

968 Door Handle Installation

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This procedure outlines the steps required to install donor 968 door handles on a 944 with the Central Locking feature. The installation shown here was performed on a 1986 944 Turbo, however the procedure will work for any 924 or 944. If you do not have the Central Locking feature, skip any steps listed as such.

Before you begin, please note that the handle connection point for the actuator arm on 968 series cars is wider than the same point on the original 924 and 944 door handles. As such, the actuator arms are different. You have two choices at this point. Your first choice is to file down the bottom tab of the 968 handle where the actuator arm attaches to fit the original arm. Your second choice is to replace the original actuator arm with a 968 arm. This procedure will use the second choice. If you decide to go with the first choice, simply skip the steps dealing with the actuator arm replacement.

The following terminology will be used when describing the door handle.

Front: Leading edge of door handle; the part of the door handle closest to the front of the car.
Rear: Trailing edge of door handle; the part of the door handle closet to the door jam.
Top: Upper edge of door handle as viewed when looking down from a standing position.
Bottom: Lower edge of door handle as viewed when looking up from ground level.

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Purchasing and Painting Your 968 Door Handles

968 door handle assemblies can be purchased from part dismantlers or from individuals who are parting out their cars. The units shown here were purchased from Parts Heaven. Additional sources include your local Porsche dealer, Oklahoma Foreign, 968.net, and E-Bay.

To prepare the new handles for painting, remove the lock assembly and chrome Rosette. The lock assembly is held by two handle arms through which a roll pin passes. Tap out the roll pin and the lock assembly will side back from the rear of the handle in one piece. The Rosette is held by a single Phillips screw which can be accessed once the lock assembly is removed. When painting, pay close attention to the 968 door handle edges as the gasket does not cover the edge. The 968 handles “sit” on the gaskets, so paint and edge preparation must be finished.

You will also need to remove the 968 actuator arm from the new handles. The arm is held in place by a small brass colored pin. Do not lose the pin or the arm as these will be used latter. I suggest placing both in a small plastic baggie for safe keeping.

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Removing the Existing Door Handles

- A) Open door and place towel on door sill to prevent door from closing once handle is removed.
- B) Remove large Phillips head screw in door jam. The screw is located at the top of the door jam just behind the door handle.



944 Door Jam with Single Large Philips Screw In Upper Left

- C) Push handle assembly forward about an eighth of an inch.
- D) The back, or trailing side of the door handle can now be pulled away from door panel about a half of an inch.
- E) Find the pin that holds the actuator arm to the door handle. The pin is located underneath the back side of the handle and is accessed from below. Using a small hammer and a small nail or ice pick, push this pin toward the front of the car being careful not to allow the pin to pop out. The pin is small and easily lost. With the pin almost all of the way out, use needle nose pliers to grab and remove the pin. The actuator arm itself is attached inside the door and can not fall into the door. Push it away from the handle toward the inside of the door.



Actuator Arm Roll Pin - Down and Left of Philips Screw Mounting Point

- F) Work the front and rear of handle assemble away from the door. Be careful not to scratch the car door. You can now pull the handle assembly away from the door about an inch and see the two remaining attachment points, the white plastic arm and the Central Locking microswitch wire.



Actuator Arm Free of Handle with Central Locking Wire and Plastic Arm Still Attached

- G) From the top of the door handle, pop off the white plastic arm that is attached to the lock assembly. The arm is connected to the lock by pressure fit over a small ball and is easily removed using a flat blade screwdriver. The arm will likely fall into the door, however it is easily retrieved as it is still attached inside the door and will pivot freely. If you do not have the Central Locking feature on your car, your handle is now free and can be removed from the car.
- H) If you have the Central Locking feature on your car you will need to remove the flat blade screw that holds the wire to the lock assembly. Be careful, the screw is quite small and short. The screw holds a small bracket that clamps the wire to the lock assembly. Remove both the screw and the bracket and place to one side.



Central Locking Wire and The Philips Head Screw Which Holds the 944 Tumblers

- I) The Central Locking microswitch is snap fit to the side of the lock assembly. Using a small flat blade screw driver, scribe a mark on one side of the microswitch and the corresponding side of the lock assembly. This will ensure the microswitch is not installed upside down when reassembled. Using the flat blade screw driver gently pry the microswitch away from the lock assembly. Note for later reference the small “pin” on the inside surface of the microswitch. The handle is now free and can be removed from the car.



Central Locking Microswitch Pin

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Removing the Lock Assembly from the 944 Door Handle

- A) The lock assembly is held to the handle by a single push pin. The pin is located on the side of the handle arms which hold the lock assembly. Using a small hammer and a small nail or ice pick, push the pin through the assembly and set the pin aside. The pin is small - take care not to lose the pin.



Removing the Roll Pin Which Holds the 944 Lock Assembly

- B) The lock assembly base must be separated from the tumblers to remove the unit from the original door handle. The tumblers will come out the front of the handle and the base will be removed from the rear. Put your key into the lock assembly and then locate the Philips screw at the back of the lock assembly. Note that the screw holds two parts and one spring to the tumbler. Study the orientation of the spring, you will need to reinstall at a latter point.
- C) Carefully remove the Philips screw at the back of the lock assembly. The two parts and spring can now be removed from the tumbler – be careful not to lose the spring. Set these parts aside.
- D) Holding the key firmly against the lock mechanism of the handle, gently pull the lock assembly base away from the back of the door handle.
- E) Remove the tumbler section of the lock through the front of the door handle – do not remove the key.



Removing the Lock Tumbler from the 944 Handle

- F) Place the tumbler section back into the lock assembly base.
- G) If you have the Central Locking feature, you will need to align the gears on the tumbler with those of the lock assembly base. The gears of the lock assembly are located on only one side. Note the “valley” on the opposite side of the gears. This “valley” corresponds to a small “pin” located on the inside of the microswitch removed in step 2I. The “pin” must rest in this valley for the Central Locking feature to work correctly. If the “pin” is too far to either side, the Central Locking system will cycle the door locks continuously. Make sure you align the gears correctly to avoid having to remove the new handle after you have completed the installation.
- H) Reassemble the lock assembly by installing the spring and the two parts removed in step 3C. Set the completed assembly aside. You may remove your key at this point.

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Preparing Door for 968 Handle Installation – Actuator Arm Replacement

- A) Remove the plastic and rubber ventilation grill from the door jam. The unit is held in place by four tabs – two on each side. Using a small flat screw driver, gently pry up on the tabs on one side until you can pull that side loose. The unit can then be easily removed.
- B) Lying on your back, look up inside the door through the ventilation opening. Locate the base connection point of the actuator arm. The arm is held by a small ball over which the actuators plastic base clip snaps. Use a long flat blade screw driver to pry the plastic base off the ball. The arm is well attached and this step can be difficult. Take your time, the actuator will come off. Once loose, remove the arm through the handle opening of the door.
- C) The actuator arm plastic base is screwed onto the arm and is adjustable. Match, as closely as possible, the adjustment of the new arm’s plastic base to the old.
- D) Working through the door handle opening, install the 968 actuator arm onto the inside door assembly ball by snapping the plastic base onto the ball. This is easier said than done and will likely be the most difficult step you will encounter. Use your fingers to set the plastic base onto the ball and then use a flat blade screw driver to pop the unit over the ball. Note – there are two sides to the plastic base. The base will snap over the ball easier if you have the correct side against the ball. If you cannot get the base to snap onto the ball, try rotating the base, or replace the new plastic base with the original base. The old base has already been “stretched” and may go on easier. You are now ready to install the new 968 door handles.

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Installing Lock Assembly In 968 Handles

- A) If you have not already done so, reinstall the chrome Rosette into the painted 968 door handles. Note, there is a left and right side to the Rosette – marked by an “L” and an “R”.
- B) The original lock assembly is interchangeable with the 968 lock assembly. By using the original assembly you will not need to “rekey” the 968 locks. Slide the entire lock assembly into the 968 handle from the rear – you do not need to disassemble the lock to install it.
- C) Reinstall the roll pin to secure the lock assembly to the 968 handle. The pin must be flush to allow the door pull to have free travel. Once the pin has been tapped in most of the way, you can use pliers set to full open to squeeze the pin the remainder of the way.

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Final Assembly of the 968 Door Handle to the Door

- A) If you have not already done so, install the 968 handle gaskets now.
- B) If you have the Central Locking feature, snap the microswitch back onto the lock assembly being careful to align the pin with the valley (see 3G).
- C) Secure the Central Locking wire to the lock assembly using the bracket and flat blade screw removed in step 2H.
- D) Place the door handle with lock assembly onto the edge of the door handle openings. Leave as much room as possible to allow for the reattachment of the actuator arm and the white plastic arm.
- E) Install the 968 actuator arm onto the handle. Test the door pull to confirm it will move the actuator arm. From below, line up the hole for the 968 actuator arm pin. Install the 968 pin and tap into place.
- F) Snap the white plastic arm to the top of the lock assembly.
- G) Insert the front of the door handle into place and maneuver the rear section into the door. Make sure both sections are well seated.
- H) From the door jam, reinstall the large Phillips screw and tighten.
- I) Test door pull to confirm the new handle works the locking mechanism in the door jam.
- J) When you are satisfied the unit works as before, close the door and test the Central Locking system.
- K) Congratulations, you have completed all the steps required to install 968 door handles. Now, step back and admire your work.



The Finished Product Installed on the Author's 951

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Troubleshooting Central Locking System

If the locks “cycle” continuously, go back and reread step 3G. You will need to reset the gearing inside the lock assembly.

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