

Mustang Repair and Refresh

Article by Lucien Boutin

Bob Azukas 1978 Mustang II Coupe



This 1978 Mustang II Coupe belongs to Bob Azukas. Bob asked me if I would do some repairs for him. The car is very clean and solid for its age. Some of the things that I will be doing will be changing the steering wheel, heater core, checking dash lights for proper operation, making sure car is running well and will be safe and reliable for the road.

The first part of the project is to gain access to the heater core. The heater box is not really hard to get to on these cars. However this one had an aftermarket air conditioning unit installed many years ago and needs to be removed before the heater core can be accessed.



First the AC system needs to be checked to see if it is charged. There is a fitting under the hood on the AC line that looks like a tire valve. Carefully press the valve with a screwdriver to see if the system is under pressure. If the system is under pressure you need to have it evacuated at a local auto shop that does AC repair as venting the system into the air is illegal and dangerous. This one was dry as the freon had leaked out over the years.

Next the cooling unit needs to be accessed from the inside by removing the upper dash pad. This is done by removing the series of screws that hold it to the main dash panel.



Also the dash bezel over the glove box needs to be removed.

Once the dash pad and bezel are removed the cooling unit is exposed. The unit was designed to fit just under the dash pad making it a separate unit from the heater box.



The unit is a tight fit and is held in by one bracket as the rest of it just sits on top of the inner dash components. To get the unit out, the main dash had to be unbolted from both ends and moved out. The lines going to the compressor also have to be removed so they can be brought through the firewall when the evaporator is removed. Once this was done the AC unit had just enough room to be removed.



The under dash unit consist of the evaporator, case and its own fan to circulate the cool air. Once removed access to the heater box was easy.



To remove the heater, four bolts on the engine compartment side have to be removed. The heater hoses also need to be disconnected under the hood. Inside, the control cables need to be disconnected from the blend doors. Once disconnected pulling heater box and hoses from car is easy. Next month I will cover servicing the heater core assembly.