



Glass Installation by Jim Schild

All cars before 1927 and most of them until 1932 were originally equipped with non-safety glass because that was all that was available. In 1929 Cadillac was the first to make safety glass standard equipment throughout the entire line. Regardless of whether your car came with safety glass when it was new, it is important today to install it in all windows.

Do not assume that because a car came new with safety glass that it still has it today. Sometimes, especially during the thirties and forties, when money was scarce and these were merely cheap used cars, someone may have replaced the original safety glass with whatever they could find. Look for the emblem somewhere on the glass if you are not sure. Replacing glass is something that may be performed by the careful home craftsman. It is not difficult and in most cases requires only a little care and patience. You should check the price difference in allowing the professional glass shop to do the job. Many times, it will not be much more.

If you want to do the job yourself, the first requirement is to measure for the new glass. To do this, you must first remove the old glass from the car. The door glass is removed in a few different ways depending on the car. On most cars, the first step is to remove the interior garnish molding screws and moldings. Behind the moldings, you should find the window channels which are attached to the door frame. These channels are removed by removing the attaching screws, but to get to these screws, you must usually roll down the glass and locate the screws on the lower portion of the channels. The screws are sometimes hard to find, but the tip of a small screwdriver pulled down the center of the channel should find the screws. The channel can usually be pulled up and out of the door frame from the inside once the screws are removed. On some frames there is an inner screw and an outer screw sleeve which will require two screwdrivers. On some cars, another piece on top of the door will need to be removed to pull out the channel.

Once the vertical channels are removed, raise the glass back to its highest position and pull it up out of the frame. On some cars, there will be a clip on the lower channel to remove. On others, the glass will tilt out of the lower channel. In either case, it will sometimes take some maneuvering to get the glass out of the door. Be careful not to break the glass as this original piece is your best pattern.

Once the glass and lower channel is out of the door frame, the next step is to remove the glass from the lower channel. Get the measurements for your glass before this job because you will most likely break the glass getting it out of the frame. To remove the glass from the lower channel, a channel chisel is used. Even after the main glass is broken, the remaining pieces will still need to be chiseled out of the lower channel as the glass will be stuck to the channel like glue. Be careful not to cut yourself on the broken pieces as they are removed. The channels will in some cases be rusted beyond use and will need to be replaced. If they are not available, they will have to be fabricated by a metal shop. You might check suppliers for other types of cars such as Model A Fords (nc), to see if some of those more readily available parts can be made to fit on your Classic.

Removing windshield glass will require a few different methods depending on the style of windshield. A sedan may have no frame at all with the glass installed in channels like the doors. Some have a roll-up windshield which requires the removal of the upper header board and regulator mechanism. A roadster or phaeton may have a three piece frame that is held together with screws in the top and sides. Some later

cars will have the glass installed in the body with rubber and covered with snap-in chrome or stainless moldings. When removing any glass, be sure to notice any rubber seals that may be installed on the window channel. Most of these are available from suppliers, but there are many different kinds, even on the same year of car, so be sure you know what kind you have before destroying it.

If there is no glass in the car, measure the frames and openings to determine what size glass to use. Remember, if the glass is too small or too large, it will not slide easily in the frame and cause binding or breakage. Make cardboard patterns if necessary to be sure that your glass will fit the frame and opening. When you buy your glass be sure that you understand the difference between safety plate and safety sheet glass and what requirements your state permits. Your glass dealer will explain this to you.

I recommend that even if you want to install the glass in the car yourself, you may want to have the glass shop install it in the lower channels as they have more experience in this operation. If you want to install it yourself, the glass installation tape is available from many sources. It is a good idea to replace all of the window glass channels and weather stripping regardless of how good the original pieces may appear. The original pieces may look usable, but in many cases, they will be worn and will allow the glass to move and rattle in the frame. Most of these weather strips and channels are available on the internet or from catalogs.