

Body Undercoating

Body undercoating is something that is very time consuming and requires lots of "elbow grease". Applying undercoating is similar to painting the body, with some important differences. One is access. Painting the body is much easier than undercoat to the location of where the undercoating is applied. Another different is (for the most part) painting is on a flat surface and gravity is working in your favor. Whereas with undercoating gravity is working against you!

Ideally, before undercoating, you would want to sandblast to remove old undercoating and paint down to bare metal. But how many of us have a sandblasting unit laying around gathering dust? Also, Ideally, you would want to strip everything out of the VW then flip over the bare body on the roof to apply the undercoating. But who in the world, or in their right mind would want to do that?! NOT ME!

One word of warning: Improperly applying undercoating will cause severe rusting out of your pan!

So, what is the best way? Pick a day with LOW humidity. REASON: once you are down to bare metal rusting will start. Keeping your VW project in a dry, clean, and low humidity place to work on will also help.

First, it is absolutely critical to remove all of the old undercoating, rust and old paint before re-applying any new undercoating. You can do this by the use of an orbital sander, sandpaper, "[Naval Jelly](#)" and a putty knife. Start by lifting the [driver's side](#). After lifting up the VW, then scrape off any loose material. ONLY work on small areas at a time! This will prevent rusting.

I have seen this take anywhere from 1 to 5 days to complete the entire underside of the VW and just as long for the inside, too. (Dave agrees with this!)

Now, after removing the all of the old paint, undercoating and rust, it is time to apply the undercoat. Be sure that all surfaces that you are applying undercoating to, are clean, smooth, and free of any contamination, such as rust, oil, grease, fingerprints, and any solvents. Spray the undercoating on smoothly using even strokes. Apply the first coat thinly but evenly. Do NOT put on the first coat on think like concrete! This will cause the first layer to not dry thoroughly. Wait for the first coat to dry completely before applying the second and subsequent coats. You must apply the undercoating in thin, even layers. You will want to put on about 4 to 6 layers of undercoating on. (This depends upon your location in the world. More layers for ocean or severe weather areas). Allow PLENTY of time for each coat to dry. READ THE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE CAN for this information. Some say it is dry in 1 hour and some say 24 hours.

"But what if I am working on the inside?" All of the above is still true but you will have to remove all of the interior including seats, carpet, the tar paper, and all paint and

undercoating. DO NOT reinstall that tar paper (Styrofoam sandwiched between two pieces of tar paper), it is used for sound deadening and will cause rusting again!

TAKE YOUR TIME! DO NOT RUSH THROUGH THIS. The more time you take and the more careful you are the better the results will be.

Which undercoating is the best? Well, [Rust-oleam](#) or [Krylon](#). **On average**, they last about 10 to 15 years. Others may last less time than that.

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