

How to Remove Door Cards on a VH Aston Martin – Rev B – 8 December 2012

1. Introduction

This procedure is meant to assist you in removing the door cards from your lovely Aston Martin, hopefully without doing any very costly damage in the process. In the 'old' days, workshop manuals used to be very detailed, with clear, concise instructions that explained everything. Nowadays, it seems that repair manuals leave a lot to the imagination, since they are meant for dealership personnel who have received hands-on training, and therefore it sometimes appears as more of a summary than a true procedure.

Removal and replacement of both door cards should take you about 2 hours if you work diligently, or much longer if you take as many breaks as I do, since I like to contemplate a lot before taking any action (i.e., have a beer). Any way, an efficiency suggestion is that you perform each of the following steps on both doors before moving on to the next step in the process. In this way you will perform the step twice in a row and you should be able to remember what you did the first time, plus you'll have the necessary tools at hand.

Note that this procedure is written in American, but with translation into English for our UK brethren where needed. This is denoted by italics set off by brackets. Lastly, if something isn't quite right in the details, please hold your complaints in abeyance, since that department is heretofore closed in any case.

NOTE: Some have successfully removed the door cards without performing Steps 3 and 4. Consequently, you may wish to begin at Step 5 and only perform Steps 3 and 4 if you have difficulty in completing Step 8.

2. Tools/Supplies

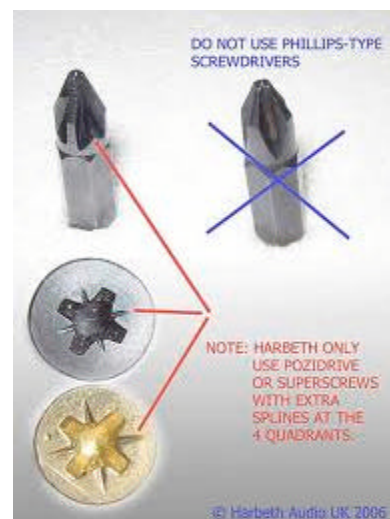
Must Have

- 1) Torx Head Screw Drivers: T10 & T15 for cheater panel, door card, and door handle
- 2) Socket Head Cap Screw Driver: 5 mm for door handle

Should Have

- 3) Pozidriv Screw Head Drivers: PZ1 (or PZ2) for door cap

***Distinguishable from Phillips
by additional cruciform marks***



- 4) Plastic Interior Trim Tool: for door chrome trim and door handle
- 5) Masking or Duct [Gaffer] Tape: for chrome trim and door handle

Good Idea to Have

- 6) Rubber Mallet: for reinstallation of chrome door trim
- 7) Foam Mat: for you to lay on during door card removal
- 8) Flashlight [Torch]: you know what for

3. Remove Door Top Chrome Trim

Be afraid, be *very* afraid (just kidding...). This is much easier than you would think, so don't worry too much.

a) Lower window completely.

b) Apply a strip of masking or duct [*gaffer*] tape to the outside of the door, just below the chrome strip as a safety precaution to avoid possible paint damage when removing it.



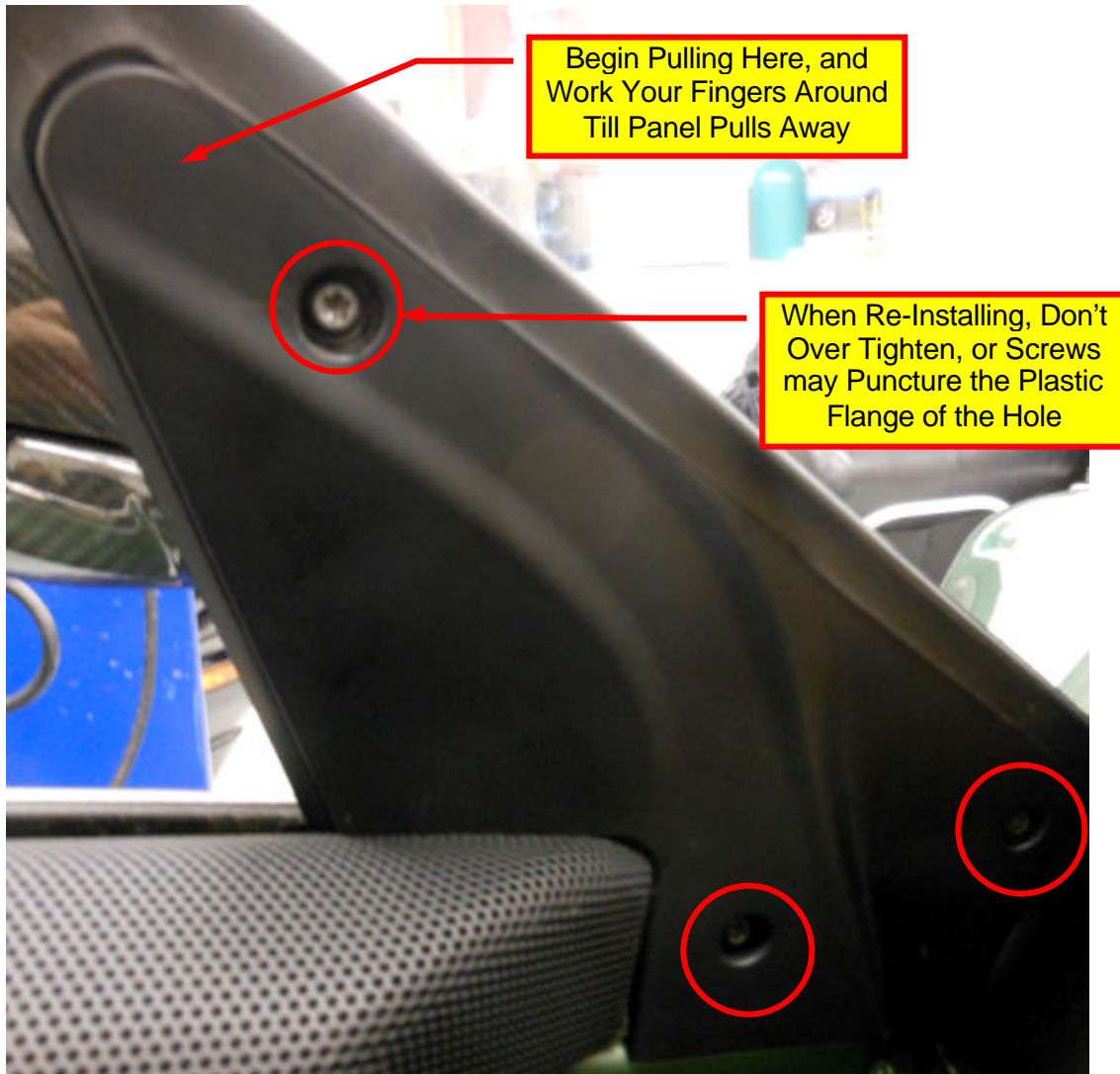
c) Using an automotive plastic trim removal tool, gently pry up [*prise*] the chrome strip, starting at the back edge of the door, and gradually work your way forward. Once you've pried [*prised*] at least half way down the length, you can just pull up the rest by hand without using the tool.



d) When re-installing the strip, begin at the front edge, using a rubber mallet or the heel of your hand to firmly tap the trim into place. Once fully installed, tap over the whole length to assure that it is firmly in place.

4. Remove Window Cheater Plate

- a) Removal of this trim allows the door card to be pushed up to disengage from the tabs at the top edge of the door panel.
- b) Remove 3 Torx screws (T15) and then pull the panel away from the door. It is partially held in place with sticky rubber/foam tape. Don't be afraid to pull on it; it will release but just be certain you have removed ALL of the screws first.



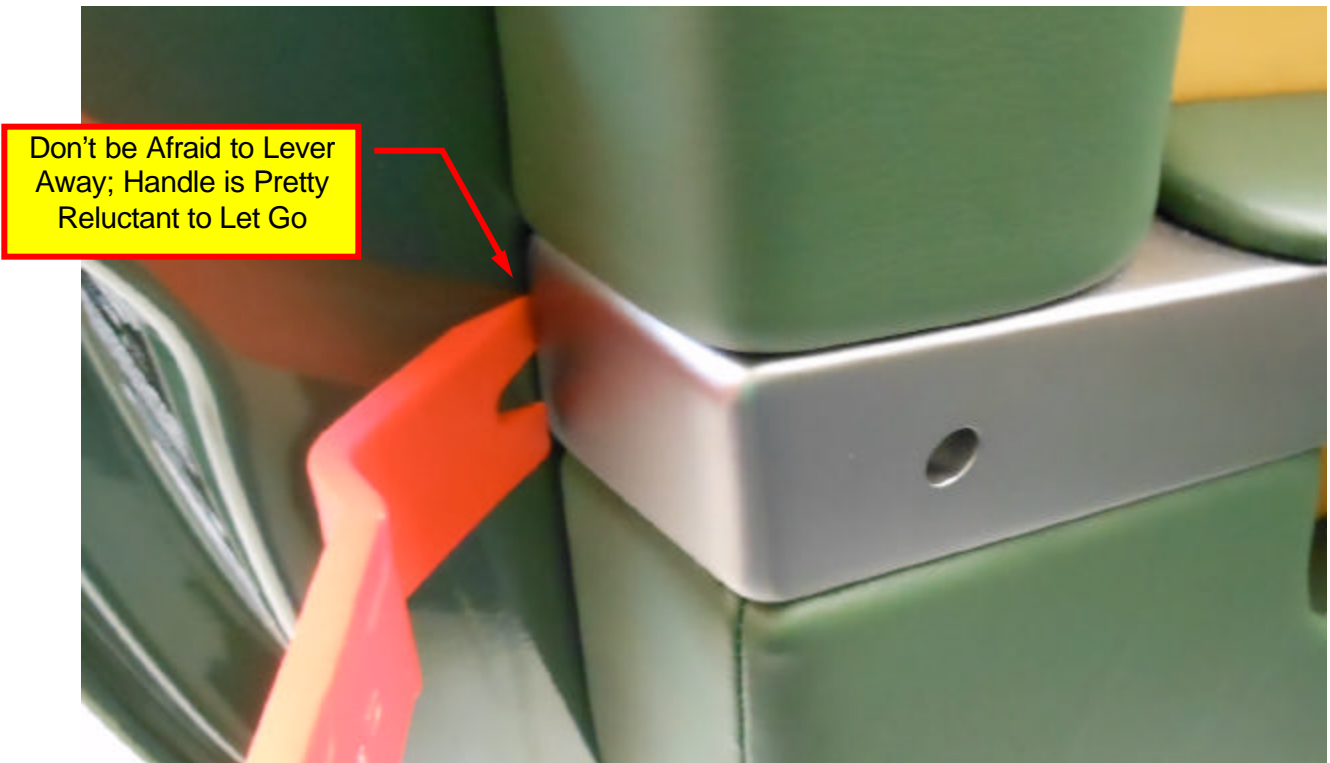
- c) This is rather flimsy plastic, so when re-installing, do not over tighten the screws otherwise they may punch through the recessed hole flange (don't ask...).

5. Remove the Door Handle

- a) Remove the 2 large socket head cap screws; one at each end of the handle.



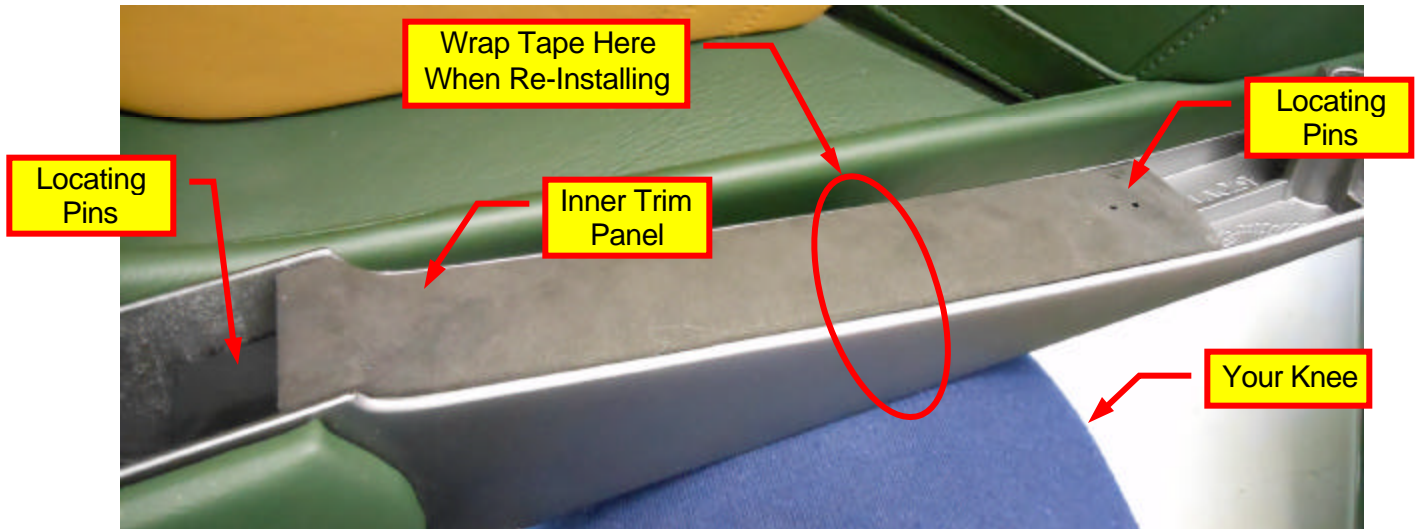
- b) Grasp the handle using both hands and give it a firm yank (that's me...). If you do not have access to a firm yank, you may find it easier to use a plastic trim tool. Insert your tool (ahem...) between the metal door panel (not the door card) and the rear edge of the handle, and lever [prise] the handle away from the door panel.



- c) Once you've managed to loosen the door handle, you can work both ends until it is completely free of the door panel. Do not pull the handle away from the door too far since the door latch mechanism cable is still attached to the door handle (**see next step first**).

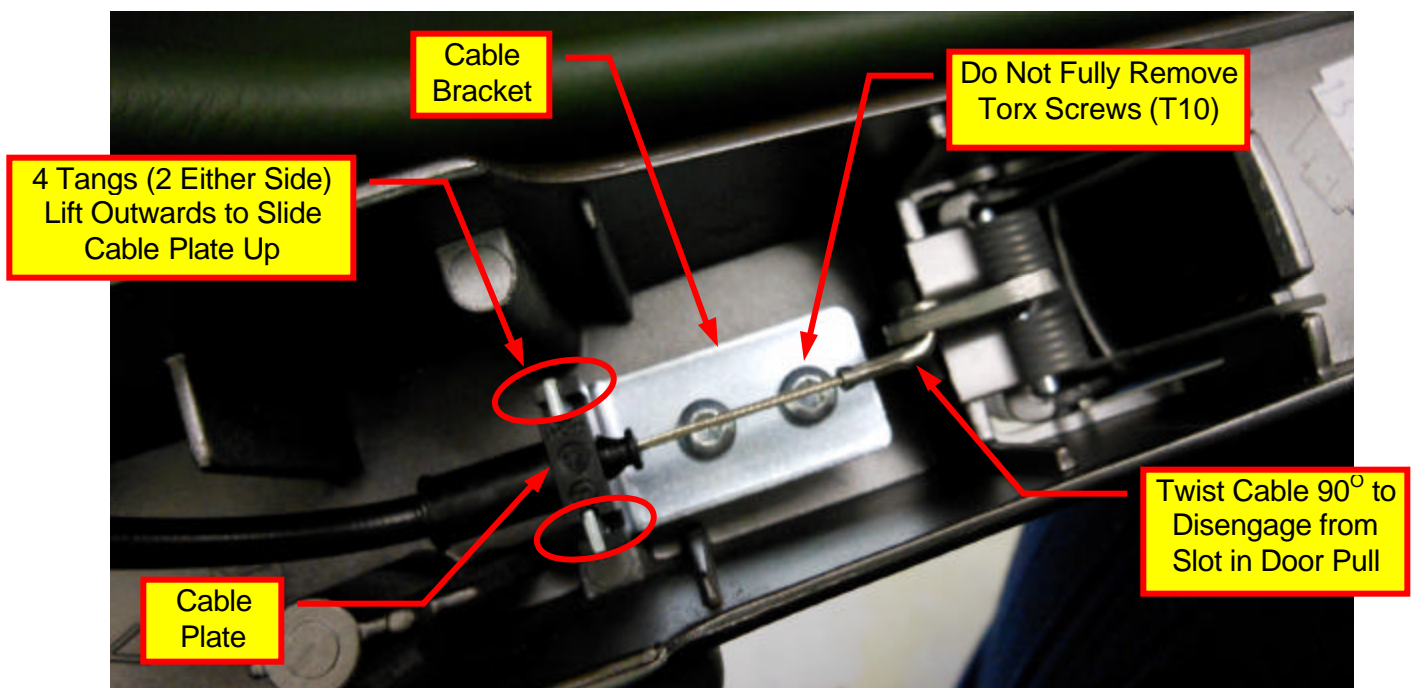
6. Disengage the Door Cable from the Door Handle

a) While [whilst] resting the handle on your knee, rotate it 90 degrees about its longitudinal axis so that the inner surface is pointing upwards.



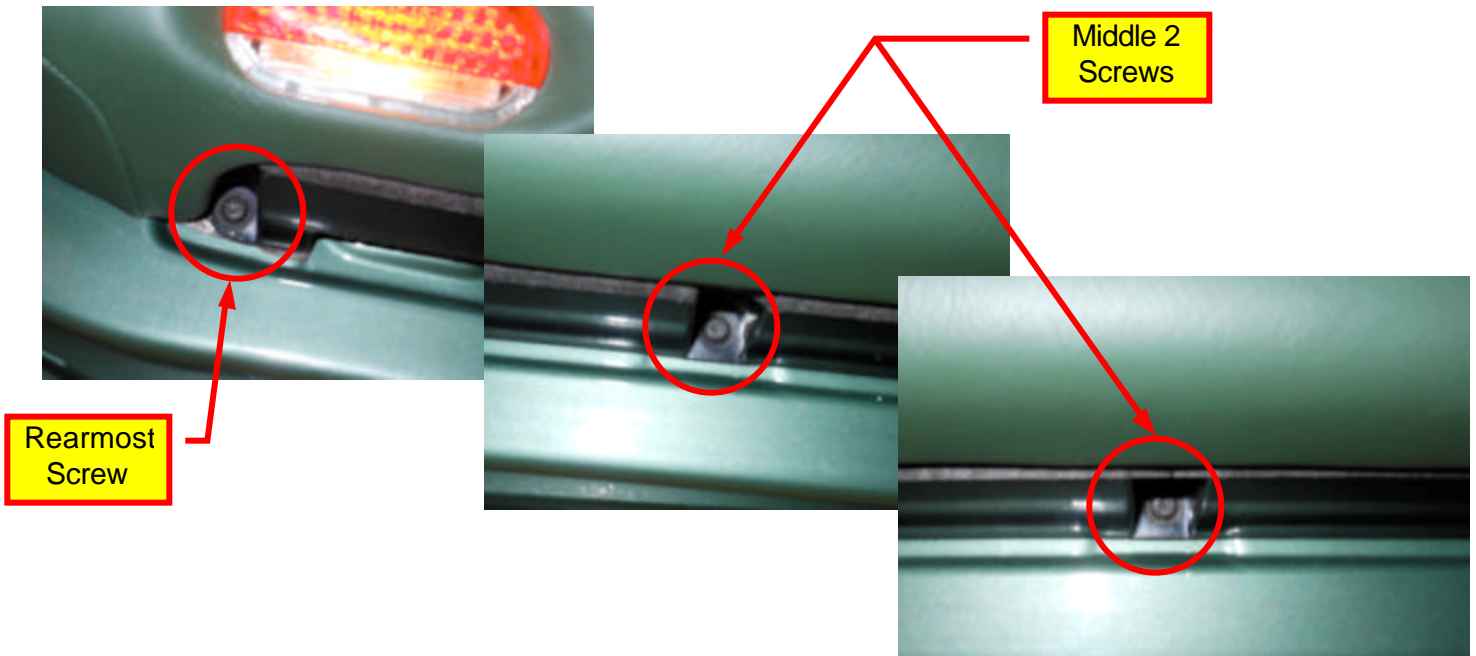
b) Simply remove the inner trim panel, which is only held in place by locating pins (and by trapping it between the door handle and the door card). Tip: when re-installing, with the trim in place, wrap a piece of tape around the handle so that the trim doesn't slip out of place while fiddling with the handle.

c) Disengage the cable from the door pull. It is easiest to loosen (but not fully remove) both Torx screws, which will then provide the needed slack to allow you to pry up [prise] from the bracket the small black clip holding the cable. This is trickier than it looks because small tangs must be disengaged on the clip itself to allow it to slide up off of the bracket. Once the cable is released from the bracket, you just disengage it from the door pull. Alternatively, you can simply remove both Torx screws completely, in which case you don't have to release the cable from its bracket.



7. Remove the Door Card Screws

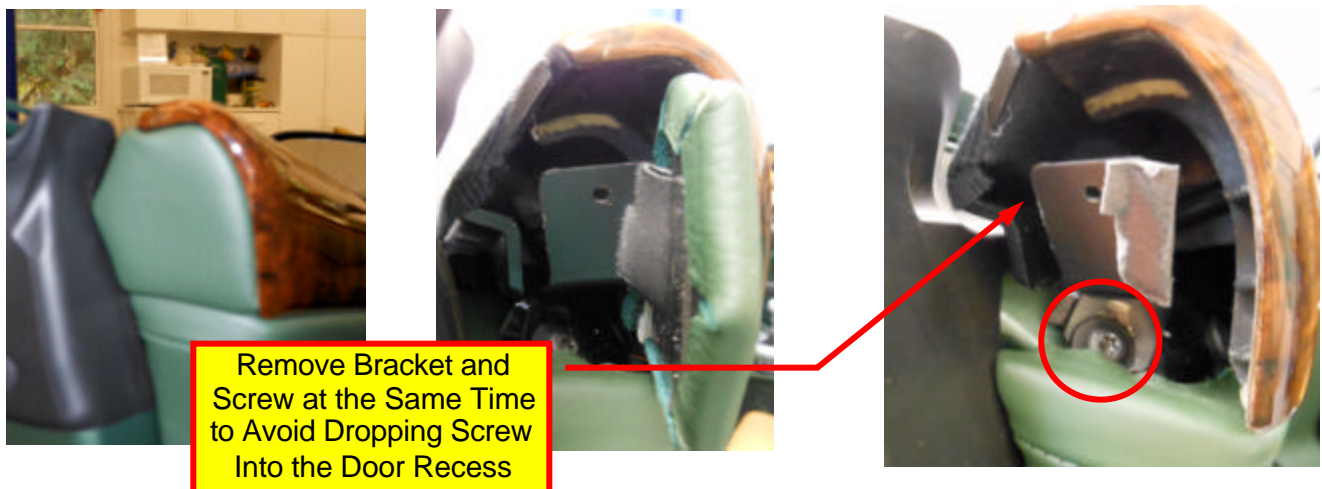
a) Remove the **4 Torx screws** (T15) at the bottom of the door. This is more easily performed by laying down on your back outside of the car while [*whilst*] peering upwards.
Note: the most forward screw location (towards the door hinge) is not shown.



b) Remove the single Torx screw (T15) from the center of the door air vent hole trim plate.



c) Remove the leather trim panel at the back of the door cap (held only by sticky tape or velcro) to access the last door card Torx screw (T15). The bracket removes with the screw.



8. Remove the Door Card from the Door Panel

This part is a little tricky, since you must disconnect the window switch and the door puddle lamp connectors but the wiring is short and doesn't allow you to pull the door card away from the door panel very far (small hands are good !!).

a) Pull the door card away from the door panel at the bottom edge and then push upwards on the entire panel to disengage slots at the top of the door card from mating vertical tabs on the door panel.

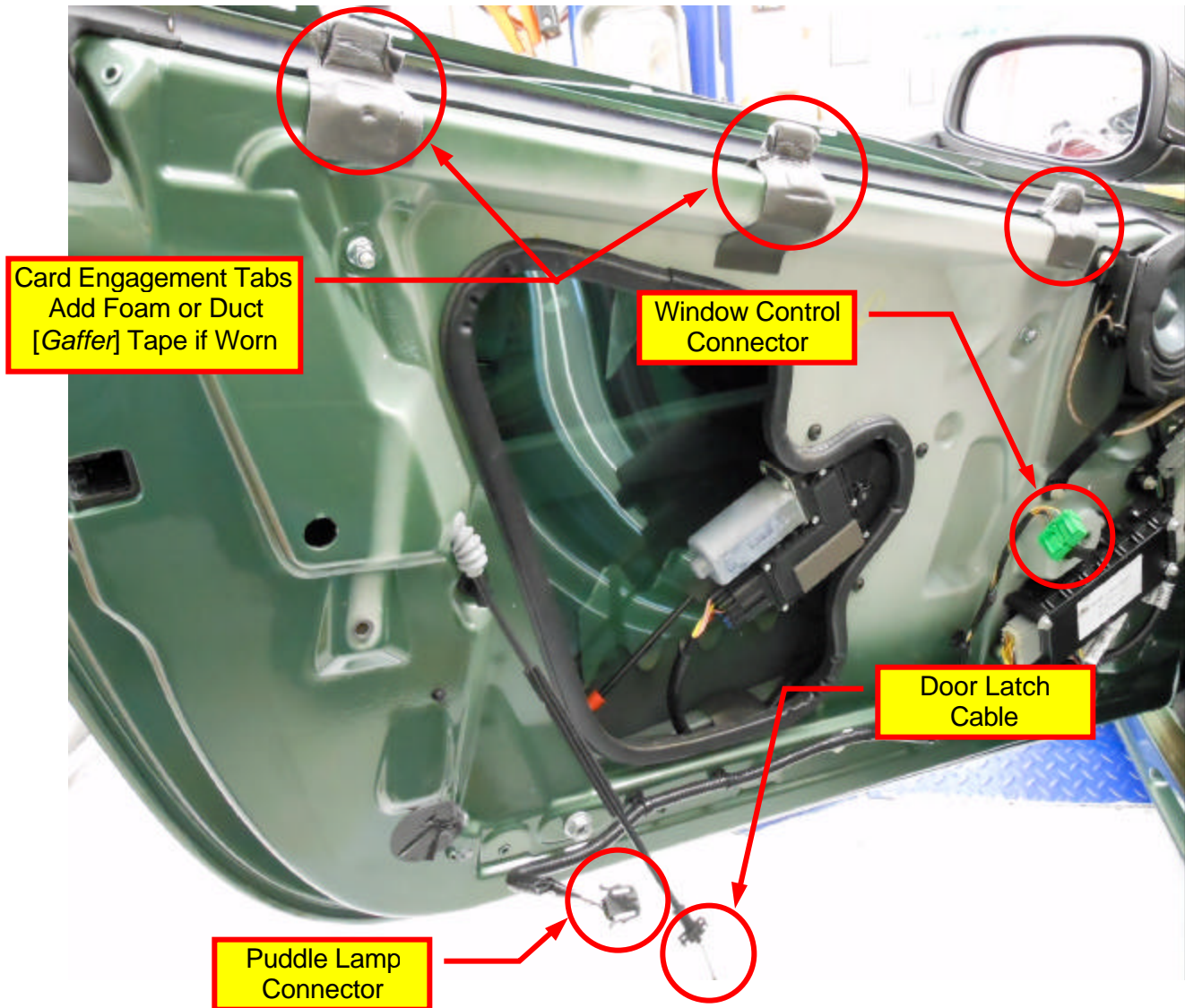
Note: read following step before doing this



Pull Card Outwards at Bottom, then Push Up to Disengage from 3 Tabs at Top

b) You will now be left with a door card attached to the door panel by only those 2 pesky connectors. So, while [*whilst*] balancing the door card with one hand at the back of the card, and the bottom leading edge perched on the tread plate, work the other hand into the gap between the card and the door bottom and disconnect those connectors.

Don't give up, maybe have a cold one or a coffee [*warm beer or a cuppa*] if you don't succeed on the first try.



c) Remove card and place on a cloth-protected firm working surface with the facing side down.

9. Remove and Replace Door Cap

- a) Remove the many pozidriv screws (10 or so) which attach the door cap to the door card. Make sure you remove all of them (look at the new door cap you will be installing to see that you've got them all). A PZ1 bit is probably the right size, but you may be able to use a PZ2.
- b) When attaching the new door cap, you will have to apply quite a bit of torque to drive these self-tapping screws into the plastic studs of the door cap (if the cap is new). This is why you really should use a pozidriv and not a Phillips head screwdriver. If you don't, you may find that you can't apply enough torque to properly tighten the screws without causing the screwdriver to 'cam' out.

10. Reinstallation of Door Panel

- a) Before installing door card, if the foam tape covering the door panel tabs appears worn or rather thin, you should apply additional foam tape or duct [*gaffer*] tape to build up the tab to prevent rattles.
- b) Follow above steps in reverse.

11. Repeat Process for Other Door

Unless you have taken the advice to perform each step on both doors before moving on to the next step, in which case you are finished.

12. Have a Cold One [*Warm Beer*] and Admire Your Handiness !!