997.1 Multi-Function Steering Wheel Swap to 997.2 Sport Design Steering Wheel

In my opinion, the 997.2 Sport Design steering wheel is one of finest Porsche has ever made. For some reason it never occurred to me that it was possible to swap out my ugly and worn triangle-center wheel and replace it with an updated version. With the help several threads posted around the forums, I was able to easily make the change. Yes, I lost the use of multi-function buttons but I never used them anyhow.

Much thanks are owed to Carl Mott at Isringhausen Porsche. Carl was genuinely helpful with determining the right parts. Carl didn't mind sharing the actual part numbers with me and he came through with a really phenomenal price that just spanked the folks at Suncoast who wouldn't help me with any part numbers.

ISRINGHAUSEN

You can contact Carl via email here...
http://www.isringhausen.com/contact/default.aspx?email=parts&name=Carl%20Mott

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Part Numbers
Steering Wheel In Black: 997 044 402 23 A10
Air Bag with Black Cover: 997 803 089 23 A03



Install Time
40 minutes

Tools
T-55 Socket
Socket Extension
Torque Wrench
3/16" Hex Key (Allen Wrench)

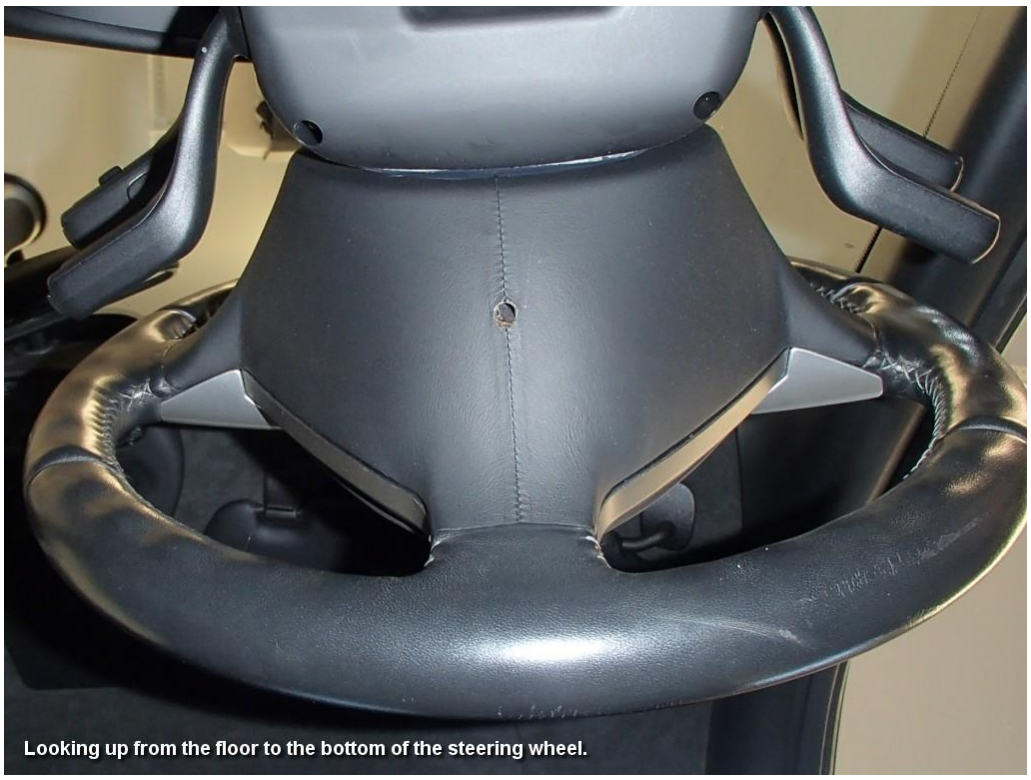
Installation

1. Sit square in the driver's seat and center the steering wheel.

2. Pop the hood and disconnect the battery.

3. Removal of the original wheel is fairly straightforward. On the bottom of the steering wheel there is a 3/16" diameter hole. If there is not a hole there, you will at least see a dimple where the leather is covering the hole. Simply take a 3/16" hex key and poke it inside the hole. You will be using the flat bottom of the hex key to press the spring release mechanism.

   The tool has to held vertical in order to engage the release mechanism. If you are pressing on the tool and you are not feeling a springiness, then you are not on the release mechanism. Keep trying. There is a sweat spot that is not hard to find. Press upward on the tool and the airbag will pop off by a quarter inch or so.



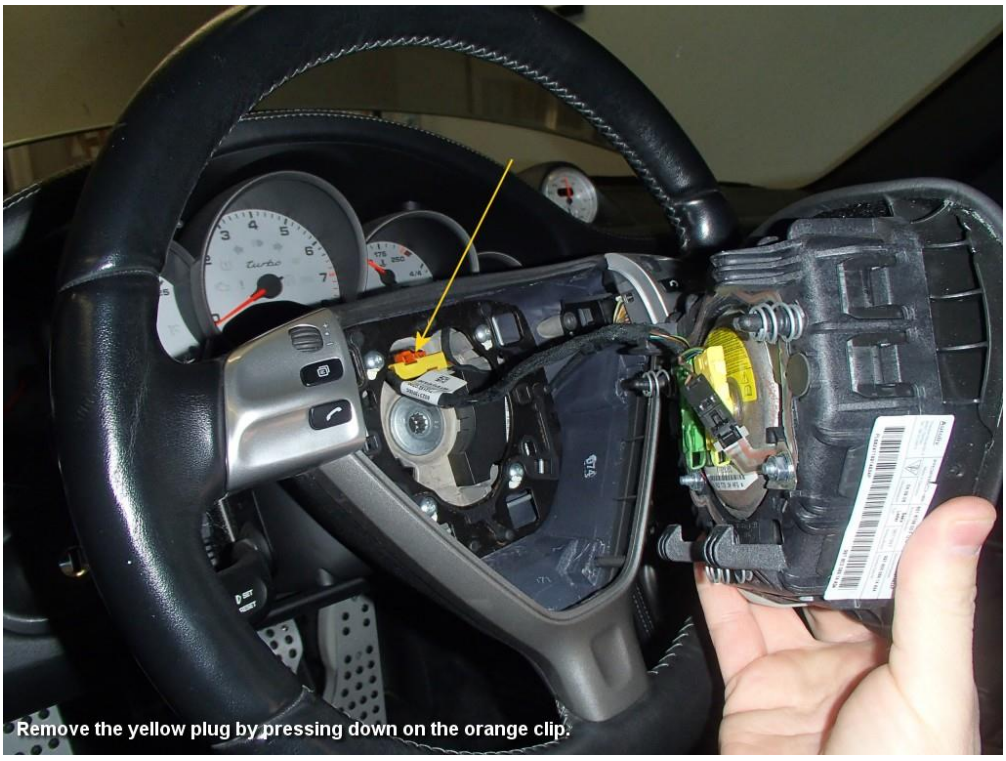
Looking up from the floor to the bottom of the steering wheel.



Press straight up.
Feel for the spring tension release mechanism.


Air bag has been released.

4. The air bag slides off the wheel enough that you can reach in and press down on the orange plastic clip on the yellow plug just above the center of the wheel. This also gives you the slack in the wiring to easily access the bolt that holds the steering wheel on the spindle shaft.


Remove the yellow plug by pressing down on the orange clip.

5. I used a T-55 (Torx) socket to remove the steering shaft bolt. The thread is standard so it's "lefty loosey".



Use a T-55 socket to remove the spindle bolt.

6. Before removing the steering wheel, I used a Sharpie marker to indicate exactly where the original steering wheel was positioned on the steering shaft spindle. I marked it in several areas because it's hard to get both pieces (spindle and steering wheel) marked with a single unbroken marking line.

7. Slide the wheel straight off. Don't turn the wheel as you do this.

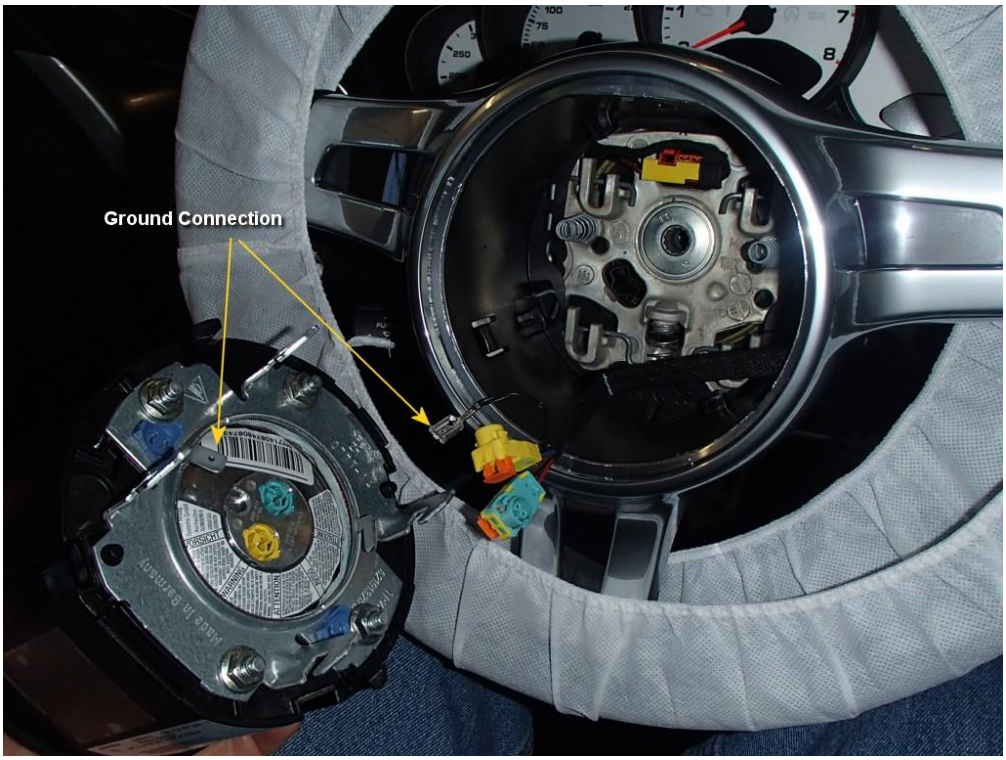
8. Set the new steering wheel onto the spindle making sure it's perfectly vertical. You could also play around with the wheel a bit if you want to see how the splines line up on different angles and how it affects the wheel position.

   Since I knew my steering shaft was still in the center position, I tried one spline to the left and one to the right to see how far off the wheel would be if I were on the wrong spline. It's quite a bit of difference. So if you keep the shaft straight *(insert Beavis and Butthead giggle here)*, then it will be easy to see when you've got the wheel in the perfect center position.



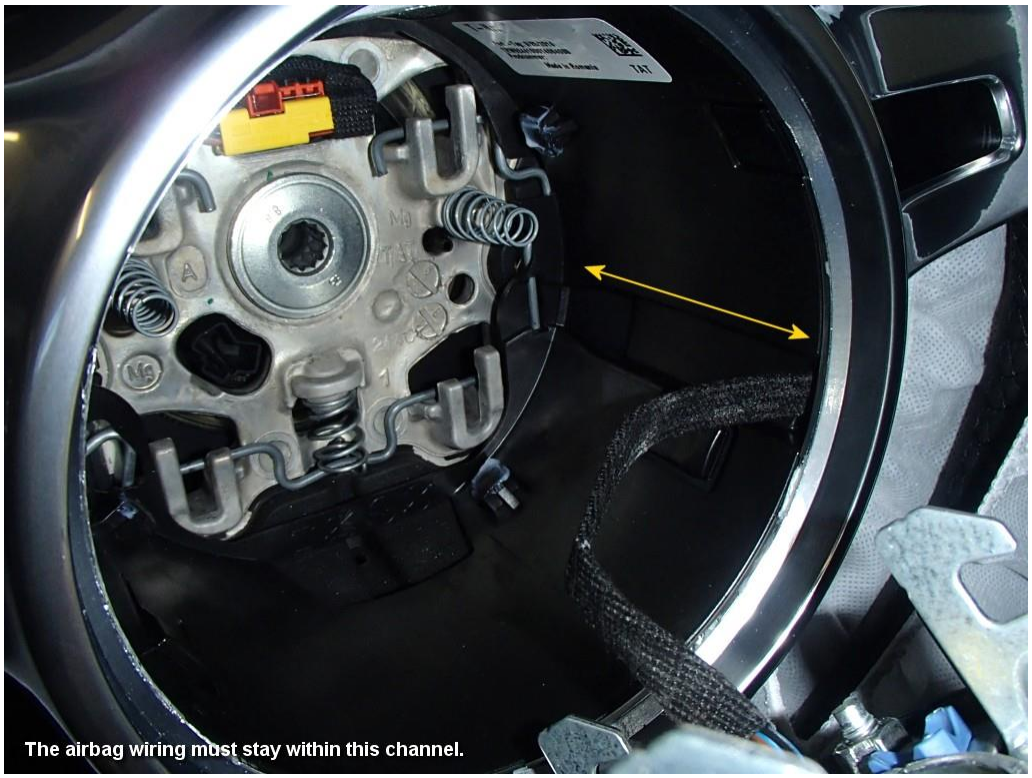
9. The new steering wheel comes with a replacement spindle bolt that has thread locker on it. Use the same T-55 socket to tighten the bolt to 37 ft lbs.

10. There are three wires inside the steering wheel. Two are connected to the harness on the back of the air bag assembly. Insert the plugs into the matching receivers on the airbag and press the orange locking pins into place. The third connection is a ground wire. It gets connected to the spade on the back of the airbag.



11. Insert the yellow plug back with orange clip into the steering wheel (again, just above the center). Listen and feel for the click so you know it's properly seated.

12. Line up the air bag and prepare to insert it into the wheel. Be certain that the wiring from the air bag falls into the channel on the inside of the wheel. If the wiring is outside of this channel, the air bag will not glide easily into the locking mechanism and if you force it, the air bag/horn will not freely return on the springs when the horn is used. You'll know you have it right if the air bag slides into place without feeling like something is binding and creating friction as it is inserted. Another indicator that you've done it right is that the air bag will push in (to engage the horn) and then pop back out again to its normal spot.



If you skipped the above step and the air bag doesn't return to from the horn activation position, then you'll need to remove the air bag and start again. There is a release hole in the bottom of the new wheel that works the same as the original wheel. The problem is that you'll need a way to pull the airbag back out. Since it's bound by the wiring, it will not pop out on its own.

Do not use a plastic trim removal tool for this. Doing so will create a facet on the shiny plastic and you will not be very happy about it. Instead, Use a very small hex key clamped into a pair of vice grips. Slide the small hex key in between the airbag and the shiny plastic steering wheel housing. Be careful not to scratch anything. With the 3/16" hex key, you'll need to engage the spring release under the wheel with one hand while gently pulling on the hex key and air bag with the other.

Don't pull too hard. Instead just keep a steady pull on the air bag until in unbinds from the housing.

13. Attach the battery cables and close everything up.

14. Go for a ride and enjoy the new steering wheel. It's amazing how much better it looks and feels.

