

Tool Tip #30 – Drilled Hole Edge Touch-up Markers

Although I am not anywhere near being a perfectionist, I am a bit fussy about the appearance of a completed project – especially when it has turned out well. However, there are times that I am left with an unavoidable detriment to the nicely finished look that I want for my projects. This happens when it is necessary to drill through an enclosure that has a colored finish. Sometimes, it will be a painted finish. Other times, it will be a colorful anodized finish. In every case, drilling through the material leaves an ugly bright ring of metal exposed at each drilled hole location. The solution to this problem is actually quite simple.



Figure 1 - Sharpie® marker set

I keep a wide selection of different colors of Sharpie® markers on hand, with a few different point or tip sizes. When the ugly bright metal rings appear, I simply touch them up with a marker of the appropriate color, and the bright rings disappear. I have used the most common black markers for both painted metals and for black anodized aluminum. I have also successfully hidden the dreaded bright rings (and even some scratches) using, at various times and as applicable, red, green, blue, violet, and yellow Sharpie® markers. These colors blend well with the anodized finishes on the aluminum enclosures that I often use. For example, it is not uncommon for me to drill an array of holes in a top panel to create a speaker grille opening in a solid panel. The marker does a great job of making the hole edges disappear, and I have even used it on screw heads with good results. The screws end up blending in with the panel and seem to disappear.

As already mentioned, I keep a selection of tip sizes on hand, which allows me to get into the narrowest of areas when necessary, while still being able to cover larger areas quickly. These markers are a great way to bring a truly professional finished appearance to your project on which you have worked so hard. It is quite surprising what a difference that hiding the drilled edges can make.

These products are widely available online as well as from your local stationery or office supply store. It is possible to purchase assortments that contain a wide array of colors. These markers are made in tip sizes from an ultra-fine tip to a jumbo oversized tip. Try this out on your next project and see what a difference it makes.