

Replacement Airbag Trim Covers For The 2004 Dodge Durango

The 2004 Dodge Durango allows replacement of the driver airbag trim cover only without the need to install an entire airbag module (see Figure 1). With most other vehicles, damaged trim covers can only be "repaired" by replacing the airbag module. This is because the airbag trim cover is normally part of the airbag module, it cannot be ordered separately. But with the 2004 Dodge Durango, if a trim cover is damaged without an airbag deployment, the trim cover and horn switch unit may be disassembled from the airbag module and is available as a separate replacement part.

There are several causes for a driver airbag trim cover being damaged. The cover could be torn or gouged as a result of vandalism or theft or a side impact collision that did not result in a front airbag deployment. Replacement trim covers come in their original colors and must never be refinished. Refinishing the trim cover can change the way in which it responds to an airbag deployment. The replacement trim cover unit has two different part numbers (YT70XDHAA and YT70ZJ8AA). To ensure a proper color match to the vehicle's interior, provide the vehicle identification number (VIN) when ordering the replacement trim cover.

DISABLE THE SYSTEM

Although complete module replacement is not required, the airbag module

still has to be removed from the steering wheel for the installation of the replacement trim cover. Be sure to follow all safety precautions when working with the passive restraint system. This includes disabling the passive restraint system before performing any diagnosis or service.

Disable the system by disconnecting and isolating the negative (ground) cable from the battery terminal. Also, the system capacitor must be allowed to discharge by waiting two minutes before servicing. This is the only way to ensure that the passive restraint system is fully disabled. Only after the restraint system is fully disabled is it safe to remove the airbag module from the steering wheel.

REPLACING THE COVER

After the airbag module has been removed, place it on a suitable dry surface area with the trim cover facing up. Remove the horn switch pigtail wire from the eyelet terminal on the back of the airbag module housing. Proceed to disconnect each of the twelve hooks of the airbag housing from the windows of the trim cover, starting with the upper wall, the two sidewalls, and the lower wall last. The trim cover and horn switch unit can then be removed from the rest of the airbag module and replaced.

Before replacing the replacement trim cover, fold the two flaps of cushion



Figure 1—The driver airbag module protective trim cover with the chrome Dodge emblem may be removed from the airbag module and is available as a separate replacement part. (Courtesy of DaimlerChrysler)

material over the top and around the sides of the retainer strap. While positioning the replacement trim cover over the airbag cushion, be sure the two flaps remain correctly orientated over the retainer strap. Route the horn switch feed and pigtail through the notch at the top of the airbag module housing and the upper wall of the trim cover receptacle. The horn switch ground pigtail wire eyelet terminal must be attached to the upper right inflator stud on the back of the airbag module housing and tightened to 7 Nm (65 in/lb). After securing each of the twelve hooks of the airbag module housing to the windows of the trim cover reinstall the airbag module onto the steering wheel. Use a scan tool to verify there are no diagnostic trouble codes before reconnecting the negative (ground) cable and reactivating the passive restraint system.

CONCLUSION

If only the trim cover is damaged on the driver airbag on the 2004 Dodge Durango, this is all that needs to be replaced. For now, this alternative to complete airbag module replacement is only available on the 2004 Durango, but it may be extended to other models in the future.