

6.4 Tyre Dressings



Once tyres have been cleaned and old tyre dressings have been removed, applying a good tyre dressing finishes off the look perfectly.

Some tyre dressings are solvent based and some are water based. Solvent based dressings work by opening the pores of the rubber to impregnate them with colour. They tend to be longer-lasting and more water repellent. However some use lesser quality solvents which can damage tyres and all of these dressings tend to attract more dust as they are typically a thicker, stickier formulation. They can also be considerably more difficult to remove when you want to clean the tyres and start again.

Water based dressings tend not to last as long and are prone to sling as they're not as thick as the solvent based products. Both water based dressings and solvent based dressings may contain silicones and so both types have the potential to turn tyres brown, so if you're aiming for a silicone-free dressing you will need to check the ingredients first, rather than relying on the description of 'water based'. It's worth bearing in mind that dressings containing silicones must not come into contact with tyre tread as it will make lose grip and become slippery, particularly in the wet.

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There are two different types of finish to choose between – a high gloss look or a natural satin sheen. Whichever you opt for is entirely down to personal choice, but note the shinier the dressing, typically the higher the silicone content. Tyre dressings come in a variety of formulations – wipe on with a foam applicator (some are contoured specifically to make tyre dressing application easier), spray on / trigger head bottle or in a tub which require you to paint it on with what looks like a paint brush. Typically tyre dressings can also be used on the under-side of wheel arches, for those who wish to be thorough.

Equipment:

- Tyre dressing of choice
- A foam applicator pad or a dressing applicator brush
- Microfibre towel

Method:

- Ensure tyre is clean and dry
- Either spray on, wipe on or paint on the tyre dressing
- Allow to soak for a couple of minutes
- Wipe excess with a microfibre to prevent any excess from slinging on to the car's bodywork whilst driving along