THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO DIY CAR DETAILING

TIPS AND TRICKS FROM AN INDUSTRY DETAILER



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Ultimate guide to DIY car detailing

Tips and tricks from an industry detailer

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Preface

I got into car detailing for the simple reason that I loved cars. When I was younger, I did everything from buying, fixing up and selling cars to racing competitively in the drift scene. After leaving motorsport, I wanted to make sure that my work kept me around cars. By this point I had a huge appreciation for the underlying machine within a car, as well as a keen, almost obsessive attention-to-detail - very useful for detailing! So I set up my own business offering car detailing services. Over the decade that I have been doing this, I've had the pleasure of working on some incredible cars and gained some great customers. I've also come to realise that learning the right way to do the basics of car detailing at home can be a great help to all the car lovers out there. So in this book I share over a decade of tips and techniques to help you keep your car in great condition year-round.



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Chapter 1 - Introduction to car detailing

Welcome to the ultimate guide to DIY car detailing, a step-by-step walkthrough of everything you'll need to do professional car detailing at home. But before we get into the detail, let's explore car detailing, what it is and why we do it.



Car detailing is the correction and protection of all surfaces of your vehicle, from glass and paintwork, to interior materials. Car detailing is not just for the supercar owners and petrolheads. In all honestly, if you own a car, it's only sensible to carry out some level of detailing. The benefits of car detailing are many – it can give an old car a new lease of life and increase its longevity. It can protect new cars from damage and wear, and it can shield cars purchased as financial investments to help keep their value.

Aside from the sensible reasons to do car detailing, it's ultimately part of the responsibility of car ownership. These vehicles are expensive investments for most people, so why wouldn't you want to keep it looking good? We paint our houses and maintain our gardens nicely, why not do the same with your car? And sure, for some people, their car is simply a functional mode of transport, and so basic maintenance is sufficient. But for others, their car is a prized possession, something they have wanted to own their whole lives and something that gives them immense joy. So keeping it clean and well maintained demonstrates a sense of pride, and gives many owners a great deal of satisfaction.

And no car, old or new, cheap or expensive, 1 litre diesel or 3 litre twin turbo is safe from damage. What most car owners don't realise is that significant amounts of damage to a car's paintwork can actually come from regular activity like washing - poor washing techniques, dirty sponges, unsuitable cloths, acidic products – these things don't just give an inadequate clean but very often will damage the paintwork, leaving marks and stripping protective layers. Multiple other environmental factors can also contribute to the poor condition of a car's paintwork. Insects (due to their biological make up) can stain and etch paint very easily. UV rays from the sun will oxidise paint, reducing colour to give a faded look. Limescale and hard water can leave spots and mineral buildup. Bird droppings, just like insects, can etch paintwork quickly as they are very acidic.

So in reality, most cars are in need of some level of detailing. But why use a professional detailer you ask? Well professional car detailing puts the car first, considering age, mileage, colour and paint condition. It is far from a one-size-fits-all. And any good service delivered, as you will find out as you read this book, is built on the need to be methodical, almost scientific, about how you carry out the work.

And that's what made me write this book, to find a way to convey all of the best methods, products and tricks to doing a good detailing service. It's easy to do the wrong thing and therefore cause damage. And sure, for some advanced levels of detailing, I would absolutely recommend using a professional detailer. Some treatments have little room for error and should be done by someone with solid experience. But the excellent safe wash processes and basic polishing are something that everyone can do, at home on a regular basis, to keep their cars looking fantastic in between the professional services.

So as you read through this book, I hope that you gain the same fulfilment and appreciation for car detailing that I have. And be prepared for it to take time. In a professional environment, an in-depth detailing service can take up to five days to complete. The fundamentals outlined in this book, should take 1-2 days. But don't rush it, enjoy the process and enjoy the final outcome of your well-detailed, protected and glossy car.