

RUMBLE SEAT INSTALLATION

RUMBLE SEAT INSTALLATION: In August, 1928 the "Ford Dealer and Service Field" magazine published an article entitled "Installing a Rumble Seat". This excellent article was reprinted in "How to Restore Your Model A", Vol. 3, page 18. It's well worth your while to locate a copy, but I'll try to paraphrase it with additions from our experience.

First of all, if the car is restored there is new paint to think about. The article suggests that the very first step is to install the rumble seat step plates on the right-hand bumper bracket and fender to give the installer a "safe" place to step as he climbs in and out.

Next, remove the deck lid. Ascertain if the lid is a rumble seat type or not, (See "D - Deck Lid"), and install the rumble-style deck lid hinges. The currently-available hinges are purely dreadful. They will not fit correctly on original rumble-style lids and have to

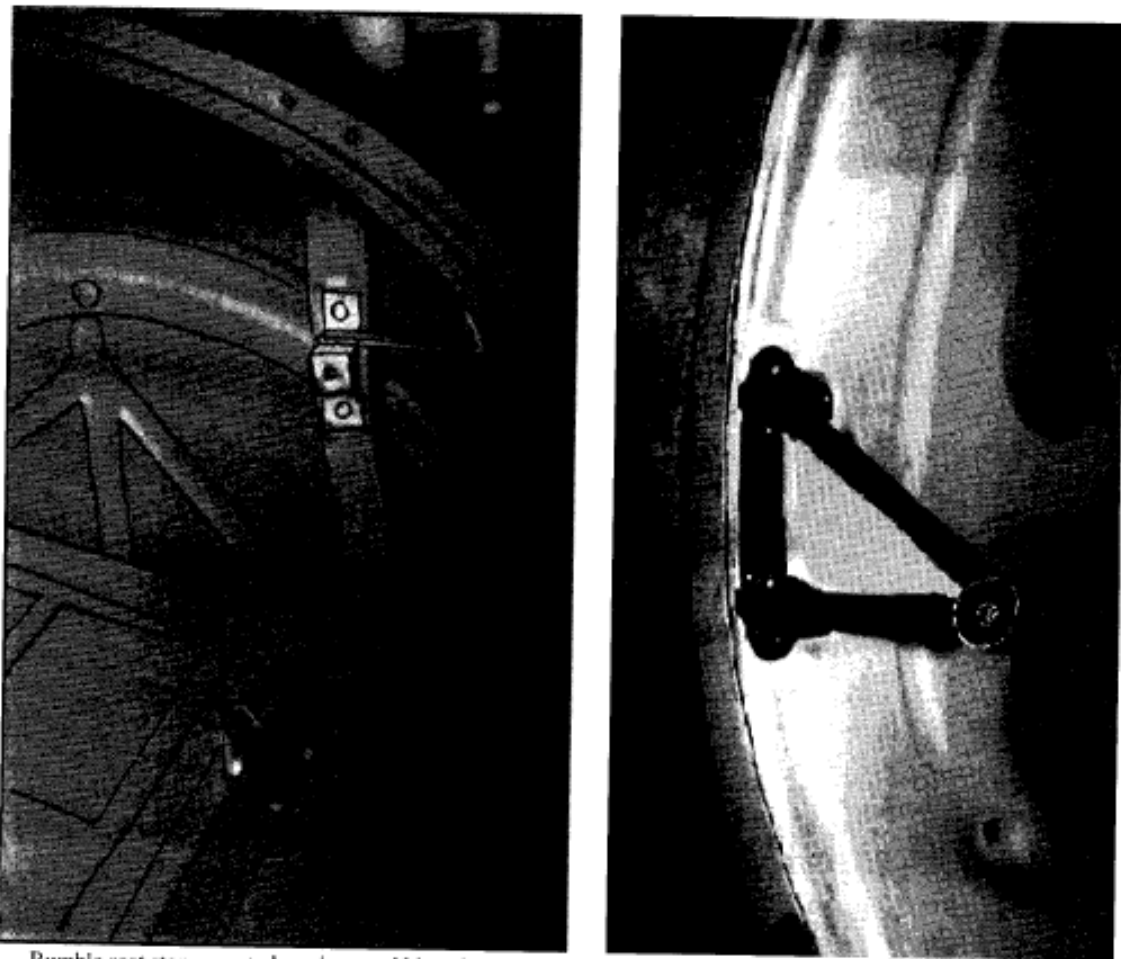
be altered by elongating their mounting holes until they will conform with the lid's "D" nut placement. In some ways, this makes it easier to mount them on a non-rumble-style deck. At least you get to make your own mount holes in the deck to fit the hinges' hole placement. Fit them into the stamped indents present in all lids for the hinge flanges, center them, and drill the mount holes. Now the fun starts. No, you may NOT use sheet metal screws to hold these hinges to the deck. They'll pull out in very short order. The proper thing to do is to install "D" nuts as original - but how? They are supported from the inner side and the outer flanges are crushed into place. One method is to build a metal inner bracket into which the "D" nuts are inserted. Then the entire bracket is pulled into place inside the deck lid. This method is detailed on page 19 of that same "How to Restore ..." volume. Dusty tried it and pronounced it twice as much work as his old way. What he does is as follows: he ties a fine piece of thread to each individual "D" nut and drags the nut up into place in the mounting hole like reeling in a fish. Next he threads a screw into the nut to hold it, spot welds it in place, then hammers and grinds it smooth. This method requires real steel or brass D nuts - not soft alloy types. You can even do this with a standard hex-type nut and flat washer.

Now that the hinges are on, you still need to deal with the handle and latching mechanism. Under normal circumstances, you can re-use both handle and latch and will need only a new type striker. Occasionally, a deck lid will require a different height latch when installed at the upper edge. Should you need to replace either of these parts, fit them before installation - "repros" are not particularly good. Pay close attention to how the latch fit into the lower edge. It's mounted the same way on the upper edge. Thankfully, the "D" nuts to mount the latch are built into the latch, so you need only drill the two mount holes through the deck lid edge and cut a neat slot like the one on the lower edge for the catch to travel. To do a clean job, you'll want to weld up the lower latch mounting slots and holes and the deck lid handle hole when you're finished.

Next, you have body panels to remove, replace, and install. All coupe bodies will already have both the rumble seat hinge braces and the rumble compartment braces installed in them. They were as much a re-inforcement feature as they were a rumble seat component. If for some reason they are not present, they will need to be installed. All bodies came with the "rumble seat riser". Since you're tearing up everything anyway, you may want to replace this if it's deteriorated or damaged. Trunk-type bodies have a curved inner panel below the deck lid that must be removed and replaced with a special inner panel built to clear the outer skin of the deck as it swings down and in when the rumble seat is opened. Both the original panel and the replacement are bolted in place, so this is not difficult if you know this one thing; the new replacement panel is mounted ON TOP OF the rear edge of the riser. It is NOT mounted "down in the well", where you will think that it belongs. Replacement panels do have mounting holes in roughly the right spots. Most fit fairly well and appear to the casual observer to be far too small, before installation. Don't panic. They seem to "grow" as you put them in.

The next few pieces are the rumble seat stops and hinge brackets. The "stops" are sheet metal stands onto which square pads of rubber are screwed. They have a four-bolt mounting pattern and are functionally impossible to install alone. A trusted assistant will be required to hold the mounting nuts and lock washers on the underside of the car while you screw down the stop bracket. Replacement stop bracket kits come with an additional reinforcing plate that is to be mounted against the underside of the panel. These don't fit

and don't appear to be original. We toss them. Most new panels will not have the holes drilled for the stops so it's important to know that they mount to the upper edge of the curved inner panel and not to the riser itself. The task of these stops is to take some pressure off the deck lid hinges and to keep the deck lid from swinging too far down into the trunk compartment. The hinge brackets are "L" shaped with a raised section containing a oversized hole. Two mounting holes above and below this center section are mounted vertically on the hinge brace. The mounting holes will be present in the hinge brace whether aftermarket or original. The long "leg" of the L faces the rear of the car, with the leg toward the top, and is mounted to the underside of the deck drip rail. Aftermarket brackets are "fits-all-fit-nothings" and will frequently need modification in the form of cutting and welding or bending to accomplish this. When it's in place, weld it permanently.



Rumble seat stop mounted on riser, and hinge bracket mounted on the support brace. Hinge mounted on deck lid.

You thought you were almost done, but your fun has just begun. Remaining is a pair of square steel washers and two shoulder bolts with their nuts. If original, the steel washers will have serrated faces but "repros" are smooth. You will note that the center hole in the washers are a good fit with the shoulder bolt but that the hole in the raised center of the bracket is oversized so the bolt will move around. Insert the shoulder bolt

into the deck lid hinge so that the bolt head fits into the recess and the threaded end faces the hinge bracket. Put the threaded end through a square washer. If original, face the washer's serrations toward the hinge bracket. Pass the threaded end on through the oversize hole of the hinge bracket and install the nut. The entire deck assembly is now loosely attached to the car. The square washers will hold that perfect, final fit after you determine where that is. That's why the oversize mount hole. Adjust the deck lid so the gap up the sides and along the top is even and the deck and body do not rub anywhere. Hold the deck lid in that position temporarily by snugging down the nut on the shoulder bolt. DO NOT expect this to stay that way just because it's tight. Once you have the square washers set just the way you want them, to hold the deck lid in perfect position, weld them into place so they won't ever move again. You will see coupe deck lids with big creases across them. They weren't welded.

Install a rumble-style deck lid striker on the leading edge of the drip rail, locating it so the latch catch contacts it correctly. Install the two mushroom-shaped "upper bumpers" in the two upper corner holes of the drip rails.

RUMBLE SEAT: Until April 1931 all coupes regardless of interior trim or exterior body color, had black-brown Cobra cross-grain imitation leather covers. The backrest had seven pleats (4 1/12" wide except for the two sides). A heavy trim welt with a 1/4" core is fastened all the way around the back rest, between it and the deck lid. Both the cover and the trim welt are tacked into a special tacking rail built into the back side of the heavy outer rail of the seat spring. These springs, for that reason, can seldom be reused. The back spring also has four brackets - two heavy and curved, and two lightweight with bolt holes - to fasten it to the deck lid. The lid has corresponding slots for the heavy brackets and "D" nuts for the brackets, with holes to accept screws. The bottom cushion had nine pleats. The cover of the bottom cushion is fastened, using the "cord and channel" method. That means that a channel is sewn into the mounting edge of the cover through which a cord is run. This channel with its cord is pulled tight into an open U-shaped heavy metal edge on the seat spring.

While held tight with the cord, the metal edge is closed with a crimping tool. Some people opt to close this metal edge and wrap the cover all the way under the spring and "hog ring" it instead. It was not expected that the back pleats and bottom pleats should "match up" perfectly and seldom did. The bottom spring has two little "feet" or extensions that drop into holes in the rumble seat riser to hold the seat in place.

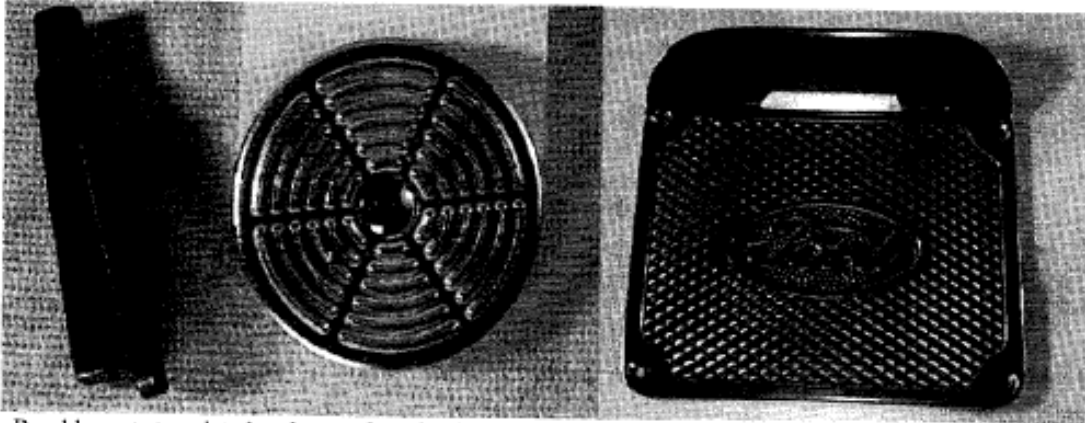
In April 1931, deluxe coupes only received a special cover and color scheme. Deep Brown crush grain artificial leather was used, with eleven 3" pleats on the backrest and thirteen pleats on the bottom cushion.

RUMBLE SEAT GRAB HANDLES: Are not used on coupes. Their function was actually to keep the glass of the roadster rear window from scratching the paint when the top was down. If you're using your rumble seat a great deal, you may want to have them anyway, as they do help passengers get in and out.

RUMBLE SEAT STEP PLATE: Cars equipped with a rumble seat had a step plate centered on the right-hand rear fender and a second one on a black iron bracket mounted on the rear bumper bracket. The step plate should be round, unfinished aluminum.

Although not original, a rubber pad is available to protect the fender from the plate. No step plate on the street (left) side ever. No exceptions.

To correctly drill the fender step hole, hook your tape measure over the outer lip of the fender and measure up over the curve 8 5/8" to 8 7/8". Chalk mark it vertically. On the underside of the fender, measure directly from the runningboard mount end of the fender in a straight line up to the center of the fender 31 1/2". Chalk mark it horizontally. Double check this measurement by measuring from the edge over the crown 34 1/4" and marking that. Triangulate the hole point with the three marks. Drill.



Rumble seat step plate bracket used on the right-hand bumper bracket and the step plate for it and the the right hand fender. Runningboard step plate.

RUMBLE SEAT TRIM PANELS: Called "anti-drum panels" and made of cardboard, they should be black-brown and fastened with black enamel screws or upholstery tacks. The cardboard for the back of the seat should have four 1" breather holes in it. Kits frequently come with these pieces covered in the seat fabric to make them more durable and match better. After April 1931, deluxe coupes used deep brown instead of black-brown colored panels.

RUNNINGBOARDS: All runningboards are covered with a pyramid-patterned rubber. Runningboard bolts were a "modified carriage head" design that featured a raised center to support the underside of the board. Until September of 1930, these boards were trimmed on all four sides with zinc trim strips fitted and mitred on the corners. End strips were riveted into place and outside edges were "crimped". The inner trim strip was held into place with a series of bolts on the underside. The boards themselves were made "all in one" with the splash shields. (New boards are almost impossible to attach to original aprons and vice-versa, as this was never intended. Replace "all or nothing". Replacement trim strips are not made correctly for the original boards' inner strip, either.) Beginning in October of 1930, a new style of runningboard was introduced in tandem with the new one-piece runningboard splash apron. On the new board, the rubber mat was now moulded directly to the board (obsoleting six strips and utilizing only the two outer ones) by extruding the rubber down through holes punched all over the board on about 3" centers. These boards were then coated with something dull and black in the paint family. A raised "half round" bead moulded into the rubber goes around all the

