

Repair and Installation Help from



Corvette Parts, Service and Sales

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For technical assistance email us at

Willcoxcustomerservice@willcoxcorvette.com

These pages and most others like it can be found in our PDF version of the Assembly manual found at this link.

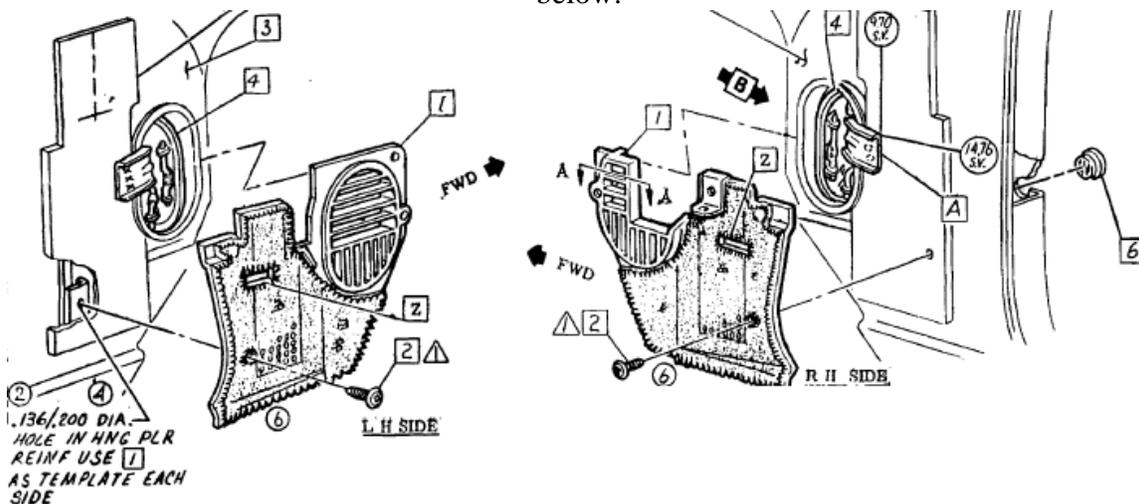
[Assembly Manuals On CD in Searchable OCR Text Format!](#)

Question: How Do I Install a Dash Pad on my 1978-1982 Corvette.

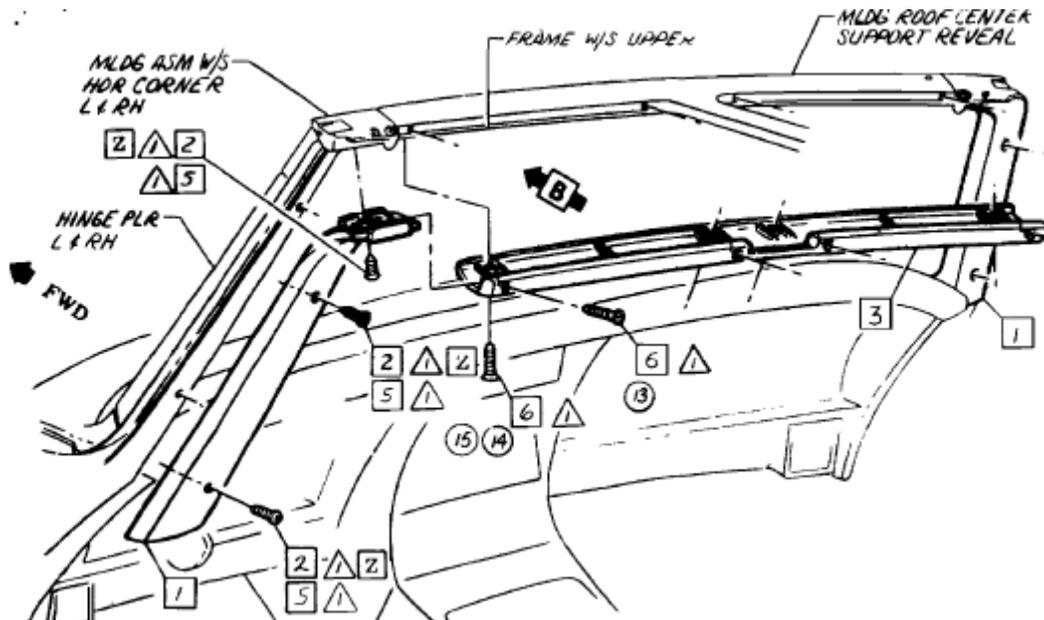
The dash pad for the 1978-1982 is not that hard to install.

To begin with let's remove the battery connection from the car.

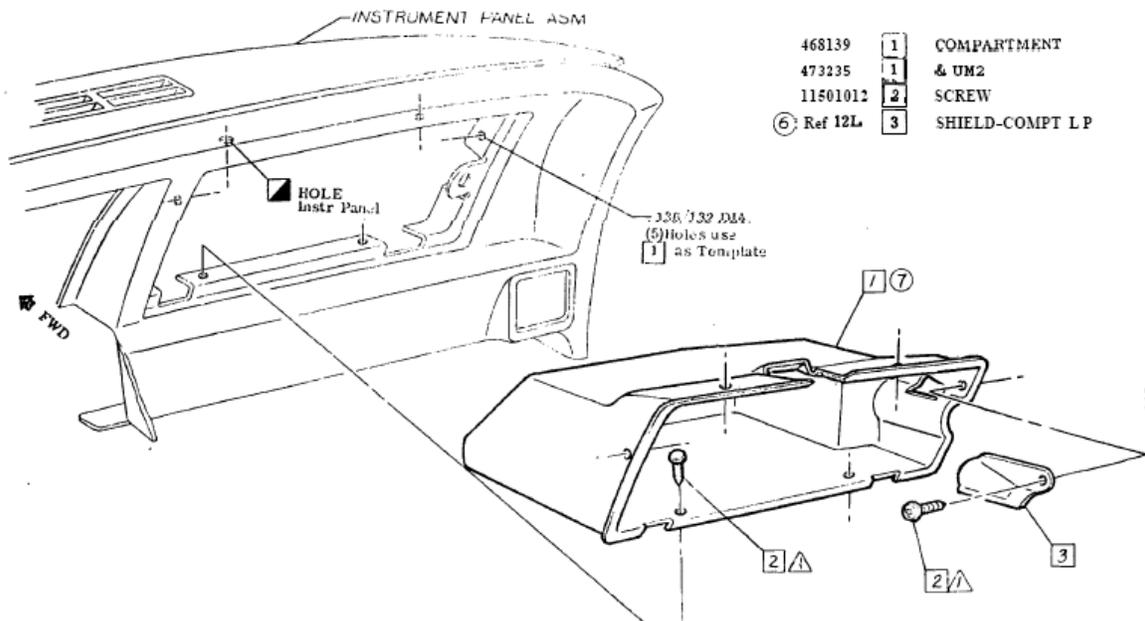
Remove the kick panels from the car by removing the screws number 2 in the picture below.



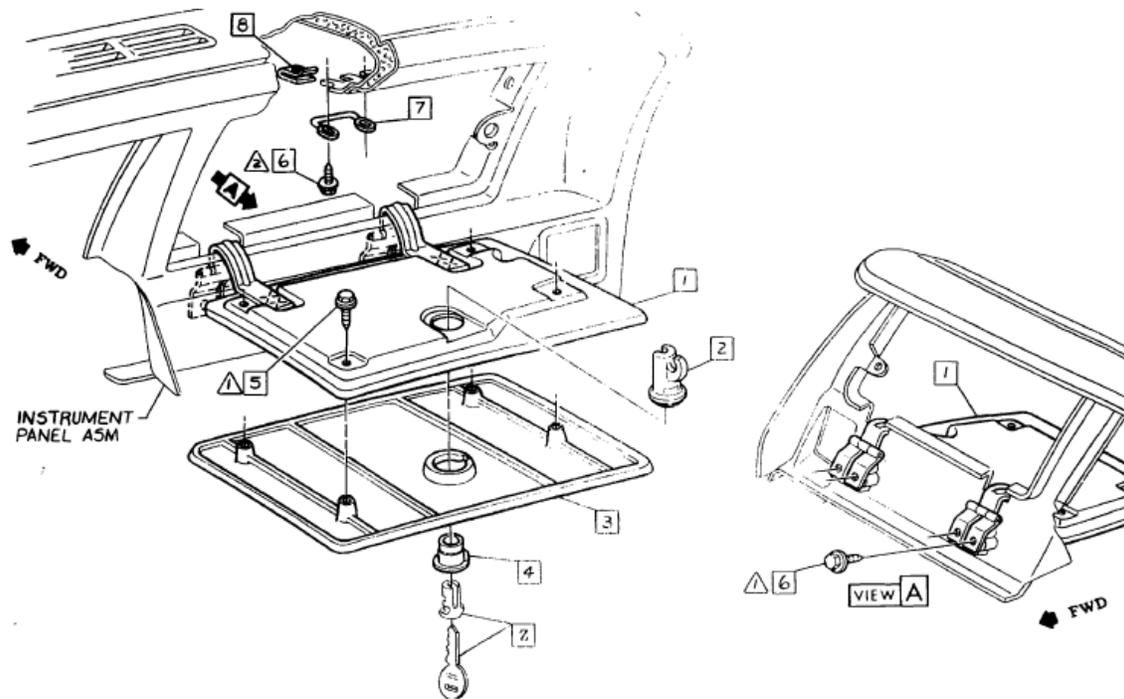
Remove the side pillar post moldings by removing screw number 2 in the picture below.



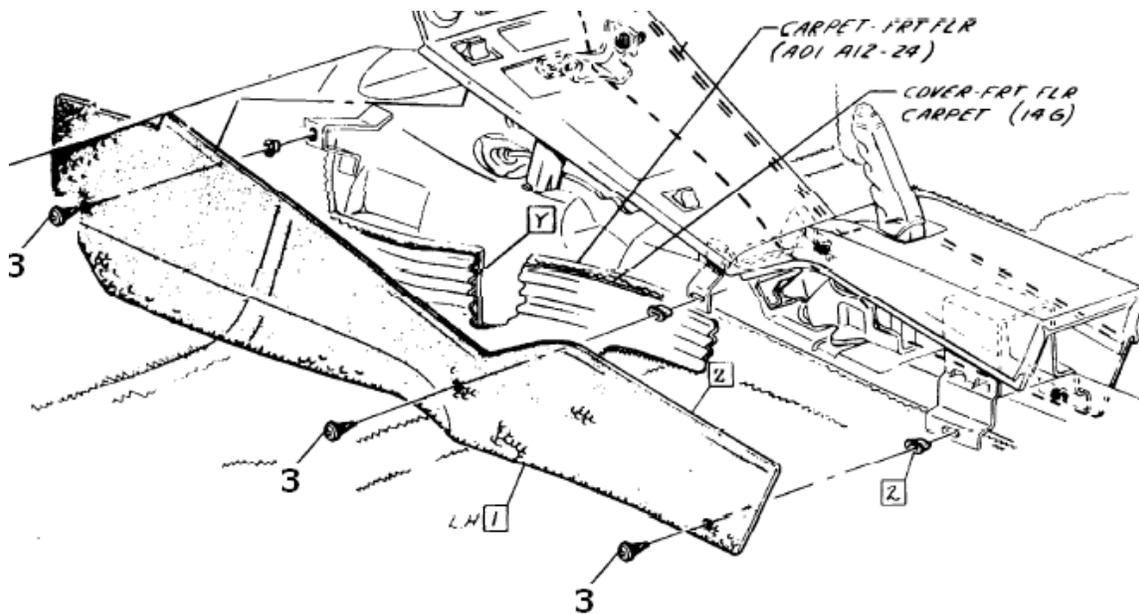
Remove the contents from the glove box.



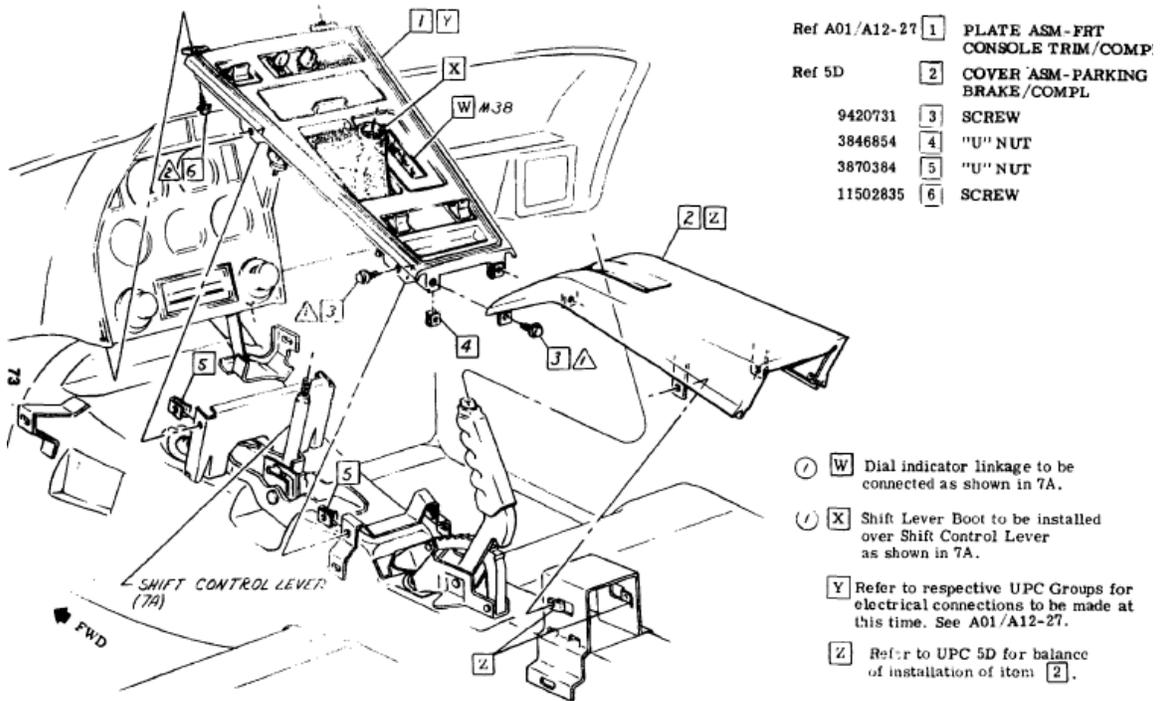
Remove the glove box door assembly by removing screws number 6 in the picture below. One reason we have you remove the battery is the glove box switch. This switch is hot all the time and if you don't remove the battery connection you can cause a short in the car.



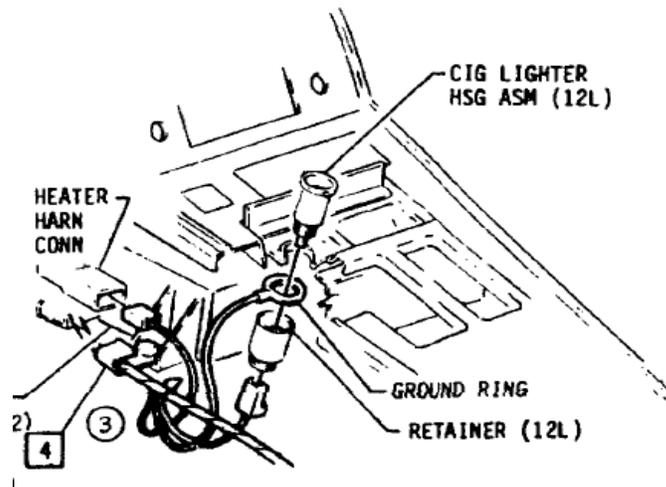
Remove the shifter console side panels (best if done with the seats out of the car). This can be done with the seats in the car but you'll have to push real hard on the seat to obtain access to the screws at the middle of the seat.



Remove the two screws that hold the center dash bezel to the shifter plate number 6 in the picture below. Remove the shifter button and knob not shown. Remove the screws from the shift plate at the rear (They pinch the parking brake cover) and number 3 in the picture below. Remove the shifter plate side screws number 3 in the picture below and there are 4 of these two on each side.



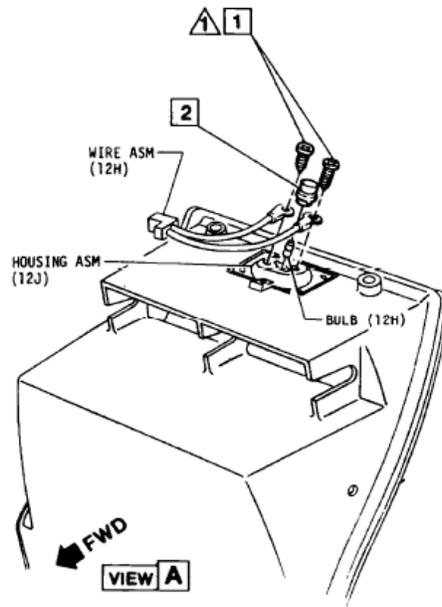
While pulling the shift plate out of the car un-plug the lighter.



.Remove the screws that hold the center dash bezel to the dash pad. There are two in the side and two in the top.

Remove the center gauge cluster allowing enough room to reach behind it and un-plug the pinch connector from the wire harness. When you remove the center dash bezel pay extra close attention to the heater control lamp mounted on top the bezel shown below!

Do not break this when removing the bezel. It is plastic and can break.



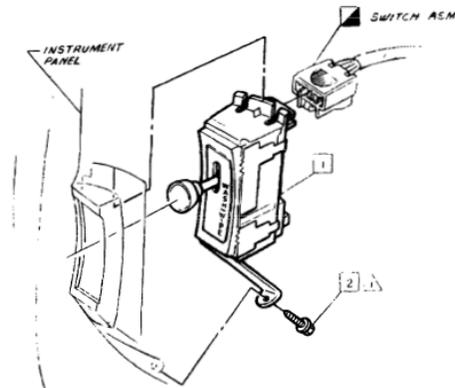
Once you have the center cluster out of the car you can remove the steering column but not necessary. I like to leave it in the car personally so I will not cover this.

If you are leaving the column in the car, follow our instructions on how to remove the speedo and tach cluster from the car. This is really all you need to do and here is the link:

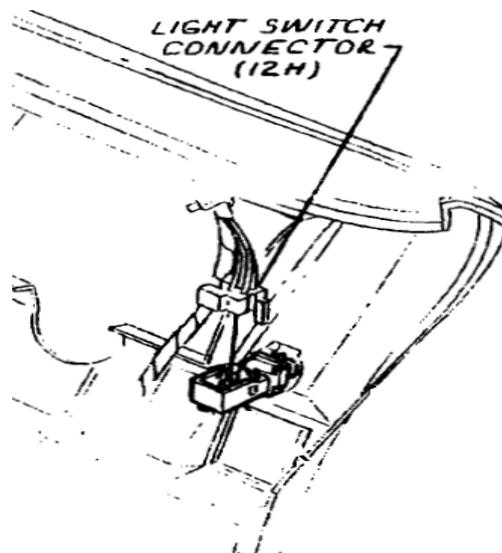
<http://willcoxcorvette.com/repairandinstallhelp.php?hID=146>

Once you have the speedo cluster removed from the car you are getting real close so lets next reach in the hole where the speedo and tach housing was and remove the windshield wiper switch connector shown in the picture below.

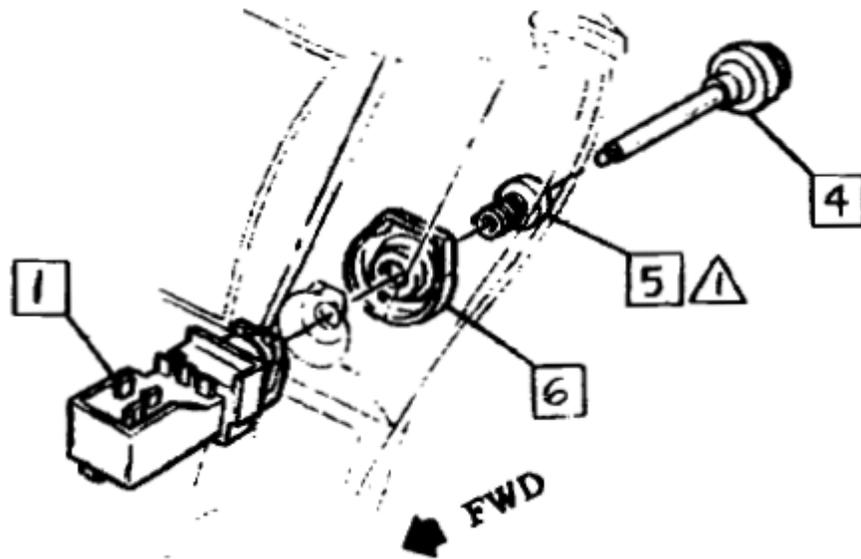
You do not have to remove the switch at this point and can do this when the pad is out of the car. We have instructions on this on our site too, so please read them.



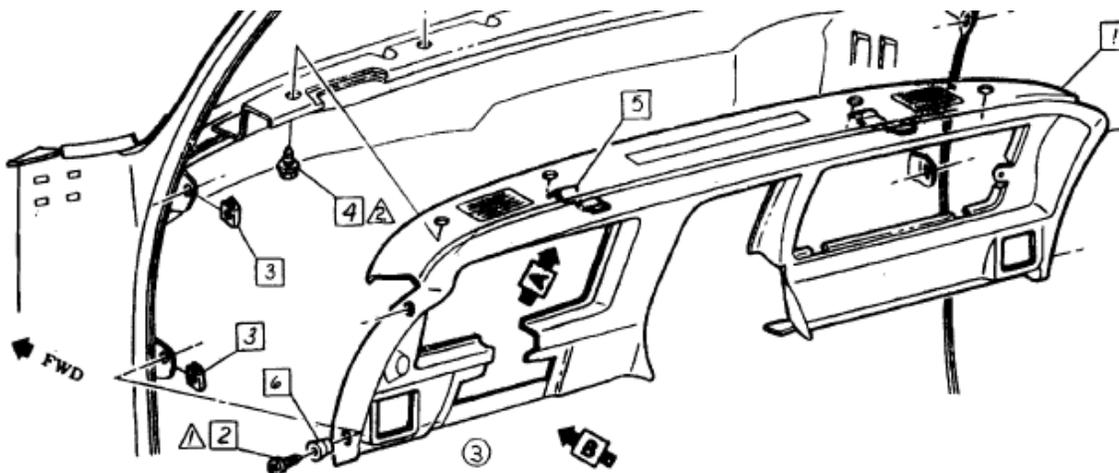
Once the wiper switch connector is removed, you'll need to also remove the headlamp switch connector shown in the picture below. This is done by reaching in the dash (speedo/tach hole) and finding the switch with your hand and un-plug it. You do not need to remove the switch until the pad is out of the car.



To remove the switch from the dash pad look on the bottom side and you'll find a spring loaded button. Push this button in and pull the headlamp switch knob outward. You may have to do this a few times but you'll get it. The switch knob has to be removed to get the switch out the pad. Once you have the knob off you can then remove the nut that holds the switch in place as shown in the picture below.



Remove the screws that are on the inside of the door jamb and hold the dash pad in the car, number 2 in the picture below as well as the screws that hold the dash pad to the main frame number 4 in the picture below.



When this is done your pad is ready to come out of the car. To remove the pad and/or install one on this car you have to bend one of the flaps upward on the top of the dash panel. These flaps are marked with a line and are visible on the top outward edge of the dash pad. You'll see them.

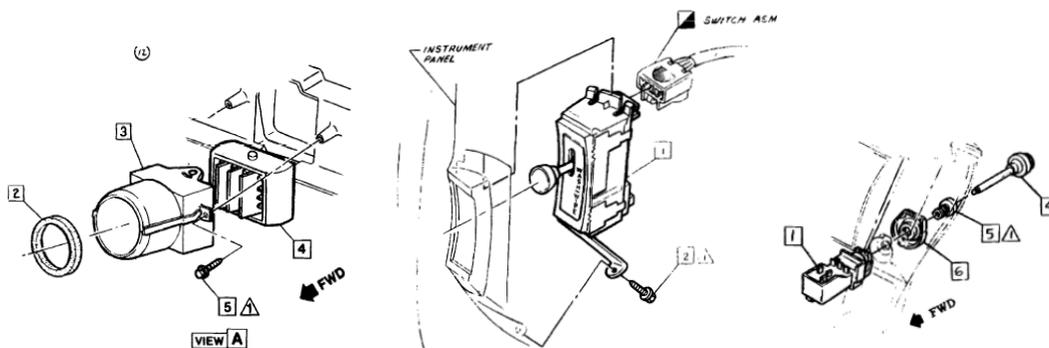
Now to install you just reverse everything. Sounds easy but its not!

There are a few tricks to getting a perfect installation of the main dash pad on the 1978-1982 cars.

One is to never assume. . .the screw holes are in the right place! Do not drill any holes in the pad until you absolutely know the area they belong. Please read on. . . .

When you install the new pad you will have to bend upward one outer flap. So it's best to get the driver side in place first and then push everything toward the driver side. Get the dash pad as close to the pillar as possible and reach over and flip up the outer flap as little as possible to get the pad in place,

Once you have the new pad in the car with the wiper switch, headlamp switch, and outer vent deflectors mounted, you are ready to install the dash pad. Pictures are shown below. Please remember. . . Mount the wiper switch before you install the pad! It is a real pain to do this when the pad is in the car and you do not want to break the mounting stud from the dash pad. It is impossible to repair once the pad is in the car unless the pad is removed.



We do not drill holes in the dash pads when we install them. We cheat. . . How? We test fit everything before we drill the first hole. We mark it and then test fit again to make sure our marks are in the right place. As with anything, please double check these before you make the first hole! The pads are expensive and making one mistake will cost you money! Once we are sure the marks are correct we use an ice pick and heat it up with a propane torch and push the pick in pad where marked to make our pilot hole.

Why? If you try to drill the holes with the center dash bezel or speedo housing in the car you'll scratch it. If you drill the holes with the dash bezel out of the car the drill bit can run on you and really cause a problem. With a heated ice pick you are only putting a 1/16" hole in the material and it is dead on center the first time. When you have the hole

in the right place you then place the screw in and it will cut the correct size threads. It really makes for a perfect installation.

Good luck and as with any project please consider having a profession restoration shop do this installation. Our labor charge to install this dash pad is right at 8 hours +/- . An individual doing this for the first time should consider this a two day job. It is and has always been suggested to service anything behind the dash while you have this pad out.

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Willcox assumes no responsibility for broke or damaged parts caused by errors or following these instructions. As with any repair, use your own judgment.

Please remember, trying to help people is my hobby, and a way to pass on to others things I have learned over the past thirty five years. If you find an error on this or any repair/help page please email us at Willcoxcustomerservice@willcoxcorvette.com.