**AUTOMOTIVE TOUCHUP ARTICLE:**

HEAD: How To Blend Touchup Paint

SUB: A few simple steps is all it takes to get professional looking results

BODY:

We’ve all seen it before. The touch up job that looks worse than just living with that heartbreaking paint scratch. Splattering paint onto the scratch and calling it done is not going to give very good results.  The key to a good repair is **blending**. By correctly blending the new paint into the surrounding area using aerosol paints from AutomotiveTouchup, even the most novice DIYer can get professional looking results the first time. In fact, you’ll find all the high-quality paints, products and expert help you’ll need, right on our website at AutomotiveTouchup.com.

Blending involves two steps to make the best looking repair. First, you’ll need to minimize the scratch by doing a bit of light sanding in order to help it blend into the surrounding area. Then you’ll blend the touchup paint over the repair and out into the existing paint that surrounds the repair.

Before you begin, you’ll need to stock up on 600 and 1000 grit wet or dry sandpaper, a sanding block, painter’s tape, masking paper, prep wipes, and your precision matched color paint and clear coat, all available from AutomotiveTouchup.com. While you’re ordering, be sure to check out the “How To “ video section for expert help on blending and many more common automotive paint and body work tips.

**Blend In The Scratch**

To blend in the scratch, you’ll need to do a little light sanding with the 600 or 1000 grit wet or dry sandpaper. Cut a piece to fit the sanding block and attach it. Next, fill a new spray bottle with clean water and spray the sandpaper to get it fairly wet. Spray the area to be sanded and while it is still wet, lay the sanding block flat on the scratch. Lightly wipe the sandpaper back and forth over the scratch. Use just enough pressure to hold the sanding block and paper onto the surface. Spray the area frequently with water, this both cleans the sandpaper and lubricates the surface. Don’t be afraid to sand wider than the scratch and a little bit into the surrounding area, you’ll cover it all next with paint.

Check your progress after each pass. You want to sand the scratch down just enough to be even with the rest of the paint. Try not to get any bare metal showing, but don’t worry if it shows through, you’ll just need to prime it before you apply the color paint. Check by rubbing your fingers over the sanded area until you can’t feel any bumps or ridges, then you are done. Clean the entire panel around the repair with mild dish soap and running water, then let it dry.

To prepare for paint, use masking paper and tape available at AutomoitveTouchup.com to hide the areas you don’t want to get painted, such as trim and windows. Leave a wide, open area around your repair so you can blend the new paint into the existing paint for the best results. Wipe the area down with prep wipes and let it dry.

**Blend In The Color Coat**

To blend in the color coat, hold the aerosol can about 6”-8” from the surface. Overlap the repair to the left by about an inch or so, (depending on the size of the repair), then depress the spray tip and move to the right in one continuous motion to about an equal amount past the repair.  Release the tip. Repeat this process several times until the repair is covered with paint and it blends well past the repair and into the surrounding paint. Remove the tape and masking paper before the paint dries, then let it dry thoroughly for at least an hour.

After the color coat has dried, apply the clear coat from AutomotiveTouchup.com. This industry leading clear coat is specially formulated work with all AutomotiveTouchup colors to bring out the maximum luster and shine, as well as protect and minimize the effects of weathering.  Apply new tape and masking paper to the area first, then wipe with prep wipes and let dry.

Spray the clear coat the same way as you did for the color coat from left to right, but this time you’ll be using a continuous spray instead of light coats. Build up a larger area with the clear coat well past the repair area in all directions. This helps to better blend the area into the old paint. After several coats, check to make sure all scratch marks or dull areas caused by sanding are covered by the clear coat.

When you are satisfied with the result, remove the tape and masking paper. Allow the area to dry thoroughly, preferably overnight. Then admire the professional looking results you’ve gotten with just a few easy steps!

It’s easy to get professional looking results with aerosol paints, even if you’ve never painted anything before. All it takes is a little patience, quality products and expert advice from the leader in automotive paint repair, AutomotiveTouchup.com.