

Waxit Car Care Cleaning and Detailing Guide



Part 2

Welcome to the second part in a series of articles from *Waxit Car Care* in which we are covering the various aspects of car appearance maintenance and detailing.

In the first instalment of this series we stepped through a couple of different techniques for washing your car using little or no water. This instalment will move on to the next process in detailing your car, which is using detailing clay to remove surface contaminants from the paint as a preparation step prior to polishing and waxing.

The use of *detailing clay* or *clay bars* is now quite widespread amongst enthusiasts and can be best described as an eraser for your paint.



Detailing clay is a synthetic product very similar to Plasticine and was developed in Japan as way to remove overspray from cars without having to resort to harsh abrasives which also remove paint. It has been used in the smash repair industry for many years and is referred to as *overspray clay*.

When used correctly, clay bars will remove the build up of sap, brake dust that has bonded to paint, bug residue, bird droppings, tar and just about anything else that gets stuck to your paint, including wax and sealants, leaving your paint feeling like glass, ready for a polish and wax to bring it to life.

Using detailing clay is a simple and safe process **provided you follow the basic instructions** as listed below.

1. Work indoors or in the shade, out of wind, on a cool paint surface.
2. Wash and dry your car prior to starting claying.
3. Before you start, test the paint for contaminants by placing your hand in a plastic shopping bag and lightly wiping the paint on your car. In most cases you will feel lots of small bumps and dots on the paint; these are the contaminants that the claying process will remove.
4. Depending on the size of clay bar you have, cut it into two or more pieces and mould one of the pieces into a flat disc shape of about 3mm thick.
A 100 gram bar would be cut into two pieces while a 200 gram bar will divide into three or four.
5. Spray an area of approximately 600mm x 600mm with clay lubricant. The exact amount of lubricant to use is something you will learn from experience: too much will cause the clay glide over the top of the contaminants, too little will cause the clay to stick and possibly mar the paint surface. Then using just enough pressure to hold the clay against the paint, rub the clay disc back and forth over the area. You will feel the roughness under the clay diminish as you do this. Continue until the clay is gliding effortlessly.
6. When you believe you have finished the area, dry and inspect the surface of the clay bar for contaminants, should you see or feel any particles in the clay pick them out and discard them. Then



Extra tips to ensure a successful claying job:

1. If you wipe off the excess lube and dry the clay prior to folding and re-shaping, your clay will last a lot longer. Kneading clay that has a coating of lubricant still on it will quickly result in the clay bar becoming a soggy mess and totally unusable.
2. To store your clay, dry any lube off the clay, place in the container provided with a LIGHT spray of lube and leave. Properly stored clay has a virtually unlimited shelf life.
3. Do use dedicated clay lubricants or the lubricants recommended by the clay manufacturer. Use of random cocktails of car shampoo, quick detailer and water can cause clay to break down prematurely and/or result in poor performance of the clay.

We trust that this article has been of interest to you and invite you to call Russell Van or Brian Gardner at our Tullamarine location should you require further advice on this area of car care or any other.

knead the clay back into itself so you will be using a clean part of the clay for the next area of paint.

7. Wipe away the clay lubricant with a microfibre towel and visually inspect the area you have clayed. You may also repeat the plastic bag test to ensure you have removed all the contaminants before you move on to a new area.

8. Continue the above steps until you have done the entire car.

Once you have clayed the car it will feel like glass. One point to remember though: a clay bar will not remove scratches or swirl marks. For these paint imperfections you will need a dedicated swirl remover. ■