

From: **Brian Ternamian** alphajag@att.net
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To:

BT

I've tried it a few ways, but here's the only way I know to do it correctly.

Of course, you do have to take the radio console out first. THEN, take out the center console. THEN, no matter what your cockpit temperature is, you have to remove the thick underlayment, felt, jute, sponge, heat shield, etc. and start over. I have an original '66 FHC and I never have excess heat coming up from the tranny area - and I live in Texas where the summers can be brutal. Mostly, you won't use anything. The multicolored spongy crappy stuff or even the new-type felt stuff seems to be favored by POs and some professionals alike. all of it it too thick if youi hope to let down your instrument panel as original.

NEXT, take off the transmission cover. Is the fershlugginer (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Potrzenie>) closed-foam insulation 'saddle' there? If it isn't and/or has been replaced by some kind of ersatz stand-in, at least install enough insulation to simulate it's effect. BUT, don't overstuff it - you still have to get the tranny cover back on as low as you can install it (there IS some small movement). then you have to weigh your options. Trial fit the radio console (hereafter RC) and see what kind of room you have left. Chances are it isn't much, but you should be able to open your instrument panel down as normal.

Originally there wasn't much padding and nowhere near as much as some folks want to use. IIRC, there was no carpet over the top of the trans tunnel and only the thin wilton wool carpet side 'finisher' left and right with a pocket in it for an equally thin jute insert. So, after the center console was installed the RC goes over it with no carpet or anything under it. If the center console was installed correctly with nothing under it, the radio console has a chance of fitting correctly.

HOWEVER the center console and the radio console have their own problems. If they have been recovered, chances are that was done wrong as far as correct thin fitment goes. The RC leather face is pretty thin and the beading around it made of very thin rexine covered cord. Most of the time when that is replaced, folks use the much thicker vinyl available today, but even the original thinner original type vinyl is too thick when doubled. That's ALL too thick. If the center console has been recovered, chances are that has been done with a too-thick padding under the leather top cover. Are you getting the drift? All this stuff has to be padded like the original stuff - i.e. thinly. If all that is correct (as far as thickness goes), the problem of actually bolting the console in place is critical.

Normally, the radio console is held in by two studs on the bottom attached to some welded-on ears on the firewall and two bolts on the top into two similar "ears". I found it absolutely necessary to install two bolts from the backside of the top captive welded-on nuts that receive the original top chrome-headed bolts creating top studs long enough to mimic the length of the bottom studs (don't wast the chromed one here).

The bottom of the console is held to the car by round, chromed knurled 'nuts' which are pretty expensive if you don't have them. No matter, regular nuts will do. Likewise, use regular nuts to affix the top of the console. This is very important. If the top is not solidly attached, it can, and will, rotate up to accommodate the thickness of the center console

padding and the radio console beading if they are too thick. This will, of course, be too high for proper movement of the instrument panel. I know folks have devised various ways of removing the plastic legend, but why go to the bother? If you do it the way Jaguar designed it there will be no problem. All the original materials - vinyl and rexine - are still available as yard goods and the beading can be made from it. Thin padding can be had locally or even use old wet suits or the material for the center console padding. By the way, this wet suit material is good to cut your own side and tail light gaskets from also.

Best regards,