

PREPARING THE SURFACE FOR DYE.

Apply several coats of Rejuvenator Oil, to soften and strengthen the leather, and clean off with Pristine Clean. (See instructions for Rejuvenator Oil and Pristine Clean). You always soften leather before you do anything to it, and it's important to remove dirt, wax, and oils from the leather.

Look at your leather so you can decide how each part will be restored. There are 3 levels of wear:

- A) leather very good, no cracking, just faded, or colour change desired.
- B) leather good but a few cracks
- C) lots of cracking

For level A, Pour Prepping Agent into a Tupperware type container, and dip 400 grit wet/dry sandpaper into it. Lightly sand the surface of the leather until the dye just starts to dissolve, and wipe away with cloth or paper towels. The idea is to just remove a mil, or very thin layer, of the existing dye, so you know that you now at a new, clean surface, and all wax, oils, sweat, silicones etc are removed. Also the sandpaper leaves scratches for the paint to grab.

During any sanding, do not sand on the stitching or you will break the threads. The process is the same for vinyl areas, except that no dye will dissolve off during sanding because vinyl is coloured plastic, not dyed on the surface. Use a brush on vinyl to clean crevices in the grain.

For level B, The procedure is the same as for level A, but apply Crack Filler to the few cracks after wet sanding. Apply Crack Filler to crack only, don't fill surrounding grain or it will appear too smooth in that area. Masking around the crack can help this. See instructions for Crack Filler.

For level C: For areas with lots of cracking it's easier to remove the old dye completely then to fill and sand so many. Cracks are usually only dye-deep, and when the old dye is removed, there is a smooth surface that you can apply the dye to. To remove the dye simply wet sand more, until most of the dye is removed. Instead of removing a mil, or just a surface layer, wet sand until the dye is mostly gone. If doing lots of dye removal, use lacquer thinners which is much stronger and faster. Don't use lacquer thinners on vinyl at all, only on leather. This sanding and the use of chemicals dry out the leather, so apply more Rejuvenator Oil after this stage.

A typical car restoration may involve all 3 levels of preparation. The back seat which is not used may only need Level A preparation. The passenger seat which is used more may need a couple of cracks filled with Crack Filler before dyeing using Level B preparation. The driver's seat bottom, and side bolster may be badly cracked requiring Level C preparation. The point is to judge each panel (a panel is from stitching edge to stitching edge) and prepare according to its condition.

After wet sanding, allow to dry well overnight. If you applied Rejuvenator Oil after sanding, give the surface a quick wipe with Prepping Agent, and allow to dry. The surface should be dry and smooth and clean, just like any type of painting. You can use compressed air to blow off the surface, and blow through stitching, or use a tack cloth. CLEAN AND DRY CANNOT BE OVEREMPHASIZED!

Apply the dye:

Don't shake the dye, it will create annoying bubbles during brushing. Better to pour the entire contents into a container and stir. Pour back most of the dye. Use a top quality acrylic brush such as Michaels brown nylon. You might need a 1/4" for tight areas, and a 1" for large areas, or even 2" for a large flat sofa. For a car, use the small brush around piping, when getting up close to non-dyed areas, and down between pleats. Then use the large brush, and apply to one panel at a time. Apply fairly quickly and evenly, and leave it to level on its own. The dye dries very fast so don't brush too long or brush marks will appear if the dye is starting to set. Don't stop in the middle of a panel. If you do get brush marks you can recoat them later, or wait a month and sand out with 1500 paper. Start on an inconspicuous area, or a piece of scrap to get used to the procedure.

If a second coat is needed, you can do this after 1 hour.

Allow to dry 48 hours. Buff with a cloth. The leather is ready to be used, but may be soft so be gentle with it for a month, until it fully cures.

Areas that rub together, such as where a car bottom cushion and seat back meet, should be lightly lubricated with Pledge or similar furniture polish. Without this, the two surfaces pressing on each other may stick, like painting your windows shut.

Sit back and enjoy your work!

If you have any questions just ask.