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Thread: Another plastic headlight restoration
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05-25-05, 03:01

#1

Another plastic headlight restoration**tegboy**

Registered User


 Join Date: Sep 2003
 Location: Australia
 Posts: 257
Opening remarks:

This practice can be used on pretty much any plastic surface, [headlights](#), [taillights](#)..

Aim: To remove the clear coat on the OEM plastic headlights and to remove the yellowing on my beloved 1 piece headlights

Required:

Before you start make sure you have:

1. 10 mm socket-- to remove head-lights
2. Various grades of wet and dry, from 400 grade to 2000, 2 sheets of each
3. [Sanding block](#)
4. Bucket with water and a small amount of quality car wash dissolved in it
5. A swirl removing car polish-- Meguairs, Mothers, 3m etc.
6. Plastic polish
7. Mothers metal polish (yes really!!)
- 7b. Meguairs Plastx
8. A power buffer (if you have one, save mondo time)
9. Microfibre cloths



12. I added a Corona with Lime here, choice is yours.

Ok, firstly remove your headlights, I won't go into, because I have a custom front bar, so my lights have been modded slightly. But basically there is 3 10mm bolts on top, and 2 10mm behind bumper bar.

Remember to unplug headlights of course, and then remove them.

Once they are out, examine how bad they really are. Mine were all yellowed.

I placed my headlight in a bench vice, simply to hold it, made life much easier to work on... OK, lets begin.

Cut your wet and dry into the correct sizes for your sanding block, once done, put them into the bucket of water and let sit for 20 mins or so, this makes them less likely to scratch. After 20 mins, remove your first piece of wet and dry the 400 grit.

Use the 400 grit sandpaper and start sanding the surface of the lights lengthwise in only a side to side motion. DON'T CHANGE DIRECTIONS (ie..up/down or circles). I sprayed the surface of the headlights water to lube them, and started to sand, you don't have to push hard, soon you will notice the clear coat starts to come off. You'll be able to tell where it is and isn't coming off.

Repeat above procedure with the 600 grit sandpaper after all of the clearcoat is removed (use water).

(inspect to see, how the clear coat or yellowing is coming off)

Repeat using 1000 grit sandpaper with water.

(inspect to see, how the clear coat or yellowing is coming off)

Repeat using 1500 grit sandpaper with water.

(Inspect to see, how the clear coat or yellowing is coming off)

Repeat using 2000 grit sandpaper with water.

By now they should be smooth and flat, there will be some micro marring, but this is where the polishes come into play to remove all this.

Firstly, hold them up to the light to inspect, you cannot do this too often to see where more sanding or work is needed to get them perfect.

I first covered them in the Mother metal polish and buffed them from right to left etc, to remove most marks, then wiped with the microfibre cloth to remove the excess.

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**DETAILING
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Another plastic headlight restoration

buff off all the polish. Once cleared, inspect again (give yourself a pat on the back, they will be looking awesome at this point)

AdChoices

But more polish is involved, to get them super shiny and add a protective layer, grab the Plastx and follow the directions and applied as instructed.

I used my trusted Random Orbit Buffer for all the polishing steps, you can work by hands, its just more effort and time into it.

Pics:



I haven't reinstalled them yet, as I am waiting for the parts to arrive but looking at the headlights now, my night vision is better.

I think that's about it, any questions??

Thomas:
Hello, thank you for visiting!
Can I answer any car care questions for you?

Type your message here and press



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05-25-05, 03:06

#2

bunmango

Registered User



Join Date: Oct 2003
Location: Diamond Bar & Berkeley, CA
Posts: 104



mmm, JDM DA one piece headlights. I remember back in high school they used to go for like \$400/set

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05-25-05, 03:32

#3

Sullybob

Registered User



Join Date: Apr 2004

Nice write up. Thanks for posting this.

Insert witty quip here...
Shawn

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