

Mercedes-Benz Tinkering - Dash Cap Installation

On October 5, 2003, I installed a "Dashtop" brand dash cap on my '83 380SL. The original dash was cracked and dull looking (which is typical for these cars) and this totally renewed its looks.

The Situation

Here's the way the dash looked. Notice the big honkin' hole, revealing the orange foam that is inside the dashboard.



Here's what came in the box. The plastic top, some glue, and some instructions. The top is made of thin but flexible plastic, about 1/8 inch thick all around. It looks like cheap plastic but is made with precision, and (it turns out) fits really well.



Cutting the Hole For the Temperature Sensor

I made a template using a piece of paper, and aligned it with the vent openings. I laid it on the original dash, and marked the spot where the temperature sensor was.



Then, I moved the template to the dashtop, and marked the spot with a sharp object. I cut an appropriate hole with a handy knife.



The temperature sensor sits in a tube with slits in the cap. The edges of the hole you cut end up being hidden under the cap.



Installation

Slipping it on. I didn't use the glue at all — the fit was very snug.

Also, I was worried about being able to remove the instrument (gauge) cluster in the future, and didn't want to risk damage caused by stuck glue. (The top curves around and into the cowling of the gauges slightly.)



Much much better than new. An old boss of mine used to say that. I think it's appropriate.

