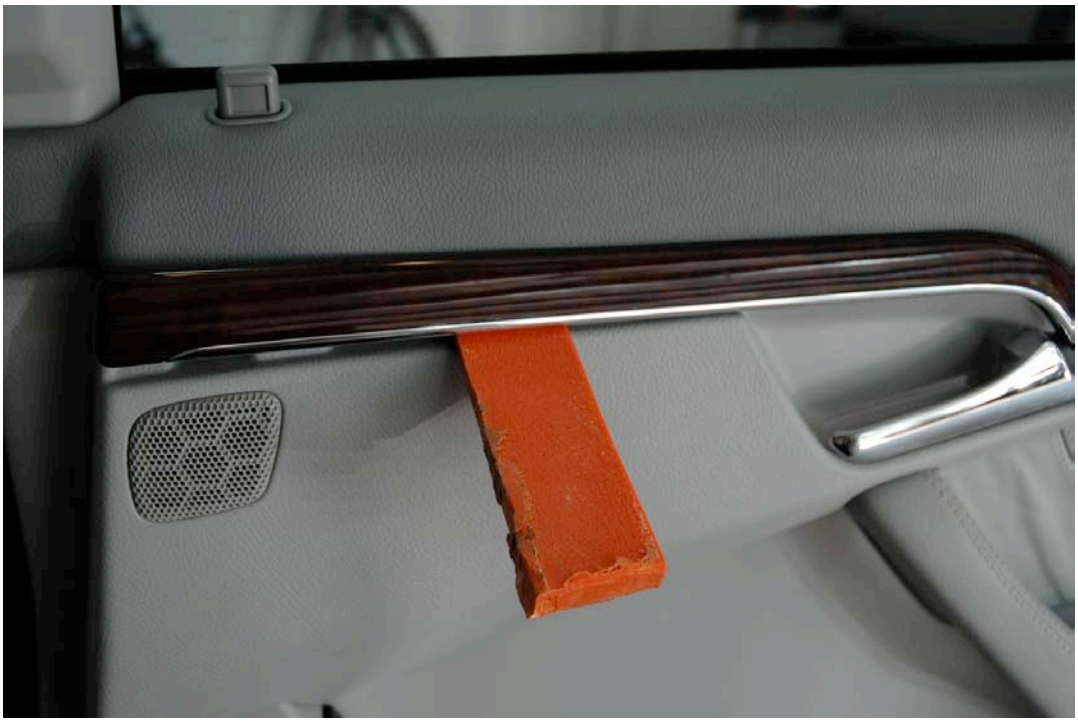
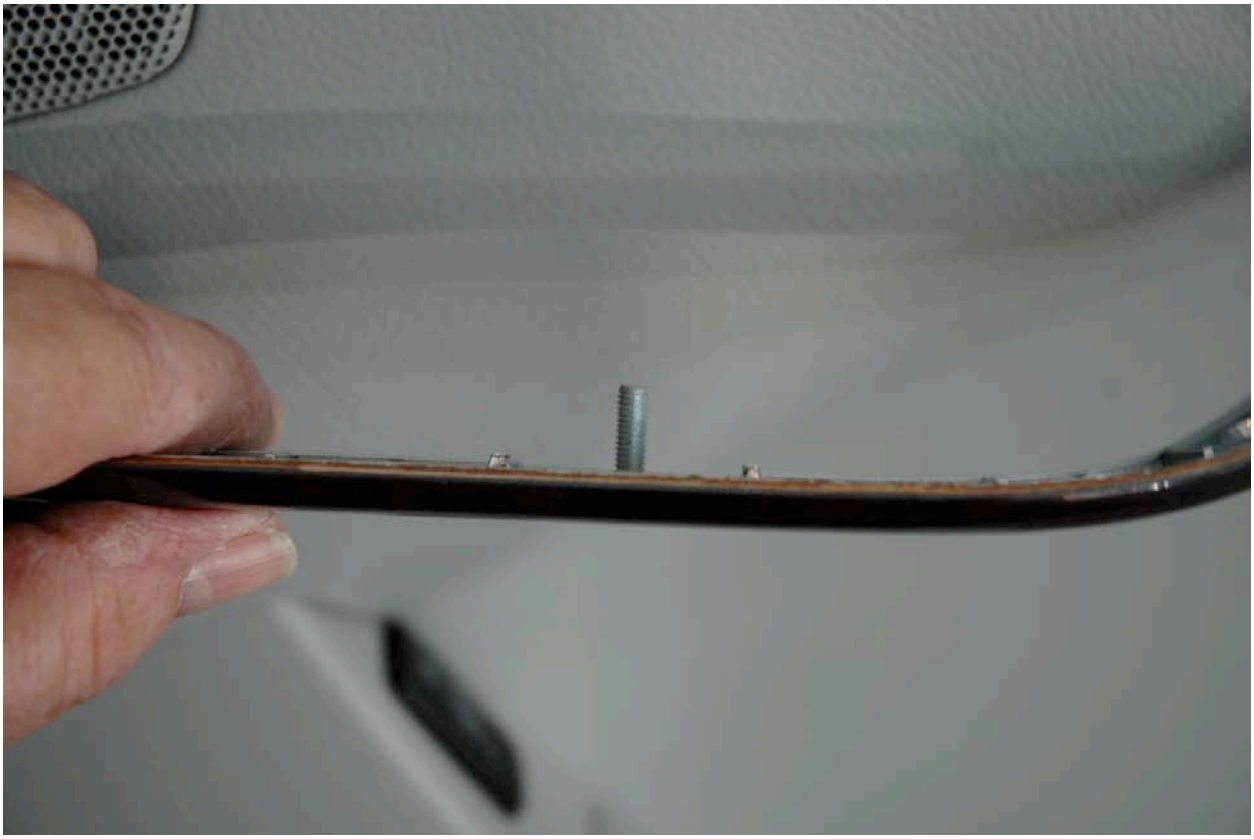
W220 REAR DOOR PANEL REMOVAL & DCM or LED REPLACEMENT

My '05 W220 has the modular LED clip as pictured in the first photo. Unlike the front doors, one must remove the entire door panel in order to replace the module. The LED is inside the black body; the gray fiber optic lead directs the light to the handle.

1. I suggest rolling the window down before beginning. To remove the panel, first remove the wood trim and the panels around the door handle (including the large panel containing the small tweeter and on which the wood trim is mounted) starting with a small very dull knife (at the left end) and finishing with a plastic wedge. It is not necessary to remove the entire inner door panel to replace a Door Control Module; however, it is necessary in order to replace the LED door handle light.

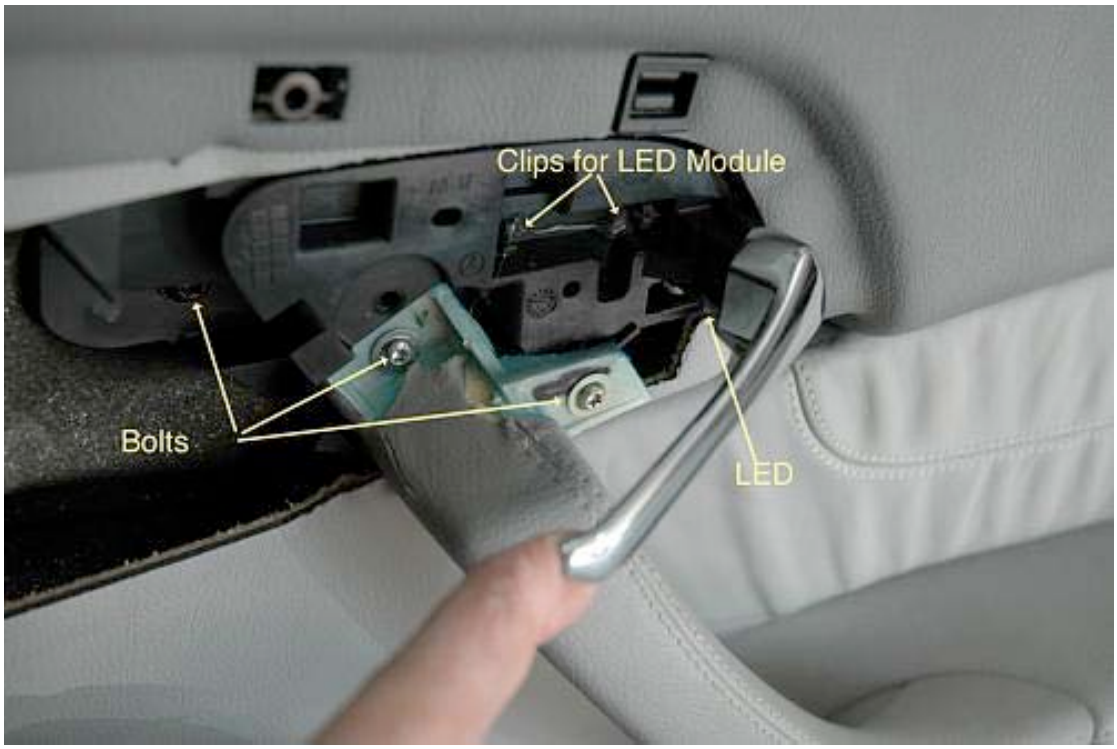




2. The wood trim is held in place by bolts welded to the metal backing of the wood itself, as shown above. It is fairly sturdy. The bolts fit into the slots visible in the photo below. After the trim is removed, unscrew the 2 black bolts (#20 Torx) visible in the photo below.

3. Once the wood trim is removed, use a small blade to remove the cup behind the inner door handle. It just pries out either from the top or the side toward the front of the car. Then, remove the third #20 Torx bolt located behind the cup, visible above the inner door handle.

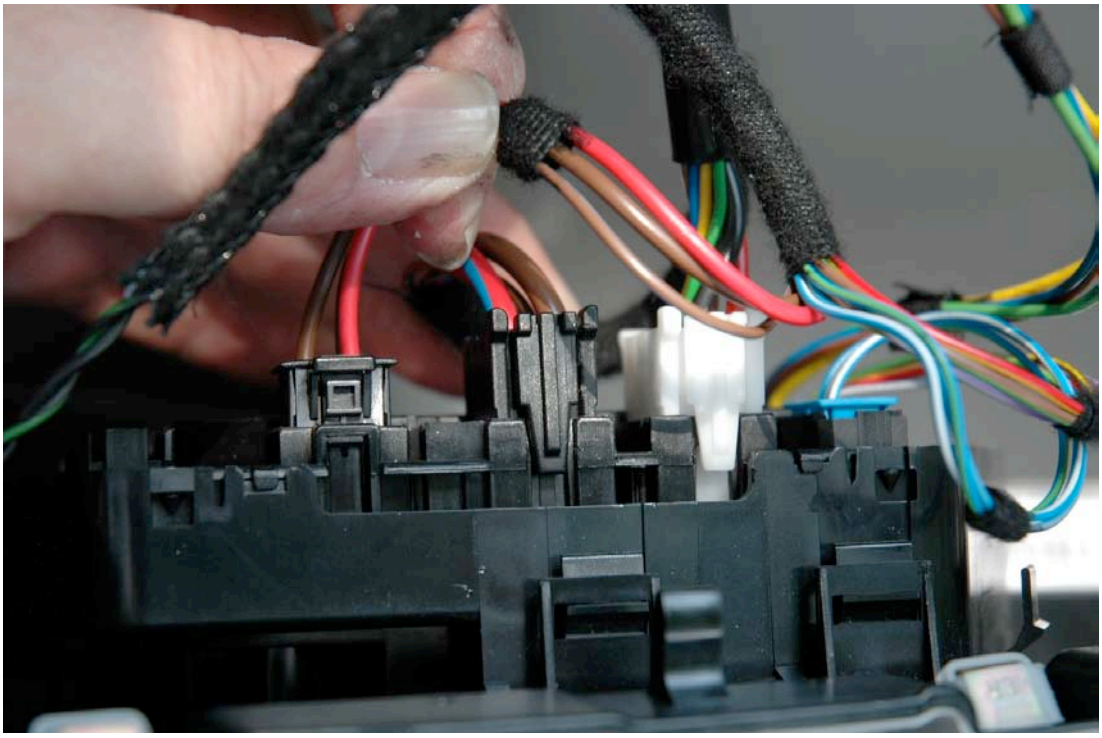
4. Then, using a wedge or a small, dull knife, pry the plastic panel out. On my door it was not necessary to remove the two silver #20 Torx bolts holding the upper door grip in place, but you must remove the black #30 Torx bolt in the plastic housing for the door handle (leftmost white arrow). The clips for the LED module will be visible; you may have to remove silicone used to keep the clips in place.



5. Unfortunately, one cannot access the mechanism for the inside handle just by doing this, even after removing the two silver and the black bolts pointed out in the picture. To replace the LED module, one must take off the entire door panel. To do this, one must remove the final bolt (on my car, it is under a cap below the armrest). It is a black #30 Torx bolt, recessed approximately 1" behind the cap, and very hard to see. The cap twists off (counterclockwise, if I recall correctly). **NOTE**: On some models, the door handle cover must be removed and the bolt at the lower end removed, instead of the bolt located in the access below.

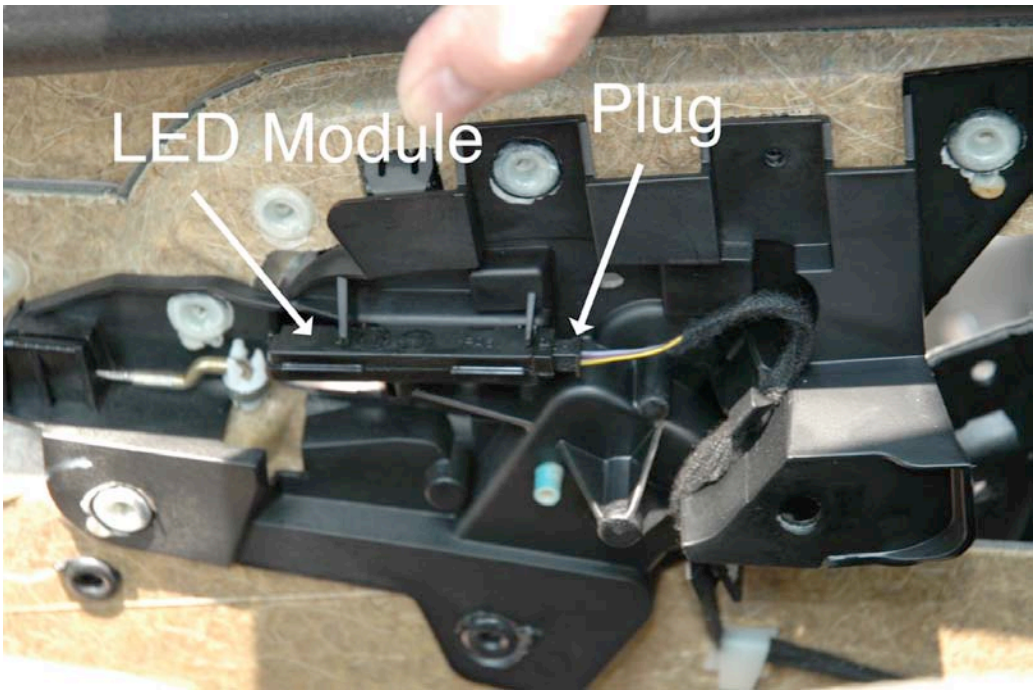
6. Then, remove the plastic trim around the door closure mechanism, below – it is held in place by a single #20 Torx screw. Note the small plastic clip on the back side of the trim piece that must fit under the side panel when you replace it.

7. You may remove the plugs from the back of Door Control Module (DCM) on the upper panel that you removed, if you wish. It is not absolutely necessary, but it does provide a bit more room to move the panel; it also disables the window. The plugs will only go back one way (they are keyed) so there is no need to mark them. I did not unplug the tweeter that is in the panel. If you are removing the DCM, it is held to the panel by four plastic spring clips and comes out easily.



8. Now, insert a plastic or nylon wedge between the door panel and the door itself – anywhere on the side, below the area of the panel you have removed. Pry gently out, moving around the perimeter of the sides and bottom of the panel. Do not pry at the top. MB did not have its tool in stock, so I used one from Harbor Freight ($3.99). After popping the 8 nylon pins, lift the door panel upward to pull it free of the window channel (I rolled the window down to do this).

9. Then, look behind the inner door handle on the inside of the panel. You will see the LED module clipped to the “cup” that contains the inner handle mechanism. Note how the steel cable runs through a slot to the left of the photo; we’ll get to that later. The cable comes out of that slot easily, often when you don’t want it to.



The clips on a new module can be seen projecting downward in the photo below.

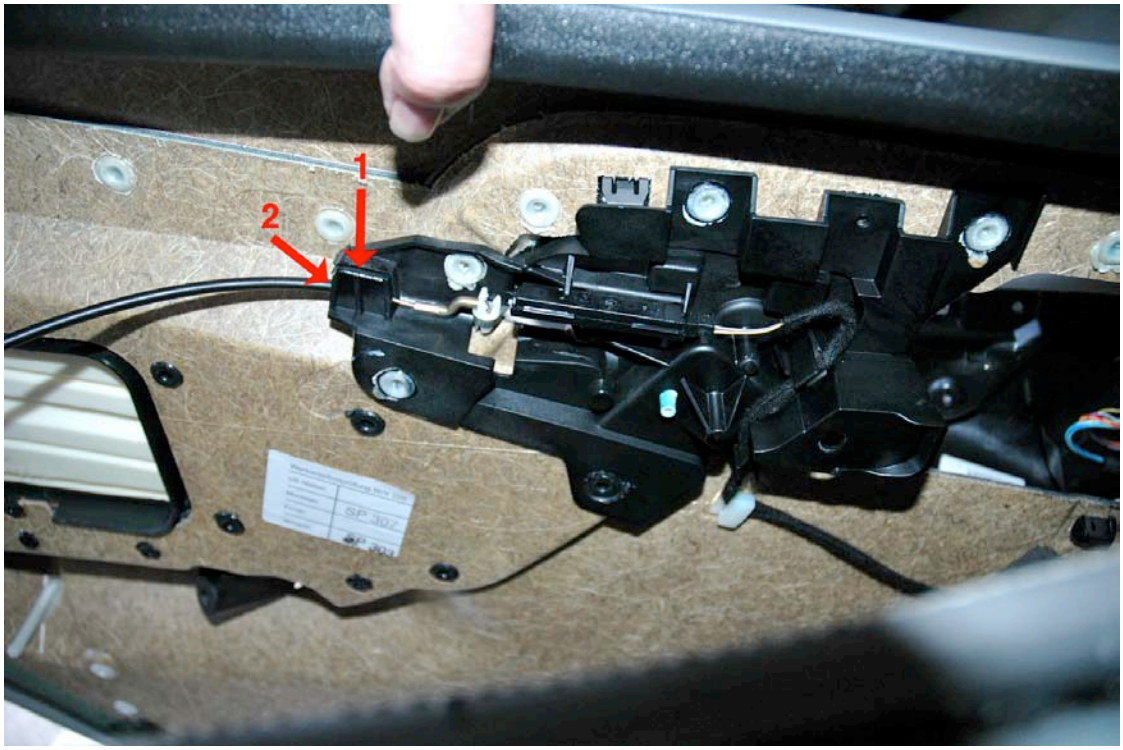
10. The front and rear door modules are the same, but they are different left to right. The part number for the right side A 220 820 04 21; the left is A 220 820 03 21 (and it has a large "L" above the bar code on its label, and another on the gray LED support). The right one has "R"s.

11. After you have scraped away any glue or silicone from the prongs of the old clip, unplug it and pry the module out with a knife blade. The two rectangular holes below are where the new clip will go. On one of your other doors, look at how the gray fiber optic carrier fits just below the bottom of the handle; getting it into the correct position can be tricky. Replace the plug.

12. If you have unplugged wires from the Door Control Module, plug them back in now. Turn your headlights on, and see that the new module works (the orange dot below). Put some silicone between the prongs of the new module to be sure it stays in place. If you have unplugged the Door Control Module, you will likely need to reset the express up/down feature for your rear window. Run the window full up, hold the button for about 10 seconds; run it down, hold for 10 seconds. This resets the window. You may have to do it several times.

13. When you removed the door panel, one or more metal clips may have fallen off of the panel, toward the rear. Here's where they go, as you start to reassemble the door. The narrowest edge of the clips goes over the metal edge that runs below the weather strip of the stationary window.

14. Last, and very important!!! On the back of the inner door handle there is a guide through which the cable between the door handle and the door latch mechanism must pass. There is an easy-to-miss slot for the cable at the top of the guide (1 below) and there is a round hole for the cable jacket at (2). The cable dislodges easily. If the cable is not back in place before replacing the panel, your inner handle will be loose and will not open the door. Don't ask me how I know.



15. To reassemble, follow the removal steps in reverse. Good Luck!!