

Tech Tip

How to dye your dash panel.

(By Steve Swain)



Subject: 1999 Trans Am – BEFORE AND AFTER
All 4th Generation Firebirds have a problem with the front dash panel cracking. It is because the dash panel is made of very thin hard plastic and when the heat of summer plus the ultra-violet sunlight shines on it, it is no wonder why it cracks. Mine started with a passenger side crack about 6” long and went from there. 3 days before the 2013 Trans Am National’s, I decided that I was going to fix the crack, BIG MISTAKE! My 1st mistake was that I did not know that the “A” pillar panels have to come off first. The dash panel has a gutter molded in the bottom, so that the “A” pillar fits into it, one light pry and SNAP! I cracked it again[®] Once I removed the “A” pillar moldings, I tried to gently lift the panel out and SNAP, SNAP, SNAP, the panel fell apart in my hands, now I had about 9 pieces of dash panel. I tried epoxying them with no luck. Duct tape did work somewhat, but I could not go to National’s with a cracked dash and it was too late to order a new panel. So I looked on line and found a lady that makes a dash cover to specifically cover the front dash panel for ~ \$55.00 + shipping. I installed it and it looks great and it cuts down a lot on the glare from the front panel.



This year I wanted to replace the panel and bought one off “Firehawk Dave” for \$125.00, but it was Ebony and I needed “Graphite” 98-99.



I first started by washing it (5 times) with liquid Dawn and with the hottest water that I could stand, rinsed and dried.



I then sprayed with the plastic adhesive promoter.



I had my paint store match the color to my old panel. I then sprayed while the promoter was still wet. It came out great! Have a great holiday!

