

Care and Maintenance Guide

for Alexseal Premium Topcoat 501

1. Introduction

With proper care and maintenance, Alexseal Premium Topcoat 501 will withstand the harsh marine environment. After application, it is important to maintain a yacht's exterior surface by keeping it clean and protecting it. Follow these care and maintenance recommendations thoroughly for best results.

2. Washing

Rinse down the paint surface with clean fresh water every time the boat is used to remove salt spray and dirt. A water softener may be needed to overcome hard water spots. A buildup of hard water spotting can be confused with premature dulling of paint. A reverse osmosis water supply may also be used to minimize water spotting.

The paint surface should be washed once a week using a mild detergent with a neutral PH formulated specifically for paint finishes. Some detergents will strip waxes & protective sealants off the surface. These should be avoided. Check the detergent label.

Do not use abrasive brushes, pads or cleaning agents on paint. These will scratch and dull the finish. Use only soft clean wash mitts and brushes that are specifically designed for washing painted surfaces.

Dry the surface to prevent water spots. Wherever possible, dry the surface with a quality towel, chamois and / or a wiping blade. This will eliminate water spots.

3. Sealing and Protecting

It is recommended to apply a high quality wax or polymer sealer designed for surfaces painted with polyurethane at least 2-3 times per year. This will act as a sacrificial coating that will protect the paint and can dramatically improve the coatings life expectancy.

4. Important Notes

Many companies manufacture products for sealing and protecting painted surfaces. Only use products that are specifically designed for surfaces painted with polyurethane. These products should not contain abrasives or caustic chemicals.

Do not let moisture/water collect or be trapped between a Polyurethane Topcoat and plastic film, shrink wrap, hardware, seat cushions, or wet fabric. Polyurethane topcoats should not be continuously submerged under water. Moisture/water held against a Polyurethane Topcoat even for a few days can result in bubbles forming in the Polyurethane Topcoat.

5. Removing Stains

Remove stains from a polyurethane finish as soon as possible. Some stains can actually etch the surface of the paint and embed into the coating. If a stain cannot be removed with a mild detergent during the washing process, solvents may be used to loosen the stain. Always start with mild solvents such as Mineral Spirits, VM & P Naphtha or Denatured Alcohol. Harsher solvents such as Acetone and Lacquer Thinner should only be used as a last resort. After removing the stain with solvent, wash the area with a mild detergent and clean water to remove all solvent residues.

6. Removing Salt Residue

Remove dried salt residue by washing the surface with a warm water and white vinegar solution. Dilute the white vinegar 1:1 with warm water and wash the surface. When finished, rewash the surface with a mild detergent and clean water.

7. Detailing

Many surfaces on a boat will require minor detailing over time. This might include removing mild overspray, light dust and tape lines from repainted panels or polishing an aged surface to temporarily restore the luster. When such areas need detailing as part of the initial application of the coating or periodically over time to repair fine scratches, use a protective wax or polymer sealer to help maintain the gloss in detailed areas. Detailing must be done by an experienced applicator either by hand, or slow speed polishing machine, using an applicator pad recommended by the product's manufacturer.

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Page 1 of 2

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8. Buffing

Occasionally light buffing and / or fine sanding with 1500-3000 grit and buffing may be needed to restore or improve the finish. Buffing must be done by an experienced applicator either by hand or slow speed buffing machine using a compound/polish and a pad recommended by the product's manufacturer. Use a protective wax or polymer sealer to help maintain the gloss in the buffed areas. Avoid aggressive buffing which could remove excessive coating from the surface and reduce durability of the paint.

9. Spot Repairs

Spot repairs must be done by an experienced applicator using a blend area and Blending Solvent fog technique. A spot repair is used to repair a small area versus repainting the entire surface. A 1500 - 2000 grit blending area will reduce a halo appearance where the new coating overlaps the old coating. Use Alexseal A5033 Blending Solvent to spray a light mist or fog on this overspray edge to reduce the texture and aid in blending. Machine buff the blended area to restore the gloss. Any buffing must be done by an experienced applicator by hand or slow speed buffing machine using compound/polish and a pad recommended by the product's manufacturer. Applying a protective wax or polymer sealer in this area is necessary every 8-12 weeks.

Note: Some colors including reds, grays, gray blues and metallics are not repairable. To avoid color change, testing on a small inconspicuous area is recommended. For further information see Alexseal Repair Guides.

10. Recommended Products

Listed below are some products designed for cleaning and maintaining painted finishes. Other products may be suitable. Read all labels before using.

Washing:

ALEXSEAL Premium Wash Down Concentrate A5005
 3M Multi-Purpose Boat Soap Aquatech 501 Boat Wash Concentrate
 Boat Life Boat Soap Liquid Glass[®] Wash Concentrate
 Meguiar's Flagship Premium Marine Wash Sudbury Boat Zoap

Sealing and Protection:

Use a UV stable polymer sealer or a non-abrasive wax which contains polymers designed for paint.

ALEXSEAL[®] Premium Polymer Sealer A5010
 3M Scotch Guard Liquid Wax (9061/9062) Aquatech 201 Premier Polish
 Liquid Glass[®] Polish/Finish Meguiar's Flagship Premium Marine Wax

Buffing:

3M Perfect-It Rubbing Compound (06085/06086)
 by slow speed machine with foam pad or yellow bonnet

3M Imperial Compound and Finishing Material (6044 / 6045)
 by slow speed machine with foam pad or yellow bonnet.

Polishing after Buffing:

3M Perfect-It Machine Polish (06064/06065)
 By slow speed machine with Black Foam Pad (05725)

For dark colors: 3M Perfect-It Ultra-Fine Polish – (06068/06069)
 by slow speed machine with 3M Blue Foam Pad (05733)

3M Finesse-It II – Finishing Material (5928 / 5929)
 by hand or slow speed machine and foam pad

Note: A coarse wool white buffing bonnet should not be used on polyurethane finishes. Use the finer wool yellow bonnet specified above when a wool type buffing bonnet is necessary.

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Page 2 of 2

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