
How to successfully refinish white pearl paintwork

Many refinishers will know that white pearlescent paintwork presents a real challenge when it is repaired. Unless refinishers are very precise, it is easy to end up with a visible difference to the original effect. Kevin Welling, Training Academy Manager for Axalta Coating Systems in the UK and Ireland, explains how to get it right.

In the last ten years, white has become increasingly popular as a car colour, as it can represent contemporary style and environmental awareness. As part of this trend, many car manufacturers have launched special effect white colours. These pearlescent paints consist of two basecoat layers and give the car a shimmering colour effect if viewed from certain angles. Refinishing them requires a complex, multi-coat application process. To support their refinish partners, Standox has developed specific refinish guidelines.

Tip 1: Preparing a spray-out card is vital

"The critical factor for white pearlescent paints is the effect coat," says Welling. "As far as it is concerned, you will achieve the closest match to the original if you use spray-out cards." He recommends producing three spray-out cards using the base colour before starting the application process. The spraying of each of the three cards should be different - one, two and three effect spray passes respectively. Due to the different number of paint layers on each spray-out card, the pearl effect will vary and refinishers can then determine the best match with the original.

Tip 2: Mark spray-out cards carefully

A seemingly simple step, but one that should not be forgotten when preparing spray-out cards. "Note the number of effect spray passes on the back of each spray-out card," says Welling. "Otherwise you'll quickly lose track of things."

Tip 3: Always paint body parts together

For the actual repair, refinishers should first apply the base colour to the damaged area until they achieve good coverage and then blend it into adjacent areas. "Matching the colour of adjoining areas or body parts is essential," says Welling. "In addition, when refinishing tri-coat colours, you should never paint body parts separately, always together." Before applying the effect coat, dust and overspray should be removed carefully as the subsequent basecoat will show up all impurities.

Tip 4: The number of spray passes is critical for achieving a good match

"When applying the effect coat, you should paint from the outermost area inwards. Use the area available and don't restrict yourself," Welling advises. "It is critical that you apply exactly the same number of spray passes as on the spray-out card that best matched the original. That will help you to achieve impeccable results when refinishing white pearls."



Many experienced car painters will know that white pearlescent paintwork presents a real challenge when it is repaired.