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McCullough Public Relations

330.329.7862

**AUTOMOTIVETOUCHUP PAINT REPAIR PROJECT PHOTO CAPTIONS**

**ATU01**

A typical paint chip, approximately half an inch in length, on a 15-year-old car that can be repaired at home. There were other paint blemishes on this vehicle that prompted repainting of the entire panel.

**ATU02**

Materials needs vary by project, but for this one, AutomotiveTouchup recommended a pack of sandpaper with five sheets of varying grades, from 180-grit to 1,500-grit; a couple of paint-pre surface wipes, a can of primer, a can of base-coat paint, a can of top-coat clear and a spray gun trigger.

**ATU03**

The project starts with sanding the affected areas (it was easier to remove the affected body panel on this vehicle). Because the paint chip and other blemishes weren’t deep and there was no other surface damage, 320-grit paper was used to scuff up the surface and 600-grit paper was used to smooth out the surface.

**ATU04**

Prior to spraying primer, the panel was carefully cleaned with the one of the surface wipes to remove any oils or other contaminants that could affect the new paint’s adhesion.

**ATU05**

Next, several coats of primer are applied on the panel is covered sufficiently.

**ATU06**

The primer leaves a coarse texture that should be knocked down with at least 600-grit sandpaper in order to provide a smoother surface for the paint.

**ATU07**

The base-coat paint comes next, after again wiping down the primed area with a surface wipe. The aerosol can trigger provide greater control. Three or four coats of the paint should be sprayed, leaving 10-15 minutes or so of drying time between spraying each coat. Painting should be done in a well-ventilated area.

**ATU08**

The clear coat comes next, which is applied with the same method as the base coat: three or four coats, with a little drying time between each coat.

**ATU09**

Even after the clear coat is sprayed, the paint finish does not look glossy. Like the primer, the texture of the color and clear must be smoothed out to achieve the glossy final appearance.

**ATU10**

After giving the paintwork several hours or even overnight to dry, bringing out the glossy appearance starts with “wet sanding,” which is exactly what it sounds like: The painted surface and the sandpaper are kept wet, while the surface is rubbed with 600-grit, 1,000-grit and finally 1,500-grit sandpaper. The idea is to sand the surface until it is uniformly smooth.

**ATU11**

Although it looks like a backward step, this dull appearance is how the wet-sanded surface should appear when completed. The shine will be brought out in the next couple of steps.

**ATU12**

Rubbing compound is used next to start bringing out the new paintwork’s shine. It takes a lot of elbow grease to work through the sanded surface, but a smooth, deep shine will emerge. It may take several applications of rubbing the compound to achieve the correct finish, which should be smooth and glossy, without visible texture. If the finish looks only OK, still with a dulled or milky appearance, another application or two of compound is required. Keep rubbing until the finish matches the rest of the vehicle’s finish.

**ATU13**

It may take several applications of rubbing the compound to achieve the correct finish, which should be smooth and glossy, without visible texture. If the finish looks only OK, still with a dulled or milky appearance, another application or two of compound is required. Keep rubbing until the finish matches the rest of the vehicle’s finish.

**ATU14**

When the compounding is complete, an application or two of standard automotive polish and, finally, protective wax, brings out an even deeper shine to finish the project.

**ATU15**

The finished job looks brand-new on the car, with a deep, glossy and lasting finish that was achieved at home.