

PRODUCT BULLETIN

Gel Coat Repair

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General Information Safety

1. Keep Out Of The Reach Of Children.
2. These products are flammable. Keep away from sparks, flame, and heat sources.
3. Wear safety glasses: In case of contact with eyes, flush with water for 15 minutes. If discomfort persists, seek medical attention.
4. Wear gloves and protective clothing.
5. Wear a dust mask when sanding.
6. Avoid inhalation of vapors.
7. Avoid eye or skin contact with resin, hardener.

Because we have no control over working conditions or methods, products should be tested to establish suitability for your individual application. Our liability is limited the price of the product.

TAP Plastics stocks most of the products mentioned in this Bulletin—ask your salesperson to help you find them or shop online: tapplastics.com.

Before You Start

1. Read the instructions completely before attempting the repair.
2. Check your supply list.

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☐ Stockton CA	1859 Pacific Avenue	209 937-9300
☐ Tigard OR	15957 SW 72nd Avenue	503 620-4960

Professional Solutions for Gel Coat Issues

- Chips
- Gouges
- Scrapes
- Air Voids
- Drilled Holes
- Stress Cracks

You Can
Fix-It-
Yourself!



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Repairing Damaged Gel Coat

Professional repair of damaged gel coat can be very expensive. The good news is that you can do a professional job yourself by investing a little of your time and patience and by using quality TAP products.

The basic steps needed for a cosmetic gel coat repair are included in this Product Bulletin. These instructions assume you have a basic knowledge of *fiberglassing* and the use of polyester resin. If you do not, a TAP salesperson will be glad to provide you with the necessary information.

Perhaps the greatest challenge in gel coat repair is matching the color of the repair to the existing color of the boat. Gel coat begins to change color (usually by getting darker) the day the boat is exposed to the sun's rays. Stock gel coat will never match faded gel coat, therefore custom colors must be used to make your repair invisible. How to custom mix gel coat color to your specific boat color is explained in this Bulletin.

There are four basic types of cosmetic repairs:

1. Air voids (caused by the manufacturing process).
2. Stress cracks (caused by the twisting and stress of the boat).
3. Drilled holes (usually due to removed hardware).
4. Scrape, gouge, or chip.

Each requires a different repair approach. This Bulletin will deal with the last two issues: repairing drilled holes and scrapes, gouges, and chips.

Supplies You May Need

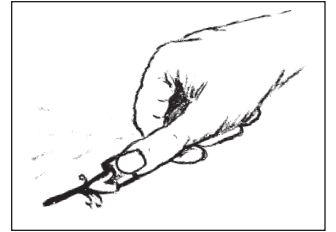
Regardless of the type of repair you are doing, the same basic supplies are required:

- Gel Coat
- TAP Pigment
- Stir Sticks
- Disposable Brushes
- White Rags
- Razor Knife
- Sandpaper (#60, 80, 320, 400, 500, 600)
- Sanding Block
- Carbide Router Bit
- Stanley Surform File
- TAP PVA
- Respirator
- 3M Marine 1-Step Fiberglass Restorer Paste
- Catalyst
- Mixing Containers
- TAP Acetone
- Solvent-Resistant Brush
- Long Masking Tape (blue)
- Putty Knife
- Drill
- Dust Mask
- Preval Sprayer
- Gloves
- Goggles/Safety Glasses

Gouge, Chip, and Scrape Repair

Before beginning your repair, make a small batch of custom matched gel coat following the instructions for matching colors in this Bulletin.

1. Using a razor knife, pick and scrape away loose, cracked gel coat so that only fully bonded gel coat remains.



2. Using 60 to 80 grit sandpaper, hand sand the gouge to bevel the edges of the gel coat. Be careful to sand only the damaged area.
3. Wipe the area with a dry rag to remove dust. (Do not use acetone yet as it can move wax from an undamaged area into the freshly sanded gouge and impair adhesion.)
4. Use *Long Mask* (blue) masking tape to mask off the area around the gouge. (Poorer quality tape often leaves adhesive behind when it is removed, which greatly complicates the job.) Mask the undamaged gel coat right up to the edge of the gouge.
5. Now you can wipe the gouge with a white rag and TAP Acetone (pure acetone) to clean it for repair.
6. Place a small quantity of color-matched Gel Coat on a piece of cardboard, a butter dish, etc. Do not catalyze it yet. Place it in the sun for about 15 minutes. This will cause some of the styrene thinner to flash off allowing the Gel Coat to thicken enough to apply to a vertical surface without sagging or dripping.
7. Catalyze the thickened Gel Coat. Be careful not to over catalyze as this can cause the Gel Coat to change color. Follow the labeled instructions.
8. Use a small brush (solvent-resistant brush) to apply the Gel Coat to the damaged area. Be sure to fill all the voids and build the Gel Coat to a level higher than the surrounding area.
9. Gel Coat does not surface cure (it remains tacky where it is exposed to air). To get a good hard surface cure for sanding, spray the surface with TAPPVA, using a Preval Sprayer—this will seal the surface.
10. Allow the Gel Coat to fully cure (12 to 24 hours), then remove the masking tape.
11. Using 320 grit wet/dry sandpaper, wet sand the repair with a sanding block. Be sure to focus the sanding on the repair area, not on the surrounding area. Sand the repair flush