



How to Restore Foggy Car Headlights

In this guide I will show how to restore a GMC Envoy headlight.

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INTRODUCTION

During normal use, headlights are exposed to UV light, dirt, chemicals, and water vapor, causing their plastic housing to oxidize and deteriorate, making the headlight foggy and potentially reducing visibility by up to 50%. While this guide demonstrates the headlight restoration on a 2003 GMC Envoy, these steps will bring any foggy headlights back to like-new conditions.

Before beginning, make sure that rain or other precipitation isn't expected in your area for the next couple days, or that you have a well-ventilated garage or covered space to work in; excessive moisture will disrupt the clear coat as it cures.



TOOLS:

- [1000 Grit Sandpaper](#) (1)
 - [1500 Grit Sandpaper](#) (1)
 - [2000 Grit Sand Paper](#) (1)
 - [Paper Towels](#) (1)
 - [Isopropyl Alcohol 70%](#) (1)
 - [Non Yellowing, UV Resistant Clear Coat](#) (1)
 - [Masking Tape](#) (1)
 - [Newspapers](#) (1)
 - [Bucket](#) (1)
 - [Microfiber Cleaning Cloths](#) (1)
 - [Carnauba Wax](#) (1)
 - [Spray Bottle](#) (1)
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Step 1 — How to Restore Foggy Car Headlights



- Place masking tape around the perimeter of the headlights to protect your vehicle's paint.

Step 2



- Soak your 1000, 1500, and 2000 grit sandpaper in a bucket of clean water.
 - ❗ Once the edges begin to roll, the sandpaper is ready to use.

Step 3



- Use wet 1000 grit sandpaper and light pressure to sand the plastic in circular patterns. When you notice that the small scratches look identical across the entire headlight, sand horizontally until all the small scratches appear horizontal.
- ✦ Use a spray-bottle filled with water to keep the sandpaper and the headlight wet throughout the entire sanding process. Dry sanding can damage plastic.
- Repeat the process with 1500, then 2000 grit sandpaper.

Step 4



- Thoroughly dry the headlights.
- Use a microfiber cloth and moderate pressure to apply a thin layer of carnauba wax to the entire surface of the headlights.
- ❗ Work the wax into the plastic using small circular motions.
- Wait until the wax dries to a haze, then buff it off with a clean microfiber towel.

Step 5



- Use 70% isopropyl alcohol and paper towels to remove any residue on the headlights.

⚠ It is very important remove any wax residue, as it will prevent the clear coat from properly binding.

Step 6



- Tape down newspaper or plastic bags at least a foot in radius surrounding the headlights, to avoid damaging your vehicle's paint during the clear coat application.

ⓘ Make sure there are no uncovered gaps.

Step 7



- ☑ Make sure the headlights are completely dry and that it isn't going to rain/snow in the near future, or that you have a well-ventilated, covered space to work in.
- Shake the clear coat well and apply a thin coat evenly across the entire headlight, using long, quick strokes to avoid pooling.
- Wait for the clear coat to fully dry before applying the next coat. Apply at least two coats for better results.
- ⓘ Read the product label and follow the manufacturer's application directions

⚠ Do not apply clear coat in poorly ventilated conditions.

Step 8



- Repeat Steps 3 and 4 to achieve the best result, using only 2,000 grit sandpaper and very light pressure to smooth the clear coat.

Enjoy your crystal-clear headlights!