Car Wash, Automatic Encyclopedia Article

Car Wash, Automatic

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The first American car-washing facilities were very expensive to operate because they were little more than conveyors that pulled the car past groups of workers who performed all the tasks associated with cleaning a car. In the late 1930s the first fully automatic car wash went into operation in the United States. It had many of the typical features we recognize today, including large rotating rollers that have flexible strands to flick away the dirt. One horizontal roller is used to clean the upper surfaces, while vertical rollers are used to clean the sides. Modern car washes incorporate a number of other features. Many of the rollers now have limit switches, operated by simple levers that control the motors. When the roller meets an object such as a mirror, the roller will slow down and move around it. Many car washes pass cars under blowers for drying and many are also equipped to apply liquid wax after the washing cycle is complete. With water conservation becoming more important, car washes often recycle much of their water.Many car washes feature brushless, no-cloth washing,relying on water pressure and chemicals to clean the car. Detailing, a service for fastidious customers is a thorough, minute, immaculate cleaning, vacuuming and polishing of a car, inside and out,usually by hand.