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# Understanding Auto Body Terms

When your insured has a vehicle in the shop for repair they may hear terms they are not familiar with and come to you for answers. Below are more terms and definitions that can help you and your insured understand what is going on in the repair process. For a Bent Fender with a complete list of terms, check out our website at [hanksautobodyinc.com](http://hanksautobodyinc.com)

**Pigment:** The coloring matter in paint. A pigment is different from a dye in that a pigment is insoluble in the media in which it is used.

**Pretreatment (metal):** The chemical treatment of unpainted metal surfaces before painting, for enhanced adhesion and corrosion resistance.

**Primer:** The first layer of a coating system. Applied to an unpainted surface. Its' role is to protect the substrate and to prepare it for the application of a surface or topcoat. It must therefore have above all excellent adhesion to the substrate and to the coating that will follow.

**Primer/surface primer/filler:** A pigmented composition which acts as a primer and at the same time has filling properties such that it may be sanded to provide a smooth surface for the color coat that is to follow.

**Putty:** A plastic material with a high mineral filler content - used for filling minor imperfections.

**R&I:** Acronym for Remove and Install. Refers to a part removed from the customer's damaged vehicle to be saved and reinstalled after the repair has been completed.

**R&R:** Acronym for Remove and Replace. Refers to a part removed from the customer's damaged vehicle that cannot be acceptably repaired. It is replaced with a new part.

**Repair Authorization:** The point at which a Consumer authorizes the repair to their vehicle (and in some cases contingent upon the Insurance Company settlement process).

**Rubbing compound:** An abrasive paste that smoothes and polishes paint films. Alternate Term(s): Polishing compound

**Sealer:** An undercoat which improves the adhesion of the topcoat, and which seals old painted surfaces that have been sanded.

**Solid color:** A coating which contains colored pigments only, i.e., does not contain pigments such as aluminums and micas.

**Solvent:** A liquid, usually volatile, which is used to reduce viscosity. This is essential in both manufacturing and application processes. Solvents evaporate during application and drying of paint and therefore do not become a part of the dried film. In conventional coatings the solvents are organic compounds (Alcohols, Esters and Ketones) whilst in waterborne systems there is a mix of organic solvents with water.

**Substrate:** The uncoated/unpainted surface.

**Supplement:** Additional repairs needed to complete the repair that were not identified on the original estimate.

**Tape Marking:** The imprint caused by applying masking tape on to a newly-applied paint film before it has time to harden.

**Thinner:** A blend of volatile organic solvents added to the paint to reduce it to the correct viscosity for application. Also used to clean paint equipment.

**Three Coat Color:** A topcoat color which consists of 3 parts, a basecoat, a midcoat and a clear. Alternate Term(s): Tri -coat

**Tint and Blend:** The process of mixing toners to match the existing paint finish, then blending or overlapping the color into the adjacent panel to avoid color match problems.

**Tinter:** Any colored pigment or paint mixture used to make small adjustments in color, or to mix the color in the first place from a mixing scheme. Alternate Term(s): Base color

**Top Coat:** The final layers of a coating system whose role is primarily decorative, it also often imparts protection to ultra violet light present in sunlight.

**Touch-up:** A localized repair usually confined to the smallest area possible (for example, repairs due to stone chips damage).

**Two-pack:** A paint or lacquer supplied in two parts which must be mixed together in the correct proportions before use. The mixture will then remain usable for a limited period only.

**U.V. Absorbers:** Chemicals added to paint to absorb Ultraviolet radiation present in sunlight.

**Ultra Violet Light:** That portion of the spectrum which is largely responsible for the degradation of paint films. Invisible to the eye, causes sunburn.

**Undercoats:** A first coat; primer, sealer or surfacer.

**Unibody:** The structural support found in most late model vehicles.

**VIN:** Acronym for Vehicle Identification Number. This is a unique number that identifies your vehicle. Although its primary purpose is to identify your vehicle, it often contains important information concerning the equipment and options that were installed on your vehicle at the factory. This information allows the Repair Center to order the correct parts for your vehicle. Any professional estimate or Repair Order will have this number on it.