

Repairing and Rebuilding Cockpit Windows

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STOP THOSE LEAKS!

Keep the copilot happy

Preserve the condition of the interior and floor

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The first thing is to remove all the retaining blocks. Obviously you need to remove the plastic trim around the window AND the plastic panel below the window...a royal pain but necessary.

These trim clips are screwed to the window through the body. There are three of these little 'hat' clips and a strip with two screws each on the back.

Note the silicone...lots and lots of silicone. From the multitude of holes in the Fiberglass, it was obvious my window had been removed at least once before.



Across the top and bottom are 1/2x 12-14" strips with three screws each. Some of these screws did NOT want to come out and a couple had to be drilled out.

This pick was indispensable in digging out all the old sealant and silicone. INDISPENSIBLE!



Once all the screws were out, the window would not move. I pushed, and pulled, and pried, and tapped, and finally got out the 3 lb sledge and a block of wood and CAREFULLY whacked the heck out of it. NOTHING! ((*&#\$\$@

I had to make another tool in order to get some leverage. It's just a midsize screwdriver that I heated with a torch and bent an 90 degree angle so I could use it as a mini pry bar. FINALLY it came loose at the back and I was able to wiggle it out of the 'A' Pillar channel. There wasn't much in the way of gasket material or sealant but what was there was tenacious.

It was pretty obvious why the window leaked. All the old sealant was in terrible shape.



Some photos of the condition of the channel and whatever this stuff was in the A pillar channel???



More shots of the nasty openings.



And THIS is why the dang thing wouldn't come out. An old broken screw was still in the window frame and the Fiberglas opening. So I cleaned up the opening in the coach with a wire brush, my handy little pick to dig out all the nooks and crannies and finally wiped it down with acetone. I did that until it was as clean as I could make it.



Before I replace the window felt, I decided to mask off and paint the window frame. I used black engine enamel because I had some.



I ordered the Window felt from Jim K at Applied. About 45 bucks. I tried to order it from the Co-op but JimB was having medical problems and didn't call me back so I just ordered from Jim K. A couple days later Jim Bounds called and graciously offered to email me his instructions for replacing the felt. I expect he will do that for anyone. I've got a copy here if anyone wants to look at it but it's not my place to distribute it. Basically, you remove the old stuff and put in the new. Bottom first, then top, then front and finally the back rubber that was in the original window. Jim says to use the window itself to help slid the felts in position. Also note that you have to cut drain slots in the felts in the same locations as the drain slots in the frame. The other thing that you'll want to do is tap off the metal on the back of the slider glass. I put a block at the top, and used another piece of wood as a 'chisel' to hit lightly with a hammer. This piece needs to be trimmed about 1/8" in order to clear the new felt. If you don't do this, it will drag on the new felt. The window should slide smoothly. Mine is a bit stiff but acceptable and it will probably loosen up a bit. One thing that Jim recommends is to NOT use any weather strip adhesive because it can make the glass slide harder. However, I did because the new felts did not want to stay in place. I used 3M black weather strip adhesive.



I STRONGLY recommend not doing this alone. I did and regret it. The problem is that there are already holes in the window frame AND the cockpit frame. If you have help, you can position the window so you can reuse those holes. I didn't and had to redrill them, a royal pain and something I won't repeat on the drivers side.

Another thing I did that I do not recommend is the sealant I used. It was the best SEALANT that Lowes had but if I had it to do again, I'd have just used the Butyl tape that is used to install the new windows, fantastic fans, etc. It is great stuff and seals like a ...well...like it's supposed to. The stuff I used will probably work fine but it did not finish as cleanly as I'd have hoped. If I'd have had more time, I'd have taken it out and redone it with the Butyl, then just calked with paintable silconized latex or similar.



Finally, I leak tested with a water hose. No more leaks!



I did not replace the rubber gaskets on the fixed glass because they are not available. I expect there is something out there that will work but I don't think it will be a problem. IF you wanted to break the window down, there are two screws inside the frame that hold the cross piece in place. Removing those will allow you to completely break the window down.

