

Gen 3 Prius Door Upholstery

I installed Katskin Leather upholstery in my Prius.

Door Upholstery

The Katskin upholstery comes with pre-cut oversized vinyl pieces for the four doors. The color matches the seat upholstery, the trim part if you buy two tone upholstery. The standard vinyl is the same vinyl used on the sides and backs of the Katskin seat upholstery. I chose to upgrade to a perforated vinyl. Katskin isn't cheaping out with the vinyl door upholstery, most new cars with leather upholstery use vinyl on non-seating areas.

Some excellent instructions by bxcd for removing the door panels are on Prius Chat

<http://priuschat.com/forums/gen-iii-2010-prius-audio-electronics/92233-door-panel-removal-front-door-speaker-removal-pictures.html>

I tried using a proper tool to remove the door panels but it was more trouble than it was worth, so I ended up just pulling the panels off like bxcd did. I had one panel off and back on four times as I was working out sealing of the speaker to door panel grill. The fasteners and panels didn't show any signs of distress.

An alternative to disconnecting the mechanical cable from the interior door handle is to pop the door handle out of the panel and let it hang there. That can be handy if you want to get out of the car through that door.

Leave your windows rolled up if you will be installing sound deadener. When the window is down it blocks access to the outer door skin.

This is not an easy job. If you don't have some experience in this area or aren't very good at solving this type of problem, you should have a shop do this. If you screw-up, replacement parts are expensive.

Don't drill out the rivets, you need all the plastic material you can save to secure the upholstery panel back into the door panel. The door panel and upholstery panel are both polyethylene/polypropylene and very difficult to glue, so don't count on that.

I used #8 by 0.375 and 0.50 long sheet metal screws with washers to reassemble the upholstery panel to the door panel. ***Note: my drivers door has been on this way for over 1,000 miles and feels solid, but I don't offer a guarantee.*** I was able to use at least a 0.375 long screw with one washer in every position except the top rear position on the front door panel. In that position, I was able to use a 0.375 screw by putting two washers under it, on the other door I tried welding the panel on with a hot air plastic welder. I ended up melting a small hole through the plastic door panel which I covered with a 0.75 inch diameter button of upholstery. Don't try that.

When you are installing the screws, make sure the door panel plastic post fits in the hole in the upholstery panel, and don't over tighten the sheet metal screws or you will strip the threads. Hold a finger on the finished side of the door panel and you can feel if the screw is starting to poke into the finished side of the door panel. If it does, back off and install a shorter screw. As long as you are careful, that won't leave mark in the door panel.

The vinyl is glued on over the factory fabric. The factory fabric adds a little padding and this is how Katzkin's instructions say to do it.

I'm not going to attempt to show how to glue on the vinyl, but you should find some instructions on line or get Katskin's instructional CD if you aren't familiar with the process. Some important points.

- Cut the vinyl about 2 inches bigger than the panel all the way around. It's difficult to get everything position without wrinkles or air bubbles. Having a little extra material gives you more freedom in location the vinyl. You can always trim the excess, but if you end up a bit short, you may get to start over.
- Which glue you use is critical. You need a strong contact adhesive that gives you several minutes to reposition (open time) the vinyl as you work wrinkles and bubbles out. I has very good results with DAP® Weldwood® High Strength Spray Adhesive http://www.dap.com/product_details.aspx?BrandID=72&SubcatID=10 That is the adhesive that Katskin includes in their optional installation package. I ran out of the Weldwood and tried to do one panel with 3M high Strength 90 and it was a disaster. The 90 is very strong but grips nearly instantly so there is no time to reposition the vinyl.



Factory rivet head
made from melting
and flattening end
of tubular
protrusion on
upholstery panel.

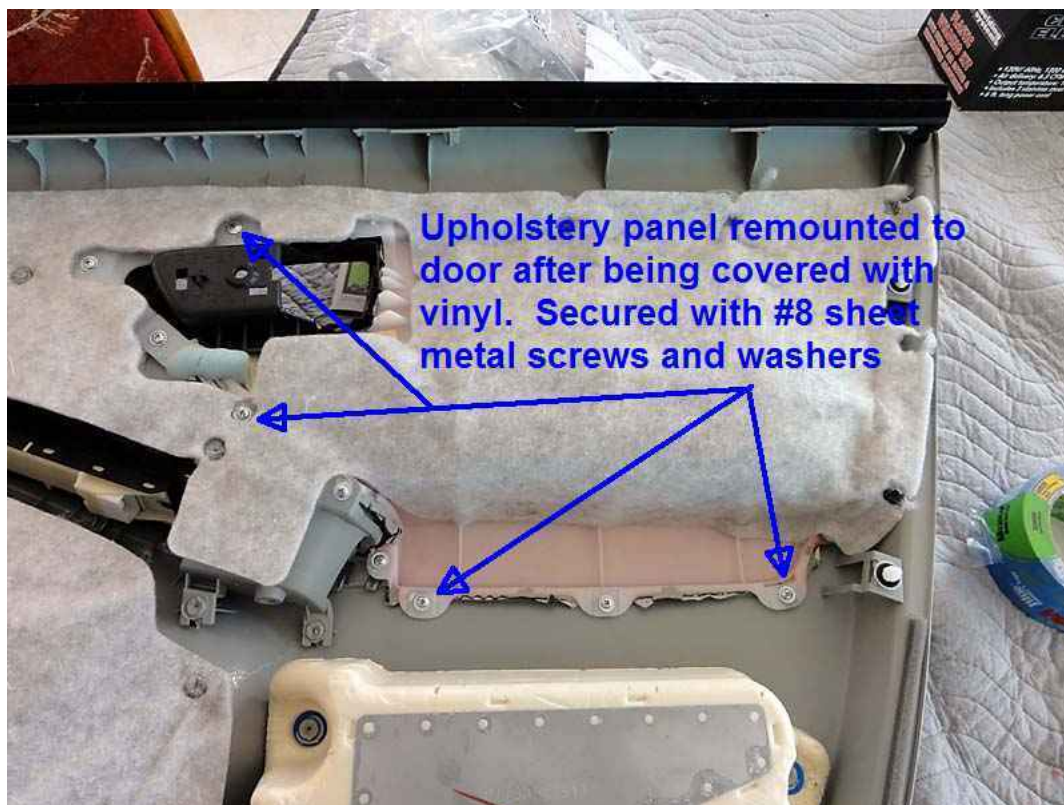


Slice rivet head off
flush with the surface
by pushing a sharp
wood chisel through
it.

If your chisel is sharp, you can just push it through the head without pounding on it









The upholstery and DiNoc both look better than this picture. I cut the resolution down to keep the file size reasonable. For DiNoc instructions and info, search YouTube for 3M DiNoc. There are loads of how to videos.

