

# CARBON WHEEL CLEANING

Carbon wheels require slightly more care than aluminum.

FFWD Wheels recommends that you keep brake pads and rims clean. How frequently these maintenance steps are performed is often subject to your riding style, geography and climate. For normal use, clean your rims and brake pads every 3-4 months or as needed.

Debris can come from many sources. It is commonly generated any time you apply brake pads to the rim whether you are riding aluminum or carbon wheels. Brake pad and rim surfaces naturally wear on each other and remove miniscule amounts of surface material at the point of contact. This is most commonly visible on alloy rims as a grey dust or dark discoloration on the braking surface; similar to the dust that may accumulate on the surface of your car's rims from braking over time. Carbon wheels, being darker in color, usually do not show this as easily. Also, debris is picked up from the road and environment as you ride. It is not uncommon to see small stones, metal, or other road debris embedded in bicycle brake pads. Wet/adverse climate riding conditions increase the debris build-up and abrasion between pads and rims on all bicycles. Routine scheduled cleaning of your wheelset will improve modulation and braking in all conditions. We recommend the following simple cleaning tips for your FFWD carbon wheels.

## Cleaning Rims

The rims can be cleaned with a clean rag and any mild degreaser such as Windex®, Simple Green®, or 409®. You can also use Acetone or Isopropyl Alcohol. It is recommended to wear safety glasses and rubber gloves. Make sure your work space is well ventilated. It is usually easiest to clean your rims when the tires have been removed.

## Cleaning Brake Track

If you are cleaning the brake track specifically, it may entail that you remove the tires to adequately access the entire braking surface. Run your fingers along the entire circumference of the wheel's brake surface feeling for width variations or changes in roughness. Changes in tackiness or 'smooth-to-rough' patches along the brake track may indicate areas with glazing.

You will need a clean gray scotch-brite pad (most hardware stores will stock gray, ultra-fine-abrasive pads) and Acetone to best clean your wheels. First, clean the brake track along the top 10-12mm of rim circumference. Remove all discoloration, smears and 'tacky- feeling' areas. Focus on the rough feeling patches or those with obvious discoloration and very-very lightly scuff with the scotch-brite pad in the rotational direction along the circumference of the rim. Please be careful not to use excessive pressure when cleaning your wheels as it is easy to remove more than surface contamination and damage the braking layer molded into the rim.

After you have cleaned smaller/obvious areas of your rim, start at the valve hole and continue around the entire circumference of the rim lightly scuffing the surface. You will detect dark grey dust accumulating on your abrasive pad. Rotate the pad to a clean section and continue cleaning. Perform this circumference cleaning on both sides of each wheel. After you've completely cleaned the brake track, with the abrasive pad, wipe down the surface with a small amount of Acetone on a clean cotton rag. You may need to wipe down the rim numerous times until you no longer see dark grey deposits on your cleaning rag. You may also wipe down the entire rim surface with Acetone; it will remove most-all road grime and oil from your hands that has deposited on the wheel, but should not damage surface.

## Cleaning Brake Pads

Inspect the brake pad surfaces, front and rear, for embedded debris. Remove any small embedded particles in the pads with a fine point tool. If the brake pad surface on your SwissStop Black Prince carbon pads have smears/smudges or appear shiny they may be glazed and will need cleaning.

To clean brake pads, use 120-grit sandpaper to scuff the brake pad surfaces. Preferably use wet/dry sand paper with a small spot of water where you are cleaning the pads. After sanding, use some hand soap and warm water to wash the pads off. Finish by drying them with a clean towel.