicated paint finish sponge or wash mitt. Wash from the top and work your way down, frequently rinsing to minimize grit abrasion. Follow with a final rinse of water.

For stubborn stains such as road tar, use an ammonia-based glass cleaner or a small amount of rubbing alcohol on a damp cloth, followed by warm soapy water and rinsed with clean water. This may not dissolve the road tar, but it will loosen tar and bug stains and remove them from the surface. Do not use solvent based cleaners on bird droppings or tree sap as these are water-based stains and will eventually dissolve using an ammonia based glass cleaner, warm soapy water and a little "elbow grease" followed by rinsing with clean water.

Drying your RV is just as important as washing it as today's tap-water and well-water contain many chemicals that could water stain your RV's finish. Use either a damp natural or synthetic chamois, or lint-free micro-fiber towels. Both work very well.



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Additional Precautions

Parking

- Avoid parking under trees or near ocean salt spray.
- Ice or snow should not be scraped or brushed from the painted surface.

Driving

- Gravel roads should be avoided.
- Anti-freeze, fuel or window solvents if spilled on the painted surface should be rinsed off immediately with water. Do not wipe dry.
- Bugs and bird droppings should be rinsed off with water daily.

Waxes & Polishes

Over 90% of all passenger vehicles finishes are clearcoated. The finish on your RV is a state of the art Acrylic Urethane Basecoat / Clearcoat. This means that what you wash and polish is a clear urethane coating designed to protect the basecoat: the pigmented coating that provides color. As its main function of protecting the basecoat, clearcoats need to be maintained, especially in harsh environments. Clearcoats do not fade themselves, but appear to fade or lose gloss as the surface becomes contaminated by the environment. If this contamination is not removed frequently, results will be a dull or low-gloss finish. Occasional washing alone will not adequately remove some forms of contamination and will require polishing.

Polishes and waxes primarily serve the following purposes:

1. To remove minor surface imperfections caused by water spots and acid rain.
2. To remove minor scratches by filling them and leveling the surface.
3. To seal the pores of the finish creating an easier-to-clean surface.
4. To beautify the paint finish appearance with more depth and high gloss.
5. To protect the paint finish from the elements.

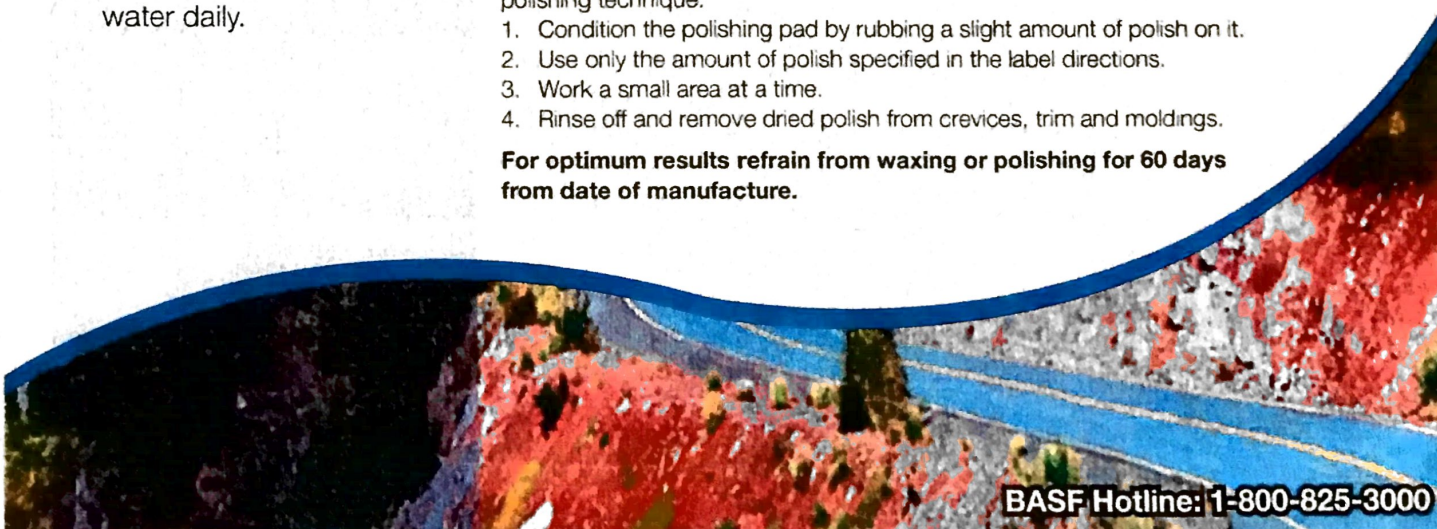
Do not use products that contain harsh abrasives such as rubbing compounds. These products should be used by an experienced technician with proper training and equipment. Most polishes and waxes are designed to clean and polish in one application, whether by hand or machine.

A machine applied polish will last longer than one applied by hand because the high RPM of the buffing wheel creates heat, resulting in a deeper film with higher gloss. However, a hand-applied polish or wax will offer outstanding performance and protect the RV's finish.

When applying polish or wax, do so in a shaded area making sure the RV surface is at the specified temperature according to the polish manufacturer's recommendations. Due to the variations of polishes and waxes, incorporate the following suggestions into the polishing technique:

1. Condition the polishing pad by rubbing a slight amount of polish on it.
2. Use only the amount of polish specified in the label directions.
3. Work a small area at a time.
4. Rinse off and remove dried polish from crevices, trim and moldings.

For optimum results refrain from waxing or polishing for 60 days from date of manufacture.



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