

Time to Shine

BY TERENCE MCKILLEN

In early Spring, your editorial staff was invited to a trade presentation of car care products at Mississauga's Living Arts Centre together with representatives from the mainstream auto media as well as fellow car club enthusiasts. The products being demonstrated were from Autoglym, part of the Altro Group plc, and the UK's leading manufacturer of car care products with over £110 million in sales (2010) and markets in more than 45 countries worldwide.

Autoglym, is the holder of two Royal Warrants, from H.M. the Queen and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, which means that not only do the Royal Households purchase and use the products, but they did so for over five years before allowing their product endorsement to be used.



It was pointed out that all of the cars used for last year's wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge were prepared using Autoglym products, including the classic Aston Martin owned by the Prince of Wales, in which the couple drove off after the Buckingham Palace reception.

Originally developed for professional use only, Autoglym have been marketing their products across Canada since 2009 through an exclusive relationship with Canadian Tire, although some products have been available in British Columbia for over twenty years. For 2012, Autoglym will have 25 retail products available here out of more than 50 in their total retail product line up. What follows is a step by step description of the process, using Autoglym's directions and literature as a basis and some of my own experience using their products.

(Product was supplied by Autoglym, however the TTC, Ragtop, nor its editors have any financial interest and this review is provided solely for informational purposes - Ed.)

Looking for the best auto wax is a quest that most car aficionados seem to be forever chasing, especially if OCD tendencies are allowed to get the upper hand. It would seem that marketing and advertising have us chasing all over the place in search of the Holy Grail of perfect finishes. This endless quest is not just the preserve of the enthusiasts among us, but also for those who just want a simplified approach to basic car paint care for their regular daily drive.

The simple answer is that there probably is no single best wax, but the choice will be influenced by a number of issues related to the degree of protection required, the expected visual appearance, the ease of use of the product, and the type and quality of the original paint finish and obviously, price or value for money.

The good news is that due to advances in chemical engineering, the products available on the shelf today are far superior to those of yesteryear. Professional grade results are easily obtainable by choosing the right products along with following a few important instructions.

As we discovered in a very thorough demonstration of a number of the Autoglym products applied to an Aston Martin Vantage in the foyer of the Living Arts Centre, it is not just a question of slapping on some wax and then rubbing it off. The ultimate

finish is also dependent on the proper preparation of the surface for reception of the product; the use of a correct type of cloth or specialised applicator; and in some cases, following a series of steps with different products in sequence. The ultimate finish is also dependent upon how the product is applied – on occasion this will be to a cloth first, while in other cases, the product will be applied directly to the paint surface. How the product is manipulated when on the paint surface and how long it is left on the surface before removal also have a significant impact on the final finish.

Before commencing on any auto detailing it is first necessary to thoroughly wash the car (refer later about the dangers of dish detergent!) and rinse it off with clean water and properly dry. Traces of tar or dead bugs should be removed with dedicated products (refer list) and the interior carefully vacuumed.



Step 1:

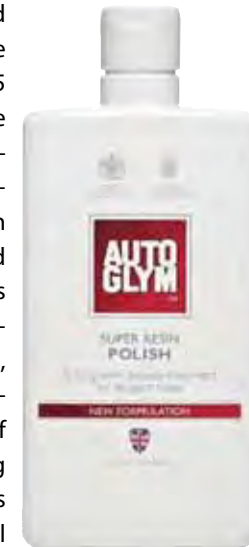
For best results on the first use of any new product, one should remove traces of all existing waxes and polishes by using a deep cleanser (Autoglym High Definition Cleanser). As regular shampoos and clay don't always remove old polish film, High Definition Cleanser will effectively remove all surface residues as well as general dust and grime. This will leave a fresh clean surface, ideal for ensuring you get the best possible result. This is a liquid product applied in a circular motion using a slightly damp High Definition Applicator (a type

of flat, dense sponge) with the product evenly spread on the sponge surface. It is recommended that only small areas are worked at a time as the product has to be removed, using a high-tech finishing cloth, before it actually dries out (the Autoglym Perfect Polishing Cloth is a 100% cotton, lightweight material, free of synthetic fibres and with exactly the right degree of density and absorbency for polishing fine surfaces). As with all auto detailing products, care should be taken on how the product is applied around the edges of panels or around window glass and rubber gaskets or around badges or door handles so that excess product does not get caught up in the grooves.

If you are dealing with the original paint that is 40 or more years old and you are confident that you have sufficient paint thickness available, you may want to remove excessive oxidation or even small scratches by first using a paint renovator. But beware, automotive paintwork is extremely thin and every time the surface is renovated using abrasive compounds some of the paint is removed. Autoglym Paint Renovator contains exceptionally fast working abrasives to give a rapid but controllable cutting and polishing action. It contains no silicone.

Step 2:

Step two involves the application of Autoglym's Super Resin Polish, an industry-leading product, which provides a brilliant depth of shine and is claimed to have a life of at least 35 car washes before it needs to be reapplied. A new formulation of Super Resin Polish was released in January of this year which, according to Autoglym, imparts an unprecedented depth of shine, exceeding that achieved by its predecessor and all



current competitors. Its durability is also greatly enhanced, beading for three times longer than the previous generation Super Resin Polish, and more than twice as long as its nearest competitor.

Super Resin Polish is easy to use and contains specialised emulsifiers and conditioners to gently clean and condition paintwork. Low molecular weight resins harden and bond to give exceptional protection and cosmetic effect. Treated high gloss surfaces are highly resistant to deterioration from most environmental contaminants and weather conditions including UV light. The product is ideal for all types of new or moderately deteriorated automotive paintwork including metallic, water based and lacquered finishes as well as for classic car bodies. The Super Resin Polish is applied on a special hand-forming applicator (the Perfect Palm Applicator) over which the product is evenly distributed and applied to the paint surface in a circular motion and then finished in overlapping straight strokes to provide for even application. Unlike the cleanser product, the Super Resin can be left to dry, and in fact, the technician recommended completing the whole car before removing any of the dried polish and buffing with another Perfect Polishing Cloth (not the same one used for the cleanser). The product should be used sparingly and not applied to the applicator in large quantity.



Step 3:

For even greater protection and for additional shine, High Definition Wax can be applied using a slightly damp sponge applicator. It is recommended that the whole car be completed before removal of the dried wax with best results obtained if the wax is left for 15-20 minutes before buffing, again using a separate high-tech finishing cloth. As with most wax applica-



AUTOGLYM - 2012 PRODUCT RANGE

PRODUCT NAME	PACK SIZE	RRP	PRODUCT NAME	PACK SIZE	RRP
Bodywork			Paint Renovator	325ml	\$14.99
Active Insect Remover	500ml	\$12.99	Super Resin Polish	500ml	\$19.99
Bird Dropping Wipes	Pack of 10	\$6.99	Detailing		
Bodywork Shampoo			High Definition Cleanser Kit	Kit	\$39.99
& Conditioner	1 litre	\$12.99	High Definition Wax Kit	Kit	\$49.99
Intensive Tar Remover	325ml	\$12.99	Rapid Detailer	500ml	\$14.99
Wheels			Interior Cleaners / Dressings		
Clean Wheels	500ml	\$12.99	Interior Shampoo	500ml	\$12.99
Custom Wheel Cleaner	500ml	\$12.99	Leather Care Balm	500ml	\$16.99
Instant Tyre Dressing	500ml	\$12.99	Leather Cleaner	500ml	\$14.99
Exterior Cleaners / Dressings			Odour Eliminator	500ml	\$9.99
Bumper & Trim Gel	325ml	\$12.99	Vinyl & Rubber Care	500ml	\$12.99
Car Glass Polish	325ml	\$11.99	Accessories		
Engine & Machine Cleaner	1 liter	\$16.99	Hi-Tech Finishing Cloth	Each	\$13.99
Extra Gloss Protection	325ml	\$15.99	Perfect Palm Applicator	Each	\$7.99
Fast Glass	500ml	\$11.99	<i>Exclusively available at Canadian Tire who may sell for less.z</i>		
Metal Polish	325ml	\$19.99			

tions, it is best to work with the car out of direct sunlight. The wax comes in a hard block and is composed of a combination of Carnauba, microcrystallines, waxes, saturated hydrocarbons and oils to give a superior quality finish with exceptional durability. It offers lasting protection against most environmental contaminants such as salt, detergents, UV light, acid rain and industrial fallout. High Definition Wax is free of all abrasives, water and emulsifiers.

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paintwork finish, as demanded by the perfectionist, one can take an extra step by applying Autoglym Extra Gloss Protection which is a spray-on product comprising an extra tough, protective sealant that contains a complex blend of hard resins and waxes. Treated surfaces are protected with a super-tough finish to keep paintwork looking brilliant for longer. Unlike a polish, it contains no cleaning or polishing agents and should only be used on clean, dry, blemish-free paintwork, ideally pre-treated with the Super Resin Polish.

Autoglym provide a complete range of additional products suitable for cleaning glass, plastics and vinyl, leather care, interior carpet shampoo, chrome, wheel and tire detailing, engine cleaning, bird poop remover and body shampoo. Almost all of the products are environmentally friendly and bio-degradable.

It was recommended that careful, regu-

lar washing using a Bodywork Shampoo Conditioner would remove traffic film without damaging the finish and appearance of the vehicle. Importantly, it is pH balanced to ensure it protects and extends the effect of the underlying polishes, unlike household dish detergents which should never be used on automotive bodywork.

I recently followed the three-step process on both my Six and my Stag. I was very pleased with the results achieved, particularly with the Stag as the paintwork had likely not seen any love and attention over the past 12-14 years. The Jasmine yellow really sharpened up after the treatment. I was also very impressed with the ease of application and removal of the Autoglym products. Very little physical effort was

required, unlike other polishes and waxes that I have previously used.

Autoglym is certainly not the only manufacturer of superior car care products. Competitors in the market place include Meguiars, Mothers, Turtle Wax, Adam's and others. However, Autoglym is among the top for quality and consequently the products do cost more than the common or garden variety. Expect to spend somewhere between \$100 and \$200 stocking your garage shelves with the most commonly used products. In the end you get what you pay for – caveat emptor. **RAGTOP**

Author's newly aquired Stag has it's paint brought back to a fine lustre



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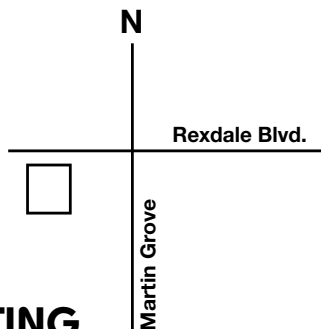


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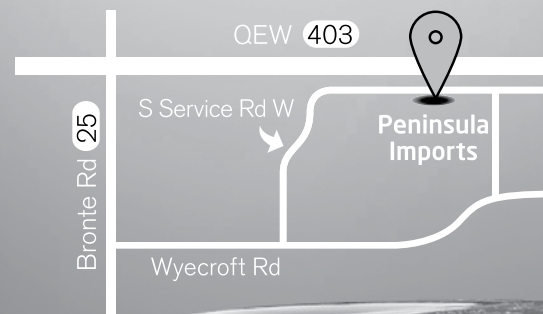


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