

Your “True Colors” and Other Cool Stuff

Happy Spring Driving Season, Miata Folks!

I hope you’re getting as anxious as I am to get our Miata’s out of winter storage and back on the road for the driving season. I know our Club and Area Reps have lots of great events planned – something for everyone to experience the absolute joy of driving on the open road on a sunny day, top down, along with some friendly folks in our Club.

Consider checking out my previous old column for tips and suggestions for washing and detailing your car once you bring it out of winter storage in the TECH section of the club website homepage: www.midstatemiata.net

*...I see your true colors shining through.
I see your true colors and that's why I love you.
So don't be afraid to let them show.
Your true colors, true colors are beautiful, like a rainbow...*

- Song lyrics by Steinberg/Kelly, 1986

Recently, I was perusing our new Miata Club roster and I noticed many of our members list their Miata exterior colors generically, i.e., “red” or “blue” or “silver”, etc. Would you like to know what the “true colors” are for your Miata – i.e., the official Mazda factory paint color name for whatever beautiful “true color” you are driving? Wondering how to find out what it is if you don’t know?

Well, guess what, Kids!

There’s a pretty easy way to find out if you’re driving a Brilliant Black, a Jet Black, a Black Mica, or a Black Cherry, especially if you don’t have the original MSRP/specs window sticker when purchased new that lists the official exterior paint color.

You may have noticed there is a small sticker on the lower part of your driver’s side door jamb (unless your car was repainted and it was removed, of course). Take a look. The sticker example below is for a 2003 Miata and it shows this vehicle’s body color code at the bottom as: Body Color Code: **25E** (Strato Blue Mica) and some other cool stuff like gross vehicle weight, build date, and VIN.

MAZDA DOOR STICKER EXAMPLE:



Now that you know your body paint code, you can hop on your computer and copy and paste the following URL into your search engine (such as Google, FireFox or Chrome):

<http://gtcarlot.com/colors/Mazda/All/MX-5+Miata/>

then click on any of several of the entries listed there and find your “true color”. If you can’t find it, let me know and I’ll help you. My ’06 “Scarlet” happens to be **A4A “True Red”**, a pretty popular color.

So, if you want to correct your “true color” listing in the Club roster with the official Mazda paint color, you can email Bob Sabella (Membership Chair) or Deane Bergstrom (Newsletter Guru and Keeper of the Membership Roster) and they will be happy to correct the change for you. At least, I think they will. ☺ But don’t tell them I sent you just in case, okay? ☺ ☺

Okay, Now Let’s Talk About VIN’s

Do you remember *Captain Midnight* sponsored by *Ovaltine* back in early 1950 TV days and his Secret Decoder Ring? (Yeah, I know, I’m dating myself here too.... Let’s not think about that right now.) ☺ Well, your Miata’s VIN (Vehicle Identification Number), also known as your registration number, contains letters and numbers that are a not-so-secret specific code for your particular car and you don’t need a secret decoder ring to decipher what they mean. This number is found on the door sticker as mentioned above and on a plate riveted on your vehicle and on the firewall (unless the engine bay has been repainted, of course) and also found on your DMV vehicle registration.

So let’s look at the fictitious VIN below and I’ll use my secret magic Mazda *VIN Decoder* to “decode” the basics:

JM1NB3538Y0153757

J = (Country of Origin: Japan)

M = (Manufacturer: Mazda Corporatio)

1 = Vehicle Type (1=Passenger Car)

NB = Model Generation (NA=’90-97, NB=’99-05, NC=’06-15, NC=’16)

35= Body Style (Convertible Body for models 90-05; 25=code for convertible body 06-XX)

3= Engine Size (3=1.8L, 1=1.6L, 4=1.8L Turbo, F=2.0L)

8= a check digit 0-Z has no meaning but is used to detect invalid VINs based on a mathematical formula that was developed by the Department of Transportation.

Y=Model Year (Y=2000; each year has a letter assigned)

0=Manufacturing Plant in Hiroshima (may also be 1=Hofu, Japan, but Mazda insists all Miatas/MX5’s are made in Hiroshima)

Last 6 digits are the car production number. Each model year starts with 100000 so this was the 53,757th car built in 2000. The letters from B-Y correspond to the model years 1981-2000. There is no I, O, Q, U or Z. From 2001-'09, the numbers one through nine were used in place of numbers. The alphabet started over from A in 2010 and will continue until 2030.

Other than a few possible additions (sometimes restraint system, suspension type, etc.) your VIN will likely look similar to above. You can also email Mazda Corporation directly with your VIN and they will give you all the information about it.

So now you can put your Secret Decoder Ring back in the drawer with your plastic Navy frogmen or little submarines that bounced up and down in a glass of water after being loaded with baking soda because you have all the answers to the VIN codes. ☺

I'm looking forward to getting on the road soon with "Scarlet" and seeing everyone at a Club event !

Please contact me if you have any questions or suggestions: gwtr3red@gmail.com

Zoom-Zoom!

Gail

DISCLAIMER

Please note these tips are not reviewed or approved by the Mazda Motor Corporation or any other corporation or entity other than the originator. The Midstate Miata Club of NY does not accept any liability for damage or injury as a result of utilizing these tips and pointers. Please use common sense and always remember safety first!