



## Buffing Tips

### MINIMIZE SWIRL MARKS

- Minimize swirl by maintaining clean buffing pads. Spur wool pads frequently, wash and air dry occasionally.
- Soak foam pads in warm water and ring dry. Never put in dryer.
- Cross contamination is another leading cause of swirl. Keep compound pads separate from polishing and finishing pads.
- Match the right buffing pad to the right polishing material. We know not all paint surfaces are the same, save time by spot buffing a small area then check results. We have many pad compositions, experiment with the least aggressive and work up to the most aggressive, if needed. Utilize this same principle when selecting the right compound or polish.
- Lower RPMs means less friction, less friction means less heat buildup. Try to stay between 1750-2400 RPM when compounding and between 1200-1750 RPM when finishing.
- After using compound wash the treated area with soap and water to eliminate excess compound grit. When finishing with a polish or glaze, don't buff dry. Leave a little material on the car, because without it, you create friction. A final hand or orbital wax will clean up any polish residue.
- Refer to Buffing Techniques for related information on reducing swirl.

### CAR BUFFING TECHNIQUES

- Paint preparation is vital. Proper paint preparation makes the process smoother with a better end result. Give the car a good wash and prep the surface with a clay preparation bar. There are several kinds available on the market. This will minimize or remove protrusions on the paint surface such as railhead particles and environmental contaminants.
- Proper buffing techniques are a must. In short, work buffer right to left over bead of polish and/or compound. Start slightly on edge and then finish flat. Working smaller areas, keep your pace uniform and in "rhythm". With increased practice, proficiency increases. Keep the RPMs on the slow side.
- Let the weight of the buffer do most of the work. Don't wear yourself out. Work with the buffer, not against it. Keep the buffer in motion to avoid burning the paint. You will get a feel for how the buffer wants to move in time.
- Work the car from right to left (right handed) and don't turn the buffer upside down, the cord will get wrapped in the buffer spindle if you do.
- Watch for pad grabbers like antennas, windshield wipers and emblems. The cautious approach is the best approach, mask or remove where possible. Have you ever seen a windshield wiper fly?
- Avoid or mask rubberized body side moldings, you can burn or stain them.

- Avoid edges by masking or working parallel with the buffer wheel. Work close but not over unless you have a good touch. If you are a beginner, don't lock the variable trigger, this will allow you to slow down at any time.

## CAR CLEANING SAFETY

- Use approved implements for elevating yourself. Five gallon buckets and cheap step ladders can tip or slide on slick pavement, especially when there's a lot of tire dressing on the ground.
- Wear eye protection
- Use a spur to clean your buffing pads, not sharp objects like screwdrivers, etc.
- Keep electrical tools away from standing water
- Stay within recommended RPMs when buffing car

## BUFFING PADS IN THE BODY SHOP

- Very important to keep buffing pads clean and not cross contaminate pads.
- Color sanding is common at the body shop level, therefore proper prep, buffing techniques, pad selection, timing the buff are very relevant factors.
- Plan your color sanding and buffing at the moment paint is ready; don't wait until the paint is harder than a rock. You wait too long, your work is now work!
- You buff fresh paint to soon, dye back.
- Use sandpaper that will meet the minimum to get the job done. Stronger paper may cut faster; it's also harder to rub out.
- Experiment with the right combination of sandpaper, buffing pads and overall timing of the buff.
- Use plenty of water when color sanding. Allowing grit and particles to suspend on the paint can damage it.
- A properly buffed and finished painted panel can sell the job. You can have the best body work in the world but your customer will be most impressed by a swirl free finish. Extra added tip: many body shops are now practicing good delivery points by quick detailing the car. This can include steam cleaning the motor, random orbital glazing the exterior and freshening up the interior.
- Avoid putting too much into the paint, in other words damaging it then covering swirl with an oily hand glaze. We all know glaze is a temporary fix and will wash off.