

REBUILD YOUR EXISTING DOOR TRIMS

It is possible on most cars built after '52 to salvage the coverings of the door trims and remount them on new board. The old trim board had very poor moisture resistant properties and is usually buckled and warped, pulling the clips through the board and flapping in the breeze everytime the door is opened. If the covering trim material becomes torn, it is pointless to proceed any further, but in many of the better cars available, while the door trim may look unsightly, the covering vinyl or leather is in an excellent state. Nelson board is available at Eliza Tinsley Pty Ltd, and other trim suppliers and it becomes a matter of remaking the baseboard.

1. Dismantle the original trim and save each part for reference, no matter how dilapidated.

2. The original clips may be used again, however the wire type pull through the board too easily and the sheet spring steel type, while having the same disadvantage as the wire type, will often be broken. An excellent substitute is available from early model Holdens. It has the advantage of gripping the Nelson Board securely, but the door holes must be eased out with a drill to allow easy fitting and removal.

3. When you come to cut the board, offer up to the door and mark the position of the door handle and window winder shaft with a tap of a mallet. Then use a hole saw in an electric drill to cut a passage for the shafts (same size hole as original).

4. With the board still in position on the door, use an awl or a small nail to locate the positions of the holes that receive the trim clips. When using original clips, a hold for each clip can now be drilled. If using Holden clips, a slot must be cut closer to the centre of the door than the hole that receives the clip. This distance from the hole to the slot is equal to the offset of the clip. A slot is necessary to slide the clip for final adjustment.

5. Rough cut the board to the shape of the door, keeping it slightly larger (1/2").

6. Insert clips and fix to door (having first eased the holes if you are using Holden clips).

7. Close the door and mark a pencil line around the edge following the draught excluder (fur flec) and the aluminium kick guard.

8. Lay up the garnish mould to the window and mark its lower extremity with a pencil onto the board (trace accurately).

9. Remove the board and add 1/4" to the top, marking where the garnish moulding fits to allow an overlap and avoiding any gaps. Now cut the board with kraft knife and straight edge.

10. Now is the time to test your old trim covering against your new board. Ensure that your trim will pull around the sides and the top. You may remove material from the sides of the board, but do it evenly and only a little at a time testing as you go.

11. Now mark where the door pocket will be cut using the covering as a reference. Cut out and test for fit.

12. Most often the original padding will be reuseable but if it is not, this material is also available from Eliza Tinsleys and most trim suppliers. Please, however, do not substitute that expanded foam PVC. It is too spongy and spoils the originality of the final appearance.

13. Imperviousness to water may be enhanced at this stage by coating the Nelson Board front and back with a layer of varnish.

14. Glue the padding in position (Selleys Quick Grip, Goa Adhesive).

15. The clup area is reinforced with millimetre ply on some cars, and it is not a bad move to put it into all trim jobs you do on door panels. If you so choose, it lays under the padding, over the clip area on the leading and trailing edges of the trim, but not on the lower edge. Marine quality ply is available from marine suppliers and also larger model aircraft hobby shops.

16. Offer up the trim covering, fold it around the corners/edges and glue.

17. The door pocket backing is a separate piece of card, cut from the original as a pattern, and glue on the vinyl material.

18. Staple the door pocket in place only on the elastics to the pocket backing and bend over the protruding staple tips.

19. Staple the pocket assembly to the main trim panel.

20. The lower carpet panel can now be attended to. Often the vinyl material around the edges of the carpet is in poor shape and one must find a substitute material. Saving old seats for their vinyl is not a bad habit to get into. But then, I strongly urge the magpie syndrome for all old bits and pieces.

21. The carpet can be cut to cover the remaining lower portion of the trim.

22. Sew on the edging vinyl in the manner used on the old trim (most domestic machines can manage this).

23. The carpet is stitched to the trim on its upper edge, and glued in other places. No domestic machine will handle this task, but the services of a friendly neighbourhood sadler could prove useful. The other alternative is to hand sew with two needles in a cross over stitch. Make the holes needed as you go with a shoemakers awl, or if you like working rough, a hammer and nail. If you hand sew and you are not confident of being neat, sew through the carpet section, not along the vinyl edge. It won't look quite right but it will hide the stitching in the pile and look much better than a crooked line of stitching down the vinyl.

24. Fit the trim, handles, winders and mouldings to the door and stand back to admire your handiwork.

Gerald Propsting.

