

It's single digit temperatures outside and you're just itching for a little quality Porsche time. Have I got an answer for you – paint chip repair! Every car that's ever been driven on a Virginia road has at least one, and it seems that the fewer the car has, the more anxious the owner is about them (you folks know who you are!) With little else automotive going on right now, it's a great time for projects like this. Fortunately, modern technology has produced some paint chip repair kits that are easy to use and difficult to screw up.

I did a bit of online research regarding several of the paint chip repair kits, and found a lot of positive comments about the Dr. ColorChip system, so I decided to give it a try. I ordered the basic kit directly from the company and had it in about a week. The kit was around \$50 shipped, and it included the paint itself, a sealing/bonding agent, very clear instructions, one nitrile glove, and three different brushes. Sending a single rubber glove seemed a bit chintzy, but there was certainly plenty of paint and sealant for a lot of paint chips.

So here's how the process goes. Before you get started, plan on being at this project for a reasonable length of time. On the website, there are a couple of testimonials that say the happy customer was done in 5 minutes. That guy must

have had some very small chips; mine took a lot longer. First, wash the panel with a bit of soapy water and dry it off. Next, wipe around the chipped area with a lint-free cloth and some rubbing alcohol or another mild solvent to remove any wax from the paint. Get your rubber glove on, and give the paint bottle a good shake. Using an



appropriately sized brush for the chip, dab just enough paint into the chip to fill it up. Very quickly now, smear the paint into the chip. The goal is to use the touch-up paint as filler, just as you would wood putty over a nail head or other indentation. After letting the paint sit for a bit, wet a spot

on a soft, clean rag with the sealant and wipe the excess paint from around the chip, blending it into the rest of the paint. Easy enough, right? Of course not! The real trick to this job is finding the proper balance of time, letting the touch up paint sit long enough to adhere to the chip, but getting it up quickly enough that the excess around the chip doesn't also stick.

On my first application, I tried to work very quickly. After dabbing, smearing, and wiping, the color filled the bottom and the edges of my chip, matching the original paint perfectly. However, because of the depth of the chip, a depression remained. The color match was so good

in fact, that the chip now looked like a factory imperfection beneath the paint and the clear coat. Things were better, but not good enough. I repeated the process, but on the next "wipe" stage, I actually wiped all of the touch-up out of



the chip and was back to square one. OK, a little slower this time, and a bit more time between "smear" and "wipe" to let the paint dry. On the next application I made it back to the factory imperfection look, but subsequent applications didn't fill in the depression. All I managed to do was get excess touch-up paint all over the place. My soft, round finger was getting down into the depression and pushing all of the paint out. I needed a nice straight edge to act as a putty knife across the top of the chip. The answer was the edge of a flat wooden toothpick. I dabbed, then scraped with the toothpick. Everything was nice and level now. I let that sit for a bit longer than before, then wiped with the sealant. The depression was much less noticeable now. It still took a couple more applications and smears with the thumb before it was perfect, but at last the chip had vanished. I finished it all up by wiping the area with a microfiber towel, letting the paint cure a day or two, and then reapplying a coat of wax. With patience and a bit of trial and error, the Dr ColorChip process produced excellent results: two nitrile-gloved thumbs up.

One final observation, the deepest chips were all on the plastic bumper cover. Those seemed to all go through the clear coat, paint, and primer, all the way down to the plastic itself. Chips on metal body panels, for the most part, weren't that deep and didn't make it past the primer. On these, I didn't have to get out the toothpicks.

Happy driving and wrenching!



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