

Some General Hints & Tips

Important Note:

Most primer is porous. If what your painting has been standing outside for any length of time or in damp conditions in the primer – remove it and start again. Moisture can get into the primer and come out when the top coats have been applied, leading to Micro Blistering of the paintwork. If this happens you'll have to start again anyway

Always wear protective clothing and use extraction where appropriate

Conditions

Never paint in direct sunlight, or in breezy, or windy conditions. If at all possible work indoors

If you know that the workshop you are using has dust in it, clean it thoroughly, and wet the floors before painting

When painting in winter use dry heaters only – never paraffin heaters and keep the temperature as even as possible. Leaving any heating on until the paint is dry

Do not paint in high temperatures unless you really have to. It can cause solvent entrapment through the surface of the paint drying too fast. This will ultimately result in micro blistering. Damp conditions and condensation can also cause blistering as the trapped liquid is drawn to the surface.

In autumn or winter stop painting at lunchtime or not long after. Changes in atmospheric conditions can cause the paint to 'bloom' (gloss turning matt). This can also happen on warm summer evenings so don't start painting too late in the day

Preparation

The best way to prepare new steel is to sand blast. However if that's not possible the next best thing is to degrease and wire brush the steel. Make sure that all loose mill-scale is removed as well as as much rust as possible. With this done apply a thin coat of Craftmaster Rust Treatment which will turn from black to white to show that the remaining rust has been neutralised

Where the metal is pitted it may well be that a good paint build will be sufficient to make the surface flat without any need for filler. If filler is necessary (and a level finish is appropriate) use a good car body filler

If you are working on existing paintwork again the best thing is to take all paint off by shot blasting all the way down to the bare metal. If however the existing paintwork is in fair condition and you don't wish to shot blast then rub it down thoroughly with 240 grit sanding paper. Either remove rust (recommended) or treat it with Craftmaster Rust Treatment. If you go down to the bare metal in any area apply a coat of Primer to the area. With this done either put a second coat of Primer overall or double up the patches being sure to feather the paint out as thin as possible around the edges

Finally if the paintwork is in excellent condition and you just fancy a change of colour remove all polish and clean thoroughly then rub down lightly before applying an appropriate undercoat for your new topcoat.

Remember once the preparation is completed to a good standard apply the enamel quickly and with confidence. Too little and you will have dry areas in the finish too much and there will be sags and runs. Sags in vertical panels can be minimised by vertical 'laying off strokes' top to bottom.

Craftmaster supply different Primers for different surfaces which are as follows:

Craftmaster Extremely Pink Wood Primer – For Wood

Craftmaster Anti Corrosive Primer – For Iron & Steel

Craftmaster Etch Primer – For Aluminium and other difficult metals (Spray Only)

Craftmaster Epoxy Primer – For Fibreglass

The Painting Process

Firstly it may seem obvious but make sure the paint you choose is fit for purpose. e.g. of a suitable temperature range and check colours for accuracy before you start work

The object of Coach Painting is to apply a good even coverage of paint with fast brush strokes (at all angles) covering a small area (about 30” square). Once empty immediately refill the brush and repeat the process, brushing into the area you've just done. As soon as a section is covered (the first upright 30” strip of a vertical panel for instance) lay the paint off top to bottom. Do this from start to finish very quickly and then keep on going in the same fashion until the panel is complete – always brushing back into the section you've just done. Don't stop to admire you work (or for any reason) until the complete panel is finished.

If you find a run or sag when the paint is dry don't rub it down; it will still be wet underneath. Slice the top off it with a sharp blade and then leave it to dry again. Next day you will be able to rub it down successfully and re-coat either the immediate area or (if it seems best) the whole panel.

Always use the biggest brush you can handle – 3” should be sufficient for most work

If you are inexperienced practice first!

Nearly all Craftmaster products (with the exception of Etch Primer) are designed to be brushed. However if you wish all can be sprayed with the addition of 15% Synthetic Thinners. If your brushing then make sure you have a good brush Harris or Purdy are the best (we sell Purdy). If you can't spray and don't have the confidence to brush then use a glossing roller, but have someone else on hand to 'lay off' the paint with a continuous vertical brush stroke.

Decant into a paint kettle or similar container only sufficient paint to complete the area to be coated. This will keep the balance of the paint in it's original tin clean and free from contamination

If you are using masking tape make sure you remove it as soon as you put the brush down

Craftmaster products are not generally meant to be thinned unless you are spraying. If the paint is going on too thick or is difficult to work we recommend our brushing additive – PPA. This lubricates the paint molecules making them flow easier. Start by adding 2-3% and work upwards to a maximum of 10%. Remember you can always add a little more but you can't take any out!

A typical paint build on steel or iron would be two coats each of Primer, Undercoat, and Coach Enamel followed by two coats of Clear Varnish if required. For a finer finish use an extra coat of undercoat and perhaps two more of enamel. This allows for more thorough rubbing down and better coverage on weaker colours

If you are able to re-coat undercoats on consecutive days there is no need to rub down between coats. If for instance you could prime on Monday & Tuesday then Undercoat on Wednesday Thursday & Friday you would have maximum build available before rubbing down. If you can't paint on consecutive days then it is advisable to rub down between coats

Never apply two coats of paint on the same day unless there are clear instructions to do so on the label or technical data sheet. Generally the only two products that be over-coated same day are the Etch & Speed Dry Primers

Make sure that the rubbed down Undercoat for all reds is of an even colour before you apply any gloss

When you have rubbed the surface down ready for the first top coat (and every time you rub down the paintwork) wipe it over with a tack rag. This sticky piece of cloth will remove and debris and dust from the surface providing you with a better surface to paint on

When rubbing down between top coats use 600 grit sanding paper before finishing off with 1000 grit. This will remove your sanding marks from the surface

Varnishing

Varnish is a great way of protecting and prolonging the lifespan of a paint finish. A good Varnish (like ours) will protect the paintwork from light scratching and depending on its degree of UV resistance from the affects of UV light from exposure to sunlight.

Its important to note that Varnish does need reapplying periodically depending on exposure to the elements. This may seem counterproductive and expensive but its cheaper (and quicker) than a full repaint. As with all things the care taken of the varnished surface will have a factor in the lifespan of the finish

If Varnish is scratched it's important to rub down and re-coat the area. The scratch can allow weather into the varnish causing crazing and flaking.

Craftmaster Clear is 98% reflective of UV Rays (More than any comparable product). Meaning that it will give added protection to colours particularly susceptible to fading. Its also (unlike a lot of other Varnish) completely clear. Also as its not a polyurethane product it does not suffer from the 'yellowing' inherent in such things

Craftmaster Clear has been designed to flow well and to produce a flat mirror-like finish without leaving brush marks. It takes 10 days to cure to its maximum hardness but can be over-coated after 24 hours and is touch dry in 4 hours

Lastly and perhaps somewhat confusingly make sure you re-coat your varnish before it looks like it needs it. If it looks like it needs another coat, you may be too late

Problems

If the paint is too thick (especially evident in cold conditions) add a little PPA Brushing Additive (maximum 10%) to ease the flow

If its too cold or too hot the paint will not want to flow. In these conditions it may be necessary to thin the paint slightly with synthetic thinners. It is however better to wait for conditions to improve to a climate more conducive to painting

If your applying a Red and its patchy remember that Red is a particularly weak colour (Alfa Red excluded). Make sure that the undercoat is rubbed down evenly and plan for 3 coats of top coat

If a fly lands in the paint don't pick it out with your fingers – this will cause much more damage than the fly will. Pick it out when the paint is dry

If the paint is drying too quickly even though its the right consistency and flowing well – work more quickly or work on smaller areas. The secret of Coach Painting is the speed at which its done. The best way to keep a 'wet edge' once your confident is to go for it! and work quickly. Use the priming and undercoating for practice