

## A Method for Repairing Rock Chips in Paint Frankie's 'Road-Ding' Repair Method

Frank Dreano

[Link to Corvette Forum Thread:](#)

**Frankie the Fink**

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This is just a method I've fallen into over the years of trying to keep my paint nice, I'm not a paint professional nor do I play one on TV...

All I know is that it works, it lasts, and with care, is undetectable....

### **GATHERING TOOLS, MATERIALS AND PREFERRED TOUCH UP TECHNIQUE:**

It goes without saying that color matched paint is essential - some of your original paint is good or else take a headlight bucket ring to a paint shop and have it color matched - tell them what you are doing and they'll mix the stuff for touching up small things. Also ask them to "formulate" the paint - meaning they will RECORD the exact formula in their database and provide it to you....instead of a tech just flowing some paint/tint together until it matches and handing you the can (and you get to do it again next time).. You won't need "hardener" for these repairs - at least I've never used it.

You don't have to buy a ton - just a few ounces are enough to repair a lifetime of chips dings. If you store it in a paint can don't trust that lid to keep the stuff from drying out, put blue tape around the lid each and every time you close it up....even better those glass mason jars gals use to preserve things is the best storage container IMO....



Get your toolkit together - applicator, sandpaper, reading glasses or magnifier, a rolling stool to sit on comfortably - this takes a while... Strong lighting is critical. Select a work area that's clean where crud and pollen and what-have-you won't be blowing all over and into your fix... I wear a pair of "wife-canceling" headphones to "get in the zone" while doing this detail work...

I've tried all the detail brushes - even those tiny brushes gals use for fingernail designs.....this is far and away my preferred touch up tool now: Laser-precise, pinpoint accuracy.



Loew-Cornell Fine Line Painting Pen

Here is where you can get one along with a link for obtaining assorted super-fine sandpaper packs:

Source for the Fine Line Painting pen: [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com)

Source for fine-grit sandpaper packs: <https://www.amazon.com/Sandpaper-Assortment-Polishing-Automotive>

Here is a YouTube Video of the technique for using the tool; fast forward to 4:08 minutes if you want to get right to it: (<https://youtu.be/Uz-zW-clDUs>)

[Link to YouTube Video](https://youtu.be/Uz-zW-clDUs)



## PAINT APPLICATION, FINISHING AND FINAL STEPS:

OK.... clean the ding with isopropyl alcohol (rubbing alcohol) and let dry, get your reading glasses and stool...

Mix/stir the touch-up paint thoroughly and use an artist's brush to dribble paint into the pen reservoir as shown in the video. Then use the pen to get the touch up paint into the repair to just above level with the surrounding surface. It may take 3-4 applications, waiting an hour or so between coats. Then let dry for 48 hours (**no cheating**)...

Don't make a big bubble - it just creates more work for you later on.

Now comes the scary part, wet sanding the fix:

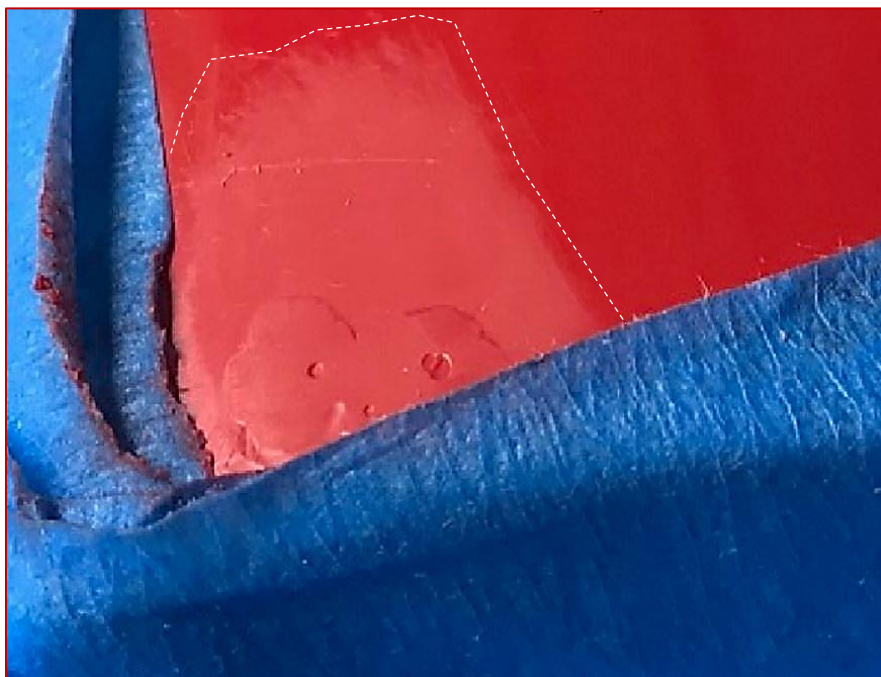
The trick is not to go at the repair so hard with your fingers and sandpaper that you make a divot in the surface... DON'T rush it...let the sandpaper do its work; it may take you 20-30 minutes (or more) of light pressure using successively finer sandpapers WITH EACH GRIT to get to the polishing point.

I wrap a rectangle of sandpaper 2-3 times around a Popsicle stick and use long back and forth strokes and when nearly finished with a single grit I do a final pass in small circles... Use the LEAST aggressive grit that removes material - don't use 1000 grit if 3000 is doing the job...**keep the paper wet with warm water with a drop of Joy or Dawn in it.** If you feel any unusual friction while sanding -- STOP, you've picked up a piece of grit or dirt somehow, discard the paper, dry off the repair and start with fresh, wet sandpaper...you should only feel light pressure while moving through the "slurry" the wet paper creates.

Dry the area after every 10 passes with a paper towel to see if you've gotten the repair level...it'll be real obvious... Finishing with 3000 is probably fine, I go with a few 5000 grit passes though. Keep the paper wet! The final test is after drying with a paper towel and the fix and surround area don't have any remaining shiny spots...it should be an even, hazy, uniform area around the repair.....NOTE: a bit of shiny area is OK if you can't feel it with your finger...in fact it's even better as final polishing will get it perfect... See the second picture below for a good example of when you are super close to DONE with the sanding...

You can see the "haze" (outlined) in the picture below after drying as I first start the wet sanding - check early, check often...

If I had used the pen above instead of an artist's brush this repair would have been much easier; it wouldn't have taken the "blobs" to get the divots level with the surface.



When you've gotten to the point in sanding where there is still a haze on the repair and it's still detectable it's time to start polishing. Do NOT make the mistake of trying to get the repair perfect with the sandpaper.

I use some Turtle Wax polishing compound in the green plastic can first, then do a final buff with Meguiar's Ultra Glaze: <https://www.amazon.com/Meguiars-Mirr.../dp/B001O7PNXC>

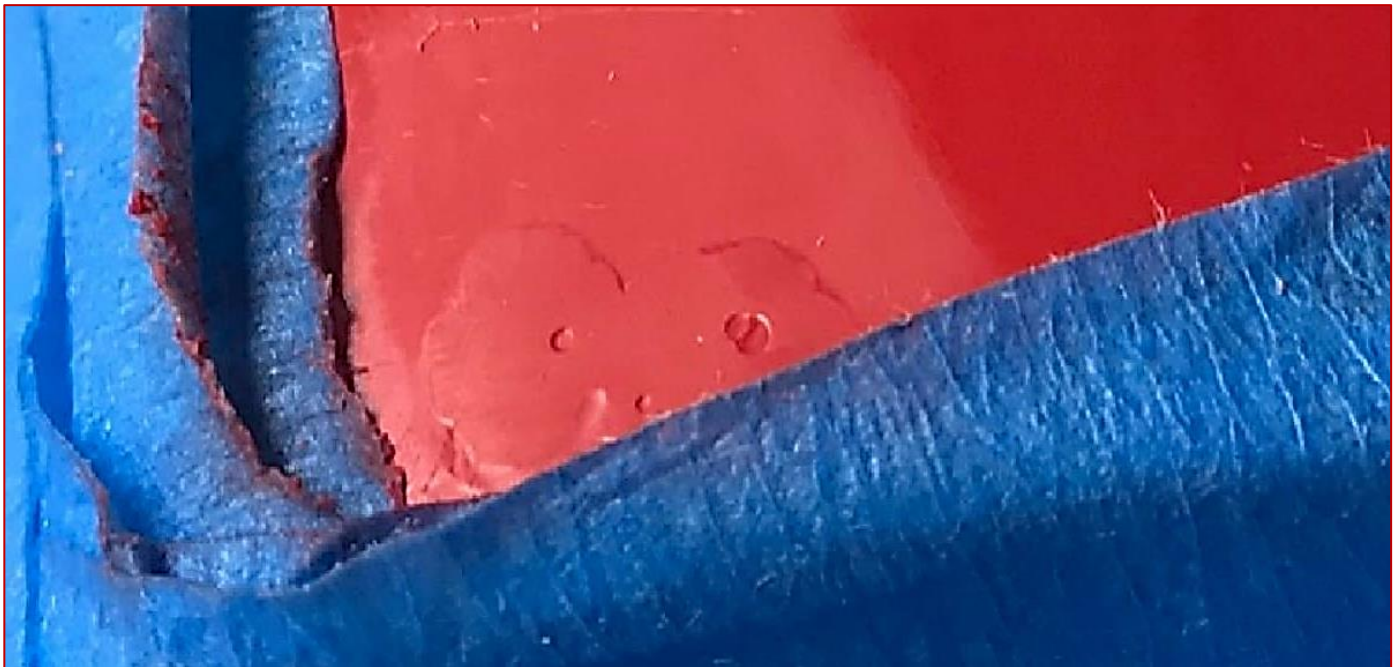
I use the same Popsicle stick technique, wrapping the stick in a T-shirt or microfiber towel and putting a dime sized dab of polish on the repair and smearing a bit on the towel/shirt to get it moist. Go slow, and avoid too much pressure or you'll make a low spot in the paint.

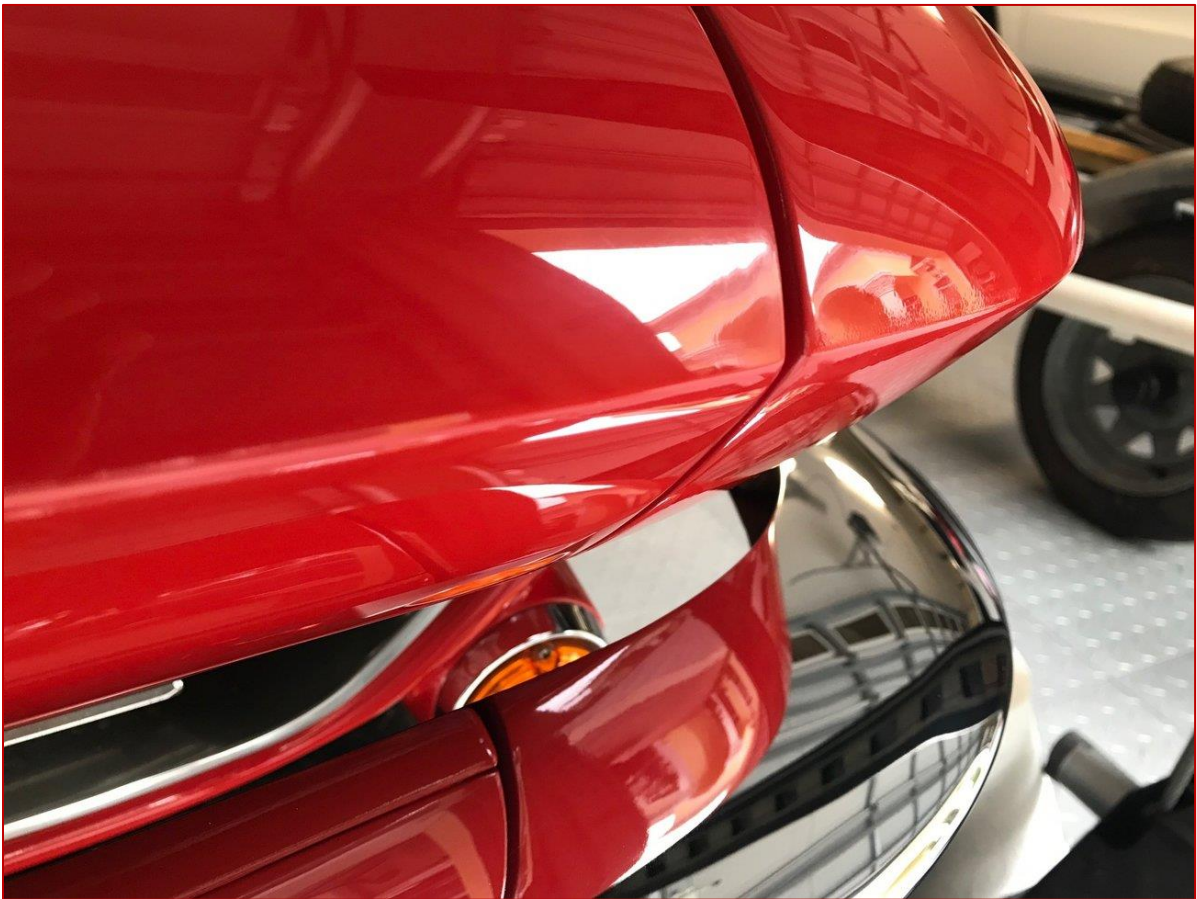
When you get to the point you are straining to see the repaired spot it's time to stop and assess what is "good enough".... I examine the fix under strong light from about 2 feet away and if I can't see it, I'm done - check again in strong sunlight.

**NOTE: I have single stage paint -- if you have BC/CC you have to be EXTREMELY careful not to go through the clear surrounding the fix as there is no coming back from that short of a panel being re-cleared...**

Some repair videos will show a guy doing a final step with clear coat with some Simoniz clear stick or a dab of clear on a brush....some will say to mix some clear with the touch up paint. I do neither, I've never had any luck with those methods and usually wind up screwing up an acceptable repair and having to start over. I stay with just the touch-up paint.

Here are two bad chips in my headlight bucket I've started to fill with paint (several applications needed); the filling was done with a brush before I discovered the tool above which would have made **a lot cleaner, precise job** of it:







This was a tough fix, not only is it above the beltline and "in-your-face" but the dings were very close to the edges of the headlight bucket requiring extra care. **The paint on the ridges and edges of your car is THIN....if you start sanding/buffing there you are certain to burn through if you aren't cautious.**

**Finally - I take zero, nada, zilch responsibility for your outcome - if you aren't up to doing this, then don't....**

If this scares you then you can try the Langka Paint Blob system:

<https://www.amazon.com/LANGKA-Comple...paint+blob+kit>

It is absolutely risk-free and will not damage anything - if you mess up just clean out the repair with lacquer thinner and start over. The results won't be as good but it's a safer method...

It's a "driver-level" repair and not a "show-quality" fix IMO - but it may fit your needs.

## Mike Geary

### Scraping the blob down

One of the DIY painting materials I bought years ago was the Kevin Tetz "Paintucation" series, in which he demonstrated his method for removing runs. The same method works great for touch-ups, where the chip is overfilled and then shaved down flush before sanding.

Taking a single edged razor blade, pass the edge across a fine grit piece of wet/dry (I use 1000) to create a small burr on the edge. That burr becomes your miniature scraper. Bend the blade into a banana shape to make it easier to handle and lightly scrape away the high spots using MANY passes. Very light pressure is sufficient. A little quick detailer to lubricate the surface doesn't hurt. Then proceed to wet sanding/polishing. Myself I go with 1000/2000/Finesse-It II (3M).

What I like about this method is that very little film thickness is removed, minimizing sand-through risk.

## mike coletta

Just to add to Franks' excellent explanation, the tool requires a heavy enough viscosity so that it will NOT "run out" the tip. This "brush" works on contact, and the paint is held in the cup the same way that you can hold water in a straw by putting your finger over the end. The paint in the cup HOLDS the paint in the tip from dripping out, until you touch the surface. Practice on something before you start. The best thing about it is that you can keep "touching" the chip, and fill it right to the edges with no "over the edge" blobs. Usually, the automotive paint "right out of the can" is a good viscosity. If you're using basecoat, make sure that you add some clear, or you'll end up with a dull spot.

## GTOguy

Basically, it works off of surface tension....when you break the surface tension, the paint will run out of the cup into the chip until you restore surface tension by removing the tool from the work. Neat stuff!

## Frankie

Quote:

Originally Posted by **GTOguy**

*Basically, it works off of surface tension....when you break the surface tension, the paint will run out of the cup into the chip until you restore surface tension by removing the tool from the work. Neat stuff!*

The pen lets you work somewhat like a tattoo artist in precise, small increments in a surgical manner. I've never gotten the same result with a brush. But my eyes and hands aren't what they used to be.

## DansYellow66

On sanding the touch up flush using sandpaper wrapped around a popsicle stick - in the last year or so, a forum member (I forget who) recommended wrapping a layer of masking tape around the stick on both sides of the sandpaper. The tape rides the paint surface and holds the thickness of the sandpaper level with the surrounding paint - so you don't accidentally sand a divot in the surface while flattening the touch up. Very simplistic but brilliant suggestion.

Thanks for the thread Frankie.

**DUB**

Quote:

Originally Posted by **rtruman**

*Frankie great idea I pretty much do the same thing . The only problem I have is PPG Paints vendors scan your paint and they refuse to add a little extra to left or right to make a perfect match I think it's kind of lazy of them to do that if it's a pain that they took care of the computer no problem but if you take like my truck up there and have him match it they won't stray Too Much*

Just to be fair to the companies that have the cameras for color matching...

It has nothing to do with IF they take care of the camera....that is not the issue. The camera is only taking a photo of the color and comparing it to thousands of colors in the database and it find one as close as possible. Using a camera like this is NO GUARANTEE that the color will be perfect.

And it honestly is not that they are lazy...but unless a person is paying someone to custom tint color....or are lucky where the paint shop WILL tint it the best they can because it can take a while to get the color right. And I am only saying this is because I do color matching and it can go somewhat easy or take a LONG TIME depending if the color is going to be shot and blended out or if it is going to be used for a panel that is being butt-matched....or touch up paint. Not everyone has a good eye for color and can see what a color needs to be tinted to match a color.

ALSO...keep in mind these cars are painted in a SOLID color and not metallic colors. When touching up a metallic color.... the rules change due to the color will not NORMALLY be able to be applied in a thick state of viscosity to match the color when the paint was atomized and applied on the car....which makes the color lighter when it is sprayed.

Nice thread Frankie. Good job and it should help many who want to venture into touching up some chips and see what it takes.

The thread below shows a color being tinted to match for those who may be interested...You can look at the whole thread ( which is really good) or start at post #39 and go from there. And by the way...the camera was used and the first test panel is the best one it found in the database,...then the tinting began form there.

<https://www.corvetteforum.com/forums...-inside-3.html>

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