

Fitting New Glass To Austin Seven Doors by Eddie Loader

The changing of door glass tends to be difficult and time consuming because it involves removing of trim panels and winding mechanism. Care must be taken removing the trim panel, particularly if it is original, because the panel would have been secured to the door frame using nails and not screws.

To remove these nails, gently lever behind the panel with a broad screwdriver or similar tool, only lever sufficiently so that the nail head can be pulled out with the use of a pincher.

Next undo the screws that secure the winding mechanism, then remove the mechanism by sliding the lifting arm out of channel at the bottom of window glass. At the bottom of the felt runners there are fitted wooden stop blocks either side of the frame. These regulate the height of the window glass when in fully down position, to remove glass both stop blocks have to be removed so that it can be slid out in a downwards direction.

Next comes the important preparation of the replacement glass, this will be cut to your pattern by the glass supplier who will also remove the sharp edges. These edges will require further attention before the glass is suitable to be fitted to the door frame.

The glass edges that run in the felt runners need a slightly rounded profile with a smooth finish. The top edge needs a fully rounded profile combined with a very smooth finish. Lastly the bottom edge needs no further attention other than removing the sharp edges.

To obtain the above finishes the motor manufacturers used belt driven wetstones lubricated by water, this was done by hand and was common practice up to the early 1930's.

After this date a process was developed where the glass was machine cut and shaped. To try and obtain the finish supplied originally is not easy but can be duplicated with care and attention.

First form the outline of the profile by using a carborundum stone lubricated with water, try to use a new stone with a smooth composition.

The next step is the use of wet and dry paper, similar to the type used in car spraying, again lubricate well with water and start with rough and finish with very smooth grades. When using the wet and dry, protect your hands with the use of a rubbing block and do use gloves. With care and patience a surface and finish comparable to the original will be your reward. Before fitting the glass to the frame, the bottom gripper strip has to be fitted. The tightness of fit is obtained by the use of a thin rubber strip between steel and glass, there is no need for adhesive or sealant, but ease of fitting will be aided with the use of a soapy mixture. The glass can now be entered into the runners and the stop blocks refitted, adjust these blocks so that the top edge of the glass is just below the door frame when in the lowered position.

Next refit the winding mechanism by first locating the lifting arm into its channel and then rescrew to door frame.

Before refitting the door trim, lubricate all moving parts with oil and grease, if the felt runners need lubrication, do not use any oil, use french chalk or talcum powder.

If the door trim has been carefully removed it can be refitted using the original nails, failing this then cup washers and screws are an acceptable alternative.

It is also a good idea when the trim is removed to treat the wooden areas with woodworm killer, do not forget the plywood backing to the trim panel.