



# Detail Guide

## Interior & Cockpit Care

Your automotive interior is probably as dirty as the exterior of your ride, but you may not know it. Trapped within the carpet's pile are pebbles and debris tracked in each time you enter the car. Dirt on your clothes and skin sticks to the upholstery, and the grooves and crevices in leather and vinyl accumulate grime. The dash, consoles and other accessory items show splatters from food and drinks, heavy layers of dust and lots of UV exposure.

### Carpets & Upholstery

The initial step for anyone cleaning a vehicle's interior has to be a thorough vacuuming. Hit the seats, dash, floor and just about everywhere else. The only exception is the headliner which is a bit trickier to clean and should be lightly brushed instead of vigorously vacuumed. To make the job go faster start with a soft, natural bristle brush to loosen clingy dirt from all interior surfaces. After pushing it into an accessible corner use your vacuum's crevice tool to suck up all the debris. The crevice attachment is also handy for cleaning other hard-to-reach areas. Keep in mind that any chemical treatments for carpet and upholstery need to have a minimal-dirt environment to work properly. You wouldn't try to wax a muddy car, would you?

#### getting cornered



Use a soft, natural bristle brush to loosen clingy dirt and push it into an accessible corner. Then use your vacuum's crevice tool to suck up all the debris.

If you're working with carpeting and have vacuumed up all of the dirt, pebbles, sand, ashes, and general muck you're now ready to liberally spray the area with an upholstery-specific cleaner.



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## if you don't succeed...



Repetition is the key to success when cleaning stained carpet. Several sprayings of carpet cleaner, along with brushing and then rubbing with a clean towel in between applications, works best in pulling grime away from the fibers. The whole process should both start and finish with vacuuming.

The purpose of a carpet and upholstery cleaner is to loosen the soil's attachment to the carpet and interior fabric fibers. Mothers® Carpet & Upholstery Cleaner is formulated to free contaminants trapped in the pile and suspend them for easier removal. After application of a carpet and upholstery cleaner, rub the area briskly with a towel and use the brush to further agitate areas with stubborn dirt and stains. Don't be reluctant to re-treat any portions of material that won't come clean—several firm attacks are better than one prolonged battle. In many cases your interior has become dirtier than you'd expected, and cleaning individual "dirty spots" may actually leave you with one exceptionally clean area and the rest unevenly dark. Be prepared to treat large areas accurately and evenly to ensure consistent coloring when finished. Also, chase any area cleaned with another vacuuming: dirt once stuck will be loose and/or suspended, ready to come free.

## Leather Care

If you see your car as a collection of synthetic materials and manufactured devices, does all that leather belong inside? Sure it does. Auto manufacturers have long used leather to make the interior feel more comfortable and natural—not to mention, it smells great, too. To keep that earthy yet luxurious look at its best, spend some time caring for it with the right methods and materials. Leather is a natural skin and should be cleaned and conditioned much as you would your own. Regular cleaning is the best way to maintain the long-term health of your interior. Leather cleaners like Mothers® Leather Cleaner can be applied to a cotton towel, sponge or directly to the seat and rubbed into the leather, then wipe clean.

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## baby me



When taking care of leather you should think of it as your own skin. No, we don't mean you should rub on baby oil, but it should be treated regularly and gently with the right type of cleaner (test an inconspicuous area first).

Leather often gives up much more dirt than you expect so be sure to clean section by section. If staining and discoloration are heavy, don't try to clean everything all at once: hit it several times lightly over a period of days, allowing complete drying in between treatments. (You wouldn't rub your own skin raw, so don't do it to leather either.) Most leather cleaners are specific to "smooth" leather or "rough" leather and suede. Don't confuse the two. As with all other car-care chemicals you get what you pay for—cheap leather "cleaners" may lack proper pH balance or could be no more than repackaged low-grade soaps. Mothers® Leather Cleaner is pH balanced and designed to clean leather safely and effectively. One note: be sure to keep leather cleaners from coming in contact with all clear or transparent plastics—they may dull the finish.

## feeling kneady?



Follow cleaning with a good leather conditioner that has protective oils such as lanolin, (the same stuff found in a high-quality skin cream). You can even knead it into the surface by hand.



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Subsequent to cleaning your leather be sure to replenish its natural oils and preservatives with a proper leather conditioner. Once cleaned, leather is bare and unprotected. Protect the leather from UV and environmental abuse (and passenger abuse) by rubbing in the conditioner after each cleaning. Mothers® Leather Conditioner is designed to augment leather's natural protective oils with neat's-foot oil and lanolin. You can use a similar applicator for cleaner as well as the conditioner, though you'll use a heavier dose of conditioner. Some folks prefer using their hands to knead leather conditioner into the surface.

Another option for restoring and maintaining your leather interior is with an all-in-one product. Mothers® Reflections® Leather Care is a multitasking solution that cleans as it conditions. Just spray it on and rub it in. All-in-one treatments are especially good for covering large areas, such as in SUVs, minivans or wagons. They get the job done in less time because they eliminate the need for additional steps.

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## Plastic Care

Interior plastic and vinyl may not be subjected to as rigorous exposure as an automobile's exterior layers, but can suffer damage just as easily due to neglect. To protect the dashboard, gauge-cluster lenses, dome lights, shiny plastic molding/trim and various other slick plastic surfaces you'll need to keep up regular maintenance.



### soft or hard plastic

Don't use the same chemical for soft and hard plastics. Use a penetrating protectant on soft or matte-finish (no gloss) vinyl, and a plastic polish on hard or shiny plastic. Apply the chemical to a towel to avoid spots on the windshield or door gloss.

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The dashboard should respond well to a penetrating treatment like Mothers® Protectant. Regular and consistent attention with a high-quality plastic/rubber preservative goes a long way toward minimizing the need for repairs of interior parts. Conversely, hard plastics like the gauge-cluster lens or overhead light won't respond to most protectants and need to be polished much like paint. Plastic polishes are designed to work great on hard plastic, though in the case of advanced stains and yellowing, you might try some Mothers® Mag & Aluminum Polish followed by a mild plastic polish. Use of Mothers® Plastic Polish gives you the added benefit of leaving a protective layer behind when buffed away.

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## Glass & Window



### no smelly ammonia

Cleaning tinted windows requires special care. Don't use ammonia-based cleaners—and make sure the cloth is made of cotton or microfiber. Specialized glass cleaners are also better for removing that new car haze on the inside.

Although not a complicated process glass cleaning does require a few tricks you might not know. Although most people probably prefer paper towels, wadded-up newspaper is a great way to wipe glass clean (but keep the paper fresh). Lint-free or microfiber towels work well too, as long as they're clean. Mothers® makes a glass cleaner specifically for automotive applications—it's better at pulling off airborne-stickiness (such as tobacco smoke haze, interior grime and that new-car film) but won't harm your dash, leather or tinting (it's ammonia-free). For hard-to-reach areas of glass it's better to spray the glass cleaner onto the towel instead of the windows. Be sure not to allow anything but soft cotton or microfiber to touch window tint, as it is easily scratched.

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## tough spots?



When you're cleaning the outside of the glass, hard-water spots may require a bit more effort, or you can try Mothers® Chrome Polish to remove them. It may also help with the haze on those hard-to-clean glass windows on a convertible top.

If the outside of your glass is marred with water spotting or minute scratching, Mothers® Chrome Polish can help to erase the damage. Often, only the outer edge of the water spot will remain. Repeated applications of chrome polish may remove spots, but if not the glass is most likely etched and needs to be professionally polished.