



Dr. Detail

by Wayne Dzien

Show Time!

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The cruise night/car show season for 2010 has arrived and I would like to encourage our membership to participate in as many of these events as possible this year since some of our rides are 26 years old and technically 'antiques'. However, before you can bring your ride to one of these events, you have got to "detail" it, which is the subject of this new, regular Fiero Focus feature that we are calling Dr. Detail.

I have been attending cars shows for the past 11 years and during that considerable time, I have learned a few things to maximize the results from the time I spend getting my ride into show/cruise night condition. That being said, I would like to share a few of my preliminary "tips" with my NIFE members.

Some of us are lucky not to use our Fiero as a daily driver and put them into storage from November to March. Others, most of us, don't have this luxury and use our cars every day regardless of weather conditions: ice, snow, slush, bird droppings, tree sap, industrial fallout and so on. It's hard to believe that a paint job that is twenty years plus can stand up to such a daily beating. Well, they can, thanks to the base coat/clear coat paint system used. Here is what I would like to suggest for getting the job done in as little time as possible with the best results.

First, go down to the local auto store, Farm & Fleet, or Wal-Mart and buy yourself a "Clay Bar Kit". I would recommend that you purchase either the Meguiar's or Mother's kit. I have used both and can vouch for them being excellent products that get the job done in little time and without a lot of effort. The kits contain one (1) clay bar, one (1) container of spray on lubricant, and the all important instructions. Folks, read them, but basically, what you have to do to ensure a great result is to wash and dry your car, getting as much of the winter's contributions off your car as possible. Suggestion, if you have a garage, pull your Fiero into it to start the clay bar process, if not, pick a shady area under a tree that is not dropping sap and you are good to go. Next, pick a section of the car to work on. I usually start with the hood and work back, finishing the fenders and rocker panels last. No matter where you begin, apply a generous amount of the spray lubricant to the entire section. You don't have to let it dry. In fact, you don't want to do that. Then take your rectangular clay bar and wipe down the area. It doesn't matter if you do circles or straight motions. After you do half of the section, turn the clay bar over and see what you picked up; years of contaminants! Then, run your hand over the area; notice that it is as smooth as silk! Repeat until you have completed the entire car. By the way, if you don't like using the entire rectangular clay bar, you can cut it down to any size that you comfortable with. I would recommend doing the rockers panels last since they usually have the most 'junk' on them. When you're finished, and if the bar changes color from yellow to black/gray, it's time to buy another bar that can be purchased separately.

This should take you about an hour or two depending on how much road rash is on your ride. When you're done, take a few minutes and admire your handiwork. Definitely break time!

By the way, the first step in this process is the hardest and longest to complete. After you have 'clay barred' your car, select a good wax to protect the finish you have just brought back from the brink. With that in mind, I would recommend that you consider the Meguiar's Tech Wax 2. This product came out a few years ago and has, in my opinion, revolutionized waxing a car. By the way, I used to use the Meguiar "Yellow Wax" that was by comparison too time consuming and difficult to use. The Tech Wax 2 is a snap! All you have to do is get a used white sock (don't use a new one or you will get in trouble with your wife or significant other and it's not worth the heat). Shake up the container vigorously for about a minute or two and apply a small amount of this liquid product to the white sock and apply to a designated body area. This stuff is so good that you can apply it in direct sunlight, but I would recommend the friendly confines of a garage or shady area. What works for me is to start with the hood and front fenders. Then, with a clean micro fiber cloth, remove the majority of the Tech Wax and go over that with a second clean micro fiber cloth removing the remainder of product. You will not have to buff the area for a long time, just remove all traces of the wax and admire the result. By the way, you don't have to use a professional,

orbital buffing machine to get a great look. Again, take a few minutes and admire your handiwork. In my opinion, some buffers/orbitals can burn the paint and make a bad situation worse!

Well, by this time you have about three to three and a half hours in this project and have, in all probability, an excellent result. Next, move to the tires and wheels. There are a lot of products on the market that claim to get the job done with little to no effort. Well, if it's too good to be true, it usually is. I just go about my business using the old school products of Simple Green and Bleach White for white raised letter tires. This is a dirty job that I will go into more detail on in future installments. You need a hose, good cleaning brush with medium strength bristles and a lot of elbow grease.

After you completed the tires, clean yourself up and tackle the interior, headliner, rugs, mats and glass. All of these elements will also be covered in future detailing articles.

Products to buy: clay bar kits (either Mothers' or Meguiar's), price \$13.29; micro fiber three packs, price \$3.59 (buy two so that you have a supply); Tuff Stuff, price \$2.79; and Simple Green, price \$5.95. Of course, the prices will vary on where you shop, what's on sale, and whether there are rebates on the products. (Marsha, my wife, is great on finding sales and rebates, even on my car stuff.)

Hopefully, you already hit the Pontiac Tribute Day events and the Dells Run, but there are still plenty of opportunities to show off your Fiero: the NIFE cruise night July 9, 2010 in Roselle at the corner of Roselle Road and Irving Park Road, Mulligan's Saloon in McHenry on July 24, 2010, the redesigned class structure at Indian Uprising (we now have a class that should help our Fieros get some trophies) August 1, 2010 at Pheasant Run, and the big one, Fierorama on September, 12, 2010!!! Just look for what's happening around where you live. Cruises are held every night of the week, sponsored by the area Chambers of Commerce, restaurants, and malls. They are a lot of no-pressure, car-commiserating fun.

I look forward to providing additional detailing tips in the issues to come. Be sure to attend as many of the above events as possible as well as other cruises/car shows in your area. You won't believe how many people are still interested in the Fiero and would like to hear about your car. You will probably be hoarse for a day or so after a cruise or car show but, it's worth it!