

WITH A LITTLE ELBOW GREASE, YOUR GARAGE COULD LOOK LIKE THIS, TOO.



UPGRADES//GUY SPACES

PAMPER YOUR RIDE

MAKE YOUR OLD CAR NEW AGAIN

PHOTO BY DAN FORBES

Take care of the little things and your car will age gracefully, like Cheryl Tiegs. Let it go and you'll be driving Joan Rivers. Take years off and add value with these seven tips.

RUB DOWN THE SKINS. You have to routinely moisturize and clean the dash, doors, and seats to extend their life, says Larry Reynolds, CEO of Car Care Specialties. The coverings are probably vinyl or plastic, in which case you'll apply a thin coat of vinyl cleaner (we like Lexol Vinylex, \$9) with a soft cloth and rub it in. For leather, you'll want a separate cleaner and conditioner

(we like Meguiar's Gold Class for both). If you're not sure what's vinyl and what's leather, stick to leather products. Each year, clean your skins twice and condition them four times.

MIND THE CRACKS. On older cars, a hazy patina develops in the clear-coat paint from hundreds of "micro-scratches," says Mark Greene, executive vice president of Griot's

Garage. Polish applied with an orbital polisher should buff them out. (Greene is partial to Griot's Garage Machine Polish, natch.) A deeper gouge requires touch-up paint. Don't use a brush, though. An applicator designed for touch-up paint (available at any auto-parts store) will be more precise.

DITCH THE SAP. Never scrape tree sap. You'll pry off the paint, says Mike Pennington, an automotive-wax and -cleanser specialist for Meguiar's. Instead, apply a few

coats of bug-and-tar remover to soften the sap, then shave it off with a plastic razor (available at any auto-parts store). Buff and wax the area, and quit parking under trees.

CLEAN YOUR SLATE. If you intend on selling your car anytime soon, you're going to want to lose the faded bumper sticker (who was Lieberman again?) and the dealer nameplate (are they paying you to advertise?). A strand of fishing line will saw through the adhesive holding on the nameplate, says

CREATE A GUY'S GARAGE Transform the most overlooked room of the house into a personal sanctuary

Pull in. Exit car. Kick aside sports equipment. Enter house. That's the extent of interaction most guys have with their garage. Instead, turn it into a space to behold.

LIGHT IT LIKE A SHOWROOM

Fluorescent lighting with a high CRI (color- rendition index) will make your ride look new, says Bill West, author of *Your Garagenous Zone*. It'll also make working on

your car inside the garage easier. Look for CRI numbers above 75. Add high-quality task lighting near your work space to reduce glare. At showroomgarage.com, you can buy the same lighting used by BMW, Ferrari, and Rolls-Royce dealers.

GO BASIC ON FLOORS

Spend your money on simple and protective flooring, not a flashy pattern, says Dan Woods, host of *Chop Cut Rebuild* on Speed TV. We like the industrial PVC floor mats from BLT (\$160 and up, jnkproducts.com).



BYE-BYE, ORDINARY GARAGE. HELLO GARAGMAHAL.

com). The material can take a beating, and you can hose it clean.

ADD A VISUAL FOCUS

Stick to one simple but powerful centerpiece in the garage, like, say, a Lamborghini. But if you have a smaller budget, consider a neon nostalgia sign from Vault (\$3,000 and up, showroomgarage.com).

STEEL THIS ROOM

Imperatively stainless-steel wall panels (\$18, ikea.com) could enliven a dungeon. They will also help protect walls against dings.

(top) Century Fox/Everett Collection (The Hustler); KANG KIM (pool table); RUSS DEYAN (pool table); Kevin Mailett/Getty Images (dort) Daniel Mulvey (news)