In this video, Rod Rosenberg walks you through three metal finishing techniques that belong in every modder’s repertoire. They’re easy, they’re inexpensive, they don’t require much more than what you’ve already got around the house and man, they look fantastic.

Keep in mind that these techniques aren’t just for case panels, either. They can also turn front panels, badges, logos, and trim into one-of-a-kind mods for your rig!

That said, these techniques do kick up a lot of dust, so they’re best done in a room with plenty of ventilation. And be careful with the hammers—they hurt.
STEP 1: Prep the surface
Lightly sand the surface of your metal with fine-grit sandpaper. This cleans your surface and gives it a smooth, matte finish.

STEP 2: Hammer time
Begin with the larger 8 oz. hammer. Use the round peening end to create dimpled craters with plenty of overlap.

STEP 3: Second pass
Go over the surface again, this time using the smaller 6 oz. hammer to create a more natural, irregular pattern.
**STEP 1:**
**First pass: 600 grit sandpaper**
Begin sanding with 600 grit sandpaper until you’ve removed the blemishes and markups on the metal.

**STEP 2:**
**Second pass: 1000 grit sandpaper**
Now go over the surface again, this time with 1000 grit sandpaper. You’ll be removing all the sanding marks from the first pass.

**STEP 3:**
**Third pass: 2000 grit sandpaper**
The third pass with 2000 grit sandpaper polishes away the fine abrasions from the second pass.
STEP 4: Apply compound to polisher
Press the cloth polishing head to the compound and give it a few spins until it’s thoroughly covered.

STEP 5: Polish your surface
Apply the compound to the metal in smooth, back and forth passes, reloading your compound as needed.

STEP 6: Wipe off compound
When your surface looks nice and shiny, wipe off the compound for the full effect. Repeat the process for any dull or missed spots.
APPLY A BRUSHED ALUMINUM FINISH

STEP 1: Sand the surface
Go over the surface thoroughly with 600 grit sandpaper to smooth out burrs and sharp edges. You can also apply the metal to the sandpaper, if that’s easier.

STEP 2: Texture with Scotch Brite
Press firmly with the Scotch Brite pad in smooth strokes perpendicular to the aluminum grain until your texture emerges.