

DIY Cast-Iron Master Cylinder “Rust Prevention”

Classic Performance Products’ Corvette-style cast-iron master cylinders are shipped to customers with “raw” cylinder bodies—which means left unprepared, they will start to form rust on the exterior from exposure to the elements, namely brake fluid.

To help prevent this and keep your master cylinder looking good as new*, CPP recommends sealing the bare cast iron, with either a suitable aerosol spray paint or a baked-on coating (do-it-yourself or, preferably, via powdercoating).

NOTE: *CPP cannot warranty any parts that have been painted, plated, or powdercoated; before doing so, ensure proper fit and, most importantly, functionality of your master cylinder.



Painting the Master Cylinder

While conventional aerosol paint is the easiest method, to our knowledge, no brand of “brake” paint is truly resistant to all chemicals. Over time, you may notice some wear through if any brake fluid comes in contact with the painted surface. That being said, proper preparation—and paint application—is a must.



1. Though highly unlikely it will ever rust completely through, left untreated, a bare cast-iron master cylinder can get pretty ugly pretty quickly. (photo 2) The following steps will help prevent that from occurring.



2. First and foremost is proper pre-paint preparation: use a quality brake cleaner to degrease and ready the surface for paint application. Do not use shop rags, as the porous cast iron will collect cotton lint; use a clean abrasive pad instead. (photo 3)



3. Remove all debris and surface rust; on new masters, thoroughly clean and scuff with abrasive. (photo 4)



4. Plug and mask off any/all areas such as brake line ports and fluid chambers where you do not want paint. (photo 5)



5. Start off by applying a light “dust” coat; allow to tack up before continuing with subsequent light, even coats; do not load up paint in one heavy coat, as that will prevent it from properly curing/adhering. (photo 6)



6. For masters with residual fluid inside, it's best not to flip them over, as that will allow it to leak onto your painted surface. And since masking tape may be difficult to adhere, try using a cut out piece of cardboard or similar to cover reservoirs in the process. (photo 7)

7. Cured, sealed, and ready for service. In the process, we used Eastwood's Brake Gray, as it requires no heat curing. Used out of the can (on properly prepped surface), Eastwood's aerosol holds up to brake fluid contact.



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