

How to Remove Swirls by Hand

The below write-up was taken from page three of this Saturday Detailing Class at Meguiar's where approximately 25 people witnessed the products shown below, applied and removed using the correct techniques to remove the gross rotary buffer swirls and restore a swirl free finish by hand.

[San Diego Mercedes-Benz club at Meguiar's!](#)

After selecting two Mercedes-Benz automobiles to work on, one being Tom's, we broke for a pizza lunch. After everyone had their fill of pizza and something cold to drink, it was time to re-gather in Meguiar's Garage to see what we could do with the gross swirls in Tom's recently painted hood.



Often times when the topic of removing swirls is being discussed on our discussion forum, or some other detailing forum, it centers around the dual action polisher, foam buffing pads and somebody's compound or polish. Yet many people don't own a dual action polisher. So here at Meguiar's Garage, we like to show people how to use the what they already own... *their hands!*



Like most detailing enthusiasts, I personally love a challenge, and with Tom's car, I believe most people would agree, his car's finish presents a challenge!

BEFORE - 700 Pixel-wide cropped out section from an un-touched, original photo of rotary buffer swirls in a clear coat finish.

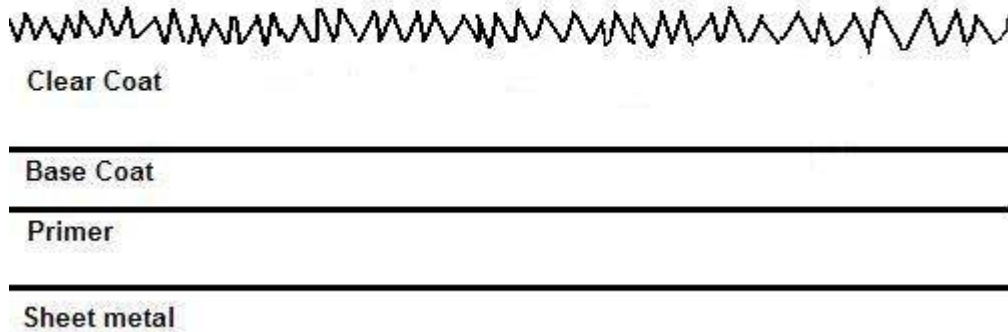


Using some painters tape, we taped-off a section of the hood to separate the before and after results. Then, we applied three, well worked in applications of Meguiar's [ScratchX](#) all applied by hand using Meguiar's [High-Tech Applicator Pad](#)



The secret to removing swirls by hand using Meguiar's ScratchX is all in your *technique*. You see in order to remove swirls out of your car's finish, you need to remove a little bit of paint. If we were to look at a horizontal view of what gross rotary buffer swirls look like *in* the paint, it would look something like the diagram below. In order to remove these *below surface defects*, (swirls), you need to remove enough paint from the finish to level the upper surface with the *****t* depths of the swirls until you've restored the finish to a flat, level surface.

Horizontal view of swirls in paint



To do this by hand with ScratchX, you need to,

- * Apply to a small section at a time
 - * First spread the ScratchX evenly over the area you're going to work (before working it in)
 - * Work the microscopic diminishing abrasives ***against*** the finish applying a little ***passion*** behind the applicator pad
 - * Repeat this process with multiple applications after first removing the residue from each application after working it against the finish



Remember that Meguiar's paint cleaners, like ScratchX do **not** need to dry before removing. Drying adds no benefit. The only Meguiar's paint products that need to dry before removing are Meguiar's waxes.

Technique Tip

The question is often asked,

"Which direction should I move my hand when applying a Meguiar's paint cleaner?"

A common mis-conception, often espoused on other discussion forums, or by some car care product manufactures, is the technique of only rubbing a product in a certain direction to keep all of your scratches going in the same direction.

Meguiar's teaches that if the products you're using are non-abrasive, that is they are **not** instilling scratches into the finish, as such, ***it shouldn't matter which direction you move your hand!***

If the products you're using are inflicting scratches into your car's finish, the correct thing

to do is to ***stop using the product!*** Don't try to camouflage the scratches to your eyes by instilling them in straight-lines as determined by the movement of your hand.

ScratchX can be applied using straight-lines or circular motion and for this particular demonstration we used a combination of both.

Removing ScratchX using Meguiar's [Supreme Shine Microfiber](#) after working the product against the finish until the product has broken down, turned somewhat clear and begun to dissipate.



At Meguiar's Saturday Detailing 101 classes, we go through a power point presentation that covers a wide spectrum of detailing topics, one of which is [Meguiar's 5-Step Paint Care Cycle](#), which includes;

- **Step 1** Wash
- Step 2** Clean
- Step 3** Polish
- Step 4** Protect
- Step 5** Maintain

After cleaning the paint with a paint cleaner like ScratchX, we then apply a pure polish, in this case, [Deep Crystal Polish](#) which is a non-abrasive pure polish.



In Meguiar's line, we offer two types of polishes, *cleaner/polishes*, which contain a diminishing abrasive, and *pure polishes*, which are completely non-abrasive and are used solely for the purpose of creating brilliant gloss. Deep Crystal Polish is a *pure* polish.

The way you apply a pure polish is akin to applying a skin lotion to your skin. That is you apply the polish to a small section at a time, work the product in thoroughly.



After thoroughly, (but gently with care and passion), remove any excess polish with a clean, soft premium quality microfiber polishing cloth or 100% cotton towel.



Like ScratchX a paint cleaner, it is ***not*** necessary to let a pure polish like Deep Crystal Polish dry before removing it. Allowing a polish to dry will not add anything beneficial to the process, so after you work it in well, go a head and remove it.

At this point, we have cleaned and polished the finish. The cleaning step removed the swirls and the polishing step restored optical clarity, depth, reflectivity, richness of color and brilliant gloss. Next we're going to apply a coating of Meguiar's new [**NXT Generation Tech Wax Paste**](#)

NXT Generation Tech Wax Paste is identical to NXT Generation Tech Wax Liquid except that it comes in a paste form. There are two types of paste waxes, the difference is in their ***consistency***. The practical application difference is in how you ***remove*** them from the can and then apply them.

With a cleaner/wax (paste), like Meguiar's [A12 Meguiar's Cleaner/Wax](#) you can scoop out a small amount and with your applicator pad and then apply it to the finish and work it in.



With paste waxes like Gold Class Clear Coat Wax Paste, M26 Hi Tech Yellow Wax, and NXT Generation Tech Wax Paste, instead of scooping wax out of the can, you can twist, or spin your wax applicator against the wax while it's in the can and this little bit of agitation will help to liquefy the wax and enable it to seep, or penetrate into your applicator pad whereupon making it easier to apply to the finish.



Paste waxes like NXT Tech Generation Wax offer good *gliding* action and tend to apply very easy. Remember a little bit goes a long ways and it's important to try to apply a uniform, thin coating.

After applying the Tech Wax Paste and allowing it to dry, we removed it using a Supreme Shine Microfiber polishing cloth and the Tom backed his Mercedes-Benz out into the sun where everyone could look at the results and see with their own two eyes what can be accomplished by hand with the right products and the correct techniques.





Here's the owner Tom inspecting closely!



And here I am capturing the results with our Sony Digital which does an excellent job of capture swirls in the sun.



Before



After















Perfect? No.

dramatically improved? Yes!

Most importantly, we fixed by hand what someone else inflicted with a rotary buffer.

Meguiar's products, applied and removed using the correct techniques will outperform the competition hands down and give your car a swirl-free show car shine!