

# That'll Buff Right Out!

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2Windy

That'll buff right out! That's the catch phrase many use when viewing a damaged car. It's supposed to be funny, especially when the car is obviously damaged beyond repair. You'd be surprised though at what really can be simply buffed out under the right circumstances.

I bring this up because I had this circumstance recently and thought I'd share! For those of you who don't know, we have a new driver in our household. And yes, she's been driving the Miatas. She's becoming a pretty good driver on the street, but she has some trouble with low-speed maneuvering. Before you get the wrong idea, the situation in question was entirely "my fault", even though I wasn't the one behind the wheel. At least that's how my wife looks at it! :O) Maybe you can get something out of my experience.

It was a pretty Fall afternoon and we needed to move some cars around the driveways and garage at our house. It's a common occurrence around our place and what better time to start putting the new driver to work, right? Right?

Our "situation" began when I asked Amanda to pull Judy's Miata ('97 M-edition) off the street and into the driveway while I put the 'speed into the back of the garage. Now you see how this is all my fault. She got the car into the drive OK, a little off to one side, but satisfactory. With me standing in the garage to guide her, I suggested she try straightening it up a little and pulling straight into the garage... straight being the operative word in that sentence.

The next words out of my mouth, in order, were: "stop", "STOP" and "I meant for you to stop when I said STOP". Somehow, the right front corner of the car scraped and came to rest against the right side of the garage door opening. Our new driver was mortified, I was stunned and my wife was rather non-plussed when she walked over to the garage to see what we were doing. After moving the car back, this was the result:

After looking it over, it appeared to be mostly paint transfer from the door jamb, some scuffing of the marker light and maybe some scratching into the clear coat. After about 20 minutes of work, here's how it turned out:

The only remaining damage is a tiny, tiny 1/2 inch scratch in the clear coat in front of the marker light that you have to get down on your knees to see. If I didn't tell you where to look, you probably wouldn't find it. It doesn't even show in the picture. Everything else you see in the picture is reflections.

Here's what I did, and you can do it too! First, I cleaned the area with soap & water and then removed the marker light. A few minutes of hand polishing with some Meguiars Plast-X plastic polish and it was good as new.

Next I pulled out the Porter-Cable buffer and pads. Don't have one of those? No problem, you can do this by hand, it'll just take a lot longer. I started with a cutting pad and Meguiars new Ultimate Compound. I mentioned it in a column a few months ago. It's worth every bit of its \$9.99 price. It cuts and levels paint very quickly and finishes down with a lot of gloss. It works by buffer or by hand. In fact, it works extremely well by hand. It took about 10 minutes with the buffer to remove the transferred paint and polish out the scratches underneath.

Finally, I went over the whole area with a fine polish, matching the gloss on the rest of the car. When that was completed, I finished up with a coat of paint sealant (Duragloss 101) and it was done.

I hope you never have a similar situation. But if you do, I hope this will help. Don't panic. It doesn't always come out as well as this did, but you never know until you clean it up and see what you're working with. If you have more damage, you can always take it to a shop to be evaluated. You won't hurt anything by removing any transferred paint in the meantime.

Oh, and yes, all has been forgiven at our house. Ultimately, I knew Amanda needed more practice with low-speed maneuvering and I'm the one who put her behind the wheel and into the situation in the first place. We're having fun with her driver's training and I'm very proud of her and her progress. As I write this, today is her 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. It'll be a few months yet before she qualifies for her license and we're willing to turn her loose upon the motoring public. I'm just warning you now...

**Disclaimer:** *Everyone's driving experience and skills differ. There's no need to attribute to malicious intent that which can be more easily explained by lack of skill or attention.*