

TESTED!



# Rust removers and converters

PC's long-suffering Ford Sierra offers up its roof space in the interests of science. Ben Field reports

**R**ust is a perennial problem on classic cars, and as owners we obsess about its eradication. Many of us will reach for the angle grinder to get rid of surface and pitted rust, but that removes metal, too.

The grinder method also doesn't always remove all the rust, and it makes the bare steel particularly vulnerable to flash rusting.

Then there's the rust you can't even get to with a grinder...

The best solution is to apply a rust remover or a rust converter. The former is formulated to actively get rid of rust, and the latter is designed to stop rust then encapsulate the steel to prevent further rusting.

However clear cut that seems, the labelling on many brands can lead to some confusion. Manufacturers have a way of describing products that work in much the same way in very different terms. Some vaguely offer to 'cure' your rust problem.

That's why we've brought eight readily-available rust removers and converters together in the same test to see just how well they do.

### The test bed

Several months have passed since we stripped our Ford Sierra Sapphire of its paint. Its boot, bonnet and flanks have swathes of rusty steel strips of treatment. The only place left for this rust removers and converters test is the roof. Here goes.

## What we looked for

1

### EASE OF APPLICATION

After dividing the roof up into eight equal strips and removing any loose rust with a wire brush, the products will be applied to the rusty steel. Those that demand the least of the operator will get top marks here.

2

### EFFECTIVENESS

Following application, and the allotted time for the products to work, we'll be checking the strips to see how they've performed. To score well, rust removers will need to have got rid of the bulk of the rust, while converters should have adequately encapsulated the corrosion and provide a smooth finish for further coating with primers and paints. After this test we'll be painting over the treated metal and leaving the elements to get to work on it. In a few months' time we'll report back again on the condition of the metal.

3

### PRICING

If two products tie for either of the top awards the lower-priced unit will claim it. Low price alone will not secure any product the **Best Budget Buy** award, however. For a product to win this category it must also perform to a very high standard according to the test's criteria. **NOTE:** These products are sold in a variety of container sizes. To allow direct comparisons of prices we're quoting the cost per 100ml as well as the retail prices. All prices include VAT.

£8.29 (250ml)

## HAMMERITE KURUST

MADE BY Hammerite: www.hammerite.com  
AVAILABLE FROM Halfords: 08450 579000, www.halfords.com  
TYPE Converter  
PRICE PER 100ML £3.31

Kurust is one of the most widely available rust converters on the market and has rightfully earned itself a good name for clamping down on corrosion.

It's easy to apply, being runny and odour free. This product is also fast acting – even though it took a couple of coats to properly cover the rusty strip, conversion started immediately and was complete within 20 minutes.

You can see from the scores that there's nothing particularly wrong with Kurust, it's just that there are now products on the market that are more effective and give the user far more confidence that rust won't be returning. Kurust's very high price per 100ml also counts against it.



**'THIS IS FAST ACTING – CONVERSION STARTED IMMEDIATELY'**

EASE 1 2 3 4 5  
EFFECTIVENESS 1 2 3 4 5

Overall 7/10

£12.50 (946ml) & Aqua Klean £9.50 (946ml)

## KBS RUST BLAST

MADE BY KBS Coatings: www.kbs-coatings.com  
AVAILABLE FROM The Rust Shop: 07515 359467, www.therustshop.com  
TYPE Remover  
PRICE PER 100ML £1.32 (rust remover) plus £1 per 100ml of recommended cleaner (Aqua Klean)

The manufacturer recommends that a dedicated cleaner is applied to the surface of the metal before brushing on Rust Blast... which needs to be regularly applied to keep the surface damp.

This system is quite labour intensive, and even though it removed a lot of the rust, it isn't up to the standard of the likes of Jenolite or Eastwood's Rust Dissolver. However, Rust Blast's built-in zinc-phosphate pre-primer and etch did mean the treated metal didn't flash rust at all. KBS claims this coating increases welding conductivity, making it ideal for those who want to prep rusty panels.



**'THIS SYSTEM IS QUITE LABOUR INTENSIVE'**

EASE 1 2 3 4 5  
EFFECTIVENESS 1 2 3 4 5

Overall 7/10

£19.99 (1litre)

## NEUTRARUST 661

MADE BY [www.neustrust.co.uk](http://www.neustrust.co.uk)  
 AVAILABLE FROM Neustrust: 08451 308803, [www.neustrust.co.uk](http://www.neustrust.co.uk)  
 TYPE Converter  
 PRICE PER 100ML £1.99

This product took a number of applications on the roof strip to really get down to the business of converting the rust to a surface ready for paint. Once it got going, however, conversion was rapid, and the resulting surface left us pretty confident that further rusting would be unlikely.

Neustrust 661 is one of the thinner rust converting products in this test and this would make it ideal for flowing into door bottoms and other hard-to-reach cavities. It's also very keenly priced – you're not paying for flashy packaging with this stuff so you get more product for your hard-earned pound.



£3.99 (150ml)

## JENOLITE

MADE BY Jenolite [www.jenolite.com](http://www.jenolite.com)  
 AVAILABLE FROM Classicsagogo [www.classicsagogo.co.uk](http://www.classicsagogo.co.uk)  
 TYPE Remover  
 PRICE PER 100ML £2.66

Jenolite is available both in liquid and, as here, gel form. The gel is very thick so it will cling to vertical surfaces. On flat panels it takes a little more effort to spread the gel out than some of the more watery rust removers in this test.

The instructions insist on a second application after 15 minutes, and this coat is then wiped off immediately.

We found that all but the very deepest pits of rust had been removed and after 30 minutes the panel was ready for etch priming.

Left unpainted, the treated surface will quickly flash over with a thin coating of surface rust.



£22.95 (1litre)

## HYDRATE 80

MADE BY Bilt-Hamber: [www.bilthamber.com](http://www.bilthamber.com)  
 AVAILABLE FROM Bilt-Hamber: 01277 65 88 99, [www.bilthamber.com](http://www.bilthamber.com)  
 TYPE Converter  
 PRICE PER 100ML £2.29

Hydrate 80 requires that the rusty surface is degreased and washed with water before application, but the thin fluid is easy to brush out and this made up some of the time lost to the extra preparation.

The milky, as-brushed, look of this converter quickly turned black and the required extra coat (applied at 90 degrees to the first, as instructed) followed suit 30 minutes later. This product gave us total confidence that the rust had been converted, and the thick, smooth coat is ready for paint after 24 hours.



**'THIS PRODUCT GAVE US TOTAL CONFIDENCE THAT THE RUST HAD BEEN CONVERTED'**

£18.38 (1litre)

## GRANVILLE HEAVY DUTY RUST CURE

MADE BY Granville: [www.granvilleoil.com](http://www.granvilleoil.com)  
 AVAILABLE FROM Frost: 01706 758 258, [www.frost.com](http://www.frost.com)  
 TYPE Converter  
 PRICE PER 100ML £1.83

This rust 'cure' (read 'converter') is applied in two coats in rapid succession. The fluid is semi viscous with a good degree of cling, but it takes no real effort to brush out over a rusty surface and could still be run into less accessible spots, if necessary.

In use the rusty strip of roof rapidly changed colour and it was evident that the rust had been adequately converted and contained. You will need to work outdoors or wear a respirator mask for this one because it is particularly potent on the nose.



£19.40 (946ml)

## EASTWOOD RUST DISSOLVER

MADE BY Eastwood Tools: [www.eastwood.com](http://www.eastwood.com)  
 AVAILABLE FROM Frost: 01706 758 258, [www.frost.com](http://www.frost.com)  
 TYPE Remover  
 PRICE PER 100ML £2.05

This rust remover is a very thin fluid that is easy to brush out over the surface. Because it's designed as a dipping solution rather than a brush-on product, it was necessary to keep the surface wet with the product. But we found it clung to the surface and hardly needed re-wetting.

The product started actively removing rust from the roof within 20 minutes, and after an hour almost all the rust had disappeared.

The metal was quick to flash rust after treatment, so etch priming and painting would need to follow in very short order.



£22.99 (1litre)

## RUSTBUSTER FE-123

MADE BY Rustbuster: [www.rust.co.uk](http://www.rust.co.uk)  
 AVAILABLE FROM Rustbuster: 01775 630958, [www.rust.co.uk](http://www.rust.co.uk)  
 TYPE Converter  
 PRICE PER 100ML £2.29

This is another semi-viscous fluid that is easy to brush on but won't run off the moment it's applied. This property makes it handy for use on vertical, as well as flat, surfaces. Fe-123 can also be sprayed into cavities or diluted up to 50 per cent and used as a dipping solution for rusty components.

With this versatility comes great effectiveness as a rust converter. After application, the rust was completely encapsulated beneath a smooth, black layer within 20 minutes. The treated surface will take any kind of single or two-pack paint finish within two to four hours of treatment.



**'WITH VERSATILITY COMES GREAT EFFECTIVENESS AS A RUST CONVERTER'**

### PC test winners

Top scorers in previous Practical Classics Product Tests

#### AUTOMATIC WELDING HELMETS

April 2011  
**SPEEDSHIELD V £69 19/20**  
 The Welders Warehouse – 0845 899 4400, [www.thewelderswarehouse.com](http://www.thewelderswarehouse.com)

**WE SAID:** 'Strike up the MIG and the view through the lens remains exceptional with the torch, work piece and surrounds all still in plain view, albeit with the harmful intensity of the arc suitably subdued.'



#### GLIPTONE GT12 CLEANER

March 2011  
**£6.75 AND GT11 CONDITIONER £7.75 13/15**  
 Gliptone – 01706 819365, [www.liquidleather.com](http://www.liquidleather.com)

**WE SAID:** 'After rubbing in the conditioner, the leather looked and felt years younger with much-improved suppleness, an even finish and the richest smell of leather of any of the other products tested here.'



#### HILKA BATTERY CHARGER

February 2011  
**£39.99 15/15**  
 Screwfix – [www.screwfix.com](http://www.screwfix.com)  
**WE SAID:** 'This top-quality unit from Hilka will charge 6v and 12v batteries (up to a whopping 180Ah capacity) quickly with its maximum 12amp charge rate.'



#### GARAGE DOOR SECURITY

January 2011 – product review only

#### STUDEXTRACTORS

December 2010  
**DRAPER 55641 ROLLER-CAM STUDEXTRACTOR £21.96 9/10**  
 Draper Tools – 023 8049 4333, [www.draper.co.uk](http://www.draper.co.uk)  
**WE SAID:** 'The extractor completed a half turn, gripped solidly and then turned the stud out with ease.'

