

“Mustang How To”

Article by Lucien Boutin

Mustang II dash bezel insert repair

Last time I told you about the history of the dash in my Mustang II and what I was doing to repair it. Time and patience and attention to detail are all that is need to do anything on your car. The last article showed how I prepared the dash bezels for their new inserts. Now I will show how this was done and what was needed to do the job.

After carefully removing the original inserts and cleaning the bezels everything was just about ready. All I needed was new material to fabricate the inserts. The originals are made of vinyl and getting that type of product was not going to happen. I looked at many different types of things to use and happened to find at Home Depot roofing flashing in brushed aluminum. For \$9.00 for a 10 foot roll it fit my needs perfectly and would give the finished job the correct look I needed.



8"x10' roll brushed aluminum flashing



some of the tools used to make inserts

Some of the tools needed to get this project going were a pick, small hobby drill, tape, a Dremel tool with cut off wheels, and tin snips. The back side of the flashing is gold colored and is the side to be used for all markings. Using the snips I cut the flashing to just over what was needed to make the instrument insert. With the gold side facing up I taped the original vinyl insert upside down on the flashing so that when finished the new insert would be correctly oriented.



Template taped in place



Holes drilled for locating corners

Once the template was secured in place a small pick was used to carefully trace all instrument locations as well as actual outer size of insert. With that done the next step was to carefully drill small location holes in all corners of the rectangular portions of the insert so that when cut there would be no guess work as to where you need to stop. Then with a cutoff wheel on the Dremel carefully cut just at the scribe lines and up to the corner location holes. While straight line cuts are relatively easy more care and patience is needed to cut the circular parts and keep them round. The key to this is to cut very small sections at a time no bigger than the edge of the cutoff wheel. The smaller the circle the harder it is to cut so be patient. Also when cutting the circles making them in pie shaped wedges is a big help.



New roughed out insert



Top: old insert Bottom: new insert



Right side insert



Top: old insert Bottom: new insert

With both sides roughed out it is now time to make them fit into the bezels. This is done by using small files to carefully trim the openings to fit the bezels they are going to. You need lots of patience to do this as it is very time consuming. Carefully file each opening being careful not to bend or kink the new insert. Test fit often to make sure that the insert will fit on the bezel flat and not have any tight spots around the gauge holes. Tight spots will create a wrinkle effect with weather changes.



New inserts temporarily installed for proper fitting

Properly clean the dash bezels in preparation for the new inserts by removing the old adhesive and wash with soap and water. Once dry and inserts are fitted correctly use contact cement to glue the new inserts in place and reinstall bezels back in dash. The total time it took me to do this project was around 8 hours. For me the time spent was well worth the final result and can proudly say I did it myself. Any thing can be done with a little time and effort.