

Basement Cargo Door Latch Replacement (pre 2000 or a bit later) -

This covers the Discovery models built before 2000 and may be applicable to the 2000 or even up until the 2001.5 came out (prior to August 2001).

So what do you do with your broken plastic plunger inside the latch that used inside the basement / cargo door? You can either replace the entire latch or replace the plastic plunger (preferably with an aluminum plunger that will take much more abuse than the plastic one). The problem on the vintage coaches is that you can't just simply remove the latch assembly from the outside of the door.



The later models (and the YouTube videos) all have latches that can be removed from the outside of the door panel. IOW the latch is screwed in from the outside and easy to remove. Well on the early models Fleetwood apparently had a mental blackout and actually mounted the latches into the aluminum edge molding of the basements, on the INSIDE side before assembling the molding to the composite door panel. After assembly they then painted and used decals on the doors in the color scheme of the coach. IOW there is NO way to disassemble the edge with the latch without seriously damaging your paint or finish. Assuming you can get it off at all after over 15 years.

1. Remove the rear cover of the locking plate inside the door (black cover fastened with 4 screws) so that you can unhook the latch rod from the lock.
2. Saw a hole in the inside panel of the composite panel, starting where the edge of the aluminum molding stops and going towards the middle of the panel. The hole is centered over the latch, must be 4 inches tall (so that you can reach the loose (!!)) nuts inside the panel and about 2 1/2 inches wide (towards the lock in the center). See the pictures. I used an oscillating multi-purpose tool which does a very clean job. A Dremel-tool with saw blade will do it too. Just remember, the latch is immediately

behind the inside panel so don't try to go too deep. The inside panel is only 1/16" thick.



3. Using a 1/4 inch socket set with u-joint and 5/16 socket hold the nuts inside the panel so that you can unscrew them with a Philips head screw driver from the outside. Don't lose the nuts, you will need them in reassembly.



4. With the latch rod disconnected (in the door middle) you can now slide the latch towards the center until you can tip it out of the hole in the door with the wide edge of the latch first.

5. Replace the latch plunger with a new one (the ones from Bruce Plumb are top notch, fit perfectly and have their own instructions) and lubricate liberally with white grease before closing/riveting the latch housing.

6. Reverse the steps to fasten the latch back into the door and reconnect the latch rod.

7. Cover the hole we made with a suitable cover (about 5 by 3 inches is enough and Bruce Plumb can supply these covers as well). Hope this helps some of you with the older models (as is mine). Each latch is about a 30 minute job. It is easy if you are a bit handy with tools. Anyone can feel free to copy these instructions and photos for any use.



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