

HOW TO REPAIR CHIPS IN YOUR CAR'S PAINT

Cars are subject to assault by gravel, road debris and falling objects. The result, frequently is a chip in the paint. The first thing to know is that repairing those chips is a learned skill and is best practiced on an area of the car that is not very visible. The hood and the nose of the car should be tackled last.

Here's a step-by-step routine to follow:

1. Twenty-four hours before you start, use rubber glue to attach small 600 grit sandpaper circles to the top of several pencil erasers.
2. First wash the car with a quality car wash and dry thoroughly.

Clean the area to be repaired with Wurth or P21S citrus cleaner. If there is rust, take it off with the pencil sander. With a toothpick, gently probe the area to be covered to make sure that the edges are secure and not just waiting to fall off.

3. With a few drops of water on the area, SLIGHTLY rough up the areas to be covered. It is possible to do 10-20 chip repairs at a time.
4. When finished sanding, apply a small amount of alcohol or Prepsol or Enamel Reducer to remove dust and grease.
5. If you're down to bare metal, put a thin coating of primer with a toothpick. Let it flow on with capillary action. Don't daub it on.
6. Shake and mix the new color paint thoroughly. Fight the urge to use too much and use a toothpick and let the paint flow into the area by itself.
7. Allow paint to dry two hours and then repeat the thin coats as many as 8-12 coats until the depression is filled and bulges slightly upwards (a fraction of a millimeter).
8. After about one week of drying, take a Meguiar Finesse sanding block, 2000 grit and soak it in water for 24 hours. Then gently plane the area with the block (the 2000 grit will not scratch the surrounding area).
9. Clean the area, and put on a high quality hand glaze such as 3M Imperial. Don't use a machine polisher unless you're working on your Yugo. Buff with a soft cotton cloth, and finish with quality carnuba based wax. Apply the wax with your bare finger; it gives a better feedback.

(This information, somewhat condensed by the editor, was provided by member Larry Paulick based on suggestions by Larry Reynolds Car Care Specialties, PO Box 535 Saddle Brook NJ, e-mail carcaresp@aol.com.)