FAST & FURIOUS™

58

Build the Legendary

DODGE CHARGER R/T



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DODGE CHARGER R/T



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TEJ PARKER, TECH WIZARD

Of all the heroes in the *Fast & Furious* franchise, one that fans are especially fond of is Tej Parker. A driver, mechanic, race promoter and a technology expert, this character has been evolving along with the franchise to become one of the most outstanding members of the Toretto family.

In *2 Fast 2 Furious*, we discovered that the real king of speed in the city of Miami was none other than Tej Parker. And not because he was the fastest, but because of his talent for organizing thrilling races, for either cars or jet skis. Usually dressed in his mechanic's overalls, Tej was presented to us as a likeable and somewhat eccentric race promoter who had decided to give up driving cars some time back. A loyal friend, imaginative and reliable, he clearly showed that he knew a lot about cars and racing, and this enabled him to operate his own mechanical workshop.

FROM RAP TO THE MOVIES

The rapper Christopher Brian Bridges, better known as Ludacris, joined the filming of this second movie in the *Fast & Furious* franchise to play Tej Parker. Although he had no previous experience as an actor, apart from appearing in the promo videos for his musical hits, the singer was thrilled by the challenge when director John Singleton gave him the chance.

"He asked me to do the screen test," Ludacris remembers. "He had seen my videos and thought that I might be perfect for the part. And it went well. And so I had the chance to become a sort of P. T. Barnum in this crazy car racing circus."

Always accompanied by his close friends Suki and Jimmy, Tej became a key player in the film when he helped Brian and Roman get through their particular adventure safe and sound.

A WELCOME RETURN

Ludacris's debut as a film actor was warmly welcomed by both critics and audiences alike. Nevertheless, it was not planned for Tej Parker to return in the following movies in the series. At least not until Justin Lin began preparing *Fast Five*, and he had the idea of reuniting all the

Singer Christopher Brian Bridges, better known as Ludacris, plays the part of Tej Parker, one of the key characters in the *Fast & Furious* saga.

characters who had been important in the earlier movies in the franchise.

"As soon as I read the script and I knew who was coming back, I didn't hesitate for a minute," says the actor. "And I was right because we had a really great time filming. I love working with good people, a good story and knowing for sure that we're making a good movie."

Eight years had gone by between his first two appearances in the franchise, a period during which Ludacris appeared in a dozen very different movies. All this led the people behind *Fast and Furious* to open the doors to a very different Tej Parker. The character's image was now more sophisticated, obvious not just by the clothes he was wearing and his hairstyle but also in the way he interacted with others.

ALWAYS LOOKING TO IMPROVE

Far removed from the loud gesticulating guy in *2 Fast 2 Furious*, Tej Parker showed himself to be a serious man, rather quiet and ironic, who had also grown in his professional life. After building motorcycles and taking them apart, he shifted his focus to the world of the new technologies, and he was equally capable of building a piece of online surveillance equipment and deciphering any password. He appeared to the audience as a new man, aiming to improve a little more each day, a virtue that he shares with his alter ego.

"*Fast Five* was my first movie with Ludacris," explains director Justin Lin. "He's someone who comes onto the set each day with the objective of doing a better job. And that's something you don't see a lot of. There are a lot of people who, while they're good at what they do, don't want to take any new risks. Ludacris, however, has the rare virtue of constantly wanting to improve."

Establishing a fun, healthy rivalry with Roman Pearce, the new Tej Parker immediately carved out an exceptional niche for himself in the team that Dom Toretto recruits to track the arrogant businessman Hernán Reyes. In fact, his skill with equipment turned out to be decisive, not just for helping Dominic's plans to succeed, but also for keeping all the members of the team protected at all times.

A SPECIAL MILLIONAIRE

The mission in *Fast Five* ended surprisingly positively for the heroes of the series, who suddenly found themselves very rich. Thanks to that, Tej treats himself, buying an extremely expensive car and adopting a far more comfortable lifestyle. But, as we see in *Fast & Furious 6*, none of that distracts him from an activity for which he feels an enormous passion.

"The money doesn't change Tej," says Ludacris. "While most of the people who get a lot of money want to give up their job, he's one of those people who just wants to do something he loves. However, there are, of course, some things that change, like the chance to buy incredible cars, play with computers or enjoy the beach."

Despite taking a bit more care about how he dresses, Tej doesn't change much as a millionaire. This was clearly seen when, in one of the funniest moments in *Fast & Furious 6*, he goes with agent Hobbs to an auction of top-end cars held in London. When the auctioneer comes over to them and tells them that the cars being auctioned there are too "expensive", Tej keeps his cool and says completely calmly that he is in a position to buy not just one of the cars, but all of them. In passing, he also buys the auctioneer's expensive suit and leaves him in his underwear, teaching him a little lesson in humility.

FRIENDS AND RIVALS

Right from the moment he began working on Dominic Toretto's team, Tej Parker established a close friendship with Roman Pearce. A friendship that, nevertheless, is not without a certain competitive edge between them to see who can do his job better or come up with more ingenious ideas for the group's plans. This friendly rivalry grows in *Furious 7* when Ramsey joins the team. She is a young woman who is an expert in new technologies and immediately catches the two men's eye.

"It really is like Tej and Roman are both back in high school," Ludacris says with a smile. "They never drop this funny, entertaining rivalry, especially when a woman comes between them. That leads them to act like crazy kids, and to be more competitive than ever."

The arrival in the franchise of the director James Wan, who made, among others, the horror film *The Conjuring* (2013), meant that Tej became even more important, not just when interacting with Ramsey, but also by taking a more active part in the action scenes.

That same line was maintained in the eighth film in the series, the fifth time that the popular singer had the chance to play Tej Parker.

"I've reached the point where Tej is part of me. When someone tells me what I should or shouldn't do, I take it personally," Ludacris says with a knowing smile. "I really try to make him progress with each movie, and not get stuck in a rut. I take what he does and says on screen very seriously. The audience doesn't really know who Tej is. The fact that he is now the member of the team who knows most about technology is a brilliant transition."

LUDACRIS

Born in Champaign, Illinois, on September 11, 1977, Christopher Brian Bridges, otherwise known as Ludacris, he has become an undisputed star of the music world, as a rapper, composer and producer, selling more than 15 million discs in the USA alone. His best-known songs include *Stand Up*, *Get Back* and *Money Maker*, all of which benefitted from the artist's enormous creativity when producing his own videos. This was precisely what decided the director John Singleton to ask him to join the *Fast & Furious* franchise as an actor. Apart from being very well known for his role as Tej Parker, who he has being playing without a break since the fifth movie in the franchise, Ludacris has also appeared in other hit films, like *Crash* (2004), *RocknRolla* (2008) and *New Year's Eve* (2011). That has not stopped him going into other lines of business, such as opening a restaurant in the Atlanta airport, or a meal delivery service. Ludacris also regularly promotes charity campaigns to help those most in need, especially with The Ludacris Foundation, an institution whose goal is mainly to encourage and help young people to get a good education.

The first appearance of the character of Tej Parker in the franchise occurred in *2 Fast 2 Furious*. At that time, he was still running his own mechanical workshop and organising races in the city of Miami.



Starting in *Fast Five*, the character of Tej Parker changed significantly. In the photo, he is with Han, one of his great friends within Dom Toretto's team.





2007 DODGE AVENGER

Launched in 2007 and manufactured for eight years, the Dodge Avenger was a midsize vehicle that replaced the Dodge Stratus. With a front-wheel drive chassis and sold only with four-door bodywork, it was marketed in both the USA and Europe. It was equipped with 4- and 6-cylinder petrol engines, with a diesel option for Europe.

The Dodge Avenger was 4.85 meters long, which made it a direct rival, in the USA, of cars like the Chevrolet Malibu or the Ford Fusion.

The Dodge Avenger was an important model in the strategy of internationalising the Dodge range, especially after its launch in Europe. It was developed on a front-wheel drive platform shared between the Daimler and Chrysler groups, of which the Dodge brand was a part, and the Japanese Mitsubishi.



The Dodge Avenger was sold only with four-door sedan bodywork for its entire commercial life.

That alliance also made it possible to jointly develop a family of four-cylinder petrol engines with up to 2.4-litre cylinder capacity, fitted in the more economical versions of this model. The Dodge Avenger was also equipped with 2.7 and 3.5-litre six-cylinder engines. For the European market, where diesel was very much in vogue, a version running on this fuel was created with a 2-litre Volkswagen engine, shared with models like the Dodge Caliber and the Dodge Nitro.

In 2011 the Dodge Avenger was modified. After Dodge automobiles disappeared from the European market, due to the merger between the Chrysler and Fiat groups, the car was sold only on the American and other minor markets. The redesigned model had a different radiator grille, but above all an interior improved by a new dashboard, which now included a large screen for the GPS equipment, and superior-quality materials.

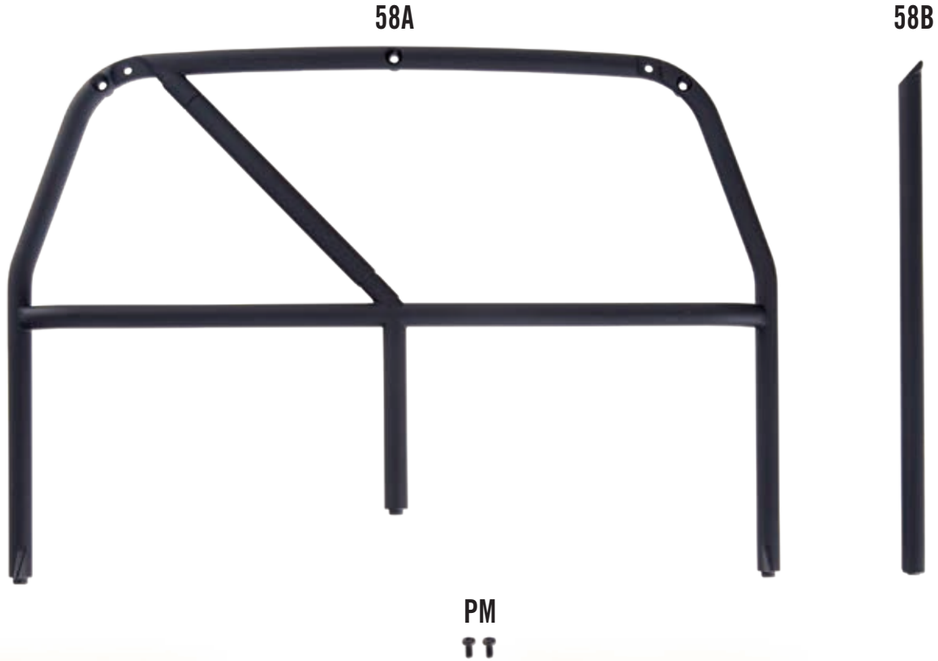


MOUNTING THE DASHBOARD AND THE ROLL CAGE (I)

In this assembly session you will attach the dashboard to the front of the floor pan and begin assembling the roll cage.

Editor's note: The parts shown here may differ slightly from the parts supplied with this issue. This does not affect the quality or the assembly instructions in any way.

PIECES FOR THIS STAGE



58A Rear arch of the roll cage
58B Rear right bar of the roll cage
PM Screws 1.7 × 3,5 mm, (x 5)*

* Some of the parts are spares.

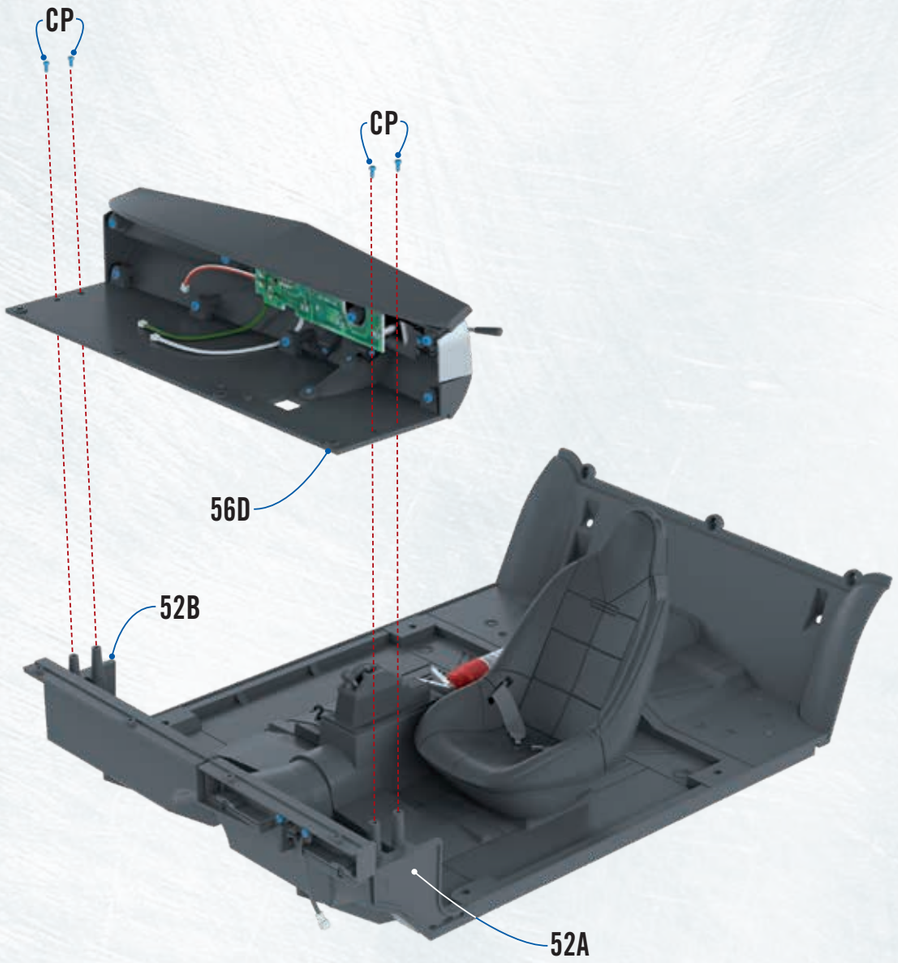
ASSEMBLY AREA



DASHBOARD AND ROLL CAGE

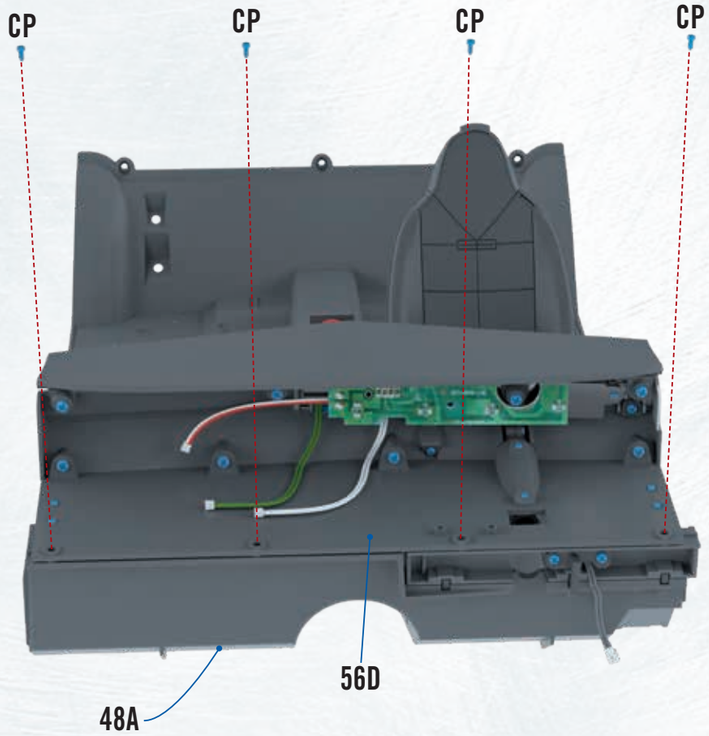
Mounting the dashboard and the roll cage (I)

58.1 **ALIGN** the mounting holes in the dashboard you assembled in the last assembly session with the vertical pins on the front of the floor pan. Secure the pieces with four **CP** screws. ▼





58.2 **INSERT** another four **CP** screws into the holes indicated in the illustration. ▼

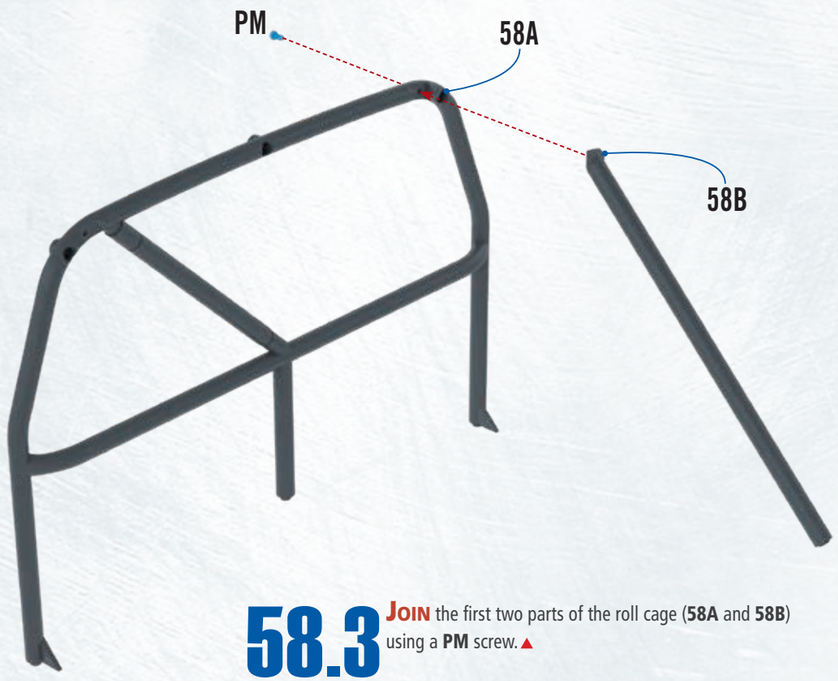


THE ROLL CAGE

The Dodge Charger R/T in the film *Fast & Furious* has a roll cage. This safety device serves as an additional support or structure for the body. If a car overturns, or in the event of a strong impact, the external structure can yield and deform, crushing or trapping the occupants of the car. A roll cage prevents any foreign bodies from entering the cockpit, giving passengers a better chance of survival.



Mounting the dashboard and the roll cage (I)



58.3 **JOIN** the first two parts of the roll cage (**58A** and **58B**) using a **PM** screw. ▲

STAGE 58 FINAL RESULT



This is the result of this simple assembly session. Put what you have made so far in a safe place until you need it in the following assembly stages.



CAR AUDIO: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE



After learning the basics of car audio, here is a detailed guide to help you create a magnificent door panel to house an impressive set of woofers and tweeters!

If you have decided to modify your door panels to create a structure ready to accommodate larger, more powerful speakers, the first step is to decide on the best position for each of the speakers. Usually, the mid-range and woofer speakers go towards the bottom, with the tweeter or trumpet tweeters at the top. Before starting, you can use a cardboard template with the measurements of the door and speakers, to check that there is enough space. At this point, you can decide to eliminate parts of the original door panel that get in the way of the speakers. You might even decide to eliminate the original door panel completely (photo 1).

If not, you can sand the panel with 40 to 80-grit sandpaper so that the liquid resin will grip without problems.

If this is the first time you have made a speaker panel, we recommend that you use a new, soft brush for each door panel. If you take a long time to apply the resin, the brush will become too hard and rigid for use.



Tools and Materials

BUILDING THE STRUCTURE
- 40 to 80-grit sandpaper
- Wood rings with or without a recess
- 1-2cm wooden rods
- Hot glue
- Micro-drill or small grinder with blade for cutting sheet metal
- 1m² professional fleece fabric for each door

APPLYING RESIN
- Thick plastic sheets
- A 2-inch brush
- 4 x 0,75-litre cans of liquid polyester resin with catalyst
- Thick gloves
- Mask and goggles

STRUCTURE
- 40-grit sandpaper to rough up the resin
- 40,120 and 240-grit sandpaper
- Medium-sized spatulas
- White bodywork filler paste with catalyst

SOUNDPROOFING
- 2 rolls of Dynamat Soundproofing material

Position the first ring to check the depth of the speaker. This will determine the length of the support. Take into account the space available between the closed door and the seat.

With tweeters (photo 2), there are usually no problems. However, with woofers, check that the magnets are not obstructed by the sheet metal of the doorframe.

If the depth is not sufficient, mark with a felt-tip pen the part of the sheet metal that needs to be removed. Then eliminate it with a small angle grinder or flexible cutters, paying close attention to any cables. This will create the necessary space for the speaker to fit into the door (photo 3).

Before moving on, lower the window, and make sure that it does not touch the speakers. At this point, you can use hot glue to fix onto the panel the wooden batons that will support the speaker frames (photo 4).

At the same time, check that the door handle can still be used. Sometimes the door handle and armrest might get in the way, and you will need to create a wooden frame to relocate them (photo 5).

Be sure that the door can still be opened, and that the rod that connects the handle to the lock is long enough. You can reinstall the handle later. Once you have planned the location of everything on your new



inner door panel, check again that everything works properly. Make sure that the seat and the end of the dashboard do not damage the speakers when the door is closed.

With the door shut, mark the parts of the panel that are covered by the seat and the end of the dashboard. When you apply the fleece and the resin you will need to stop before the lines you marked, otherwise the door will not close properly.

THE RESIN

Correct placing of the fleece is essential to get a perfect result. The fleece fabric should only be stretched in one direction. So glue it to the top of the panel and then pull it down carefully. Getting the right tension on the fleece is fundamental. If it is not stretched enough, during the resin phase, it will sag and look baggy. But if it is too tight, it could tear and collapse under the weight of the resin.

As you work downwards, stretching the fleece over the panel, you will need to hot-glue it to the speaker rings. You can hold it in place with small spring clips. Repeat the process on both panels, and then you are ready for the resin.

Before applying the resin, protect the doors, the mirrors and any other parts that could be splashed. The best protection is thick plastic sheeting. Be careful - the resin might dissolve thin sheets. After ensuring that you have all the necessary mounting clips, you can fit the panel to the door. It is a good idea to buy new clips from your local car parts store. They are ridiculously cheap, and are safer than the old ones.









DRYING:

To make the panels shown in the photos, we used two cans of resin per door. Each can was divided into two parts. Each pot of catalyst is for one complete can of resin - so only use half the catalyst per portion. With a brush, soak the fleece well, except in the centre of the rings. Let it set hard in the open air (photo 10).

Do not try to speed up the drying process with heaters or hairdryers, and avoid leaving the door in direct sunlight in summer. Once the edges have dried, you can close the doors and use the car without any problems until the whole thing is completely dry. It is a good idea to protect the seats and your clothing. To facilitate drying, you can make cuts with scissors in the centre of the speaker rings.

When the whole panel is completely dry, you can remove it. Use scissors to remove the unresined fleece and a Dremel-type micro-drill with sanding attachments to remove excess resin. Carefully finish each ring with the sander (photo 11). The final check is to re-fit the door panel to make sure that the door closes correctly, with no obstructions.

THE FINAL STEP

Start by sanding the panel with the 40-grit sandpaper. The idea is to make the resin surface smoother without reducing the thickness of the underlying fleece. Then remove all the dust with compressed air and prepare to apply the filler paste. The amount of paste you use (or waste) depends on your skill and speed.

Start with a ball about the size of an egg, and dose it with catalyst, according to the manufacturer's instructions. With this much, you will only fill a small area, but you can increase the amount as your skill increases.

Soundproofing the door panel

After covering the panel in leather, check that the components fit perfectly (photo A). Then you can soundproof both the inner and outer door panels immediately in front of and behind the window glass.
The soundproofing is usually self-adhesive and therefore does not need to be glued. Work from right to left (photo B).
Tidy all the cables that are loose (both the original ones and those of the new system) with cable ties.
Now you can fit the panel onto the door, pull the cables through the holes, and proceed with the final installation of the speakers.



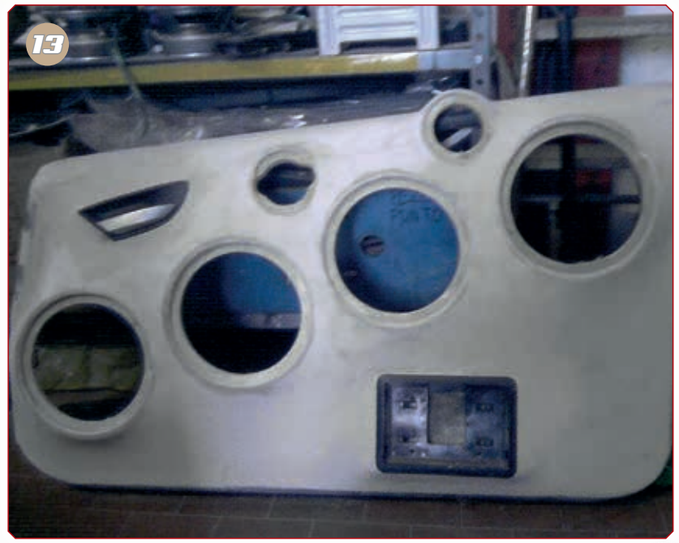




Fill the whole panel quickly, without worrying too much about the surface smoothness. You will be able to sand away any high points with coarse sandpaper and re-fill any dimples or scratches. Then let it dry completely. Finally, sand the whole thing with 120-grit sandpaper to smooth the surface.

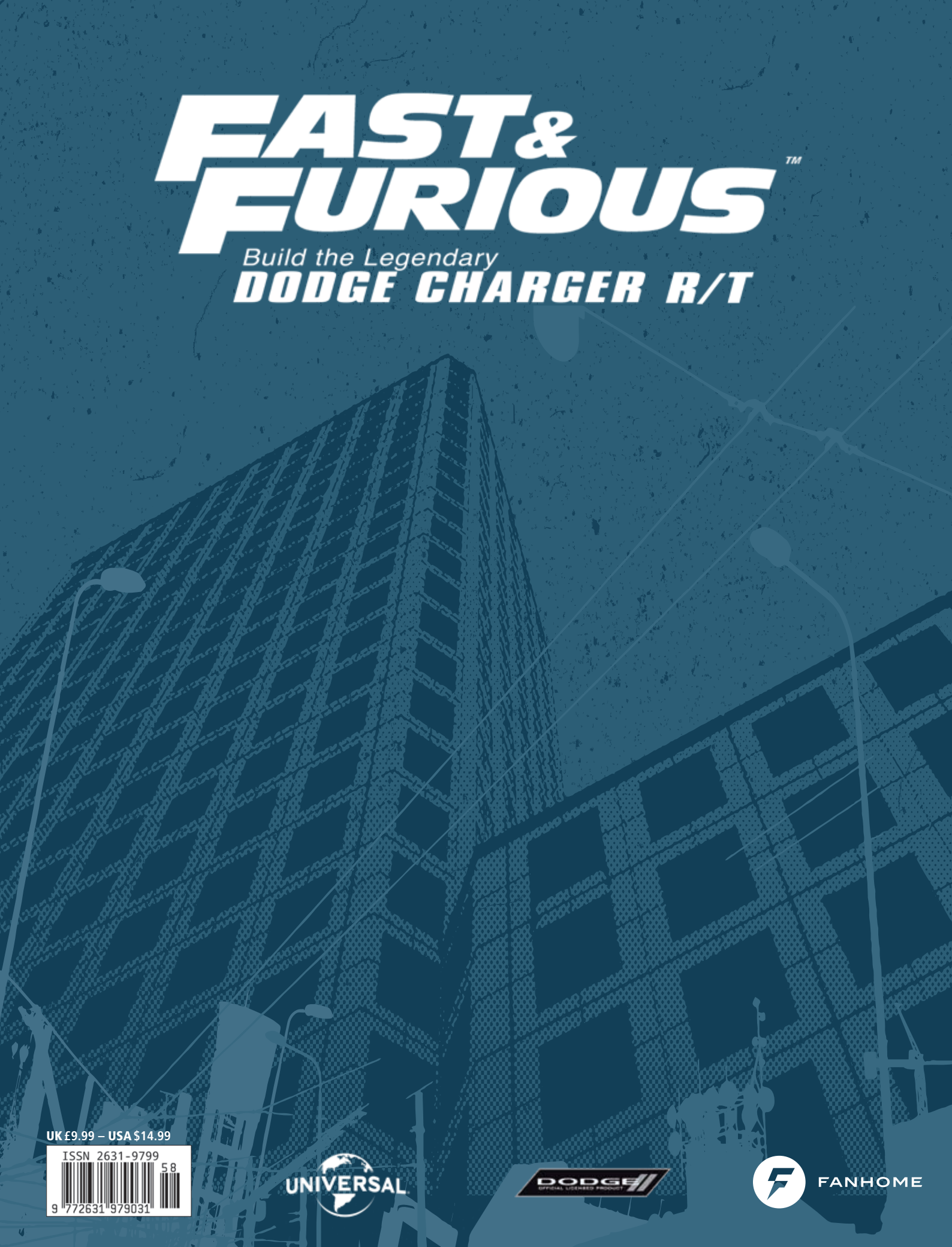
If you relocated the door handle, it is time to check that it fits together correctly. If not, you might need to move the window lock. You can cut out a small panel with the micro-drill and later perfect the edges with fibreglass paste. Cut the metal slightly larger than needed, because the paste will reduce the size of the hole.

At this point, the panel is ready (photo 13). Now it is up to you to decide whether to upholster it, or paint it. If you want to upholster it, give it a final rub down with fine 240-grit sandpaper before taking it to the upholsterer. If you want to paint it, you can leave the preparation steps to the bodywork specialist.



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