

Thinking About Trying Some Painting?

By Ray Fichthorn

IMPORTANT!!!!: Learn the prep work first.....this is THE most important factor in a nice paint job.

The actual painting is "relatively" easy.

For Dupont Centari: Be SURE to buy the proper temperature reducers and USE HARDENER!

I would recommend using a gravity-fed HVLP gun. I have used all manner of spray guns from \$29 (experimental primer-gun) to \$450. I currently buy a brand-new \$89 Gravity/HVLP gun for every overall paint job I do. This makes for lots of spare primer-guns, but the results can't be argued with- there's just nothing like spraying with a fresh gun. With the time involved in cleaning your old gun, replacing needles/fluid nozzle, and air caps, and cost of the reducer... it just isn't worth it these days. The "basic" rebuild kit for my "good" Binks Mach1 HVLP is \$147. It "really" doesn't spray that much better than a new \$89 gun.

Turn the pressure up (about 50 psi to the gun for a gravity-fed HVLP 40 psi is recommended), open the pattern to a minimum of 8", and spray successive coats (5-6 passes over the same place- approx 4ft/sec) very quickly until it just appears "wet". Begin to slow down the coats until you can get the "wet" look in fewer passes (2- approx 2ft/sec). Overlap your coats 50%. Never spray more than it takes to appear "wet". This will help prevent RUNS!

Practice first on a spare hood or large panel mounted vertically- to see how far you can go without runs yet get a consistent "wet edge"... If you don't have "extra" parts.... be sure to do door jambs, under hood and under trunk lid first as your warm-up. Spending \$30 for an extra quart of paint to practice with is a GOOD investment if it prevents a few mistakes on the exterior of the car.

Trouble areas: The most common mistakes are getting too much paint around the edges where panels meet, around door handles, taillights, headlights, vents, windows, etc... When you begin spraying the car, "trim out" the panels first by lightly "coloring" around the windows, door handles, vents, and all your edges.. let this DRY for at least 20 minutes- DO NOT RUSH!!!! When you begin the entire body side- spray it front to back in one pass... do not spray quarter- then door- then fender.... spray the whole side from bottom to top. (Takes a lot of walking). When transitioning from sides to hood/trunk lid/roof.... try to "pause" your spraying at body lines, seams, or narrow parts (such as the A and C pillars).

Let dry the minimum recommended interval between coats or up to 20% LONGER!