

## Press Release



DEKRA tips for ensuring good windshield visibility

### **The Right Cleaner for a Clear View**

- ▶ Accumulations of dirt cause dangerous glare
- ▶ Winter windshield cleaners unsuitable for summer dirt
- ▶ Choose high-quality cleaners

**A dirty car windshield is a safety risk, warn DEKRA's experts. Dirt and smears on the glass can have a significant impact on visibility, especially in unfavorable light and weather conditions. So what is the best way of getting rid of these undesirable accumulations? Thilo Kunst, an automotive chemicals expert at DEKRA, explains what drivers should look out for. The switch from a winter windshield cleaner to a summer product is especially important.**

If drivers fail to clean their windshield regularly, all kinds of dirt can accumulate: on the outside, dead insects, bird droppings, tree resin, pollen, road dirt, and wax and drying aids from the car wash; on the inside, a film of vapors emitted by plastics, dirt, and cigarette smoke. Especially when driving toward the light, dirt on the windshield can cause glare that dazzles the driver. DEKRA warns that this increases the risk of accidents, particularly from the glare of oncoming headlights at night or when the sun is low in the sky.

#### **Interior glass cleaner is a good solution**

Many drivers use household glass cleaners or products purchased from auto accessory stores to remove these accumulations. "They are a good solution for the inside of the windshield," says Thilo Kunst, an expert from DEKRA's laboratory for environmental and product analysis. "However, caution is recommended. Like dishwashing liquid and other household cleaners, they are not really suitable for cleaning the car cockpit because they may cause stress cracks in displays and other sensitive plastics." For this reason, it is best to use special cleaning products for plastic cockpit components and displays.

Glass or windshield cleaners are also an option for the outside of the windshield. As a rule, they also remove car wash residues such as preservation waxes and drying aids.

Date        Stuttgart, April 16, 2025 / No. 030  
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These residues can normally be eliminated by the cleaner used in the windshield washing system.

### **Exterior car shampoos**

Car shampoos are an even better solution for the exterior because they clean the entire vehicle – including the windshield. “Special insect removers are recommended to clean dried-on dead insects from the radiator grill and license plate,” explains DEKRA expert Kunst. “The last resort for really stubborn dirt is glass polish, which contains very fine abrasives that remove the film.”

### **Switch to a summer cleaner**

The right windshield cleaner is the key to ensuring good visibility. That is why a summer mix should be added to the washer water when spring comes. Winter cleaners contain solvents, which can easily form an unsightly film on windshields. They are designed for low temperatures and are often unable to optimally remove the protein-based summer dirt cocktail of dead insects, bird droppings, tree resin, and pollen.

For this reason, using an unsuitable windshield cleaner or just water can be a safety risk. It is also not advisable to add dishwashing liquid or similar household cleaners to windshield washing water. Unsuitable cleaning products may cause paints or plastics to blister, dissolve material, and cause stress cracks in headlamps made of polycarbonates.

### **Unsuitable cleaning products may damage paintwork and rubber**

Drivers should look for quality when choosing a windshield cleaner. A reliable indication of a high-quality product is a test label, which verifies that the cleaner has been tested in terms of its performance, harmful ingredients, and material compatibility.

Windshield wiper maintenance is also essential to ensuring good visibility. Wiper blades should be changed if they start to vibrate, leave streaks, or fail to properly clean some areas of the windshield. Even so, the combined effect of cleaner and wipers may sometimes not be enough. “If too many dead insects have dried onto the windshield during a long journey on the highway, only a sponge, water, and elbow grease can help,” says DEKRA expert Kunst.

### **About DEKRA**

*For 100 years, DEKRA has been a trusted name in safety. Founded in 1925 with the original goal of improving road safety through vehicle inspections, DEKRA has grown to become the world's largest independent, non-listed expert organization in the field of testing, inspection, and*

*certification. Today, as a global partner, the company supports its customers with comprehensive services and solutions to drive safety and sustainability forward—fully aligned with DEKRA's anniversary motto, "Securing the Future." In 2024, DEKRA generated revenue of 4.3 billion euros. Around 48,000 employees are providing qualified and independent expert services in approximately 60 countries across five continents. DEKRA holds a Platinum rating from EcoVadis, placing it among the top 1% of the world's most sustainable companies.*