



FLAT CUT METAL LETTERS/LOGOS MAINTENANCE

Metal Letters

All Gemini metal letters (except anodized and stainless steel) are coated with clear poly paint to help protect the metal from corrosion. Based on where the letters are installed, periodic cleaning of this coating may be required. Wash these letters with a soft cloth and warm, soapy (dish washing liquid) water. Cleaning with harsh cleaners that contain chemicals is not recommended, as this may damage the clear poly coating. We recommend cleaning every few months, or as needed to preserve the original finish.

Repairing Paint Scratches

Scratches in letters can be a distraction, especially with interior installations. Smaller scratches can be minimized by first washing the letter, then applying car wax and buffing the scratch with a soft cloth. Deeper scratches can be removed by wet sanding with extra fine grit sandpaper. Sand the scratch, wipe dry with a soft cloth and apply a liquid paste such as Finesse-it to the scratch. Buff out the scratch with an auto paint repair buffing wheel. Deep scratches that cannot be buffed out will have to be sanded with 1200 grit paper, then re-painted.

Anodized Aluminum

Anodized Aluminum is a superior coating that is both weather and abrasion resistant. When your anodized letters require cleaning, just use a soft cloth, warm water and a mild dish soap. While the finish is hard and weather resistant, do not use any solvent based thinners (petroleum distillates) or abrasive cleaners, as they will degrade the chemical seal and will cause the finish to fail.

Stainless Steel

Gemini's stainless steel flat cut letters & logos are provided without a clear poly coating. While stainless steel is designed to stain or corrode less than other metals, periodic cleaning may still be required to retain the original luster, and preserve corrosion resistance. Stainless steel is protected from corrosion by a thin layer of chromium oxide. Oxygen from the atmosphere combines with the chromium in the stainless steel to form this passive chromium oxide film that protects the steel from further corrosion. Any contamination of the surface, such as dirt, will hinder the passivation process and trap corrosive agents. Excessive exposure to salty air or frequent watering (sprinkling) with city water containing chemicals and hard minerals, may also stain your stainless letters. Therefore, routine cleaning not only protects the letters appearance, but also the integrity of the metal. As with coated metal, these letters can be cleaned with a liquid soap and warm water. Depending on the level of dirt or grime, additional cleaning may be required by using water, white vinegar and a soft cloth or a household stainless cleaner such as "Kleen King"-available for cleaning stainless appliances. Always wipe letter faces in the same direction as the grain. Should polishing be required, use a good stainless polish such as Wenol metal polish and a soft cloth to reshine the letters. If corrosion becomes visible as soon as a few days or weeks after installation, the most likely cause is carbon steel or iron contamination of the surface. If it is surface contamination rather than deeply embedded particles, a surface chemical treatment can dissolve the carbon steel without damaging the stainless steel. Citric acid passivation products can be used but they are generally less effective than other options. There are Nitric acid gels, which can be painted on in the field and then

rinsed away. Oxalic Acid can be effective if you want to try an intermediate step before stepping up to a nitric acid. Both "Barkeepers Friend" and "Zud" contain oxalic acid and a fine abrasive that will not scratch the finish. Make it into a paste, apply to the surface and let it sit on the surface for 10-15 minutes (giving the acid time to work) before rubbing. Thoroughly rinse off the paste.

Caution:

Never use Comet, Ajax, Softscrub, or similar common household cleaners. They can scratch the finish and some contain chloride compounds that can cause corrosion, if not thoroughly washed off surfaces. There are also commercial rust removal products that are specifically designed for use on stainless steel. Do not use a general "rust removal" product without identifying its ingredients and determining if they are acceptable for use on stainless steel. Test any new product on a small stainless steel surface prior to use to make sure that it does not cause color change. Fingerprints and Stains usually affect only appearance and seldom have an effect on corrosion resistance. They are easy to remove by a variety of simple cleaning methods. Fingerprints can be removed with a glass cleaner, white vinegar or by gently rubbing the surface with a paste of soda ash (sodium carbonate) and water applied with a soft rag. Follow this with a thorough warm water rinse. The key is to not use any cleaner that contains chlorine.