

General

This repair group covers interior trim removal and installation procedures.

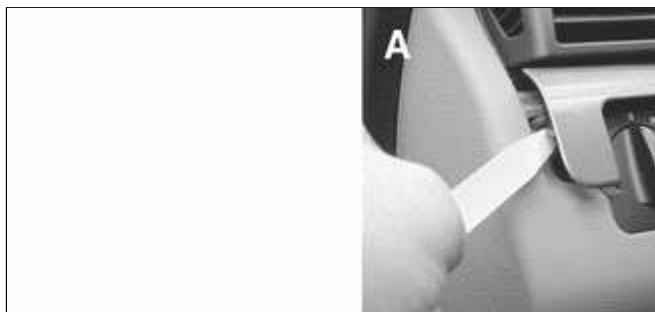
Refer to the following repair groups for additional information:

- ◆ ⇒ [250 Gearshift Linkage](#)
- ◆ ⇒ [411 Doors](#) (interior door panels)
- ◆ ⇒ [612 Switches](#)
- ◆ ⇒ [620 Instruments](#)
- ◆ ⇒ [640 Heating and Air Conditioning](#) (IHKA control panel)
- ◆ ⇒ [650 Radio](#)
- ◆ ⇒ [721 Airbag System \(SRS\)](#)

Special tools

Use plastic prying tools or wrap the screwdriver tip with tape to avoid marring interior trim.

- ✦ Plastic prying tool BMW 00 9 321



Interior trim repairs

Interior trim and finish panels are clipped or screwed into place. Many of the trim retaining clips are designed to be used only once. When removing trim that is held in place with clips, it is a good idea to have spares on hand before beginning the job.

Note:

The BMW E46 is equipped with SRS airbags mounted in the steering wheel, the dashboard on the passenger side, the front doors, the A-pillars, and as an option in rear doors on four door models. See warnings and cautions on below and in ⇒ [721 Airbag System \(SRS\)](#).

WARNING!

- ♦ ***Special precautions must be observed when servicing the BMW Supplemental Restraint System (SRS). Serious injury may result if system service is attempted by persons unfamiliar with the BMW SRS and its approved service procedures. BMW specifies that all inspection and service should be performed by an authorized BMW dealer.***
- ♦ ***Before performing any work involving airbags, disconnect the negative (-) battery cable. See ⇒ [721 Airbag System \(SRS\)](#).***
- ♦ ***Airbags contain a back-up power supply within the SRS control module. A 5 second discharge period should be allowed after the battery cable has been disconnected.***

CAUTION!

- ♦ *When working on electrical switches or lights, always disconnect the negative (-) cable from the battery and insulate the cable end to prevent accidental reconnection.*
- ♦ *Prior to disconnecting the battery, read the battery disconnection cautions given at the front of this manual on page viii.*
- ♦ *To prevent marring the trim when working on interior components, work with plastic prying tools or wrap the tips of screwdrivers and pliers with tape before prying out switches or electrical accessories.*

Center Console

The console between the two front seats starts behind the shifter housing. It houses the parking brake handle, optional telephone and oddments storage tray. The rear portion of the console houses the ashtray and covers the emergency brake cable ends.

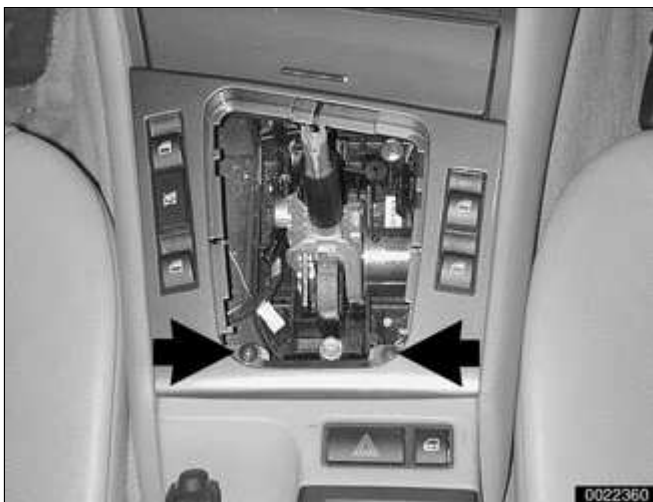
The optional front seat armrest is part of this console.

Center console, removing and installing

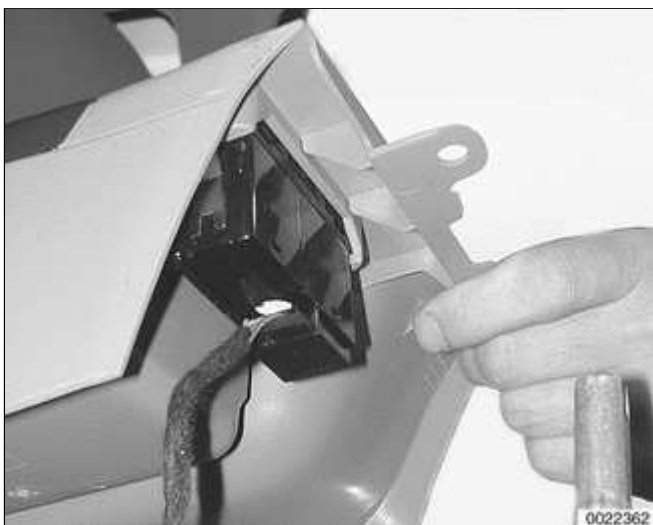


- ✦ Press rolling cover of rear ashtray down. Depress cover fully to pop ashtray out of console. Remove ashtray.
 - Remove retaining screws and bracket.
 - Remove ashtray cover and housing. Disconnect electrical harness connector for ashtray courtesy light.
 - Remove screws at base of ashtray compartment in console.
- ✦ Unclip trim boot for parking brake lever and pull boot and handle forward off brake lever.
 - Gently pry up boot or trim at transmission selector. On automatic transmission vehicles, unplug connector for gear indicator light.

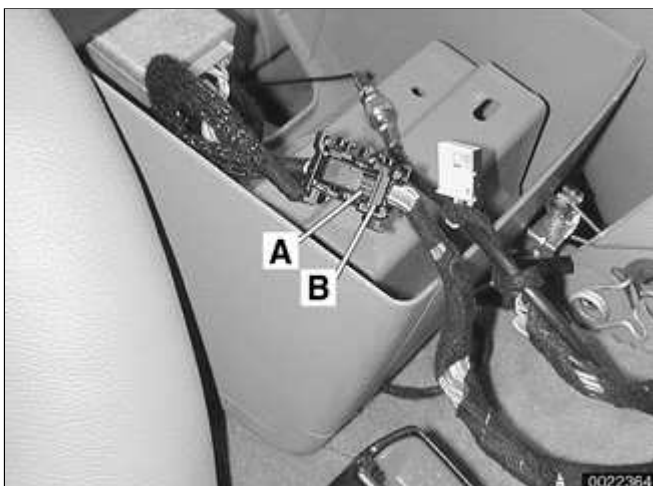




- Remove trim panel retaining screws (**arrows**) under transmission selector boot/trim.



- Slide center console back and lift up. Disconnect electrical harness connector from hazard light and central locking switch.

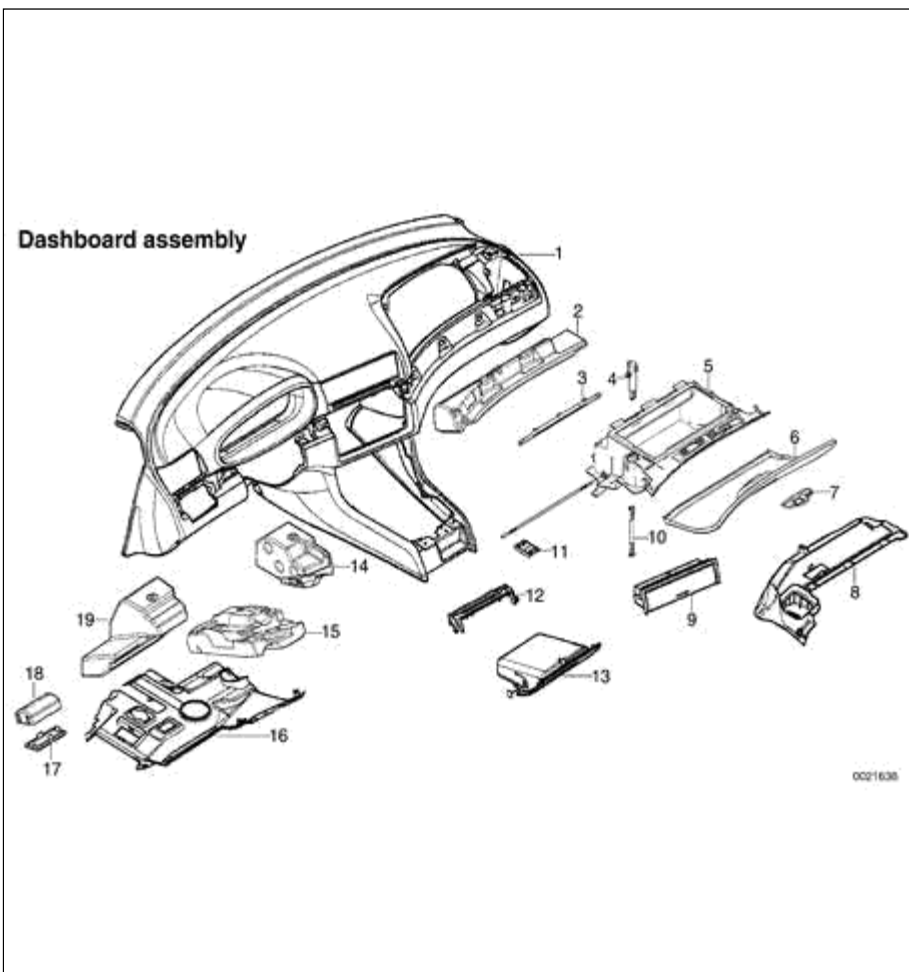


- If applicable disconnect wiring for factory installed cellular telephone. To release phone connector, press catch (**A**) and slide lock (**B**) forward. Disconnect antenna connection.
- On vehicles with center armrest: Tilt armrest upright. Lift parking brake lever upwards. Feed center console panel out over armrest and brake lever.
- Installation is reverse of removal. Make sure to securely fasten all electrical harness connectors during reassembly.

Dashboard

The E46 dashboard assembly includes the instrument cluster, passenger side airbag, glove compartment, fuse and relay panel, radio, IHKA control panel or on-board monitor (if equipped with GPS), front ashtray, shifter assembly, and window control switches.

Dashboard removal is a complex operation. Read the procedures through before starting work.



Dashboard assembly

- 1 - Dashboard
- 2 - Passenger knee protector
- 3 - Reinforcement
- 4 - Damper piston
- 5 - Glove compartment
- 6 - Glove compartment door
- 7 - Latch
- 8 - Right top footwell trim panel
- 9 - Storage compartment
- 10 - Glove compartment door strap

- 11 - Glove compartment hinge
- 12 - Steering column cover
- 13 - Left glove compartment (optional)
- 14 - Center knee protector
- 15 - Steering column knee protector
- 16 - Left footwell (pedal cluster) trim panel
- 17 - Footwell light cover
- 18 - Footwell light socket
- 19 - Left knee protector

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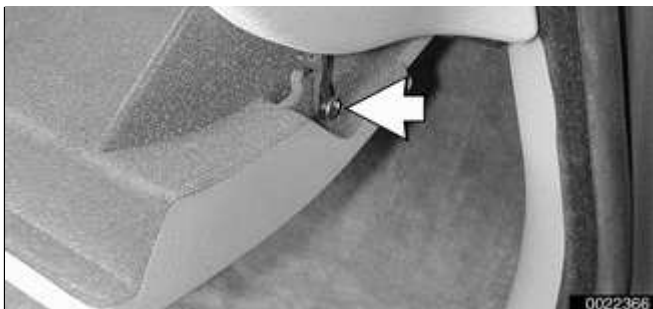
Glove compartment and right footwell trim panel, removing and installing

- Open glove compartment door.
- Snap out glove compartment light fixture and detach electrical harness connector.



To detach glove compartment:

- ◆ Pull out retaining pin (**arrow**) for



right side strap.

- ◆ Pull out pin from bottom of left side dampening rod.



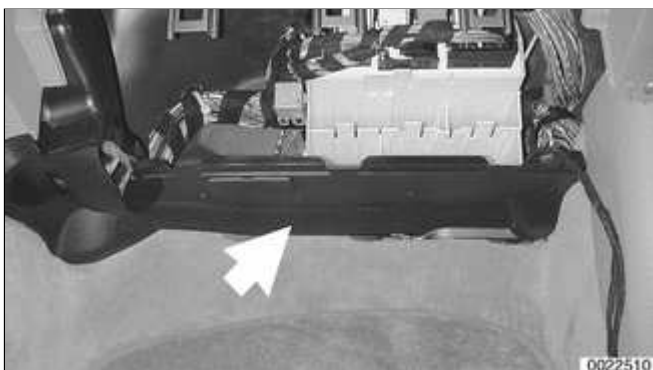
- ✦ Remove glove compartment hinge mounting bracket screws (**arrows**). Lift glove compartment over mounting rod to remove.



- ✦ Remove glove compartment housing:
 - ◆ Remove insert mounting screws (**arrows**).
 - ◆ If necessary, release mounting pin (**A**) at right side of housing.
 - ◆ Pull glove compartment housing down.

Note:

Detach glove compartment electrical harness from guides while removing housing.



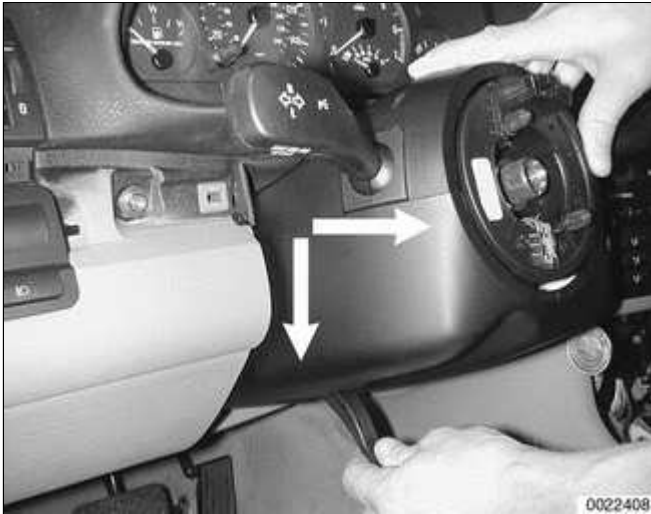
- ✦ Remove right footwell trim panel (**arrow**) by pulling backward to detach from mounting points.

Note:

Detach electrical harness connector(s) from panel while removing.

Steering column trim, removing and installing

- Remove steering wheel as described earlier.

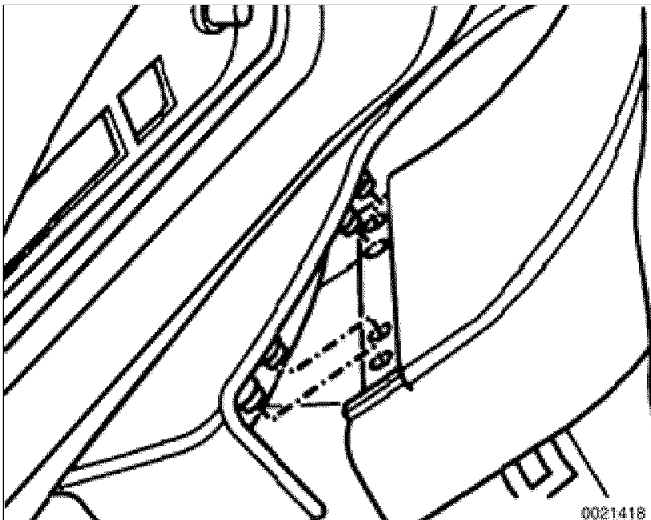


- Fully lower and extend (**arrows**) adjustable steering column.

- Remove retaining screw from top of steering column upper trim cover.



- Push in sides of upper trim cover (**arrow**) to release from lower trim. Pull back and up on upper trim.

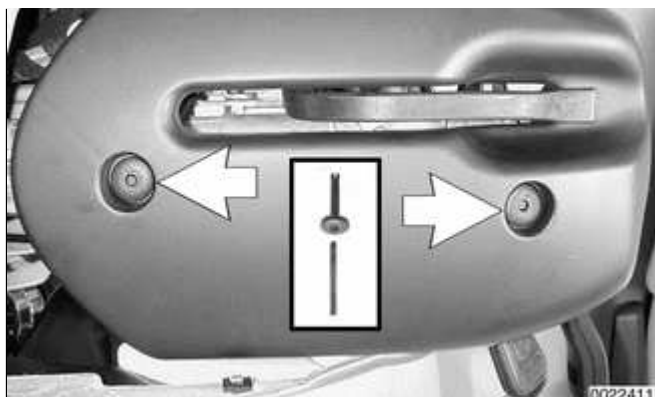


- Pry gently to detach flexible cover from upper trim. Lift off trim.

- Remove left footwell (pedal cluster) trim panel. See ⇒ [Steering column trim, removing and installing](#).



- To remove steering column lower trim, drive pins into expansion rivets (**arrows**)

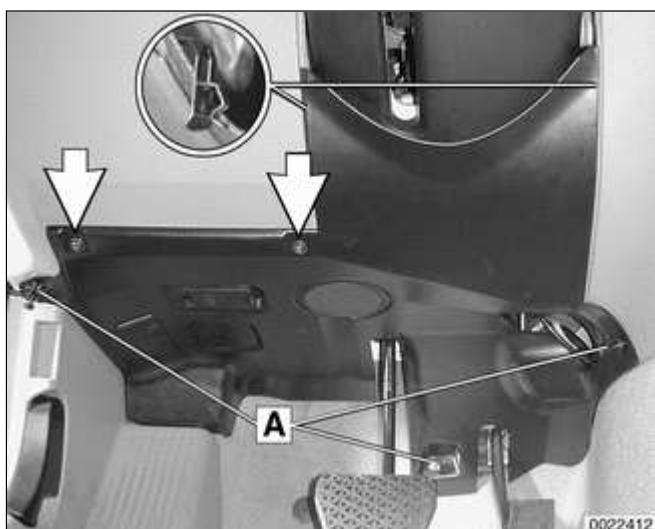


to release. Pull down on trim.

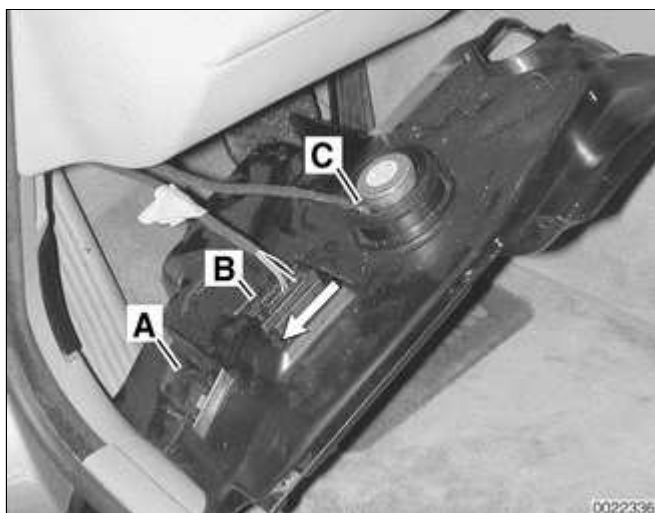
- Installation is reverse of removal. Replace any broken or missing fasteners.

Left footwell (pedal cluster) trim panel, removing and installing

- Move steering column to maximum extended position.



- ◀ Working at trim panel, remove screws (**arrows**) and expansion rivets (**A**).
 - ◆ Clips (**inset**) must be rotated 90° to remove.
 - ◆ If equipped detach electrical harness connectors from footwell light and warning chime.
 - ◆ Release OBD II socket from panel and pull out.



- ◀ Disconnect electrical harness connectors at left footwell trim panel and remove panel:
 - ◆ Unplug connector at footwell interior light (**A**), if equipped.
 - ◆ Slide lock at OBD II connector (**B**) in direction of **arrow**.
 - ◆ Unplug connector at chime (**C**).

Dashboard/shifter console assembly, removing and installing

- Disconnect negative (-) cable from battery and cover terminal with insulating material.

CAUTION!

Prior to disconnecting the battery, read the battery disconnection cautions given at the front of this manual on page viii.



- ◀ Using a plastic trim tool pry gently to remove left, center and right dashboard trim.

CAUTION!

To avoid marring interior trim, work with a plastic prying tool.

Note:

- ◆ *Left side shown. Center and right trim are similar.*
- ◆ *To remove center trim, right trim must be removed first.*
- Remove steering wheel. See ⇒ [320 Steering and Wheel Alignment](#).
- Remove left footwell trim panel as described earlier.
- Remove upper and lower steering column trim. Detach steering column stalk switch electrical connectors and remove stalk switch. See ⇒ [612 Switches](#).

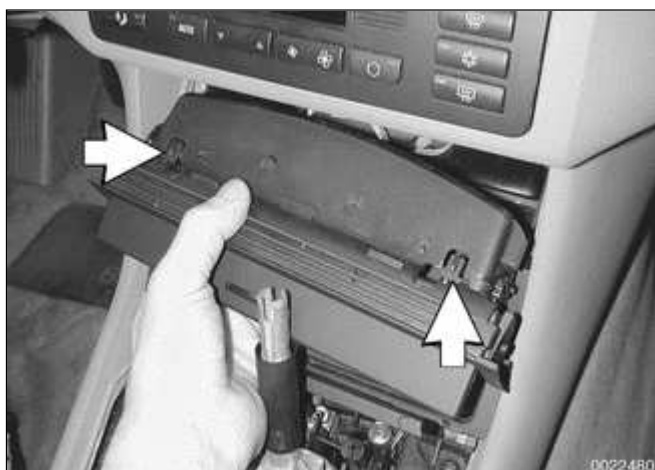


- ✦ Remove shifter knob by pulling straight up.

Note:

Apply approx. 90 lb. of force to pull off knob from shift rod.

- Lift up and remove shifter bezel by prying gently.
- Unclip bottom of shifter boot from center console trim by pushing forward. Pull boot up around shifter.
- Remove center console as described earlier.
- Lift off switch carrier and detach electrical harness connectors to window switches.
- Remove glove compartment as described earlier.



- ✦ To remove storage compartment below IHKA control panel:

- ◆ Open compartment door.
- ◆ Push upward on tabs (**arrows**), then pull out.



- ✦ Remove A-pillar (windshield pillar) trim on left and right sides by prying out finishing strip.

CAUTION!

The Head Protection Airbag is behind the A-pillar. Do not use sharp



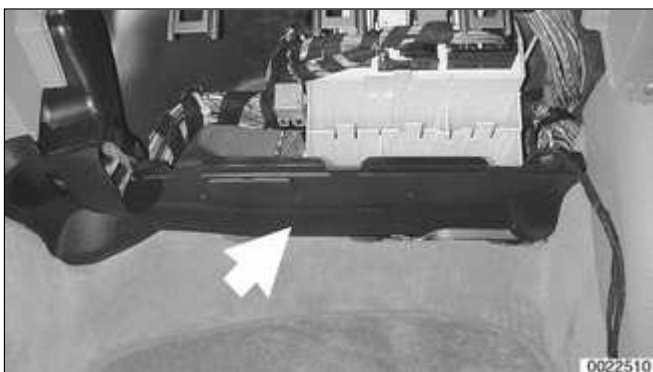
instruments to remove trim or finisher strip

- Remove screws beneath finishing strip.



⚡ Carefully pull away A-pillar trim.

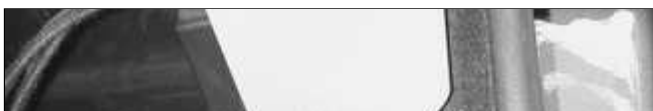
- Remove headlight switch. See ⇒ [612 Switches](#).
- Remove instrument cluster. See ⇒ [620 Instruments](#).
- Remove IHKA control panel and module. See ⇒ [640 Heating and Air Conditioning](#).
- If applicable: Reach through IHKA control panel opening and disconnect solar sensor harness connector.
- Remove radio. See ⇒ [650 Radio](#).
- Remove front passenger airbag. See ⇒ [721 Airbag System \(SRS\)](#).
- Remove glove compartment as described earlier.



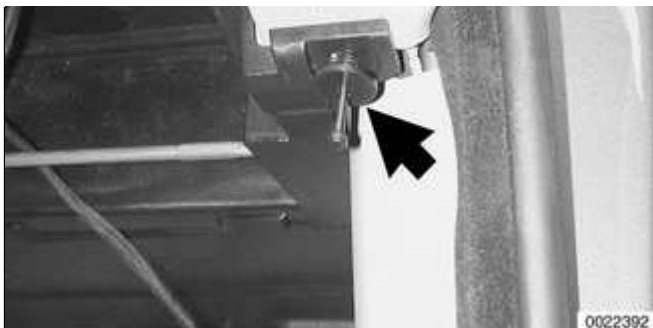
⚡ Remove right footwell trim panel (**arrow**) by pulling backward to detach from mounting points.

Note:

Detach electrical harness connector(s) from panel while removing.

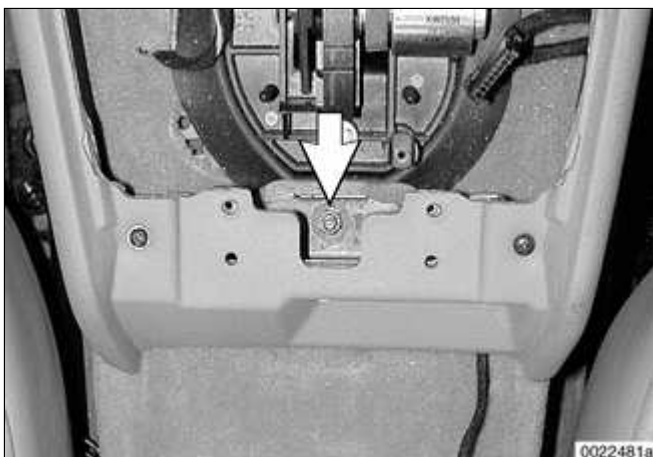


⚡ Remove dashboard mounting screw or expansion rivet (**arrow**) in lower right



dashboard.

- Similarly, remove left side dashboard mounting screw or expansion rivet.



- ✦ Remove dashboard mounting nut (**arrow**) at shifter console.



- ✦ Remove mounting nuts and screw (**arrows**) at dashboard face.

- To remove dashboard:
 - ◆ Pull up parking brake fully.
 - ◆ Push seats fully back.
 - ◆ Lift instrument panel off carefully, making sure all harness connectors and wiring are disconnected.
 - ◆ Remove through passenger door.
- When installing, fit dashboard guide pin into locator slot at base of windshield in center.
- Install center console with dashboard mounting nuts loose. Align and center parts before

tightening fasteners.