

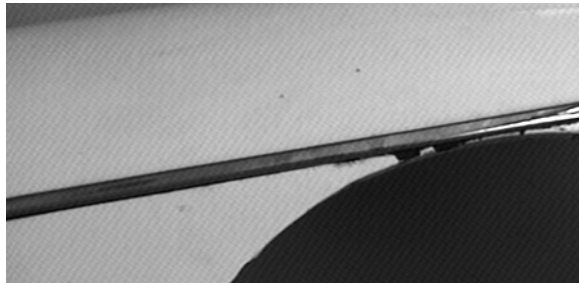
Replacement of MGB Side Chrome Molding Set

(Reprinted from the Sports Car Chronicle - Christmas, 2006)

It's usually a good idea to replace the side chrome moldings', (as well as the mounting hardware) when doing a body or paint job. The molding strips are stainless, consequently they don't rust. They sure do get dented and creased though. MGB's with damaged moldings look lousy. In fact, dented moldings look worse than no moldings at all!



There are six molding strips on a car, one on each fender and one on each door. Even if your existing pieces are perfect (highly unlikely though), they should be removed in preparation for any body or paintwork. The hardware that attaches the moldings to the car body is mild steel and usually quite rusty. Always replace it.



You can see the rust starting to develop under the molding on this MGB fender. The mounting hardware eventually gets rusty. Rust streaks then develop on the fender underneath the chrome moldings. Left long enough this can seriously rust the fender beneath. Considering the price of new MGB fenders, this is not to be taken lightly!

Removal & Replacement of Side Chrome Moldings

Removing the old moldings from your MGB is not very difficult. The old molding pieces can be either slid off the old rivet clips or pried off with a flat bladed screwdriver. Just remember one thing: There is one threaded stud plate in each molding that must be removed first!

The nuts for the stud plates must be accessed from inside the wheel wells on the front fenders. For the rear fender moldings the stud plate nuts are accessible from inside the trunk (much easier). In the case of the doors, the stud plates are generally installed about the middle.

Unfortunately this means that you'll have to remove the inside door panel to gain access. We really don't see why the stud plate for the door couldn't be at the extreme front or rear of the door shell though; this would make removal and replacement much easier!

The nut and molding stud are visible inside this front fender. For reference, the stud plate protrudes through the fender about two inches back from the headlight flange. The hole is above the spot-welded flange that runs the length of the fender inside.



After removing the stud plate from each molding, the moldings' themselves can be pried off. Using a flat screwdriver, pry each molding up and off the pop-rivet buttons. If you work carefully, you will be able to remove each molding without damage (in the unlikely event that your existing moldings are good enough for re-use!)

Here is what you typically find underneath an MGB fender molding, lots of rust!

After removing the moldings, it's best to remove the old rivets. The rivets are "set" or installed from the outside of the car. Since the rivets are of the standard "pop" variety they leave a hollow where the shank of the rivet pulls out and snaps off. This hollow area is the perfect place to drill. A small electric drill with a drill bit of a bit less than 1/8" will be perfect. Carefully drill just enough until the rivet head breaks off. The large button piece will then fall off the front. The remains of the rivet can then be pushed through, inside the body panel (be it a fender or door). Alternatively you can extract the rear portion of the old rivets by pulling them out from behind with needle nose pliers or vice-grips.



Take this opportunity to de-rust and paint the area underneath the molding(s).

Wire brush, sand, grind, or blast the area clean. Apply a good quality primer and then paint the area. Try to clean out and paint the rivet holes thoroughly to prevent future rusting. Unsightly rust streaks down the sides of MGB fenders start right here and can be avoided this way.

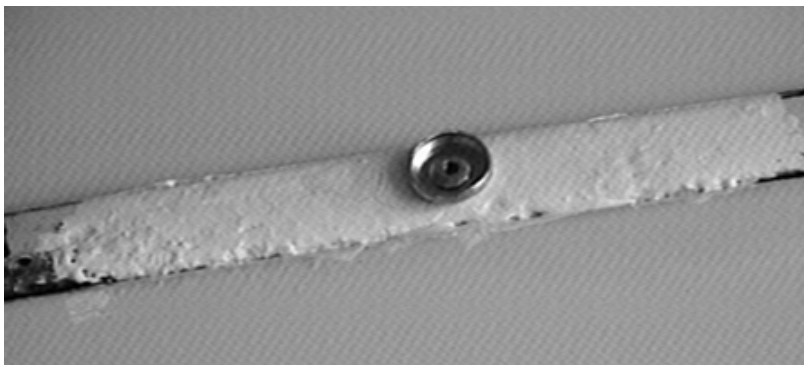


Here's the proper orientation when assembling the buttons onto the rivets.

After cleaning up and painting the molding areas of the fenders and doors, installation of new hardware can commence.

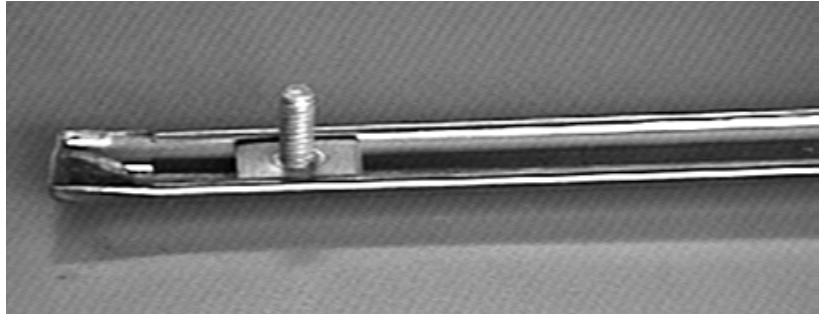
Push the buttons onto the rivets with the "open end" of the buttons pointing towards the "nail end" of the rivets, (shown in the photo to the left). Push the rivet through the fender or door that you are working on. Push a standard pop rivet gun over the "nail end" of the rivet. Make sure that you are using the correct sized adapter on the rivet gun head to match the diameter of the rivet. Press the rivet gun tight against the car body and squeeze the rivet gun handle. Release the handle to allow the rivet gun to grasp more of the rivet shank and then squeeze the handle fully again to set the rivet and break off the wire end. Set all the rivets in this manner.

Here is a rivet with its button ready to install. Simply clinch the rivet with the riveter and the job is done.



The rivet has been fully set. After installing rivets down the length of the fender or door, the molding can be installed.

You can see the squared out slot in the end of this fender molding (as well as the stud plate in the slot beside it). Prior to installing the chrome moldings, insert a stud plate into the backside of each piece. The stud plates are a tight fit. It is much easier to install a stud plate into the back of the molding on a table or workbench. Attempting to force one in with the molding half installed on a fender can be very unpleasant. Further, you'll be pretty mad if the paint gets scratched in the process!



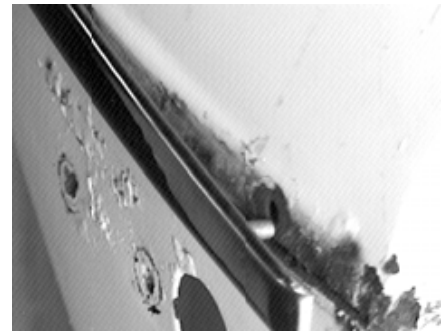
To install a molding, feed the squared slotted end of the molding over the first rivet head. Carefully slide the molding across the fender (or door) while "feeding" the slotted end of the molding onto the next and subsequent rivets. Go down the length of the panel in this way.

Work carefully-you don't want to scratch the paint on the panel or kink the chrome molding by pushing on it too hard.

This molding is almost completely installed. The stud plate can now be pushed through its hole in the fender and secured with a nut and lock washer.

After the chrome molding is slid fully home, push the stud plate through the fender (or door skin) and secure it with the nut and washer.

This procedure applies to both fender and door moldings.



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