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355 Door Panel Removal - How To

I know it has taken some time, but I have been busy, Sorry---Here is a step by step detail on removal of the 355 door panel---Hope this helps some of you guys that had questions..

These are all the tools you will need to complete the job--A small Philips head screwdriver, a larger Philips head screwdriver, a ratchet and deep 10mm socket



Here we go.....



Remove lock knob by unscrewing it. It is threaded almost the entire length of the knob so it takes quite a few turns to get it off--





Next is a piece of trim attached to the outer portion of the door, I have pointed to it in the pic. It is attached with Philips head screws. Unscrew the 4-5 screws and just gently pull this piece of trim off.

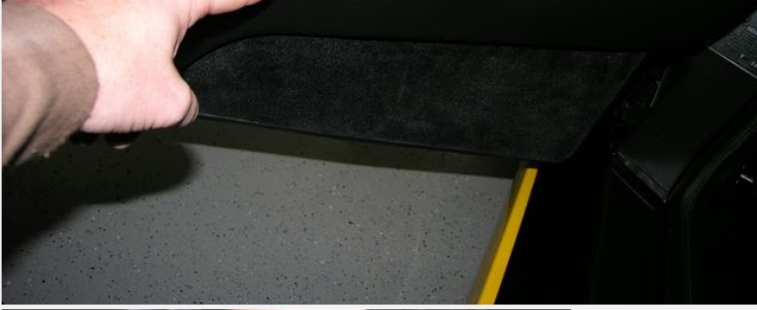


Now locate the mirror trim piece towards the front of the door panel, up near the outside mirror. This metal triangle shaped piece is held on by 2 Philips head screws. Remove both screws and gently pull the trim piece off.

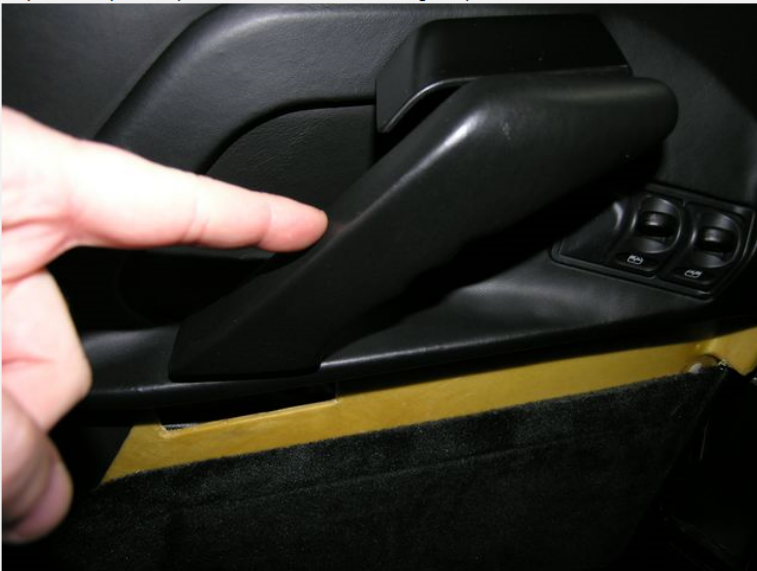


Next you want to remove the long trim panel that sits below the armrest. The first pic shows this piece. If you look toward the front of this piece, you will see 2 small Philips head screws holding on a small triangle piece, which I am pointing to in the next pic. Remove the 2 screws and the end plate will come right off. Now grab ahold of this long piece of trim and pull towards the front of the car. The entire piece will slide right off. Do not just pull outward. It needs to slide forward as there is a long clip that slides into the actual panel from behind it.





Now we need to remove the door handle and door handle pull. There is a large Philips head screw below the handle and behind the pull. I have attached a pic of the pull and of the screw behind it--Remove the screw. BE CAREFUL! My car had 2 washers between the screw and the door panel. I have talked with guys who have only had one washer and a few with no washers. The washers help line up the door pull and the handle so they don't rub together when opening the door handle. So you may have a washer or two in there. Remember where they were so you can put them back when reinstalling the panel.





Toward the bottom of the pull there are 2 bolts that need to be removed. They may be hidden by a black fabric. They hold the door handle pull onto the panel. This is where your ratchet and socket come into play. Pic is of the 2 bolts. Once the top screw and bottom bolts are removed, gently pull the door handle pull and it will come off.



Now your door panel should be pretty bare with the exception of the door handle itself. Under the handle there is a small Philips head screw that has to be removed. The pic shows the silver colored screw. Unscrew and gently pull the handle TOWARDS you. It seats on the assembly with notches and may be tight at first. Do not try to turn it. It pulls off straight towards you. When reinstalling the handle it will only slide on one way because of the notches.

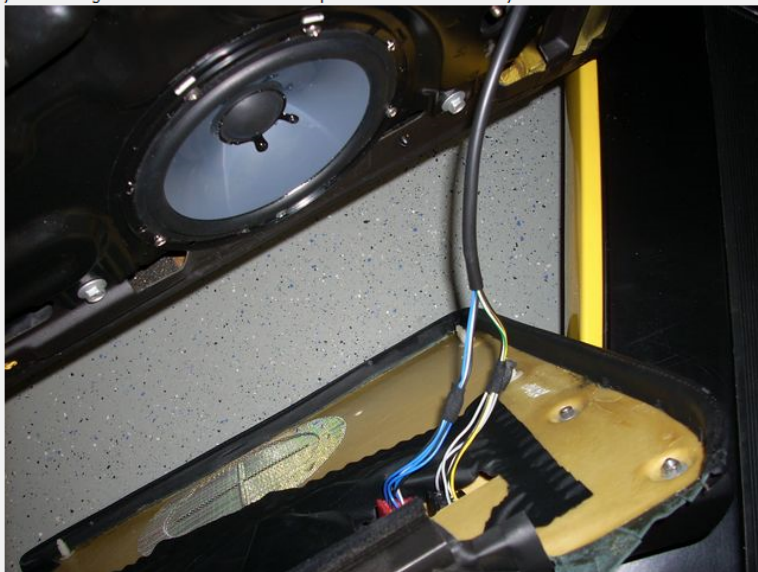


At this point your door panel should look like the below pic. All components are now removed and we are ready to unscrew the trim screws that go around the outside edge of the panel. These screws are small Philips head screws and my car had 9 of them in all. They are located at the outer edge of the panel and at the bottom of the panel. You will have to basically lay on the ground and look at the bottom of the door panel to see them. Remove all the screws and double check to make sure you did not miss any because they are quite small. The next pic shows one of the screws under the bottom edge of the door panel.

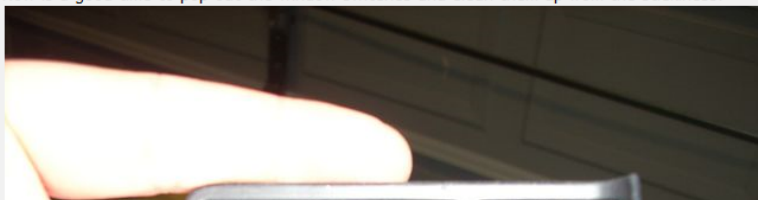




The only thing holding the door panel on at this point are the plastic clips behind the panel that snap onto the door itself. Grab one corner of the panel and slowly and gently pull towards you. The clips will start to pop off from the door as you work your way around the panel gently pulling. I can not remember exactly how many clips there are, but I would guess as to about 8-10 of them. Once they are all popped off you will feel the loose panel. Slowly slide the panel upwards toward the glass and over the lock knob at the top of the panel. Now you will see behind the panel the electric connectors for the power windows. There are 2 connectors. Black goes towards the front of the car and the red one is behind it. When reinstalling you will be glad I mentioned that! Unsnap both connectors and you are DONE!!!!



Now is a good time to pop out the window switches and clean them up from the stickiness.





That is about all there is to it. Overall this should take you about 15-20 minutes. To reinstall you will basically reverse all the steps here. If anyone has any specific questions about it please feel free to send me a PM. There are also a few guys who have How-To pdf files--If you want to add this in feel free. Print it, copy it, whatever--use it!!

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