

WHEEL & TIRE DETAILING

By Brad Bean

While this article is not intended to prepare a Corvette for NCRS top-flight or Bloomington Gold competition, it can help you in NCCC concourse competition or local weekend car shows. There are many tire detailing methods, but this one has served me well.

No offence, but when judging cars, one of my pet peeves has to do with those owners who drive their beautifully prepared car to an event, clean and polish the paint, glass, chrome, rubber, interior and engine compartment, but don't touch the tires.

If you drive your Corvette the way GM intended, the tires are the only part that come in contact with road. However, even if you avoid driving in the rain, road grime and brake dust leave their residue behind. As part of your regular vehicle maintenance program, I suggest washing the tires, wheels and wheel wells monthly using a boar's hair or soft long bristle brush with mild detergent and water. Rinse with water and dry using a soft cotton terrycloth towel. Use your preferred metal polish to shine wheel covers at least annually.

Since a Corvette's interior space is limited, I found many of the cleaning products used to detail your car, can perform double duty for wheel and tire detailing. These are *Meguiar's* "Quick Detail," *Armor All* "Low Gloss – Protectant," and *Simple Green* cleaner. (These products are readily available, but you may prefer others.) In addition, you will need a medium bristle scrub brush, a 2 1/2" China bristle paintbrush, a fingernail brush or toothbrush, along with water, a small screwdriver and a cotton cloth.



- Remove small stones from the tire treads with the small screwdriver.
- Use the dry scrub brush to remove loose grass and dirt from the tire and tread surface.
- Spray *Armor All* on the China bristle paintbrush and apply to the tire's black surface areas. The brush allows you to evenly apply the liquid between the grooves on earlier bias belted tires and treads. "Low gloss" is suggested because it leaves a natural shine, unlike the high gloss of most tire care products.
- Spray *Simple Green* directly on the fingernail brush or toothbrush and scrub any heavy dirt or grease from the whitewall.
- Spray *Simple Green* on a small portion of the cloth and wipe down the entire whitewall.
- Pour water on another section of the cloth and wipe any residue from the whitewall.
- Spray *Meguiar's* "Quick Detail" on a dry cloth and wipe the wheel's rim and wheel cover to remove dust and water spots.

The previously mentioned washings will clean build up of these products from your tires and

keep the *Armor All* from yellowing. I also suggest occasionally applying a whitewall dressing to keep the white surface from drying out and chalking.

The next time you have your tires rotated and balanced, request that they install the weights on the inside side of your rim. It just looks nicer.

Good Luck at your next show! 🚗