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Pressure washing cheat sheet

Starting ranges, the five Simpson tip colors, and the soap rule. These are working ranges from the guides, not a permit to ignore the manual for your machine.

PSI and tip by surface

SURFACE	START AROUND	TIP	REMEMBER
Cars and paint	Under 2,000 PSI	40°	Rinse grit before a mitt touches the paint.
Wood decks	Often under 1,500 PSI	25° or 40°	Stop if the grain fuzzes. S with the grain.
Vinyl siding	Low, soap does the work	25° or 40°	Point the tip slightly dow No ladders.
Concrete	2,500 PSI and up, with flow	15° or a surface cleaner	Oil still needs a cleaner a dwell.
Second-story walls	The widest safe fan	25° or wider	From the ground, with a telescoping wand.

Nozzle colors on the Simpson sets

On the 80145 and 80146 sets, color is the angle. The stamped orifice is the hole. 3.0 and 4.0 are not upgrades of each other. Other brands sometimes dye a wide fan gray. Read the stamp.

COLOR	ANGLE	USE
Red	0°	A cutting stream. Leave it in the holder.

COLOR	ANGLE	USE
Yellow	15°	Narrow fan for sound concrete, while you keep moving
Green	25°	General rinse. As narrow as most siding should see.
White	40°	Wide fan. Start here on paint, vinyl, and softwood.
Black	Soap	Low pressure so chemical can sit. Not a rinse tip.

Soap rules

- Apply with the black soap tip or a pump sprayer, then dwell. Do not let it dry.
- Bleach, acids, and ammonia do not go in the pump unless that jug says the washer is allowed.
- The 30 SECONDS outdoor gallon is a 1:1 mix. The listing we checked does not authorize the pump.
- The separate 30 SECONDS concentrate is the one whose listing says the tank is allowed. It is bleach.
- Do not mix a bleach jug with a Krud Kutter jug, with ammonia, or with acids.
- Flush the soap circuit with clear water when you finish.

Safety

- A 0-degree tip can inject fluid through skin. That needs medical care even when the mark looks small.
- Do not wash from a ladder. Use a telescoping wand from the ground.
- Point siding spray downhill. Water driven up behind a lap gets into the wall.
- Cover outlets. Skip the electrical panel and the area under a service drop.
- Wet plants before chemical, and rinse them after.
- Know whether your city allows wash water in the storm drain before you start.

Longer versions: PSI and GPM, nozzle colors, soaps.