WA Technology

GM Plastic Protective Film Removal on C7 Z51 & Grand Sport

It's difficult to see from pictures how very "noticeable" the plastic "protectors" are that GM installed on the Stingray rocker panels. Especially with time and exposure, the edges become very noticeable as seen to some degree in this picture. Without the addition of side skirts they were needed and protected the panels from small rocks that get thrown from the sticky tires, especially when they are hot.

Maybe Splash Guards Will Solve the Protection Need

Thought when I installed the GM splash guards that might solve the rocker panel damage problem and the heavy too obvious plastic wrap could be removed. Unfortunately that was not the case! The plastic was still getting "dinged" from rocks and pebbles thrown back from the sticky front tires. The area that was being marked was just where GM put the plastic, from about the rear third of the door back. Of interest the "Splash Guards" did work on the rear panel behind the rear tires! That panel is close to where the splash guards are located and the panel does slope back out of the path of rocks. Note GM did not supply any plastic film in those areas! The obviously knew from testing where the problems were located.

Fortunately the addition of "Side Skirts" did stop rocks from hitting the rocker panels and above so the plastic film could be removed.

Removing the Plastic Film

Although not a difficult task there are some key points that must be followed or adhesive will remain on the panels and be very difficult to remove. Made this PDF to show what doesn't work as well as to how easy it is do if done correctly.

Note I started the removal on an 80 degree day for the C7 Z51 and 78 degrees on the Grand Sport. Did not use any heat but suggest being sure it is a warm day.

.

Photo Sequence

Having had damage on the panels behind the tires in an '88 and '93 Vette, when my '08 Vette was custom ordered also ordered matching colored splash guards. They both arrived at the same time! These splash guards were somewhat large but contoured and fit the car very well. Most important when the car was sold 5 years later they had protected the panels perfectly!

Thought the GM splash guards might provide similar protection for the C7. In fact for the rear panels they have worked fine but I attribute that mostly to the backward sloped panel. However for the front they only provide protection immediately behind the front tire. However the GM plastic was still getting marked . That plastic film protection is from about the center of the door back. That is where it is needed.

The side skirts installed are made from carbon fiber and sold by LG Motorsports. They are contoured vertically but not horizontally as are the Z06 shirts. They won a SEMA Award when the C7 was introduced. The Z06 has 2 inch wider rear tires so the fenders are wider to accommodate them. For better exit and entry the side skirts are contoured and tuck into the car about where the GM plastic film starts. That is also where your feet plant when exiting.

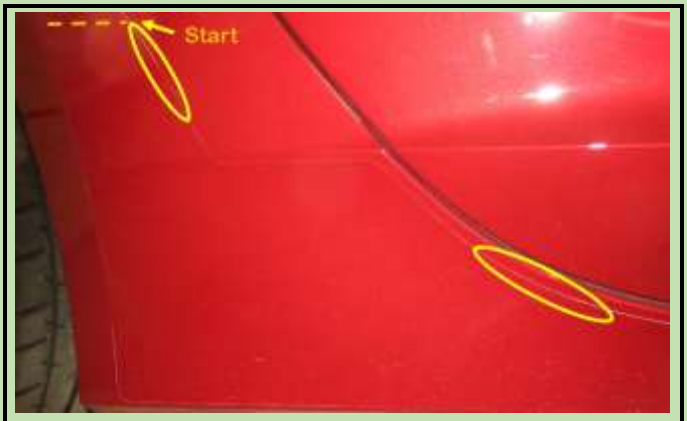
Manufactures of side skirts are offering this Z06 aesthetic option for the standard Stingray although it is not really needed to help with getting in and out as they are for the wider Z06.

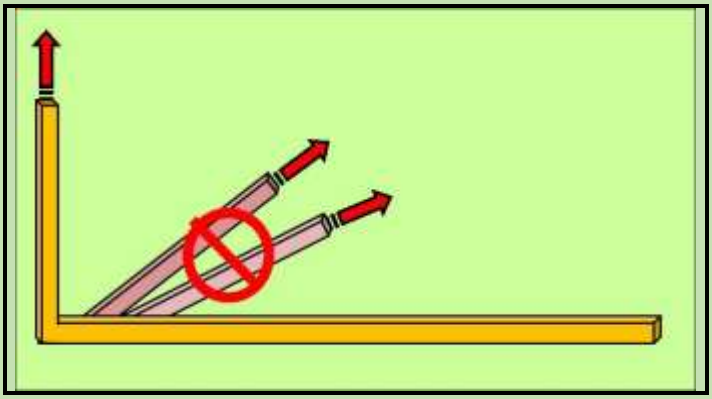
However that option may not provide sufficient panel protection where it is needed most toward the rear and after the door. Consider that when buying side skirts. For me the most important thing is their functionality not this tapered look

It is difficult to show photographically how much the GM plastic is visible. After a number of months the edges become very visible and particularly stand out.

TO REMOVE:

Start at the top as noted in the photo. Use your fingernail to start at each corner and pull down about a ½ inch. The next step is very critical:



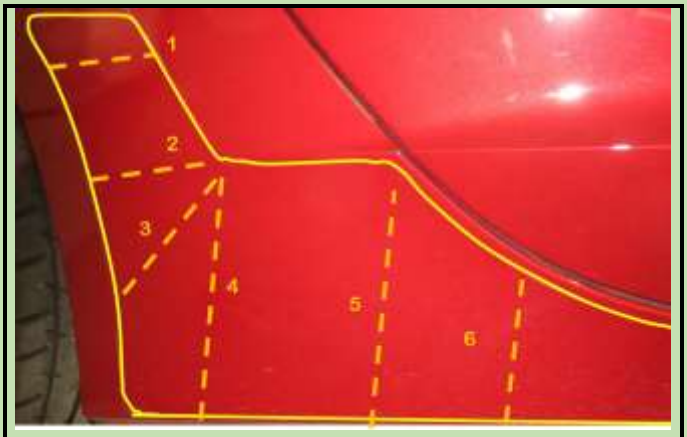


CRITICAL STEP:

It is very important to pull the film at a 90 degree angle, not more. The plastic is very strong, it will not break. However if pulled at a steeper angle the adhesive will remain on the panel and not come off with the film! Done properly 95 to 98% will come off with the plastic.

Start at # 1 and slowly progress in the sequence shown. Getting from step 3 to 4 requires care and slowing pulling the bottom down and forward until it is perpendicular to the thinner sections. Also go slowly as you reach step 6.

Sitting on the ground and moving carefully to maintain the 90 degree pull is very important.



Where I followed the advice of a perpendicular pull 95 to 98% of the adhesive removed with the plastic film. There was little need for a chemical remover. That was the case for most of the second side after I saw what happened in a small area on the first side where I used a much stepper angle!

On the first side I moved too far along the side to the front when repositioning myself. This made the angle I was pulling much steeper, perhaps 30 to 45 degrees to the panel. The plastic came off fine but a layer of adhesive stayed on the panel. As I got closer to where I was positioned it returned to an almost perpendicular pull and the adhesive came off with the plastic. Film.

However it was much more difficult to remove than anticipated!

Have used this 3M product for a number of years. When installing the rear, fixed side windows in my Street Rod it was the only product that would remove that excess commercial window adhesive/sealant. Purchased at an automotive paint store. Worth the price. However even it did not make the job easy!

The instructions say to soak a rag and rub into the surface. Then repeat as necessary. There were very many repeats of the process necessary!

One approach that helped was to use the soaked rag and then while the area was still wet use a thin plastic card to scrap the surface to remove the adhesive. It would ball-up and could be picked off. Did this many times.

One other thing noticed where this heavy adhesive remained was that the rag quickly becomes contaminated with adhesive and it can smear on the surface. It is recommended the rag be turned to a clean surface. In fact I found rubbing once and turning to a clean section of rag worked best.

Fortunately, I had only a ~6 inch area along the bottom panel with heavy adhesive remaining. It still took 20 minutes to a half hour to remove all of it! For the remainder of that first side and all of the second side where I only used a 90 degree pull on the film about 10 minutes with the adhesive remover cleaned it all off.

GRAND SPORT

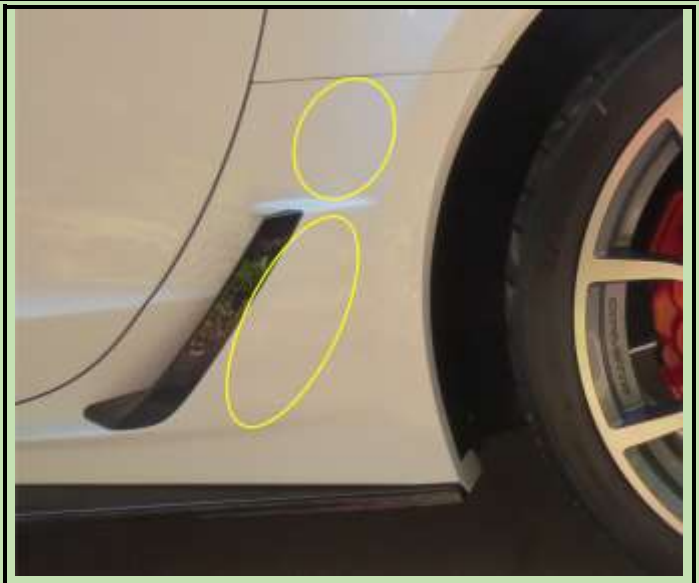
With the Z51 success eliminating marking of the rocker panels and front of the rear wheel well using full length side skirts planned to do the same with the Grand Sport.

Considered aftermarket but since the Grand Sport comes with ¾ side skirts I didn't need, opted for the GM Stage 2 option that includes full length side skirts.

Thought I would use the GM Splash Guards so removed them when I sold the 2014 Z51! However, Forum posts said with the wider front tires to use the ACS front Splash Guards. They are about a ½ inch wider and extend ~1/2 inch deeper. Note the GM Splash Guards are flush at the bottom with the rocker panels.

The ACS Splash Guards, unlike the GM guards, use wheel well screws not clips (see pic right.)

Used the GM Splash Guards for he rear (see above pic.)



After 18 months no marks on the rocker panels or the lower rear brake ducts that many posts say get marked, perhaps because of the ¾ standard side skirts.

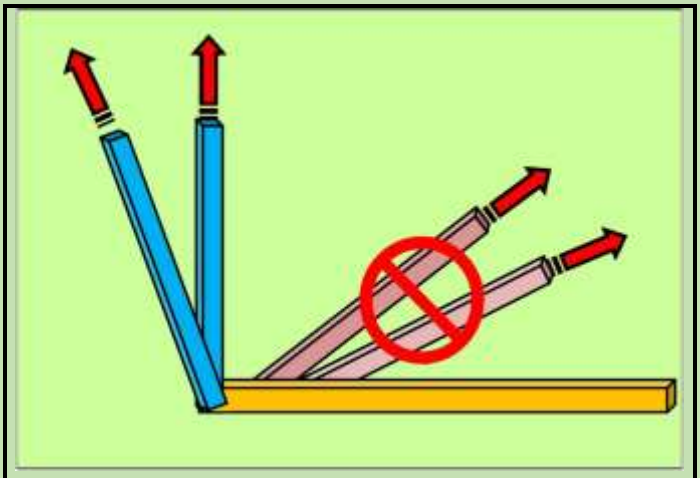
As with the Z51, the area behind the rear wheels was fine as it is short and tucks in.

However, like the Z51 the limited amount of GM protective plastic used on the Grand Sport (yellow circles left,) although not marked had discolored at the edges. After washing the car, it looked bad (hard to see in pic so didn't bother to take one.) Time to remove.

Having learned from the Z51 pulled off correctly!

Started at one edge using my finger nail to loosen one corner. Was not easy to get enough loose with my fingernail so used needle nose plyers to pull the very small amount at 90 degrees and get enough off to grab with my fingers. The "stuff" is very strong.

Then grabbed the plastic with two fingers and thumbs and with slow pressure the it pulled off. Always kept the angle from 75 to 90 degrees BUT never went over 90.



Each of the two plastic pieces on each side came off in one piece (pic of two left.)

***There was NO glue left on the car*. Cleaned the surface with the Turtle Wax Bug & Tar remover I was using in preparation for a coat of Zaino. I applied the Zaino as I have in the past, one light coat of Z-2 with no added accelerator. Used very sparingly right from the bottle. Did the whole car than buffered off with a clean cotton cloth.**

Followed with Zaino CS (clear seal.) According to Sal at Zaino it sets the Z-2. I use CS by itself on the side skirts, splitter and wheels. It is "apply and let dry!" In less than 10 minutes with CS on a Zaino cotton pad the car is done! Great products.

WA Technology

"48" 2017 Grand Sport & 2014 Stingray PDF's Available:

48 PDFs discuss improvements or information about a 2017 Grand Sport and 2014 Stingray function and/or esthetics. Some are minor and others, like the installing the rear diffuser & MGW shifter, include detailed install information.

Below are the PDF's available. Click on picture (may need Ctrl pressed.) Or just copy and paste the PDF info (Blue type) into your browser. Or email me at GUttrachi@aol.com **and state the title desired, shown in Yellow:**

Note: **A GS in the title indicates the info was updated from that available for the C7 Z51 PDFs.**

Rusty GS/C7 Muffler ***Why the C7 muffler is rusted and a simply way to make rust turn matte black.*** ***Bottom pic rusted, top pic treated*** **http://netwelding.com/Muffler_Rust.pdf**	
Change GS/C7 Oil ***WHY change your own oil and HOW to do it*** ***Revised, includes C7 Lifting Methods*** **http://netwelding.com/Changing_Oil.pdf**	
C7 Carbon Fiber Side Skirts ***How to install side skirts with jacking information for DIY's without lifts*** **http://netwelding.com/Side_Skirts.pdf**	
C7 Carbon Fiber Splitter w/End Plates ***How to install Splitter & Nylon bra fit*** **http://netwelding.com/CF_Splitter.pdf**	
C7 Removing GM Plastic Film ***How To Remove The Rocker Panel Film*** **http://netwelding.com/Rocker_Panel_Film.pdf**	

 GUttrachi@aol.com

GS/C7 Mirror Proximity Alarm

Limit switch alarm warns when passenger mirror is too close to door frame

http://netwelding.com/Mirror_Proximity_Alarm.pdf

Jacking Pads for GS/C7

Manual says Jacking Pads 2 1/2 inch max OD.. Have 1 inch, 2 inch pads semi-permanent pads.

http://netwelding.com/Jacking_pads.pdf

GS/C7 Radar Power

For C7 tapped rear fuse panel. For GS tapped mirror

http://netwelding.com/Radar_Detector_Power.pdf

GS/C7 Belt Rattle

Passenger seat belt rattles against the seat back. The solution, add a shoulder belt pad.

http://netwelding.com/Eliminate_Rattle.pdf

Aluminum C7 Chassis and Weld Repair

The C7 has an all aluminum chassis, made from 117 welded pieces. Includes weld repair info.

http://netwelding.com/Aluminum_Chassis.pdf

GS/C7Ceramic Brake Pads

The Z51 has very dusty brakes. These pads help!

http://netwelding.com/Ceramic_Pads.pdf

GS/C7 License Plate Frame;

Must Meet South Carolina Law

http://netwelding.com/License_Plate_Frame.pdf

Manage GS/C7 Spilled Gas & Door Lock

Protect the side of the Vette when filling up with gas. Includes info on preventing door lock failure.

http://netwelding.com/Manage_Spilled_Gas.pdf

GS/C7 License Plate & Cargo Lights

LED license plate light & cargo area bulbs are brighter and whiter

http://netwelding.com/License_Plate_Light.pdf

GS/C7 Rear Cargo Area

Rear cargo area needs storage device and rear protector

http://netwelding.com/Rear_Cargo_Area.pdf

GS Rear Diffuser (Fits Any C7)

Rear Carbon Flash Composite Diffuser

http://netwelding.com/Rear_Diffuser.pdf

GUttrachi@aol.com

GS/C7 Door Panel Protector

Black plastic protector added to prevent scuffing of door when exiting

http://netwelding.com/Door_Panel_Protector.pdf

GS/C7 Improved Cup Holder

A solution to the cup holder spilling under hard braking or shape turns.

http://netwelding.com/Improved_cup_Holder.pdf

GS/C7 Wheel Chatter/Hop

Why sharp, low speed turns with cold tires causes the front tires to chatter/hop.

http://netwelding.com/Wheel_Chatter.pdf

C7 Carbon Fiber Grille Bar

Install genuine carbon fiber grille bar overlay

http://netwelding.com/CF_Grille_Bar.pdf

Jacking a GS/C7 Vette

Safely jacking either front only or back & front

http://netwelding.com/Jacking_A_C7.pdf

Deer Whistle Installed on GS/C7

Do they work? Plus Install Info

http://netwelding.com/Deer_Whistle.pdf

Replacing C7 Battery

After using a GM type charger and showing fully charged a voltage low, replaced battery with AGM!

http://netwelding.com/Battery_Issues.pdf

GS/C7 Window Valet

Lower Windows with FOB

Window Valet Helps 2014/2015 Latch Hatch

http://netwelding.com/Hatch_Latch.pdf

GS/C7 Splash Guards

GM offers splash guards for the C7 Corvette. An easy DIY installation. ACS Best Front Guards for GS.

http://netwelding.com/Splash_Guard.pdf

GS/C7 Blind Spot Mirror

Smaller rear and side windows cause C7 blind spots. Small "blind spot mirrors" help

http://netwelding.com/Blind_Spot.pdf

GUttrachi@aol.com

GS/C7 Skid Pad Protector

After the air dam, the aluminum "skid pad" hits driveway ramps etc. Plastic protector helps.

http://netwelding.com/Skid_Pad_Protector.pdf

GS/C7 Wheel Locks

Wheel locks, torqued to required 100 ft-lbs, help protect your expensive wheels from theft.

http://netwelding.com/Wheel_Locks.pdf

GS/C7 OnStar Lights

Rear view mirror OnStar LED's, at a quick glance, look like a police car flashing light! This is a fix.

http://netwelding.com/OnStar_Lights.pdf

GS/C7 Skip Shift Eliminator

Skip Shift Eliminator install with suggestions on jacking a C7.

http://netwelding.com/Skip_shift_Eliminator.pdf

GS/C7 Catch Can & Clean Oil Separator

Direct inject engines are subject to "coking." What is Coking and how to reduce the potential?

http://netwelding.com/Catch_Can.pdf

GS MGW Flat Stick Shifter

The MGW shifter shortens throw and is more precise

http://netwelding.com/MGW_Shifter.pdf

GS/C7 Round Shift Knob

A round shift knob shortens throw on OEM shifter

http://netwelding.com/Shift_Knob.pdf

GS/C7 Stingray Sill Plate

Stingray sill plate replaces original.

http://netwelding.com/Sill_Plate.pdf

GS/C7 Nylon Bra

Nylon Bra Stops Bugs on Front and Grill. Fits with Stage 3 Winglets

http://netwelding.com/Nylon_Bra.pdf

GS/C7 Clutch Fluid Change

Clutch fluid after 3000 miles gets dirty

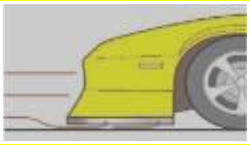
http://netwelding.com/Clutch_Fluid.pdf

C7 Carbon Fiber Hood Vent

Replaces Plastic Hood Vent

http://netwelding.com/Hood_Vent.pdf

GUttrachi@aol.com

GS/C7 Cold Air Intake ***Low Restriction Air Filter & Duct*** **http://netwelding.com/Cold_Air_Intake.pdf**	
Garmin GPS for GS Cubby ***Garmin Mounts in GS Cubby & Apple CARPLAY*** **http://netwelding.com/GPS_In_Cubby.pdf**	
GS Splitter Stage 3 Winglet ***Stage 3 Winglets Integrate with Spats*** **http://netwelding.com/Stage_3_Winglets.pdf**	
GS 2LT to 2.5 LT ***Red Upper Dash Pad Like 3LT*** **http://netwelding.com/Red_Dash_Pad.pdf**	
Jake Emblem/Decals for GS ***Jake Symbols Support GS Racing Image*** **http://netwelding.com/Jake_Emblems.pdf**	
GS Splitter Protector ***Scrape Armor Protection for Splitter*** **http://netwelding.com/Splitter_Protectors.pdf**	
GS Engine Compartment Mods ***Cosmetic Additions in Engine Compartment*** **http://netwelding.com/Engine_Compartment.pdf**	
GS Vitesse Throttle Controller: Fits All C7s ***Adjustable Throttle-by-Wire Control*** **http://netwelding.com/Throttle_Control.pdf**	
Boomy Bass Solution ***Use Presets to Adjust Bass etc Tone/Balance*** **http://netwelding.com/Boomy_Bass**	
GS Air Dam, Functions ***Why Missing from Z51, Some GS & Z06*** **http://netwelding.com/Air_Dam.pdf**	
Engineering a ProStreet Rod ***How Our '34 ProStreet Rod Was Designed and Built*** **http://netwelding.com/Engineering%20Street%20Rod%203-08.pdf**	
Motorsports Welding Article ***Wrote a 5 Page Article for AWS March 2018 Journal Covers NHRA and NASCAR Chassis Design*** **http://netwelding.com/Motorsports_Welding_2018.pdf**	

 GUttrachi@aol.com