

MORE TECH TIPS...

Trunk Panel Replacement

by Dan Cameron

After years of weathering, the fiberboard trunk panels begin to look pretty bad. If you are getting ready to tackle this project, the steps below should help:

1. First, you need to purchase the following items:
 - Hardboard: this is a waterproof cardboard used by auto upholstery and trim shops for making door panels. It comes in 3'x 4' sheets.
 - Aluminum pop rivets with washers.
 - Adjustable shelf metal strip approximately 4 feet long.
 - Contact Cement.
 - Spray-on upholstery adhesive.
 - Vinyl: 3x4-1/2"
 - (26) screws and washers
2. Next, using your original panels as a template, cut out the new panels using a packing knife. To get a nice, clean edge, I sanded mine with fine sandpaper.
3. Now, install the panels with the metal screws. This is only a temporary measure to assure fit and allow for drilling of screw holes in the hardboard.
4. After proper fit is assured and the panels removed, reinforce the side facing the gas tanks with a short piece of metal shelving strip. I think the strips I used were about 14" long. This step is only necessary to

prevent warpage when the trunk compartment becomes hot. Position the metal strip approximately 3" down for the top (running from front to rear of the car) and secure with pop rivets and washers. To avoid having the pop rivets show through the vinyl, countersink the hole, install the rivet and cover with a short piece of duct tape. The exact position is determined by trial and error method so as to eliminate the possibility of interference.

5. Finally, cut the vinyl covering about 1" larger than the panel itself, spray the panel surface with the spray-on adhesive, let it air dry (will not fully cure) for 3 minutes and place the vinyl over the panel. Turning the panel over, roll the edge of the vinyl over the backside and secure with contact cement (not spray adhesive). Locate mounting holes with a prick punch and you are ready for the final installation.

The result should be a trunk good for another 35 years and an enhancement that could translate into profit should you ever decide to put the car up for sale.

OPPOSITE PAGE

So, why are we printing this picture of a telephone company advertising flyer that Kenneth Bishop, Wauwatosa, WI sent us? Take a close look at that car. See something familiar? Yep, it's a Sunbeam, although it's difficult to tell if it's an Alpine or a Tiger. In any case, Sunbeams are still the symbol of a carefree life. Obviously, the ad's writer never had to change the number 8 plug on a Tiger.