Repair of Stuck Lens Covers
as originally presented on “Do it Yourself Digital Camera Repair”
http://camerarepair.blogspot.com/

This is a fairly common problem, but is usually very easy to fix. The lens cover mechanism is normally accessible for most cameras without needing to open up the camera case. Before starting, a reminder that I hold no responsibility should you damage your camera or worse. These repairs are normally last resorts on expired warranty cameras that would otherwise be tossed. In this example we'll fix an inoperative lens cover on an old Canon A400.

This particular Canon was acquired from ebay at very little cost. I won't feel bad if I damage it further. As seen in the below picture, the camera powers up normally, but the lens cover does not fully open.

With the camera powered on and the lens extended, remove the camera's batteries. The lens should remain extended.

The lens cover mechanism is accessible by removing the silver band ring on the front of the lens mechanism. This is true for most Canon digital cameras (suspect this is also the same for other brands). The trick is how to remove that silver band. To do so you'll need a Q-tip, some rubbing alcohol, and the pointy tip from a box cutter.

Dab alcohol from the Q-tip around the silver ring so that it will permeate between the silver ring and the lens barrel. Let it sit for a few minutes as it loosens the internal glue holding the silver ring to the barrel. GENTLY try to pry it loose using the tip of the box cutters. I say gently in that I managed to slightly chip the lens barrel of my A400 by not being gentle (it's OK, just a little unsightly). If there's too much resistance, apply more alcohol and wait a little more for it to loosen the glue. Eventually it should pop open.

Now closely inspect the exposed lens cover mechanism to note how it is assembled. If you have another camera, recommend taking a couple macro pictures to help you remember. In the below picture, note that the black lens cover opening mechanism is not fully resting against its metal stops (at the eleven and five o'clock positions) even though the lens barrel is fully extended.

Carefully lift out the lens cover shutters and their springs and place them to the side. Now gently try to rotate the black mechanism. In my case it quickly and easily snapped counter-clockwise into place where it should be against the metal stops. Apparently a little sand or gunk had jammed it stuck. I momentarily reinsert the camera's batteries, and extend/retract the lens several times to verify that it repeatedly returns to this correct position. This is to ensure that the jam has been cleared. With the lens barrel open, remove the batteries to keep the lens barrel extended.

Carefully reinsert the lens cover springs using tweezers or in my case a magnetized screwdriver. Then reinsert the lens covers, inserting their pins into their support holes in the lens cover mechanism and the lens cover springs. Note that with the lens barrel open, the lens covers should now easily install in the open position.

Now apply very small dabs of glue (I used super glue) to the glue tabs on the silver ring. A little bit of glue should easily suffice. Remember that you may need to get in there again someday. Now simply reinsert the silver ring onto the barrel. Your camera is now repaired. Reinsert the batteries and verify proper operation. This particular camera is now going to my niece as her first digital camera!

Note that some Canon's may give you an E18 lens error at this point. If so, don't fret, in that it's easily corrected. Try resetting the camera by holding the menu button down for five seconds with the camera powered. If this doesn't correct it, try applying a little pressure to the lens barrel helping it to close while turning off the camera. If that also doesn't work, try the other E18 correction methods outlined at http://www.e18error.com/repair.html .