

Paint Touch Up Procedure

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Touchup paint
- Clearcoat touch up, if your car is multi-stage paint
- Toothpicks
- Several clean rags
- 1000 and 1500 grit wet/dry
- Pencil with fresh erasure head
- An all-purpose cleanser. Make sure it's organic - such as a citrus-based cleanser.
- Contact spray (ie. 3M spray adhesive)
- Meguiars #3 (medium cut) or equivalent Dupont product, so LONG as it's ****NOT**** rubbing compound AND it's a medium cut POLISH. Meguiars #9 (or any swirl remover) is not adequate.
- Zymol HD-Cleanse (highly recommended). If not, Meguiars #7
- Zymol Carbon wax. If not, a good carnauba wax.
- Several clean, soft cotton rags.

PREPPING THE AREA:

1. First sand any high spots from the chip flush with the paint. This will possibly take a dozen back and forth motions. If you look with good light, you can sand one or two swipes and see a shiny area surrounded by matte sanded paint. This indicates a high spot. If the area around the chip is immediately dull from a couple swipes, there is no high spot.
2. Go to the sanding section below and set up a 1000 grit sanding block. Follow sanding instructions below. Once the area is matte, move on. NOTE WITH CLEARCOAT it is more difficult to tell. Just do a half dozen swipes with 1000 grit and move on.
3. Clean chip areas thoroughly. This can be done with the cleanser of choice combined with a blotting rag, Q-tip, etc. You may want to run a toothpick along the edges to remove grime built up in the chip. Remember, we basically need to strip the wax out of the area.

PAINTING:

4. Dab paint on a palette (cardboard works) and dip toothpick in paint. Get enough that it transfers to the chip - this takes a few tries. Put a THIN COAT of paint in the chip, covering the chip completely. If a little paint gets on the outside of the chip, fear not - we'll be sanding soon. THE IDEA HERE IS TO PUT A THIN "CONTACT" COAT THAT ADHERES TO THE SURFACE AND PROVIDES GOOD GRIP FOR FURTHER COATS.
5. Let dry recommended time. Most touchups can dry in 4 hours before applying more.
6. From here, work on filling the chip so that it is eventually higher than the paint. Use successive blots with the toothpick, waiting 1/2 hour or so between intervals.

(NOTE - If you have a CLEARCOAT finish, just fill the chip with enough paint to give a solid color. Let paint dry, then proceed to fill the chip with CLEARCOAT as described in step 6.)

7. Once the chip is filled higher than the original paint, let dry for a day or so. Note that the chip only needs to be slightly higher than the original paint. Any more than necessary just means more time sanding the chip down, which takes time.

SANDING: [Steps 8 - 15 take approximately 15 minutes per chip]

8. Take the 1000 grit wet/dry and spray adhesive on the back. Let sit for a few minutes. Spray adhesive on the rubber tip of the pencil.
9. Cut a centimeter square of wet/dry (enough to cover pencil rubber) and stick to pencil. This is your sanding tool.

10. Wet area to be sanded. Apply light pressure and move the wet/dry back and forth over the paint chip. Keep the pencil perpendicular to the surface (flat) and always be on top of the chip (don't swipe completely by the chip). You will sand some of the original paint. Don't worry - this is why we are using 1000 grit. After two or three complete swipes, look closely at the paint. You'll notice the paint mound in the chip is beginning to dull, as is the paint surrounding the chip. Also, periodically alternate sanding directions as follows: do 0 degree (left to right), 45 deg, and 90 deg. This alleviates several problems, the largest is that you want to sand the chip evenly and your strokes (and area) do not perform this if you only go in one direction.
11. Keep the area damp/wet and change sanding squares after 20 or 30 sanding swipes (when the wet/dry dulls). Every 10 swipes or so, check your progress. The idea is to sand the area until it is smooth. Use your fingers to feel the area. Look for a shiny low spot surround the chip (where the wet/dry is not touching the original paint around the chip since the chip is the high spot). Approximately a half dozen squares per chip is required.
12. Once the chip area is fairly smooth, set up some 1500 grit wet/dry in the same way as steps #8 and #9. Wet area and sand 15 or 20 swipes perpendicular to direction of the small scratches caused by the 1000 grit.
13. Clean area with water. Take the medium cut (i.e. Meguiars #3) and place a dime dab on your fingers. Wipe back and forth with medium pressure, covering several inches around and including chip. Wipe area dry. Look closely, if it is dull or scratches still exist, do again. Note, do this with your fingers since 1) you can feel what is going on and 2) it cuts much less paint.
14. Once the area is polished, use Zymol HD-Cleanse to remove microscopic scratches and rejuvenate oils in the paint. Again, wipe back and forth, but this time with LIGHT pressure. 15 or 20 swipes should do it. Wipe dry. Turn over to clean area of cloth and buff.

** At this point, the area should look good. If you are satisfied, move ahead. If you feel the chip area is still high, go back to step #12 and work ahead. **
15. Apply Zymol wax (or good carnauba wax). Wipe area dry with a clean cloth turning cloth over to buff.