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Introduction To Auto Air Colours

Creutex auto air colours are base coat graphic paints for custom automotive painting. Auto Air Colours are lightfast and utilise the latest developments in water based and waterborne technology to provide long-lasting, successful results when used as directed.

Auto Air Colours are made with lightfast, permanent pigments and colorants that are intended and designed for automotive applications. The binders used are durable and an automotive grade. The Auto Air Colours are what the automotive paint industry is evolving into durable, lightfast and non-toxic automotive colours.

Auto Air Colours are in intermixable system consisting of over 135 colours. When used in combination, Auto Air Colours provide an infinite possibility of custom colours and effects.

Auto Air Colours can be used as the base coat for an entire paint job, which is then coated with a finishing clear, or Auto Air Colours may be used for graphics applied into the factory finish then coated with a clear.

The newly reformulated Auto Air Colours are unlike any other water based paint available. Auto Air Colours are specifically designed for automotive application. Auto Air Colours are ready to spray out of the bottle and do not require any additives. Auto Air Colours have a silky, finely atomized spray pattern. The colours dry to a flat, even finish without an "orange peel" look and form a strong, permanent bond with the surface they are applied. Auto Air Colours are made with the highest grade pigments and colorants for lightfastness comparable to urethane paints. Auto Air Colours are a true breakthrough in waterbased technology.

Auto Air Colours are non-toxic, containing less than 0.01% VOC. Auto Air Colours do not pose health or respiratory dangers. Expensive air filtration systems are not needed.

Auto Air Colours are designed to be coated with a clear finish for maximum permanence. Auto Air Colours work excellent with virtually all urethane or polyurethane clear coats of any grade. There are no compatibility issues between paint and clear coat when working with Auto Air Colours. Due to the Auto Air Colours' porosity, the clear coat is absorbed directly into the paint creating a strong, uniform bond. The result is perfect unison between the base colours and clear coat. Auto Air Colours have a "death grip" on the clear coat. They will not lift or peel.

Auto Air Colours have greater flexibility than urethane and lacquer base coat paints, making them more resistant to chipping and flaking. When spraying on fibreglass, Auto Air Colours do not create an electro-static charge as do urethane base coats which makes dust and debris stick to the colours.

Required Materials

- Spray gun for larger areas
- Airbrush
- Air Compressors that produces 3 cfm or more
- Heat gun or heat lamp
- 3-M Red and Gray Scotch-Brite Scuff Pad®
- 320-800 grit sandpaper
- Paint filters
- Cleat coat
- Mild solvent based degreaser
- NIOSH/MSHA approved respirator

Preparation

Proper planning is the key to the success of any project. Proper preparation requires having the right materials, tools, abrasives and a clean area to spray.

The first step in preparation is to remove the surface of all contaminants such as dirt, grease and waxes. Even when the surface is to be sanded, it is best to remove any film on the surface as sanding a dirty surface will further push contaminants into the surface. Use a cleaner or degreaser with a mild solvent base that dries fast.

Next the surface should be thoroughly sanded or scuffed. It is necessary to evaluate the surface. If the existing coating is an O.E.M. finish in good condition, it may be prepared by dry D/A sanding, wet sanding or scuffing.

If the existing coating is in poor condition, stripping down to the bare substrate is recommended. Use liquid strippers, aggressive sanding, medial blasting, etc.

Bare metal should be cleaned of any contaminants and oils, then coated with self etching primer. Use standard automotive grade primers. Auto Air Colours work over any automotive filler primer. After automotive primer has been applied, prepare surface by scuffing or sanding thoroughly eliminating all surface imperfections. Follow manufacturer's directions. Once the surface has been thoroughly sanded or scuffed, the next step is the application of Auto Air Base Coat Sealer White or Dark.

When working with bare or exposed metal, an automotive primer must be used before application of Auto Air Colours. Auto Air Colours are water based and may corrode exposed metal. Auto Air Colours work over any automotive primer.

Fibreglass should be scrubbed thoroughly, washed and dried. Repair and fill any deep scratches, dents and surface imperfections prior to painting. Machine sand, hand sand, wet sand or scuff with a 3-M Red or Gray Scotch-Brite Scuff Pad®.

Once the surface has been thoroughly sanded or scuffed, the next step is the application of Auto Air Base Coat Sealer White or Dark. The surface is then ready for the application of colours.

Application of Auto Air Colours

Auto Air Colours must be thoroughly shaken prior to use. Auto Air Colours have a high pigment load in a low viscosity binder. Settling of the pigment is intended. Auto Air Colours must be thoroughly shaken prior to use. Some colours in the 4300FX Colours Series, such as the 4330 Metallic White (fine) and 4331 Metallic White(coarse), and then 4100 Series Aluminium Bases may need vigorous shaking due to their heavily pigmented metallic flakes.

There are no time windows when working with Auto Air Colours, Unlike most other automotive base coat systems, there are no time windows necessary for proper application of Auto Air Colours. Additional coats may be applied at any time once the underlying coat has dried. Additional coats may be done within minutes of the fast coat or several days may pass before the next coat is applied.

There is no time window for clear coating Auto Air Colours. The clear may be applied as soon as the colours have been heat cured and are thoroughly dried. However, the clear will still work excellent with the colours if several days pass before application

Auto Air Colours are best used under warm, dry and dust free conditions. Createx recommends using Auto Air Colours under shop conditions with a minimum temperature of 70°F. Auto Air Colours are water based and lose excess water through evaporation and will retard the Auto Air Colour's curing process. Working in excessively cold or humid conditions requires an extended heat curing process.

When working in conditions under the recommended temperature, a heat lamp or other heat source to warm and dry Auto Air Colours is essential. Auto Air Colours must be thoroughly dry prior to clear coating.

To ensure colours are free of any contaminants, pass Auto Air Colours through a filter prior to spraying. Createx takes great care and pride in making its Auto Air Colours. As a part of its quality control process, Createx employs multiple filtration steps to ensure the colours are free of contaminants. However, small bits of hardened paint may be on the caps, especially once the caps on the Auto Air Colours bottles have been opened and the colours are exposed to fresh air. These hardened bits of paint may be mixed with the rest of the paint when the bottle is shaken. These hardened bits will create imperfections when sprayed. Although such occurrences are not common, it is best to pass the colours through a filter or screen prior to use. Pass the colours through a fine mesh paint filter prior to use. Another way colours may be properly filtered is to cut out a small area from the filter screen, unscrew cap from bottle, place the cut screen over the bottle's opening and screw the cap back onto the bottle's top.

Apply colours in lightly layered coats, allowing coat to dry prior to the application of the next coat. Working in lightly layered coats is important to ensuring successful results. As evaporation is a part of the curing process, working in light layers ensures all excess moisture will evaporate and that colours will properly adhere to the surface.

Often, multiple layers of 2 to 5 coats are applied to achieve the desired colour. Coat refers to applying enough colour so that the layers "wet". Wetting is when the individual colour particles adhere with one another creating a wet look on the surface. When the colours are applied on a single light pass they look dry on the surface. After 2 or 3 light passes, they look wet because they link up with one another creating a continuous film. This is one coat; 2-3 light passes until the colour is wet. At this point, the colour can be cured with heat with a heat gun or other heat source until dry to the touch. When using a heat gun, it is important to move the hot air source, not staying on a particular point for too long. This technique and much more information is demonstrated on the Createx Auto Air Colours User Guide Video and DVD.

Use Base Coat Sealer as first coat. Base Coat Sealer has excellent adhesion and coverage and should be used as the initial coat. For more information, refer to Base Coat Sealers on page 7.

When working on bare metal, an automotive primer must first be used. Auto Air Colours are water based and should not be used directly on metal to avoid corrosion. For more information, please refer to "Preparation" on page 2.

Auto Air Colours need to be cured with heat. The heat source may be a hot air gun, heated/infrared lamp, heated spray booth, etc. All coats should be cured with heat before the next coat is applied. It is especially important to cure with heat the first coat and the final paint job prior to clear coating.

Curing Auto Air Colours in humid or cold damp conditions requires extended exposure to heat. Auto Air Colours are water based and as such, evaporate excess water when they cure. Cold and humid conditions inhibit the evaporation of the excess water, which retards the curing process. To counter this, Auto Air Colours should be exposed to heat from a hot air gun or heat lamp for an extended period of time. Length of time varies, but colours should be dry to the touch. When working in light coats as recommended, extended drying time should be about double the amount of time allowed to cure colours. Cure colours prior to sanding and masking. When applied in light coats and cured, colours will not lift. Tape with most any automotive tapes and fine line tapes. Colours may lift when not cured or used improperly by building coats too thickly.

Auto Air Colours may be thinned with Auto Air Reducer. Auto Air Colours are ready to spray out of the bottle, but for use with airbrushes smaller than what is recommended on the colour's label, thin with Auto Air Reducer.

Auto Air Colours are compatible with any urethane or polyurethane automotive clear. Createx has yet to find a urethane or polyurethane clear coat that did not work excellent with Auto Air Colours. There is no required time window for applying the clear after applying the Auto Air Colours. The colours can be cleared right after the colours have been cured with heat and are thoroughly dry. For more information, please refer to the clear coating instruction in this guide.

Curing Auto Air Colours

Auto Air Colours are water based and evaporate excess moisture when they cure. This is why it is important to work in light layers as heavily built layers will not allow the excess water to evaporate from the underlying layers. Light layers ensure the Auto Air Colours properly cure.

Auto Air Colours cure through the addition of heat from a heat gun, a shop heat/infrared lamp, heated spray booth, etc. Hot air causes the Auto Air Colours' binder to crosslink, which creates a permanent paint film. If area is too large to cure with heat, use Auto Air Catalyst and make sure colours are allowed to thoroughly dry.

As demonstrated in the Auto Air Colours User Guide Video and DVD, the colours are cured by applying heat from a hot air gun to the colours after spraying a thin coat. The colours do not need to completely dry prior to using a hot air gun when the coat is a thin layer of 2-3 passes. The temperature does not need to be excessively hot. Making colours warm to the touch will do, although Auto Air Colours are able to withstand temperatures in excess of 400°F. Exposing colours to extreme heat when curing may risk blistering of colours.

Cold and humid conditions inhibit the evaporation of water, which retard the Auto Air Colours' curing process. To counter this, Auto Air Colours must be cured by heat; heat gun, heat lamp, heated spray booth, etc.

The length of time required to cure the colours varies as temperatures, humidity and amount of material sprayed affect the curing time. However, the process should be quick when coats are applied in light layers as recommended. When using a hot air gun, it is important to use it at 2-4 inches away from the surface and keep the air moving so as not to stay on a particular area for more than a few seconds.

Clear Coating Auto Air Colours

Auto Air Colours are compatible and work excellent with all urethane and polyurethane clear coats of any grade. Createx tested many clears with the Auto Air Colours during its development and found all clears to perform excellent with the Auto Air Colours. Clear coats have a death grip on Auto Air Colours with no delamination problems.

The secret to the Auto Air Colours superior compatibility with clear coats is its porosity. Clears are absorbed into the Auto Air Colours creating a strong, uniform bond. There is no lifting or peeling and the results are long lasting

Auto Air Colours do not have to be sanded prior to clear coating. If fingerprints and smudges need to be removed from the Auto Air Colours' surface prior to clear coating use a mild solvent based cleaner or degreaser, such as DuPont's Final Kleen 3901S®.

When applying the clear, lightly dust on the first coat allowing it to be absorbed and acclimated into the Auto Air Colours. Allow for the proper flash time as recommended by the clear manufacturer. Then apply 2-3 additional medium wet coats as per the manufacturer's instructions. You won't be disappointed by the results.