

8.1 Drying Towels vs Chamois



A traditionally accepted method of drying a car after washing is to use a natural chamois leather. Whilst chamois leathers are effective, being a natural product they are time consuming to look after and, if not properly cared for, have a tendency to rot. Synthetic chamois were introduced in an attempt to combat these issues but some fall short of the mark, being less effective at absorbing water and can be prone to leaving marks on paintwork and windows.

In recent years the introduction of drying towels has revolutionised the process of drying a car. Much easier to wash and clean (they are usually machine washable!) more robust and longer lasting, the majority of car care enthusiasts have now turned to drying towels. There are two types of drying towel: the microfibre drying towel and the waffle weave drying towel.

Microfibre Drying Towel:

Microfibre towels have been used for quite some time for removing polish residues and buffing off natural carnauba waxes. Microfibre towels are graded according to grams per square metre (GSM), the higher the GSM, the plusher the microfibre. Most quality examples are constructed from a polyester/polyamide mix – the higher the polyamide percentage, the softer the towel will be. The higher the overall density, the more absorbent the towel is likely to be. The over-woven fibres have their edges split in order to create the microfibre 'catchy' feel. Microfibre drying towels are typically significantly thicker than general purpose microfibres and are very soft to the touch, however some will require washing several times in order to fully 'size' them and to prevent linting (fibre loss) – a problem that will be particularly noticeable on darker coloured cars, especially if the drying towel is white!

Waffle Weave Drying Towel:

Like microfibre towels, these are also made from a polyester/polyamide mix, but the fibres have been woven in to a pique finish – literally – they look as though they've been created in a mini waffle iron – rather than having the edges of the fibres split.

The absorbent cups created by the waffle indentations mean these towels have the ability to soak up huge amounts of water. When dry however, they feel less pliable to the touch than the microfibre version which can discourage some people from using them for fear of scratching the bodywork. Used correctly however, the waffle weave drying towel is a highly effective and very popular option.

Drying Your Car With A Drying Towel:

Equipment:

- Drying towel (microfibre or waffle)
- A wet car!

Method:

- Step 1 – Unfold the clean drying towel and lay it over a section of the car to be dried
- Step 2 – Pat the top of the towel to encourage it to absorb the standing water
- Step 3 – Take the towel off the surface and wring it out
- Step 4 – Repeat Step 1 – 3 until the car is completely dry
- Step 5 – NB: When cleaning the cloths you should machine wash **without** the use of a fabric softener. Softeners contain salts which should not be used with cloths that come into contact with paintwork, as this may contribute towards marking or even scratching