## Alternative Polishing Procedures

**KBM -** **Removing Paint Defects via Meguiar's® M205 Ultra Finishing Polish**

*This article outlines a procedure that assists in minimizing the negative effects of paint residue.*

*Within this article, the term **paint defect** refers to the marring of a vehicle's paint surface. Examples of paint defects, and how they are sometimes formed: Random, deep scratches (caused by contact with hard objects); swirls & scuff marks (caused by repetitive abrasive scrubbing of the paint surface); etch marks (caused by hard water deposits & bird droppings); and paint oxidation (caused by exposure to harsh environmental conditions & chemicals).*

*Traditionally, removing a severe paint defect has required the use of a heavy-cut compound and a buffing pad, commonly applied via **rotary** or **random orbital polisher**. Although this article was written with the random orbital polisher in mind, the premise behind the procedure (a controlling of paint residue) would also be effective when working with a rotary polisher.*

*The procedure outlined in this article exchanges the use of a heavy-cut buffing compound, replacing it with **Meguiar's M205 Professional Ultra Finishing Polish**. Although M205 has been used to remove fine paint defects since its creation as an abrasive finishing polish, this procedure requires that an **abundant amount** of M205 be used to achieve the desired result.*

*The genesis and constant tweaking of this procedure traces back to a handful of guys: **Bryan Burnworth** of Peach State Detail (GA), **Bob Willis** of Auto Concierge (CA), and **myself**. Word of this unorthadox procedure has been slow to spread. But recently, two specific instances occurred (within two weeks of each other) that inspired me to write this article.*

*The first instance involved a case of difficult-to-remove water spot etch marks that had formed across a large portion of a paint surface (dealt with by **Joseph Torbati** of Orinda Detail, CA). The second instance involved the severe scratching of a paint surface (dealt with by **Jeff McGoveran** of Immaculate Reflections, CA). The scratches were created when the car was hand-washed using a Scotchbrite® Heavy Duty Scrub Sponge in place of a wash mitt. In both cases, several attempts were made using a variety of traditional polishing methods, without satisfaction.*

*In the end, the procedure outlined in this article was used to polish each car to a high satisfaction level. Interestingly, the **cut-stalling issue** that both detailers faced was not caused by a lack of abrasiveness, but was instead caused by the **rapid accumulation of ground-up paint residue** that formed during the polishing process. In Joseph's case, paint residue limited the pad's ability to remain sufficiently in contact with the paint surface; In Jeff's case, paint residue encompassed the pad & compound, severely limiting cutting potential.*

*It should be noted that this procedure should be viewed as an "outside the box" approach to heavy-cut compounding: It was derived out of necessity, when the rare occurrence that traditional polishing methods proved to be untimely or unsuccessful in delivering a satisfactory result. This procedure should be utilized as a **backup** to traditional compounding methods, **not as a replacement** of them.*

***Kevin Brown***

## *Removing Paint Defects* via Meguiar's® M205 Professional Ultra Finishing Polish

When an "aggressive" cutting pad & buffing compound can't seem to eliminate surface scratches, water spot etching, or other dastardly blemishes from a paint surface… is sanding by hand or machine the only remaining option? **Thankfully, it is not.**

Before you fire up a palm sander or attempt to hand-sand the defects away… give **Meguiar's® M205 Professional Ultra Finishing Polish a try**. When used in conjunction with a microfiber polishing disc*, a random orbital polisher, and the procedure outlined in this article… M205's performance *just may* BLOW YOU AWAY!

*Meguiar's® (the originator of microfiber buffing pads) refers to their microfiber buffing pads as **Microfiber Discs**. To date, all other competing brands use the term **microfiber pad**. The terms **disc(s)** and **pad(s)** are used interchangeably throughout this article*.

**Note: An abundant quantity of M205 must be used in order to implement this procedure.**

The heavy-cut polishing procedure outlined in this article can save a substantial amount of time versus using a more traditional approach. In fact, there are instances in which *this* procedure will get the job done, when time-proven traditional polishing methods *won't*.

*This article and procedure is not an attempt to downplay the performance of state-of-the-art buffing compounds: Implementation of this procedure should be rarely needed.*

Understanding the reasoning behind using a *finishing polish* in place of a *heavy-cut compound* is not all that difficult. Further, the procedure itself is a breeze to implement! However, some "outside-the-box" contemplation is in order. Consider the following points:

1. *State-of-the-art **superfast cutting compounds** rely upon a massive amount of miniscule, ultra-refined, and consistently sized abrasive grains to rapidly grind (or cut) paint away.*

2. *The accumulation of **paint residue** (the paint remnants that are ground from the paint surface during polishing; also referred to as **abraded paint remnants**, **residue**, **paint residue**, **debris**, and **polishing debris**) can dramatically reduce cutting speed and diminish overall polishing performance, particularly when the abrasive grains are diminutive in size.*

3. *In the midst of this procedure, M205 does not accomplish a high level of cutting action on its own; it instead relies upon a **microfiber buffing pad** to bolster its cutting capability.*

4. *Increasing the quantity of **abrasive grains** instilled into a buffing liquid, or increasing the quantity of buffing compound being used <u>does not always result</u> in increased cutting speed.*

**To the four listed points:**

**1. State-of-the-art superfast cutting compounds.**
The current state-of-the-art in buffing compound technology relies upon a massive amount of miniscule-sized abrasive grains to do its cutting. As the name implies, this new generation of **superfast cutting compounds** can accomplish its work astonishingly *fast!* When applied via microfiber buffing discs (which feature an immense amount of usable surface area versus a typical foam pad) that are mounted to super-capable polishing machines (such as the Rupes® LHR21ES BigFoot Random Orbital Polisher), *rapid* cutting of the paint surface is ***initially*** guaranteed.

The word ***initially*** was *intentionally* used because as paint residue accumulates, it can adversely affect cutting speed and overall polishing performance. Whereas problems related to the accumulation of paint residue didn't seem to be as big a concern only a few years ago, the upward trending use of random orbital polishers and the *combined use* of four independently-created technologies has brought the issue to the forefront:

- *The introduction of catalized basecoat/clearcoat automotive paint systems*
  *(This paint type features a hardened, thin layer of clear paint that is easy to overpolish)*

- *The introduction of **superfast** cutting compounds*
  *(Meguiar's identifies their products as having Super Micro Abrasive Technology, or SMAT®)*

- *The introduction of buffing pads featuring a specialized **microfiber**-pile material*
  *(Meguiar's identifies their products as DA Microfiber Cutting and Finishing Discs)*

- *The rise in popularity of the **large stroke** random orbital polisher*
  *(Credit goes to Rupes® for launching its BigFoot® line of machines)*

Prior to the introduction of *superfast cutting compounds*, traditional-style compounds relied upon a smaller quantity of larger-sized abrasive grains to generate its abrasive grinding action *(Note: both types of compounds are readily available).* In general, traditional-style compounds are slower working, and rely upon a larger dose of petroleum-based solvents to keep paint residue disseminated (separated, suspended, not clumped).

Since they require more working time to accomplish a similar level of cut (especially when working on catalyzed basecoat/clearcoat paint systems), traditional-style compounds tend to deliver a longer buffing cycle than their superfast-cutting counterparts (a buffing cycle is the time period in which efficient cutting action takes place using one application of buffing liquid). When using a superfast cutting compound, the buffing cycle should be shortened, or the area being polished should be decreased. Due to polishing habit and lack of awareness, this change has been slow in coming. Consequently, polishing issues related to paint residue build-up are at an all-time high.

The negative effects of paint residue develop at an even faster pace when polishing is accomplished using microfiber buffing pads, especially when paired with large stroke random orbital polishers.

Microfiber buffing pads feature an immense amount usable surface area, which is one of the reasons that they are able to cut so rapidly. The face of a microfiber pad is covered with vertically placed strings that are made using a specialized microfiber-pile. The microfiber strings are super-efficient in their ability to attach and hold onto liquids & particulate; consequently, they tend to saturate with polishing liquid and debris faster than a similarly sized foam buffing pad.

The capability of a superfast cutting compound, when applied via microfiber disc that has been mounted to a large stroke random orbital polisher is ***stunning***. In fact, this combination can *equal* or *rival* the speed of cut created by a wool pad and a rotary polisher! If you've ever used a rotary polisher and a wool pad… then you most likely understand how big of a deal this truly is. With so much cutting capability on tap, the emergence of a new polishing issue has arrived: the rapid accumulation of paint residue.

**2. Paint residue: The Performance Killer.**

Although most of us realize just how rapidly a superfast cutting compound can eliminate defects, we seldom consider the effect that the **abraded paint remnants** *or* **paint residue** can have on polishing performance as it encompasses our buffing liquids and pads. Eventually, paint residue will accumulate to the point that it *drastically slows* or *altogether stalls* cutting ability. The need to control paint residue build-up is of utmost importance. In fact… it is the key reason this article was written!

**3. Use of Meguiar's M205 Professional Ultra Finishing Polish as a heavy-cut compound.**

Although it's likely that the *quantity* of abrasive grains mixed into M205 is a *paltry* amount compared to what a superfast cutting compound might normally contain, it's important to realize that M205 is not accomplishing such a high level of cut on its own. If you've already guessed that the microfiber strings attached to the polishing disc are partly responsible for the supercharged cutting speed… you're right on point.

What enables M205 to work so well for this procedure is a seemingly perfect balance of hi-tech abrasives (doled out in a complimentary amount), and an ability to remain very fluid throughout the polishing cycle.

By using an **abundance** of M205, the stifling effect that paint residue has on cutting performance can be kept at bay. While it's true that M205 features its own batch of abrasive grains (and their presence most likely increases cutting potential), it's a small amount when compared to the quantity used in a state-of-the-art, superfast cutting compound.

Meguiar's M205 is a pleasure to work with because it stays FLUID. It never seems to dust away, or buff to the point of dryness. Meguiar's M205 does not typically stick to problematic paint surfaces, nor does it inherently thicken to the point of gumminess. It never seems to saturate a pad to the point that its integrity is compromised. Even if an excessive amount of M205 is put into play, it's not a problem to work through puddles of it.

Meguiar's M205 does not contain silicones, polymers, or heavy resins, so it wipes away with ease. Since it is void of these types of ingredients, M205 allows the strings of a microfiber disc (and other types of buffing pads) to remain in direct contact with the paint surface. This increases their ability to cut at an efficient rate, and stalls the formation residue build-up on the pad face (or face-mounted materials).

**4. Increasing the use of an abrasive-laden compound can exacerbate the problem.**
As we've already discussed, the potential cutting capability of a microfiber disc paired with a superfast cutting compound is *tremendous*. Although it seems reasonable to assume that by increasing the *quantity* of cutting compound in use, *more* cutting speed would be the result. After all, with more liquid available in which to *store* or *suspend* the paint residue, the ratio of ***liquid*** *versus* ***paint residue*** would change for the better. In other words… increasing the quantity of buffing liquid would effectively decrease the percentage of paint residue residing in the liquid.

In order for this adjustment to work, common sense dictates that the *size* of the area being polished should not be increased. In addition, the amount of time spent polishing *per application of buffing liquid* should not be extended. Otherwise, paint residue will accumulate to a point that renders use of this procedure pointless. There's one more *very important factor* that we need to consider.

If we *increase* the quantity of buffing compound used per application, then it's quite likely that even *more* paint residue will envelop our microfiber buffing pad & liquid as *more* paint is ground away by the compound's inherent abrasiveness. In fact, all sorts of problems can arise when an excessive amount of abrasive grains are put into play.

Knowledge of some potential pitfalls should help you in determining whether the use of an inordinate amount of buffing compound *for the expressed purpose of solving our paint residue dilemma* is *reasonable*. Potential problems include:

- A clumping of the abrasive grains, which can *cause* more damage than it fixes

- An increase in dustiness, since the abrasive grains aren't kept in control by the buffing pad via attachment, or by the increased presence of the liquid itself (since there's just not enough of it available)

- The formation of a super-hard barrier, created as the abrasive grains envelop the microfiber strings and scrub paint from the paint surface (causing paint residue to coat the microfiber strings across the entire pad face)

**Paint residue can also inhibit finishing ability.**
With so much focus placed on cutting efficiency, it is important to note that finishing ability is also affected by the formation of paint residue. Finish polishing *is* essentially cutting (the removal of paint through polishing); it's just accomplished in a more refined manner, and at a much slower rate.

As of late, the quest for a *perfect finish* has become en vogue.
There are a few good reasons for this:

**1**. Certain paint types are susceptible to a *hazing* of the surface. Hazing (also referred to as micro marring) is an accumulation of very fine scratches that have formed during the random orbital polishing process. Whereas a *rotary* buffer is capable of creating curved & extended scratch marks that mimic the rotating action of the buffing pad (often referred to as *swirl marks*), the scratches that are sometimes formed when polishing via random orbital are tightly bunched, similar in size and shape, and countless in quantity (causing the paint surface to appear *hazy*, or haphazardly polished).

Depending upon the color of the *primary* or *base coat* (the pigmented paint lying directly underneath the clear topcoat), hazing can be *very* noticeable. In fact, since the scratches in the clear topcoat cast off a whitish appearance, hazing can alter the perception of a paint color (reds can take on a pinkish hue, blacks can take on a grayish hue, and so on).

**2**. With the advent of paint protective coating products (extremely durable paint toppings), certain types of coatings have an inability to mask even the finest of surface imperfections. Once the coating has been applied, the only way to remove it (so that the imperfections trapped beneath the coating can be dealt with) is via mechanical agitation. In other words… the coating must be removed by polishing it away.

**3**. Creating a perfect paint finish can be *rewarding*. Feeling a sense of pride in a job well done is a big motivating factor for most folk. Plus, when perfection is frustratingly elusive to achieve… it sure is satisfying figuring out how to accomplish it!

**Can foam pads be used in place of microfiber pads?**
Yes, but cutting speed is likely to be *substantially* slower, especially when attempting to remove etch marks caused by water droplets, bird droppings, bug splatter, and chemicals.

Since the vertically mounted strings of a microfiber disc are better suited for contouring into the intricacies of etch marks, there may be instances when a microfiber pad will achieve a satisfactory result, but a foam pad will not. A foam pad may be a capable of achieving a satisfactory result in **removing etch marks** using this procedure if it can:

1. Keep abrasive grains and paint residue from sticking to the paint surface

2. Resist rapid attachment of M205's abrasive grains across the entire face of the pad

3. Resist a build-up of paint residue from forming across the face of the pad

4. Retain an ability to tumble and roll M205's abrasive grains across the paint surface

**To the points:**
**1**. If a foam pad can apply an *abundant* amount of M205 to a paint surface, yet keep it from *gumming* or *sticking* to the paint surface, then extended polishing of the surface is possible. As long as the pad is able to impart its own scrubbing action directly onto the paint surface (to whatever degree), or cause abrasion of the surface via dragging and rolling M205's instilled abrasive material across the paint surface, then polishing progress will be continual.

**2**. If a foam pad can resist the attachment of M205's abrasive grains (to the point that they encompass the pad's entire face), then no hard barrier will form that can potentially prevent the soft and pliable foam material from interacting with the paint surface. Once a hard barrier envelops the pad face, the squeegee-effect imparted by the pad is negated, and scouring of the paint surface is sure to occur.

**3**. If a foam pad can resist a build-up of paint residue from forming across its face, then efficient and accurate polishing of the surface will be possible. Once the face of a foam pad becomes coated with paint residue (even a minute amount), the characteristics of the pad can change. In some cases, the attached residue can make it very difficult (or impossible) to create a highly polished surface.

**4**. If a foam pad can retain its ability to tumble, push, and roll M205's abrasives across the paint surface, then an extended amount of polishing action can occur. However, if paint residue accumulates to the point that it encapsulates or locks the abrasive grains onto the face of the pad, polishing will slow, or eventually stall.

**How to tell if a foam buffing pad has become coated with *clear* paint residue.**
At times, paint residue can coat the face of a pad to the point where attempts to eliminate it via compressed air, microfiber toweling, brushing, or soap & water won't fully remove it. The big question is… Since the majority of today's paint systems feature a clear topcoat over a pigmented basecoat, how can we discern whether there *is* a buildup of paint residue?

It can be difficult to tell, but not impossible.

If it seems that the only time you can achieve a perfect finish on a particular paint type is when the pad you are using is fresh (or within a few minutes immediately thereafter), then there's a pretty good chance that paint residue has become stubbornly attached to the pad. This assumes that consistent and proper cleaning of the pad has occurred throughout your

polishing attempts, and that you've removed any obvious debris from the face of the pad. The following is short story about the negative effects of clearcoat paint residue.

In the midst of a *difficult-to-finish* polishing session, a detailing friend contacted me for some advice. He was interested in a new approach… and a way out of his polishing nightmare! As him and I discussed the possibility that paint residue was likely the culprit responsible for his dastardly hazing issue, he recalled noticing something quite odd.

Upon comparing a ***new & unused pad*** to a ***new but minimally used & washed pad***, he noticed that the entire face of the used pad took on a *glossy* appearance. Although he was not sure *why* it had become glossy, one thing was certain: he had never considered the possibility that the gloss was caused by a micro-layer of clear paint residue.

While there was a chance that through the act of polishing, the foam material had become *smoother* and consequently more *reflective*… it was not very likely. We also believed that if such an instance did occur, it was doubtful that such a change would inherently cause a hazing of the surface.

We agreed that the glossy appearance was likely caused by a glaze-layer of paint residue. The pad would therefore require rewashing, and perhaps a change to the pad washing procedure as well (more agitation, an extended wash period, an increase in water temperature, etc.) We also agreed that some types of foam seem to resist the attachment of paint residue better than others. Eventually (through a series of procedural changes), my friend was able to eliminate the hazing issues, and the job was finished to a satisfactory level.

**Some thoughts about paint hardness.**

As of late, it seems that there is much importance placed upon knowing whether a paint type is ***hard*** or ***soft***. Although there *are* variances in paint hardness, the level of hardness is not critically important *as long as the build-up of paint residue is kept to a minimum*.

There is no doubt that various forms of automotive paint are intrinsically harder than others, and may therefore require more time to polish to a satisfactory level. In addition, there may be a need to employ a variety of procedures or tools to accomplish the polishing task. Notwithstanding, paint residue (remnants of ground-up material) will almost always have a negative effect on cutting efficiency.

Paint doesn't become *harder* or *softer* as it is ground into tiny bits via polishing; logic tells us that the hardness level very likely remains the same. However, it *does* make sense that *hard* particles of pulverized paint will build a *tougher* barrier than its softer counterpart can. Therefore, when polishing paint that is identified as being *hard*, it's vitally important that paint residue does not encompass the buffing pad and the buffing liquid's abrasives. Otherwise, the buffing cycle will become radically shorter. Cutting speed will slow, and the ability to refine the surface in a consistent manner will likely be compromised. To control residue build-up when compounding, it is almost always better to use *more* buffing liquid, rather than *less*.

**In order to implement this procedure, you will need the following items:**

- Meguiar's® **M205** Professional Ultra Finishing Polish
- Meguiar's® Detailer® DA Microfiber **DMC5**/**DMC6** Cutting or **DMF5**/**DMF6** Finishing Discs
- A trigger bottle filled with water, for occasional misting of the paint surface
- A Random Orbital Polisher

**Meguiar's M205, Meguiar's DA Microfiber Discs, and Water.**
You'll be using quite a bit of M205, so keep plenty on hand. There will be instances when you'll want to mist the paint surface in an attempt to extend the length of each buffing cycle (a cycle is the time spent polishing using a single application of M205). Water misting (or spritzing) also aids in keeping the strings of the microfiber disc free of clumped abrasives and paint residue via frictional drag.

Feel free to use *either* Meguiar's DA Microfiber Cutting *or* Finishing Discs. While there are very specific differences in their designs, *neither* disc was specifically designed to work optimally with the abundance of M205 that we plan to use during the implementation of this procedure. The primary differences in Meguiar's Cutting and Finishing Discs are:

- DA Microfiber Cutting Discs feature a low profile, maroon-colored foam. The foam material is reminiscent of a race-tuned suspension (firm, rigid, and efficient at transferring machine motion directly through it). Its microfiber string material is seemingly long, and is able to lay horizontal to the polishing surface. Compared to the Finishing Disc, there seems to be a lesser quantity of strings installed across the disc face.

- By comparison, the DA Microfiber Finishing Discs feature a taller, black-colored foam. The foam material is reminiscent of a touring suspension (softer, more pliable, and therefore less efficient at transferring machine motion directly through it). Its microfiber string material is seemingly shorter, but more densely covers the disc face. Consequently, the strings are more apt to remain vertical to the polishing surface.

**Choosing a random orbital polisher.**
In terms of currently available machines, I believe that the machine *most* capable of successfully implementing this procedure is the Italian-made ***Rupes® LHR21ES 6" BigFoot® Random Orbital Polisher.*** Compared to other random orbital machines, the LHR21ES delivers a high level of *backing plate action.* Much of the credit goes to the LHR21ES's comparatively immense stroke (21mm), its rotating mass (which increases its ability to accomplish work under high-load, high-friction situations), and ample motor strength. With so much motion, speed, and potential backing plate rotation on hand, it is perfectly suited for this procedure.

If you don't have an LHR21ES at your disposal, no sweat! You can still achieve a spectacular result using virtually any random orbital machine. However, when using a machine that features a smaller stroke, less rotating mass, or less motor power, some procedural and equipment changes may be required:

- The frequency in which the pad is cleaned may need to be *increased*, and the size of area being polished per application cycle may need to be *decreased*.

- The buffing pad diameter may need to be *decreased*, and the backing plate diameter may need to be swapped for one that closely matches the diameter of the buffing pad. This is done in hopes of increasing support along the circumference of the pad. In doing so, random rotation of the backing plate should *increase*, and pressure across the pad face should *equalize*, thus delivering a superior result.

**On to the polishing procedure!**

1. To be certain that the procedure is working as expected, it's best to *initially* polish a small section of paint. If you attempt to polish too large an area, residue will accumulate faster than the area can be thoroughly polished; you will therefore not be able to accurately gauge the potential performance of this procedure.

2. Attach the microfiber disc to the machine's backing plate. Apply a liberal amount of M205 to the face of the microfiber disc. Massage it in until there's a high likelihood that every string has become saturated with M205. You may need to repeatedly apply M205 to the disc until you've reached the point of saturation.

3. Once the disc has been sufficiently primed, it's time to add more M205 into the mix! Normally, you would apply additional M205 to the disc face in the form of a thin "X" or "O" pattern, or by placing several small drops in random locations… but not this time.

Instead, apply an ***abundant amount*** of M205 directly onto the polishing surface. The term *abundant* is rather vague, but it's a judgment call. Basically, you should apply enough M205 so that the microfiber strings are partially buried in M205, but not so much that you'll create an absolute splattering mess once the machine is running. The idea is to have an ample M205 present, in order to minimize the negative effects of paint residue build-up.

4. Place the microfiber disc directly atop the blob of M205. Adjust the speed-control dial to a slow speed setting, and turn the machine on. Tweak the speed setting until the machine starts to glide along smoothly (the machine should not feel jittery or grabby while the disc is rubbing against the panel).

5. Once the machine is gliding along smoothly, adjust the speed dial until the backing plate is rotating in the neighborhood of 1-4 turns per second. To gauge backing plate rotation, place a single contrasting dot or line along the outer edge of the backing plate. You should be able to estimate the amount of backing plate rotations by watching the edge of the backing plate.

6. Move the machine at the rate of approximately one inch per second. There is no need to apply undue pressure atop the machine, as there should be more than enough cutting action present. If the area being polished is not free of defects after a single one-direction pass, continue to make subsequent passes until there is an obvious reduction in defects.

Check polishing progress regularly by wiping the panel clean. Continue to polish as needed. If you believe there to be plenty of M205 present, but it seems to have become *dry*, *sticky, or gummy* in a short period of time… you can bet that the culprit responsible for the loss of lubricity is an accumulation of paint residue!

At this point, you have **three** options to consider.

a. **Mist the panel with water**. Typically, one to three pulls of a fine-mist trigger will supply an ample amount of water to the polishing area (1.0 mL per pull). The water will assist in breaking apart any clumping of M205's abrasive grains (bound together by paint residue), and will add moisture into the mix. The water will also create additional frictional drag, which will assist in pulling abrasive grains and paint residue from the strings of the microfiber disc. Once you mist the panel, place the pad atop the water, and continue polishing as previously described.

b. **Apply an additional dose of M205 to the polishing area**. Continue to polish as previously described. If the polish continues to seem dry, sticky or gummy… the microfiber disc may need to be cleaned.

c. **Clean the microfiber disc, or replace it with a fresh one**. If you've got compressed air handy, blow the microfiber disc clean. Otherwise, run the microfiber disc against a clean microfiber towel; most guys hold the machine in one hand and trigger on/off switch while running the disc against a microfiber towel that is held in the other hand. The microfiber towel will remove a majority of the stuck-on polishing debris. If it seems that the disc is not being sufficiently cleaned, run the disc against a water-moistened towel first, then against a dry towel.

*Note: When using microfiber toweling to clean buffing pads that are mounted to a random orbital polisher, use caution so that the towel does not become tangled into any rotating machine parts!*

If after a thorough cleaning it seems that the microfiber strings are still not sufficiently clean and fluffy, reapply some fresh M205, massage it into the strings, and run the disc against a clean microfiber towel again. The additional M205 should assist in loosening any remaining polishing debris. Finally, if you've got plenty of microfiber discs on hand, or if the foam material of the microfiber disc has become moisture-saturated, consider replacing the disc with a fresh one.

7. Upon achieving polishing success, feel free to make minor adjustments to the procedure. You can change the quantity of M205 being used per application, the size of the polishing area, the rate in which you employ water spritzing, and on and on. Check your work often, and be reasonable in your expectations.

8. Once you've completed the compounding portion of your polishing session, use M205 to final polish the paint surface *(it is after all a finishing polish!)* If you are diligent in avoiding the pitfalls of paint residue, the final result created by M205 can be quite spectacular. Generally, only a minute amount of M205 is needed to final polish a surface that has been cut using this procedure.

**A reminder: use caution when implementing this fast-cutting procedure!**
Always be aware that there is a **limited amount of material** that can be safely removed from any paint surface. It is also important to remember that although this procedure uses M205 (a finishing polish) to accomplish its work, there is potentially a vast amount of paint removal taking place.

If you are a beginner-level paint polisher, use as much caution as you would when utilizing a heavy-cut compound and an aggressive polishing pad. If you are an experienced paint polisher, I encourage you to trust your judgment when utilizing this procedure. If upon attempting this procedure you believe that no amount of polishing (regardless the procedure) is going to remove stubborn defects, then by all means… stop polishing! Finally, if it seems that you've achieved *some* level of success using this procedure, but you aren't sure that you've *maximized* its potential… contact me directly at the e-mail address listed below.

**In closing.**
I believe that paint polishing is a **craft**, not an art form. Properly polished paint is not open to interpretation; it has no style or design. In writing this article, my goal has been to assist its paint-polishing readers in becoming proficient & efficient in their ability to accurately assess a polishing situation, and to put into effect the procedure that delivers the safest and best result.

An expert paint-polisher should know when a paint surface *cannot* or *should not* be polished to a higher degree. He should also possess enough self-control to cease polishing when he's reached the goal set forth at the onset of the polishing session. Finally, he should strive to develop his polishing ability to the point that he can perfect a paint surface to the highest degree, should he *desire* or *be required* to do so.

Thanks for reading!

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