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CAMBIAR INTERIOR COMPLETO

Greetings folks,

As a new active member on this forum, I determined I should contribute something of significance to this forum, so opted to share one of my more recent ventures--How to replace your entire interior (based on a post I made for a fellow US Z3 owner):

1) Take the seats out

a) Run the seat all the way back

b) Remove the two front floor mounting bolts in the rails

c) Run the seat all the way forward AND up (allows for better access to the rear bolts)

d) Remove the two rear floor mounting bolts in the rails

e) Disconnect the battery and wait at least 10 min(leave disconnected for duration until remounting four floor bolts)

IMPORTANT-need to verify whether your seats came with seatbelt pre-tensioner disarm screw or not...mine did not, so non issue, but disconnecting the battery should prevent them from firing. If yours do have them, supposedly you're supposed to disable them with some screw, but disconnecting the battery should work as well. The wait time is more for the airbags to discharge any residual electric charge that could inadvertently set them off.

f) Carefully lift up and disconnect 3-4 socketed cables underneath each seat (power control, heated seat, weight in seat signal, etc)

g) Carefully lift up the seat enough to reach the seatbelt mounting bolt on the side of the seat and disconnect; keep track of orientation so you don't get seat belt twisted up later



2) Take your radio out (if you have the original BMW set, you'll need a special 5-star tip screw driver...hopefully, you've done this before so you know what you're doing)

NOTE: any time you disconnect cables, etc, recommend getting some painters blue tape or white masking tape and labeling both wires/sockets so you know what goes to what and you can keep track of them for better/easier reinstallation

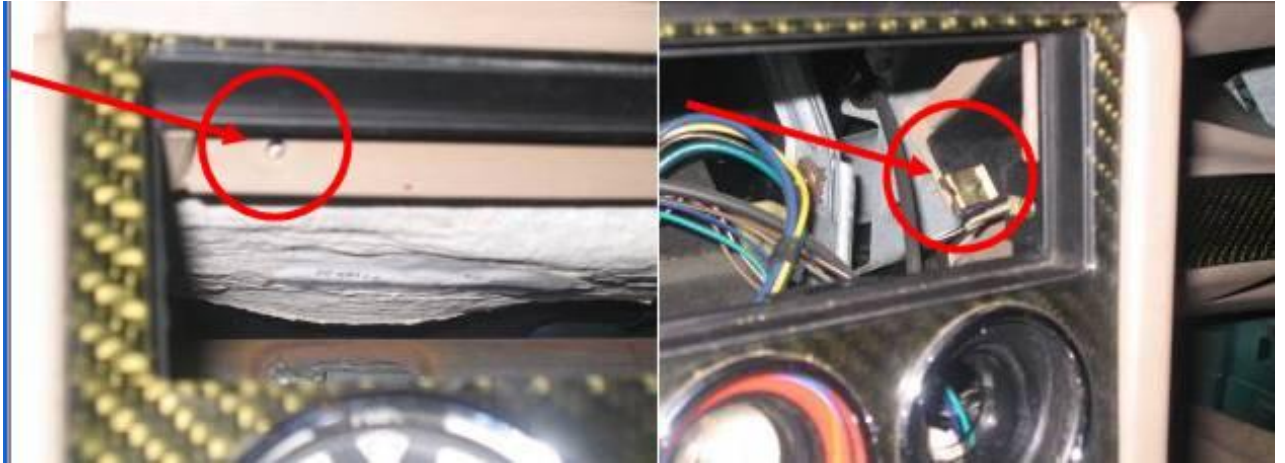
3) Remove center console

a) Don't know what this looks like in a Coupe, but in a roadster there are about three-four screws (one on each side of the console at the rear of the console and one-two to hold down the center armrest/cassette/cup holder). Obviously, remove them and keep track of where they go

b) Remove e-brake boot (you'll need a replacement zip-tie afterwards)

c) Remove shift knob and shift boot (you'll see from my pictures, that you don't need to remove the e-brake/shift boots...but it sure makes things easier)

d) Remove four screws just inside the hole where the radio goes in (two are very easy to see and clearly connect to the dash...two more are out of sight, have (I think) 7 or 10mm bolt heads (though I think they also have a flathead screw driver slot as well) and installed from front to back (i.e. the tips, when installed, are facing the back of the car). They're a little bit of a pain, i.e. you'll have to 1st find them (just look at the pictures below to get an idea) and 2nd get to them with either a short screw driver or socket set



(Picture on the left of first set; Picture on the right of second set – harder to get to)

e) Remove four plastic screw caps and the four screw (two on each side) at the very front of the center console (each set of two connect the center console panel to the glove box panel on the right and the under steering wheel panel on the left)

f) Once all those screws are removed, very carefully lift at the back of the center console enough to free it loose

NOTE: Though the screws are removed, the front part of the console is still secured to the dash by two hard plastic prongs that slide into holes in the dash

g) Once the back part is loose, very carefully try to slide console back and up from the front to the back of the car...be aware of the prongs at the front, may need a little shifting up and down/left and right on the front side to get it loose; biggest thing is you don't want to use excessive force and break the prongs or the holes in the dash (once you get it loose, just take a closer look at your set up to see what I'm talking about)

4) Remove the glove box panel (you said you've already done this once), the under steering wheel panel and the driver's side knee bolster (metal plated with ~5 bolts holding it in place...you'll need a socket extender to get to the ones on the right side, should be two on the left and three on the right)

5) Remove steering wheel and dash gauge panel for easier dash removal

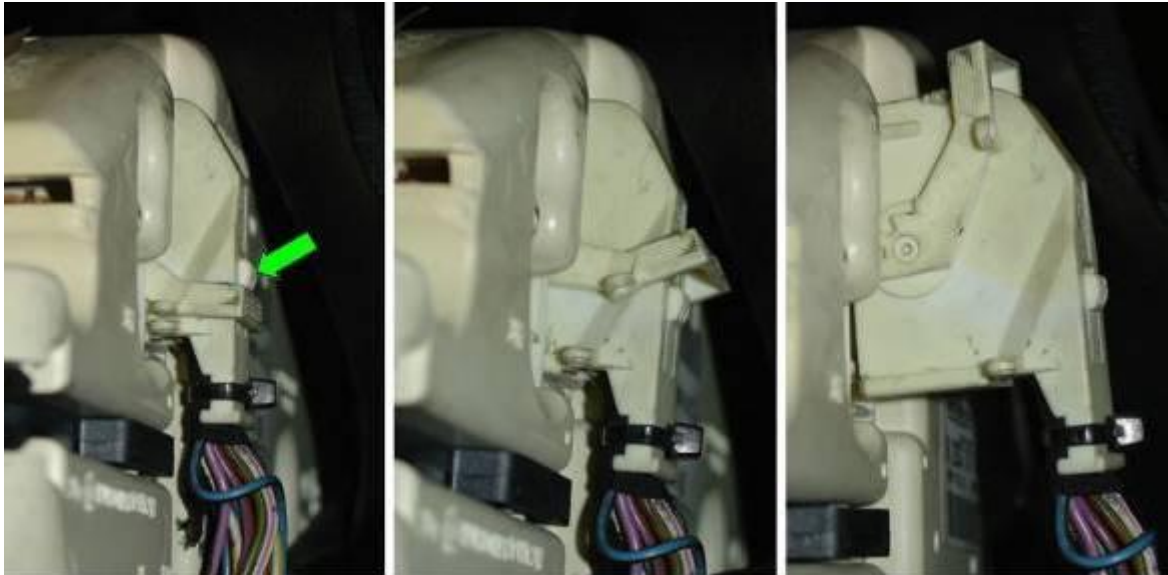
NOTE: Before you remove steering wheel, recommend you center the wheels and the steering wheel, then make sure the steering lock engages to keep the steering column centered.

a) To remove the steering wheel, you'll need a set of Torx socket tips; on the back side of the steering wheel should be two holes (I want to say I used a Torx-10 tip, but I'm not sure); unscrew the two Torx screws and it'll release the airbag (that's why you had to disconnect the battery, remember?); disconnect the socketed wires and set the airbag aside

b) In the middle of the steering wheel is a locking nut (I think 16 or 17 mm); you may need to use a breaker bar to loosen it up while holding the steering wheel; remove nut and slide steering wheel off (realize horn and airbag wires will still be connected...should be okay to just let dangle, but you can remove them from the socket if you like)

c) Once wheel's removed, remove gauge cluster by unscrewing two Torx screws at the top of the cluster under the cluster cowlings (think they're Torx 15); gently slide the cluster

forward...with the underside panel and knee bolster removed, you should be able to reach from underneath and behind the cluster to push it forward; you'll need to disconnect the wire cables from the back of the cluster to remove the dash...as I recall there are three cable bundles--blue, white and black and they all have a latching mechanism like the one in the picture below (picture below from Pelicanparts.com):



You'll probably notice in the pictures below that my cluster was already out. You can get it out without removing the steering wheel...but then you'll quickly realize you need to remove the steering wheel to get the dash out in the first place! (UGH, you'll also see I left my shifter and e-brake boots on...it can be done, but trust me it's just easier with them removed) The other things I want to point out in the pictures below are:

6) Remove the headlight and lighting control switch (position highlighted with red arrow, actual switch circled in red) -- let me know if you're not sure how to do that, but in short:

a) Pop cap off the top of the lighting knob

b) Use a 6 or 7 mm socket to remove retaining nut inside the lighting knob and remove the knob

c) Use a Phillips screw driver to remove retaining screw that 's behind the knob and above the lighting knob shaft

d) Use two small flat-head screw drivers to press in the plastic latches along the lighting knob shaft to release it and press it backwards (don't force it too much), should fall back and out, then hang freely like mine in the picture

7) Remove 4 large dash retaining bolts (2 on the outside edge of each side of the dash, see green arrows for location)



(Picture on left of airbag removed; Picture on right of steering wheel removed)

8) Then you'll need to remove the passenger side airbag

a) First you'll need to pop the airbag cover off (a flat butter knife will work, just carefully wedge in the crease on the front of side--closest the seats--and pry it up; it should pop up without much force and you'll then see a retaining strap



b) You'll need to get under the dash and find the bolts that hold down the metal bracket to which the retaining strap is connected and remove them to free up the bracket, strap and cover; you'll then have free access to the airbag--to some degree



(Picture on left of airbag cover with strap removed; Picture on right of airbag with cover removed)

c) To remove the airbag, you'll need to get back underneath and remove four retaining bolts (see red arrows below) as well as disconnect the airbag wire socket (see green arrow and, again, only after battery's been disconnected for at least 10-20 minutes to discharge)



(Picture on left from under where glovebox was; Picture on right from above once airbag removed)

9) Next, very carefully remove the A-frame trim on the left and right sides of the window see red arrows below; they just pop out, start from top and go down, ensure the force you put to them is linear from the outside of the car to the center and not forward and aft



10) Final step for dash removal: remove the three front dash retaining bolts...this is a little more complicated than it sounds, they're a little tough to reach

a) Each bolt is covered by a plastic cap (highlighted in red arrows below); BMW uses a special sharp plastic tool to pry them out...they're very stubborn; you may have to use what you can (knife, etc) and buy replacement caps from the dealer or other source...unless you successfully pop them off without major damage to the dash or the caps

b) Once the caps are removed, you'll need either a very small open-ended wrench or a short stubby socket to unscrew the bolts; I think they're 10 mm, also be very careful not to lose the washers that come with them in the process

c) Very slowly and carefully use some force up and to the back of the car to slowly pry the dash out (a little on the left side, a little in the middle, a little on the right...back and forth) and before you know it, it'll be out

d) Recommend you carefully remove (and I mean carefully) your VIN sticker from your old dash and mount it on your incoming dash, so the VIN for the vehicle remains the same (see the green arrow below for VIN sticker locations)



At which point the dash will look like this: 😊



11) Installing the new dash is just in reverse of removing it:



12) Next you'll need to remove the rear console:

- a) Remove the subwoofer lid
 - b) Unscrew, unplug and carefully remove the subwoofer
 - c) Remove the two small panels one on the left and one on the right just below and on the outer edge of each roll hoop
 - d) Now you'll have access to the roll hoop retaining screws, remove them with a socket wrench and a Torx-30 tip
 - e) Remove the roll hoops; shouldn't take much force, but be careful not to drop so you don't damage anything
 - f) Carefully remove all retaining screw holding down the remaining pieces of the rear console (just look and you'll find them; as I recall shouldn't be more than 15-20 of them (MAKE SURE YOU KEEP TRACK OF THEM ALL 😊), there are others, but they join the top section of the console to the bottom section--rule of thumb, if you feel you're having to use significant force to remove...STOP! There's likely another screw you haven't removed):
 - NOTE: to access the retaining screws down by the base of each door, you'll need to remove the two kick plates at the base of each door jam, they just pop out, but be careful not to force it
 - NOTE: three retaining screws on the back side of the console at the base of the window shelf are covered with caps; the caps' clips might be brittle so they might break...that's okay, they're relatively cheap at the dealer. Also, there are two caps flush with the vertical back of the console that cover two screws...you don't need to remove them, they retain an internal plastic part inside the console piece
 - g) Use a socket wrench (I believe it's a 16mm) to free up the seat belt guide retaining bolt on inside each side of the rear console
 - h) Carefully remove the top portion of the console on each side; you'll have to "thread" the seat belt and buckle through the console piece...again, DON'T FORCE! May take some gentle prodding, but it'll make it through...also, keep track of the seat belt's orientation so you can feed it through and reconnect the same way
 - i) The two rear speakers are still connected at this point, slightly lift the center section of the lower rear console and find where the speaker wire sockets connect, should be right where the wall carpet ends right below the center section--disconnect the two speakers
 - j) Now you'll just have the three lower pieces to remove, use the same guidance: never force, carefully check to see all retaining screws were removed, then slowly carefully remove...may need to tilt, spin and angle to get the side ones out
- Once done this is what you'll have:



13) Remove the carpet!

a) Complete removal would require removing the heater core...I took a shortcut and just trimmed the carpet carefully around it's base and matched the cut for the carpet I was going to put in

b) Keep in mind there are two sections (front and back) and there are several wires below them

c) Removal of the rear section was not exceptionally difficult, should just lift out

d) Removal of the front section is a bit more complicated (not just because of the heater

core): the gas pedal is anchored to the floor through the carpet 🚗...probably the most frustrating part of the entire process, but relatively simple if you know what you're doing. In essence, the base of the pedal is a male socket with a plastic locking tab. It fits into a female metal socket on the floor board and the plastic locking tab clasps it into place. Use your hands to find the tab on the back side of the pedal and use a fair amount of force to separate/unlock, then use a fair amount of force to "jiggle" and lift the pedal out...won't be easy

e) Unscrew the clutch stop and the gas pedal stop from the front fire wall

f) If you haven't done so already, make sure you remove the side panels

-- NOTE: take care with the left (or right if UK) side panel in removal of the hood release lever, it's hinge is also a screw that must be removed to access a plastic latching screw securing the panel...each of the panels are secured by such plastic "push" screws

That's all there's to it... 😊

Then your interior will look like this:



-- NOTE: you can easily replace the rearview mirror with an oval M-style one, just twist 45-degrees counter-clockwise and it comes right off...install in reverse

The rest of the process is in reverse:
Install the carpet



Then the rear console and roll hoops



Then the center console and the seats



...then notice that the center panel on your new (used) door panels really looks ugly with the evergreen accents on your new (used) seats and swap the leather out...Oh, and while you're at it, do it for the center arm rest as well! How? Well, that'll have to wait for another DIY thread. 🍷



Then, of course, there's the bit that you never liked the steering wheel and you swap it for an Alcantra covered three-spoke one and you always wanted a carbon fiber backing to your gauge cluster...but that's another story as well.

Hope this helps!

Cheers,
Gibber