



## Bilt Hamber auto-clay regular

Price: £9.95 Clay weight: 200g

Contact: 01277 658899, [www.bilthamber.com](http://www.bilthamber.com)

Rating: ★★★★★

**BEST BUY** THIS clay from Essex brand Bilt Hamber feels different. Where most rivals are soft and noticeably sticky, auto-clay regular is stiffer and any tackiness is masked by the powder it comes in. But it works. It was close after the first attempt, but clearly left the smoothest finish after the second. Put this alongside a big 200g bar, plastic box storage and cost-effective water lubricant, and you have a winner.



## BriteMax Claymax

Price: £8.99 Clay weight: 100g

Contact: 01342 893015, [britemax.co.uk](http://britemax.co.uk)

Rating: ★★★★★

**RECOMMENDED** UNIQUELY in this test, Claymax claims to be chemical resistant and is recommended for use with BriteMax Iron Max bodywork cleaner as a lubricant. The latter smells like the latest wheel cleaners. Claymax matched our winner on the bonnet, plus it can be used with water as a lubricant. It's more expensive than auto-clay, but buy online and you currently get a free Iron Max sample.



## Meguiar's Smooth Surface Clay Kit

Price: £30 Clay weight: 160g

Contact: 0870 241 6696,

[www.meguiars.co.uk](http://www.meguiars.co.uk)

Rating: ★★★★★

**RECOMMENDED** THE US favourite has carefully targeted this kit. You get a decent amount of clay with two 80g bars, which are presented in a good, plastic storage box. Also included in the kit is 473ml of Quik Detailer lubricant, plus a decent-sized microfibre cloth, which should cover an entire car before becoming soaked. The spray mists on easily and the clay requires little effort. This was among the top performers on the bonnet and is our pick of the kits.



## Autoglym Clay Detailing Complete Kit

Price: £28.25

Clay weight: 100g

Contact: 01462 677766,

[www.autoglym.com](http://www.autoglym.com)

Rating: ★★★

THIS comprehensive kit from Autoglym was a match for its Meguiar's rival, but seems to be aiming at a slightly different market. The main thing setting it apart is that you get much less clay for your money. To compensate there is a small 100ml bottle of the brand's big-selling Super Resin Polish thrown in. For claying alone the Meguiar's is a better option, but the Autoglym combination is good for those just starting to clay. There's also decent cloth and clay storage.

**AE** Kim Adams

THERE'S a little bit of magic about clay bars; unlike other cleaners, they remove grime you cannot see.

Even the most thorough of washes will leave behind invisible contaminants in the paint that you can only feel. These will adversely affect the bond a wax can form with the paintwork, as well as reduce the shine once it's applied.

A clay bar will remove these particles – usually brake dust, tree sap and metal filings – that collect primarily on horizontal panels, leaving the ideal surface for a wax or sealant. The products were once part of the detailer's art, but are now found on most accessory shop shelves, and several newcomers have launched since our last test in 2013. So which is the best one for your car? We tried nine.

## How we tested them



WE revised our test this time around to focus on the clay's core use – removing contaminants on bodywork – rather than the paint overspray element we have included in the past.

Each clay bar was used to the maker's instructions with any supplied lubricant on a long-neglected bonnet. Two attempts were made with limited wiping, and progress was monitored after each stage. Other factors considered included whether water could be used as a lubricant, what you got for your money and storage for unused clay. Prices were taken from retailers' websites or other online sources.

## Also tested

### Race Glaze Clay Bar

Price: £12 Clay weight: 200g

Contact: 01780 749449, [www.raceglaze.co.uk](http://www.raceglaze.co.uk)

Rating: ★★

## Verdict

EVEN though there are new products on the market, Bilt Hamber hangs on to its crown with a winning combination of cleaning power and cost. Close behind is the novel newcomer Britemax Claymax. Our pick of the claying kits is Meguiar's Smooth Surface combination.

1. Bilt Hamber auto-clay regular
2. Britemax Claymax
3. Meguiar's Smooth Surface Clay Kit

# CLAY BARS

We pick the best products to help you prepare bodywork for a top finish

## PRODUCT GROUP TEST 27 | 7 | 2016

Every week, we extensively test all the latest car kit from tyres to trim cleaners. Log on to [www.autoexpress.co.uk](http://www.autoexpress.co.uk) to look through our huge online test archive.



### Dodo Juice Supernatural Medium Detailing Clay

Price: £17.95 Clay weight: 240g

Contact: [www.supernaturalcarcare.com](http://www.supernaturalcarcare.com)

Rating: ★★

DODO Juice expects you to know how to clay as instructions on the snap-shut plastic pack are minimal. Usefully, it warns that sensitive finishes could be marred. You get lots of clay for your money, plus it works pretty well, scoring strongly on both attempts and finishing among the top performers.



### Angelwax Glide

Price: £9.95 Clay weight: N/A

Contact: 0141 886 6732, [www.angelwax.co.uk](http://www.angelwax.co.uk)

Rating: ★★

GLIDE is the latest alternative to the traditional clay bar, and sells alongside Angelwax's conventional range of clays. It's a sponge about the size you'd cut a clay to, with one face covered in slightly tacky rubber. The idea is that it can be reused repeatedly as it can be washed. It works, but nowhere as quickly as a conventional clay. Still, it's easy on the pocket.



### Koch Chemie Rkb

Price: £22 Clay weight: 200g

Contact: 01423 860022, [www.reepgroup.co.uk](http://www.reepgroup.co.uk)

Rating: ★★

THIS German product's full name is Reinigungsknete blau and it's essentially a mild cleaning clay. It made steady rather than spectacular progress, but was clearly working and could be used with water and a bit of car shampoo as a lubricant. Comes in a plastic snap shut case with good instructions in English. But it's the most expensive clay-only option.

### T-Cut Classic Clay Bar Kit

Price: £21.99 Clay weight: 100g approx

Contact: 0161 764 5981, [www.tetrosyl.com](http://www.tetrosyl.com)

Rating: ★★

CARPLAN is coy about just how much clay it has put in this kit, but we measured it at just over 100g. That seems a bit odd when others make it clear what you are buying. Alongside the clay you get 500ml each of lube and T-Cut Clay Wax. The latter is a liquid version exclusive to the kit, although if you already have some wax you won't need it. A cloth is also included, although it's tiny and won't last long before becoming waterlogged. The clay works, but progress was a step behind our other kits.

