



### How to clean your V8 to almost concours standard

So you want to revive your V8's appearance from a dirty but sound car to somewhere nearer to a concours standard finish? Well it's not really that hard, honest, but it does take time and you will need to invest in the right cleaning/polishing/waxing products. You will need an initial outlay of around £160 although once you have them they will last the average V8 owner for many years. Howard Guiney explains.

Below is my personal recommendations of what you'll need; they are all available at a discount from the Ultimate Finish company at <http://www.theultimatefinish.co.uk/>

Meguiar's Hyper Wash - 3.78 Litres  
 UF Double-Sided Merino Wash Mitt  
 UF Ultra-Soft Microfibre Drying Towel  
 UF Microfibre Buffing Fleece (pack of ten)  
 Meguiar's Soft Foam Applicator Pad (two packs)  
 Bilt-Hamber Auto Clay – Soft  
 R222 Gloss Enhancing Paintwork Cleanser  
 R222 'Concours Look' Carnauba Wax  
 Meguiar's Perfect Clarity Glass Cleaner

A hose is a necessity and access to a pressure washer is helpful. The first time you "detail" your car will be the hardest and will take around two days to complete. Gather together everything you need and choose a day when it's dry maybe with a breeze but not too much sunshine. Start by removing your grille; when was the last time you cleaned behind it. It also helps to remove your mirrors, wiper arms and air intake grille.

The engine bay is probably the dirtiest part of your V8 so it's a



good place to begin the cleaning process. With a cold engine cover your alternator and distributor with plastic bags and it's a good idea to remove the pedal box cover and water container to allow more access then using the Hyper wash diluted 25 to 1 spread it all over the engine bay and engine and around the oil cooler using a soft brush to work it into all the little crevices then rinse off with a hose, you may need to repeat some areas the first time around and just allow it to dry naturally whilst you tackle the rest of the first stage cleaning.

If you have a pressure washer (if not use the hose) start by blasting inside the wheel arches and as much of the underside as possible not forgetting the cills, the hyper wash can always be used with the pressure washers soap dispenser. Then it's straight on to cleaning the bodywork using the hyper wash diluted 400 to 1; never use washing up liquid as it contains salt and always use a wash mitt not an old fashioned dirt trapping sponge. Always start at the top and work down rinsing with plenty of clean water before drying using a Microfibre Drying Towel, dry the wheels and engine bay last. Then let the car dry out overnight ready for the most satisfying part the next day!



The next morning use the tips of your fingers to run along the bodywork, it'll probably feel "gritty" like fine sand, if it does the you'll need to use the clay bar to remove all the contaminants, just follow the instructions and use lots of clean water, this really only needs doing every two years or so, on an MGB GT this should take around two hours to complete then you're ready to cleanse/polish using the R222, it essential to use a damp foam applicator and keep to straight strokes not circles and always do one panel at a time, concentrating on any tar or other marks, the cleanser will also remove most of the minor scratches and swirl marks, buff off with a Microfibre fleece. The R222 is very easy to use and leaves a lovely finish and should take less than an hour.

The final act is to use the R222 wax to protect the shine created by the polish; again only do one panel at a time and use a small amount of product; it really is shine on shine off...always use a clean Microfibre fleece and new foam pad (personally I always apply a 2nd coat of wax after a 24 hours) now stand back and admire your shiny car. . . well almost as you will need to decide if you are going to cleanse and wax the engine bay and around the oil cooler before replacing the grille etc.

After a well earned cuppa it's on to the wheels. To do it properly they need to come off the car, especially for the normally unseen rear. Clean using the Hyper wash, dry and apply wax and you are done! Whilst the wheels are off you should always clean and check the wheel arch area and the suspension or if like me you'll even polish it all.

Don't forget to clean the glass and give the inside a good vacuum and if needed the seats should be cleaned using any quality shampoo or if leather then you can't beat Gliptone.