
A PORTABLE PAINT BOOTH FOR THE GARAGE

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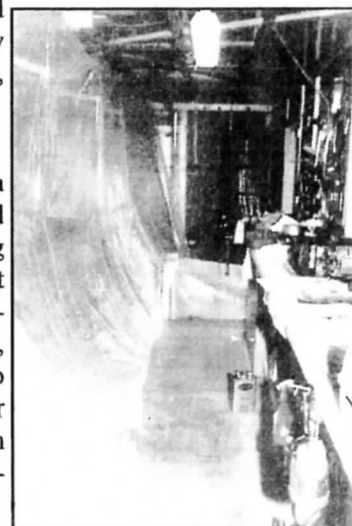
A number of years ago I decided to venture into painting a big block '66 Silver Coupe that I had recently purchased. I stripped the paint and drove it to a friends shop to have it painted Nassau Blue!!! It came back nice, particularly given the low fee charged by my friend. Soon, however, I was not happy with the finish and decided to learn how to wet sand lacquer paint to correct some blemishes. Needless to say, I found that my friend had not put much paint on the car and there was little room for error. After considerable thought I decided to buy a Sears air compressor, a Binks paint gun and jump right in. The purpose of this article is not to explain how a back yard duffer like me learned how to paint lacquer but to show you folks how I built a portable paint booth to "hang" in my garage. It was a simple system that proved very effective for a repaint on 3 cars plus my neighbor's Emron paint job on his Oldsmobile.

The portable paint booth I'm about to describe was used in an attached 2-car garage. It is important to note that the design was conceived after I shot 2 coats of primer in the garage with no paint booth. I must confess that upon completion of my first primer job, I walked into the utility room and found nearly my entire house in a grey fog. You can imagine how long it took us to clean the entire house.

I went to the big box building supply center and bought 4 ply (6 ply is better) clear plastic in 10 foot widths. I fashioned a 10-foot by 22-foot by 10-foot high cube of plastic. Essentially you cut a 64-foot long section of plastic from your 100-foot roll of plastic and connect the 2 ends using duct tape. That's right, duct tape on both sides. If you keep it clean and press firmly, it will last for a number of years. Next you cut a 22 foot section from the roll. This will act as the top of your paint booth. It must be attached to the 64 foot loop of plastic to form a "cube" and will also require using duct tape on both sides all along the top.

Once I had formed the 3 dimensional cube I fashioned 2 inch by 2 inch squares of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wood stock along the top side of the cube every 3-4 feet. Note that one of these little squares is each side of the piece of plastic serving as the top of the booth. I attached them using small wood screws. I then installed wood threaded hooks from the top. I made measurements of the location of the hooks and installed hooks in the ceiling of my garage to match the location of the hooks on my booth. I was then able to hang the entire assembly from the ceiling and presto, I had a paint booth.

Now you're probably asking how I vented the booth. It was easy. I cut a square opening next to my side garage door the same dimension as a 3-speed box fan from your discount department store. I also fashioned a 10-foot long tube "exhaust tube" of plastic using the remaining plastic from my 100 foot roll. When I was ready to paint, I would duct tape the paint booth and the exhaust tube to the box fan. It is important to note that the suction from the fan, even on low, will collapse the booth from the sides, so I used a dozen or so bricks on the floor to keep the bottom of the portable booth away from the car and to give me space to walk around the car. My last addition to this system was to install cheap (\$1) heat pump air filters at 4 locations to allow fresh filtered air to enter the booth.



I also added 2 additional ceiling hooks to one end of the booth to hold open one end while I pushed the car

A PORTABLE PAINT BOOTH FOR THE GARAGE (Cont.)

inside. Once the car was inside, I would stretch the sides as far as possible away from the car along the floor using the bricks. I would turn on the fan to low or medium, blow off the car with the air gun, wipe the car down and proceed to pour "pre-positioned" buckets of water on the floor. It was amazing how clean you can get the area inside this portable booth. I would have my air hose lying inside the booth and ready for me and the paint gun. I would slip inside the booth, attach the spray gun and apply the paint.

It's a great, effective and cheap portable booth. When not in use you can simply leave it hanging from the ceiling rolled up on the sides or you can spend 10 minutes unhooking and folding it up for the next time. Mark one of the ends so that when you unfold the booth for the next round of painting or primer you know how to position and reattach it to the hooks in the ceiling.

Again, it lasted over 5 years and could be easily reinstalled for a quick set up. I had very little dirt in the paint and it kept the rest of the garage (and house) extremely clean.

