



Vehicle Care Guide



The Finishing Touch 2

Vehicle Care 6

Mercedes-Benz Vehicle Care
Products 10

Paint Technology 4

Vehicle Care Basics 8



The visual presence of a well-maintained Mercedes-Benz is an emotional experience - reflecting personal taste and prestige. This is why every visible surface has been crafted with the finest materials and coatings to ensure the best appearance and durability.

As you might expect, aside from its visual attractiveness, the appearance of your Mercedes-Benz is a main component of its high resale value (a long-standing additional ownership benefit). Thus, it goes without saying that basic upkeep of your vehicle's components, be it paint, leather, wood veneer or plastic, is a vital link to ownership enjoyment and increased resale value.

This Vehicle Care Guide explains the total vehicle care process, from the basics to some of the technical issues, and is aimed at making this activity less intimidating and more enjoyable. The key components of any effective vehicle care program are the products used. For that reason, Mercedes-Benz has endeavored to find the best possible cleaning, polishing and protection products for your vehicle's various surfaces - from the more obvious paint down to the less obvious door seals.

We have selected Meguiar's Inc., the recognized leader in surface care technology since 1901, to develop a custom formulated range of products specific to your Mercedes-Benz vehicle. (And although these products are perfect matches to Mercedes-Benz finishes, they will perform well on any vehicle you own.) Meguiar's is the top selling premium car wax in America, preferred by car enthusiasts, automobile museums, and classic car competitions around the world including the prestigious Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance.

Interestingly, good vehicle care is more commitment than science. And although there are a number of vehicle care choices available from the aftermarket to maintain your Mercedes-Benz, we believe that our vehicle care line is second to none.

Each product has been formulated to meet the strict performance standards of Mercedes-Benz, including ease of application, non-abrasiveness, environmentally safe compositions, and "brilliant" results. With this basic knowledge, quality vehicle care materials, and a minimum of regular effort, your vehicle can look as good as it did when it left the showroom.

Paint Technology

From the beginning, automobile manufacturers have known and made use of the protective and color reflection qualities of paint. Antique and classic models, now found in museums, show how colorful and original they often were in achieving this. Naturally, the art of automotive painting has been systematically perfected over the years.

For most painting today, Mercedes-Benz uses computer-controlled automatic robots which ensure an uniformly high paint finish standard and eliminate potential work hazards.

Major advances have also been made with regard to the paint itself. A quality standard has been achieved which gives vehicles greater luster and longer protection than ever before.

This is true provided that the paint is cared for regularly and in the correct manner. Please continue reading to see how little effort this requires.

The high-gloss paint finish of every Mercedes-Benz leaving the assembly line is the combined result of ultramodern paint technology and first-class employee training. New synthetic resin and two component polyurethane paints are considerably more resistant than cellulose paints and ensure maximum quality.

A lot of effort goes into preparing the body shells for painting. Each body receives several layers of primer and paint.

The make up of the paint is:

1. Sheet metal
2. Zinc phosphating with chromate rinse
3. Cathoretic dip priming
4. Water-borne function coat
5. Water-borne color coat
6. Polyurethane clear coat



Protection vs. Appearance

Because of the extraordinary durability of the paint finish on a Mercedes-Benz, primary attention need only be focused on appearance. Dark-colored and clearcoated paint finishes, in particular, deserve special care to keep them looking their best. Healthy and vibrant paint can actually look faded and dull if scratches, swirl marks, and bonded contaminants are not removed.

Evaluate Your Own Paint Finish

As soon as you take possession of your vehicle (and as long as you own it), you should evaluate its paint finish on a regular basis. Wash and dry both your vehicle and your hands. Then feel the surface of your paint finish with the face of your hand. Your paint finish should feel as smooth as glass. When it does not, you will feel bonded contaminants which are beginning to affect the surface, diminishing gloss and clear reflection.

Surface Contamination/Damage

Whenever a new vehicle is outside and uncovered (whether it is parked or being driven), surface contaminants are constantly landing on its finish. While some are relatively harmless, others will bond to or etch into the finish if given enough time. Even the world's most durable paint finishes and paint protection products cannot stop contaminants from landing on and bonding to the finish. Regular attention with the right products is certainly needed to remove contamination and resist it in the first place.

Chemical etching

Cause: Elements like nitric oxide, sulfur dioxide and sodium hydroxide can contaminate moisture that forms on vehicle finishes, causing each bead of water to become either alkaline or acidic. When activated by the sun's heat and UV rays, etching can occur.

Sources of chemical contaminants are numerous and diverse and include jet exhaust, auto emissions, industrial fallout, insecticides, and even wet fertilizers, to name a few. Hard water spots from sprinklers hitting your vehicle on a hot day are another common problem.

Tree Sap Mist

Cause: Trees emit a fine mist of tree sap (resin) that can travel for blocks before landing on your paint finish while you are driving down the highway or even when parked far away from trees. When allowed to sit and bake in the sun for just a few days, this common contaminant will bond to the finish and resist washing. Gloss and slickness will be affected.

Bird and Insect Deposits

Cause: Everything that flies, from tiny insects to large birds, expels contaminants that can stain, bond to or etch into your car's finish. The degree of severity is dependent on the current diet of the bird or insect, the length of time the deposit remains on the surface, and the temperature.

Swirl Marks

Cause:

1. Use of rubbing compounds and other harsh abrasive products
2. Use of any type of toweling other than thick nap, clean, 100% cotton, terry cloth
3. Machine polishing with a harsh/contaminated buffing pad or using poor buffing techniques.



Understanding the five basic steps to effective car care is the key to keeping your vehicle looking newer with the least amount of effort. They are:

I. Wash

Using a vehicle shampoo and water to remove the loose contaminants that have not yet bonded to the paint finish.



Do not use dishwashing detergents (they strip off protection and dry out the paint, causing paint to fade and oxidize). Never wash the vehicle unless the surface is cool and in the shade. First rinse the entire vehicle with a strong spray of water. Then start at the top and work your way down to the more contaminated areas, washing one section at a time and rinsing it off before continuing. The wheels should be done last. After a final overall rinse, wipe dry with a natural chamois or 100% terry cloth toweling.

II. Clean

Removing surface oxidation, stains, blemishes or contaminants that will not wash off to restore a smooth finish prior to polishing and waxing.



Using rubbing compounds and other harsh abrasive products will scar the finish, leaving fine scratches that cannot be removed without a high speed buffer.

III. Polish

Restoring vibrant color; clear reflection, and sparkling high gloss (the resultant benefits of a surface that is completely free of oxidation and bonded contaminants).

IV. Protect

Protecting the top coat of paint with a barrier coat of waxes, silicones, polymers, and resins to keep contaminants from sticking and coming into direct contact with the paint finish.

V. Maintain

Using a product * to remove surface contaminants on location, without water; before they have had enough time to bond or etch into the finish, while adding slickness, gloss and protection. This simple procedure keeps the vehicle finish in better condition, thus requiring less frequent washing and waxing.

*** For example, Mercedes-Benz Quick Wipe.**



“Our long-term partnership with Mercedes-Benz has been especially rewarding because they are as serious about the appearance of their cars as they are about their engineering. All of their interior and exterior surfaces are state of the art. Our role is to help you keep them in showroom condition for as long as you own your car.”

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Meguiar', positioned below the quote.

**Barry Meguiar
President/CEO
Meguiar's, Inc.**

Mercedes-Benz Car Shampoo

This is a highly concentrated, conditioning shampoo specially formulated to loosen and foam away surface contaminants, enhancing the finish and extending protection.

Pour approximately 4 capfuls, or 1 ounce per gallon of water, into a clean bucket. Add water using a strong spray or stir well. Rinse the entire vehicle thoroughly using a strong spray to loosen contaminants. The vehicle should be cool and not in direct sunlight to prevent water spotting.

Wash the vehicle using a soft, clean sponge, towel or sheepskin washmitt. Start at the roof and work your way down in sections, using a lot of water. Rinse each section and the sponge, towel or washmitt. Exercise caution when washing the lower

sections of the vehicle to avoid transferring the grit to the upper surfaces.

After a final, complete rinse of the vehicle, wipe completely dry with a natural chambray or soft, cotton, terry cloth towel. Do not permit water to dry on the vehicle.



Mercedes-Benz Wheel Care

Mercedes-Benz Wheel Care provides you with a totally safe and effective cleaner specifically formulated to keep Mercedes-Benz wheels in original condition. Wheels that have been neglected may still require an application of a more aggressive wheel cleaner. Caution should be used, however, when using this type of wheel care product.

Mercedes-Benz Wheel Care is completely safe for use on all types of wheels. For best results, apply when wheels are cool to the touch. Wet the wheel with a strong spray of water; preferably from a garden hose nozzle. Spray Wheel Care onto the wheel with complete coverage. Agitate the surface with a soft, bristle brush. Then, rinse with another strong spray of water and wipe dry. Wheel Care will leave a brilliant, lasting finish.

Mercedes-Benz Vehicle Care Products

Mercedes-Benz Paint Cleaner

A gentle paint cleanser for removing surface blemishes, oxidation, and bonded contaminants that need some extra help. Completely safe and very effective, paint cleaner will not scour the finish like rubbing compounds and harsh abrasive cleaners.

Apply a liberal amount to a clean terry cloth or sponge applicator. Work one section at a time rubbing the product thoroughly and evenly onto the finish. This allows maximum opportunity for penetration and removal of surface problems. When dry, wipe with a separate, clean, soft, terry cloth towel.

Mercedes-Benz Paint Care

This is the ultimate multi-functional paint care product for Mercedes-Benz paint finishes that are free of serious oxidation, blemishes and bonded contaminants. If these conditions exist, preclean with Mercedes-Benz Paint Cleaner.

Mercedes-Benz Paint Care removes light surface problems, polishes the finish to a brilliant high gloss, and coats the finish with a complex layer of waxes, silicones, polymers and resins for exceptional protection. This is, in fact, a complete health treatment which rejuvenates dry paint, and restores vibrance and color. Paint Care creates a clear reflection by polishing out fine surface imperfections and provides a lasting show car finish that is especially brilliant on dark colors.

Using a sponge applicator or soft, cotton, terry cloth towel, apply evenly (to entire vehicle or a section at a time). Allow at least 5 minutes for the finish to fully benefit from the active, nourishing ingredients. Remove excess residue with a soft, cotton, terry cloth towel, turning to a clean portion for the final wipe.

Mercedes-Benz Interior Care

Unlike simple, silicone emulsion protectants, this complex formula cleans, renews and protects all MB-Tex, vinyl, plastic and rubber surfaces, including tires.

Most vinyl protectants cover over the surface contaminants with a synthetic high-gloss coating without first cleaning. Mercedes-Benz Interior Care removes the contaminants, penetrates the surface to restore its vitality, and leaves the surface protected with a rich, natural, low-gloss finish.



Mercedes-Benz Leather Seat Care

This rich, cleansing/conditioning formula is a complete beauty treatment for fine leather. With one application, leather seats are cleaned, restored, nourished and protected - without leaving any noticeable residue.

Surface contaminants will be emulsified and removed. Additionally, the original suppleness and beauty of the leather is restored with humectants and emollients. Finally, an invisible film coating remains to protect against damaging UV rays.

Mercedes-Benz Vehicle Care Products

Mercedes-Benz Quick Wipe

This new generation product makes it easy to keep a vehicle looking as if it has just been detailed. Fresh contaminants like tree sap mist and hard water spots are easily removed when they first occur and are very difficult to remove if left too long. Quick Wipe fills the void between washing and waxing by allowing you to quickly remove contaminants and dust anywhere, anytime, without water.



(This is the product you may choose to keep in the trunk of a vehicle with a cotton towel to use when convenient.)

Mist spray Quick Wipe directly onto one section at time. The high lubricity formula penetrates contaminants and deposits, and separates them from the finish with a lubricating film.

Using a soft, 100% cotton, terry cloth towel folded into quarters, spread Quick Wipe evenly over the section being worked on. Then turn to the dry portion of the cloth for a quick, final wipe. When Quick Wipe becomes slow to remove, it is time to wash the vehicle and reapply Mercedes-Benz Paint Care.

Plastic Window Cleaning Kit

Our specially formulated three no-scratch cleaners (Clear Plastic Cleaner; Polish and Care) will help you clean stains and grime from the SL's plastic soft top windows. All three cleaners are available in a zipped case for easy storage in the trunk of your SL.

The preceding vehicle care products have been tested for use as directed. Should you have any questions or comments relating to the vehicle care product line, we would like to hear from you. Please call 1-800-FOR-MERCEDES

Printed in U.S.A.

All rights reserved. Reproduction or translation in whole or in part is not permitted without authorization from the publisher.

Editorial status: 05/01/2002

All illustrations and specifications contained in this folder are based on the latest product information available at the time of publication approval. Mercedes-Benz USA reserves the right to make changes at any time, without notice.

Distributor in the United States:
Mercedes-Benz USA, LLC
One Mercedes Drive, P.O. Box 350
Montvale, NJ 07645-0350

Order No. S-2330-03A (05/02)

© 2002 Mercedes-Benz USA, LLC
A DaimlerChrysler Company
www.MBUSA.com
Printed in U.S.A.