

Detailing Part III, the dirty work: wheels and the engine compartment. In these two areas, more than any other, a little disassembly goes a long way. To thoroughly clean your wheels, you must pull them off the car. And to really get into hard to reach areas of the engine, a few of the uppermost pieces need to be removed. In both cases, you'll save yourself time, get the job done better, and come away with your knuckles intact by doing a little wrenching first.

So you've got the wheels off the car. Most Porsche wheels have a 5 spoke pattern. For any of these, getting into all the little corners shouldn't be a hassle with a soapy rag. If you've got some of Porsche's other offerings with a tighter spoke pattern or a mesh/honeycomb style, you'll probably need a brush. Look for a brush with a plastic or wooden "paddle-style" handle and bristles that are stiff enough for the job, but soft on the ends so that they won't leave fine scratches. These days, boar's hair seems to be the bristle-of-choice. Avoid any brushes that use metal wire to hold the bristles together. They do a great job of getting into tight spots, but the metal wire will leave horrible scratches all over the place.

The dirtiest part of your wheels will be the interior of the dish, behind the spokes. It's covered in brake dust. Begin by scrubbing as much of the brake dust off as you can with soap and water. Now comes the tough part. What's left is a combination of road tar, grease and oil, and leftover stick-um from old wheel weights. You're going to need a solvent

to get this mess up. I've had success with either Goof-off or mineral spirits. Dry the wheel off, put on some rubber gloves, and go to work using the solvent on an old microfiber towel. Patience and a bit of elbow grease should get most of it to loosen up. For the really stubborn bits, try using a plastic scraper, such as those for spreading body filler or wood putty. As soon as you've finished up with the solvent on a particular spot, be sure to go over it with the soap and water. You don't want the solvent to go to work on your wheel's finish. For the outside surfaces of your wheels, the procedure is the same. Fortunately, the outside should be cleaner, so you probably won't need the scraper. Once the wheel is clean to your satisfaction, dry it off and wax it inside and out, just like you would any other painted surface. The best wax for this application is probably Rejex, but any synthetic will work. Carnauba waxes aren't the best choice here because they won't last. The wax will make future clean-ups a lot easier, and you should be able to get away with leaving the wheels on the car for quite a few cleanings.

Clean-up in the engine compartment is a job that can be as big as you want to make it. For those brave enough to do some engine detailing, but not so obsessive as to think of removing the engine and rebuilding anew, here are a few pointers. Start by wiping down all of the major and accessible surfaces with a wet towel. This should help to identify where most of the cleaning needs to be done and just how dirty things under the hood really are. If you're still in this, now's the time to take a few things

apart. Remove some of the big top-end components that are in the way. These include air cleaners, intake tubing, or air filter boxes. They'll be easier to clean outside of the car, and they'll give you easy access to all that's underneath. If you're going so far



as to remove spark plug wires or unhook electrical connections, put a piece of masking tape on each end and identify where each needs to go when putting things back together. Getting these mixed up is no fun at all! Use clean shop towels secured with tight rubber bands to cover up open carburetors or throttle bodies, and protect any open electrical connectors with more of the masking tape. You sure don't want anything dropping into the engine or getting into the electrical connections. Once you've got as much of the engine exposed as you want, use a mild degreaser such as Simple Green and a towel or brush to scrub away. It's helpful to have a wet-dry vacuum handy to get any big dirt as it loosens up. When the engine itself meets your standards, move on to the sheet metal around the engine and the underside of the hood. This may require a bit of the degreaser as well, but it shouldn't be as bad as the engine. Afterwards, a cleaner-wax is a great way to finish the painted surfaces in the engine compartment. Now you can move on to any of the parts you removed from the engine compartment. Clean these with either a good plastic cleaner (newer cars) or the degreaser and a coat of wax (older cars). Reassemble everything, close the hood, bandage any wounds, and reward yourself for a job well done with your favorite ice cold beverage.

Happy driving and wrenching!



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