

**Instructions For Converting A Rumble Seat to
A Trunk in Roadsters and Coupes
The Ford Way
Part 3
as of
February 28, 2016
by
The Model A'ers
(Revision 6)**

To continue the Rumble Seat to Trunk conversion, Part 3 will deal with six items which are the Rear Floor Pan Support Assembly, the Rear Floor Pan, the Deck Door Striker Plate, the Rear Support Bracket, the Anti-Drum Cardboard, and the "Brass" Plug Button.

Support (floor pan) Assembly...Rear

The A-40215, Support (floor pan) Assembly...Rear, a.k.a. Rear Floor Pan Support Assembly (**Fig. 1**), is the "L" shape bracket, which is not used in the Rumble Seat Assembly, that runs in a horizontal position and is attached to the A-47421 Deck Panel Lower and Floor Cross Sill Assembly...Rear (**Fig. 2**) by means of six (6) round head slotted machine screws and lock washers. Make sure that these screws are short enough so as not to hit the back of the Deck Panel Lower when assembling the bracket especially on an already painted vehicle!

The upper part of the bracket has four (4) holes with attached "D" nuts to accept the French head (oval head) screws for "support" of the back part of the Rear Floor Pan. There are also two holes in the center to accept the attachment of the A-41615 Deck Door Lock Striker Plate as seen in (**Fig. 5**)

The bracket measures $\frac{3}{4}$ x $\frac{3}{4}$ x 35".



(Fig. 1)



(Fig. 2)

Pan (floor) Rear Assembly

The following explains the differences in the two known styles of Rear Floor Pan Assemblies (RFPA) which were used in trunk assemblies in 1928-1931 Model A Ford Roadsters and Coupes (Standard, Special, and Business). Deluxe models could also be fitted with trunks if the customer wanted.

The Rear Floor Pan Assembly for trunk assemblies, A-40203-A, was used with 1928-1931 Roadsters and 1930-1931 Coupes (**Fig. 3**) which was used with the “tall rear panel” of 9-1/2 inches; and A-45203 was used with the 1928-1929 Coupes (**Fig. 4**) which was used with the “short rear panel” of 7-1/2 inches.

First of all, what constitutes an “assembly”? An “assembly”, as Ford used the term, was the combination of two or more parts used to make one item. In this case, the Rear Floor Pan Assembly.

The RFPA was the combination of just two parts. The Rear Floor Pan, (A-40205-A, tall; and/or A-45205, short), plus the Striker Plate, A-41615, which was riveted in place as seen in (**Fig. 5**) .

A-40203-A Pan (floor) Rear Assembly 1928-31 Roadsters and 1930-31 Coupe Models

Initially, the Roadster was the only model with the tall rear panel of 9-1/2 inches. It came standard with a trunk so the “tall” type rear floor pan assembly, A-40203-A, was used. This rear floor pan, for which a side view is seen in (**Fig. 3**), had the side attaching flanges in a **downward** position so as the attaching hardware was not seen when the deck door was open.

The rear floor pan itself measured approximately 10 inches from the lower bend, in back of the six (6) screws that attach the assembly to the Center Floor Pan, upwards to the first bend; and approximately 2-1/4 inches from the bottom of the tray, where the striker plate is screwed onto the pan assembly, upwards to the first bend of the pan assembly.

As the 1930-31 Roadsters and Coupes were assembled with trunks, also using the 9-1/2 inch rear panel, they too utilized the same rear floor pan as the 1928-29 Roadsters.



(Fig. 3)

A-45203 Pan (floor) Rear Assembly...Rear 1928-29 Coupe Models

The 1928-29 Coupes (Standard, Special and Business) were the only models with the short rear panel of 7-1/2 inches. Therefore when they came standard with a trunk, the “short” type rear floor pan assembly, A-45203, was used.

The **first** generation rear floor pan assemblies for the Coupes had the side flanges in a **downward** position, such as those with the A-40203-A pan (**Fig. 3**). On April 6, 1928 PR #8104, Ford designed the **second** generation A-45203 rear floor pan, for which a side view is seen in (**Fig. 4**), and *“Added depression $\frac{3}{4}$ inch deep at each end and reverse flanges as shown (on the drawing)”*, and therefore had the side attaching flanges in a **upward** position so as the attaching hardware was seen when the deck door was open and remained as such throughout the production period.

The rear floor pan itself measured approximately 8-3/4 inches from the lower bend, in back of the six (6) screws that attach the assembly to the Center Floor Pan, upwards to the first bend and approximately 2 inches from the bottom of the tray where the striker plate is screwed onto the pan assembly upwards to the first bend of the pan assembly.



(Fig. 4)

Deck Door Lock Striker Plate

The A-41615 Deck Door Lock Striker Plate, a.k.a Deck Door Lock Striker, was a *symmetrical* part that was assembled on the upper rear center side of the Rear Floor Pan by two Round Head Screws on the bottom side (with square nuts and lock washers underneath for attachment) and a rivet attached to the upper hole in the striker plate and rear floor pan with a waffle stamping to the outside as seen on a April 1928 Business Coupe and a February 1929 Special Coupe **(Fig. 5)**. However some cars may have the rivet head on the outside with the waffle stamping on the inside as seen on a May 1931 Coupe **(Fig. 6)**.

Yet one example did exist on a 1928 Roadster which had a round slotted head screw in the top hole **(Fig. 7)**. Slight configurations may exist throughout production.



(Fig. 5)



(Fig. 6)



(Fig. 7)

Tire Carrier Bracket Support Brace

The A-41371-A Tire Carrier Bracket Support Brace, was a “Z” shaped bracket **(Fig. 8 and 9)** and used throughout production on those cars with trunk assemblies.



(Fig. 8)



(Fig. 9)

The bracket served as a “support” for the Rear Spare Wheel Carrier Assemblies (**Fig. 2**) and in conjunction with its attachment to the Center Floor Pan, A-40212-A, with two (2) rivets going in from the top and waffled on the bottom (**Fig. 10**). However other configurations have been seen on original cars such as rivet heads on the bottom side of the body going up through the floor (**Fig. 11 and 13**) or not seen at all (**Fig. 12**).



(Fig. 10)



(Fig. 11)



(Fig. 12)



(Fig. 13)

At the start of production there was no reinforcement (A-40222) on the Center Floor Pan for the rivets. Marco Tahtaras reflected on this: *“By early 1928, the Center Floor Pan had a small reinforcement (A-40222) spot welded to the center rear (Fig. 13) to strengthen the attachment of the Tire Carrier Bracket Support Brace. It is unknown at this time (by me) whether rumble seat models in early/mid 1928 included this unneeded reinforcement (I doubt it)”*.

"Initially, the Center Floor Pan went under the number A-40212. It later became A-40212-A for trunk models only, and A-40212-B was added for use with rumble seat models only. The timing is uncertain but it was no later than August 1928".

"Beginning approximately August 1928 (recorded 8/2), A-40212-B included two A-40225 Bumper Bracket Reinforcements spot welded to the underside to support the deck door stop brackets used with rumble seats. These reinforcements should never be present with a trunk configuration. This pan did not include the two holes at the center rear for the Tire Carrier Bracket Support Brace as those pans were used with a trunk".

Some thoughts on the assembly process of completing the floor area.

If the car was destined to be one with a trunk, then just what was the assembly process concerning the assembly of the Rear Floor Pan, the Rear Floor Pan Support Assembly and the Brace (tire carrier bracket support)?

To begin with, the center floor pan was riveted in place before the attachment of any specific part which made the car either with rumble seat or trunk.

Once the necessary parts were assembled, which were those parts related to both rumble seat and trunk assemblies, the decision then was...will the Coupe and/or Roadster have a rumble seat or a trunk?

If it were to have a trunk then the three (3) items to complete the floor area would have been the addition of the A-40215 Rear Floor Pan Support Assembly, the Rear Floor Pan Assembly (A-45203 for Coupes and A-40205-A for Roadsters), and the A-41371-A Tire Carrier Bracket Support Brace.

Once the parts were assembled in place within the body of the car, it was then that the two rivets were installed through the Rear Floor Pan, the Tire Carrier Bracket Support Brace and the Center Floor Pan and were thus riveted together showing the waffling of the rivets underneath or on top.

Were there other ways of doing this? Maybe.

Marco Tahtaras's thoughts on this subject: *"While I've never seen nor heard of specific branch records showing just how body features and options, as well as each bodies associated chassis were coordinated, it is very clear that each car was well planned and coordinated. Most were certainly in their basic "standard" form such as an early '30 Standard Roadster with a trunk making it simpler, but still needing to be on the body drop in sequence to be coupled with a Roadster chassis with the proper seven leaf rear spring. That's just an example of simple, but certainly not random".*

"The "Ford" assembled bodies (Phaetons, Roadsters, Coupe models, Tudors, and some slant windshield Fordors), were assembled by joining completed sections. These completed sections included the cowl assembly, left and right body sides, upper and/or lower rear body sections, and of course the floor section. The floor section was also complete including all floor pans prior to being joined with the other body sections. These sections were easily shipped from one branch to another for final assembly". (This process was referred to as "Knocked Down" shipments by Ford).

Quarter Panel Lower Anti-Drum Cardboard

A-46954 Quarter Panel Lower Anti-Drum Cardboard, left and right, became a new number and was adopted for use in the Standard Coupe, Sport Coupe, Business Coupe, and Roadster on July 25, 1928. They were glued on to the quarter panel lower (**Fig. 14**) for sound deadening purposes.

There are five microfilms available from the BFRC files for this part number. The original release of this part was on **Wednesday 7-25-28** in which the overall part size was 20 - 3/8 wide x 32 inches long. The narrow appendage area was 6 - 3/4 **inches** wide. If this part was nested together to make two parts from one piece of stock material; the minimum material would have been 27 - 1/8 x 32 inches. The first design did not have radii on the cutout areas. The material specification designated is Flexible Fiber Material or equivalent. Vehicle usage was: Coupe, Sport Coupe, Business Coupe, and Roadster. However, according to Marco Tahtaras: *"it is thought that this design was unlikely ever used as it was quickly redrawn as the one we are familiar with (Figs. 16, 17, 18, 19 and 21)."*

One week later on Wednesday 8-1-28, the design was changed (**Figs. 16, 17, 18, 19 and 21**) to have two 7 - 1/2 inch radii on the angular surface. Dimensional location of the radii's are from the intersection of the horizontal and angular surfaces. The overall part size was also changed to 20 - 1/4 wide x 31 inches long. The narrow appendage area remained at 6 - 3/4 **inches** wide. If this part was nested together to make two parts from one piece of stock material; the minimum material would have been 27 x 31 inches. The material specification remained unchanged. Special Coupe and Tudor was added to the vehicle usage designation.

One of the first examples viewed were seen on an August 1928 Roadster and were 12" in height and 21-1/2" long (**Fig. 14**) and placed as such on the Quarter Panel Lower. According to the Part Release, they were made from a "flexible fiber material" (**Fig. 15**). However, according to Marco Tahtaras: *"Jim Sinclair's example (Fig. 14) seems to be an anomaly. There is no record of a rectangular anti-drum cardboard ever being used in the quarter panels of any Coupe or Roadster models. That would suggest anti-drum cardboards from another application were installed after the body was painted."*



(Fig. 14)



(Fig. 15)

Not long after the introduction, on August 1, 1928, and according to the Part Releases, the panels were "*Redesigned contour*" (**Fig. 16**) as seen in another Mid 1928 Roadster (**Fig. 17**) and February 1929 Special Coupe (**Fig. 18 and 19**) and showing the original texture of the panels (**Fig. 20**).



(Fig. 16)



(Fig. 17)



(Fig. 18)



(Fig. 19)

On August 16, 1928 the panels *“changed material from flexible fiber material or its equivalent to asbestos (chip board), black, 0.060-0.065 thick, 50% asbestos, 40% newspaper, 10% common mixed paper, 75 lbs fast black per ton”*.

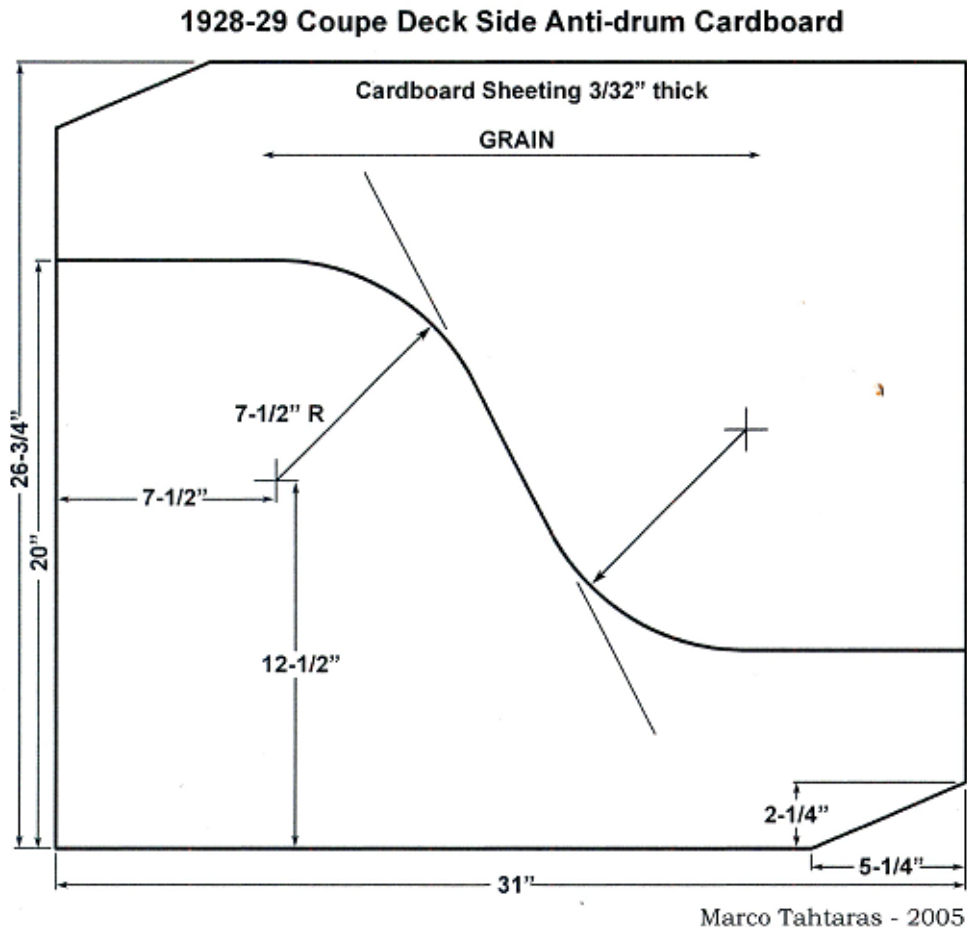


(Fig. 20)

The following sketch of original panels was drawn by Marco Tahtaras showing the dimensions of each panel (**Fig. 21**). According to the Benson Ford Research Center: *"the two 2-1/4 x 5-1/4 chamfers shown on the drawing below and in the photographs of vehicles (**Figs. 16, 17, 18, 19, and 21**) do not appear on the Ford drawings."*

It was noted by Marco Tahtaras: *"It is interesting that none of the drawings show the removed corner at the upper rear. I've never seen it any other way and in most (if not all) cases, on Coupe and Roadster models the uncut corner would run into the belt line where adhesive can't hold it securely."*

David Gillingham also had this thought: *"Just a thought on the two 2-1/4 x 5-1/4 chamfers...When it comes to production, last minute changes (a very simple trim in this case) often don't get back to the "original" drawing even with good intentions."*



(Fig. 21)

On May 27, 1929, the anti-drum cardboard was *"Retraced and specified material as Soft Asbestos and must be free from Glazing and not waterproofed."*

On August 5, 1929, the panels became *"obsolete"* and were *"Replaced by Sprayed Body Deadener, M-579"*.

The Indianapolis Ford Service Letter of October 4, 1929 indicated: *"For your information, part A-47170 (Back Panel Anti-Drum) and A-46954 (Quarter Panel Lower Anti-Drum) are now obsolete and will not be furnished any longer. These parts are the anti-drum cardboards used in panels and doors of open and closed bodies, also in the Deluxe quarter panel"*.

“Brass” Plug Button

The last part in relation to the Model A Trunk Assembly are the two (2) brass plug buttons (**Fig. 22**), A-35042, that fit in the two 1/2 inch holes, left and right, of the Floor Pan Center Assembly (**Fig. 23**). These 1/2 inch holes were used to attach the bottom seat to the Floor Pan in the Rumble Seat Assembly. In conjunction with these two plug buttons, there were two more just below them on the Center Rear Floor Cross Sill.

The plugs were initially designated as A-35042. In the Ford Automotive Hardware and Trimming Supplies (1934) the plug buttons are listed as 74218-S. They were 5/8” in diameter with a low crown. This same plug was used on the firewall of 29 to early 30 cars and trucks with electric wipers. It plugged up the hole in the firewall where the vacuum line eventually went if the car or truck had a vacuum windshield wiper.

The plugs were often installed during assembly of the body and therefore painted body color.



(Fig. 22)



(Fig. 23)

This completes Part 3 about the Rumble Seat to Trunk conversion.

Part 4 will be about the Rear Wheel Carriers for Trunk and Rumble Seat applications.

The Model A'ers who have contributed their research and photos to these 3 articles are: Roddy Barton, Darrel Beavers, Bob Burdick, Chuck Christiansen, John Cochran, Dave Gillingham, Mike Gooding, John Hash, Ray Horton, Hans "Doc" Kalinka, Gary Karr, Harold King, John Layton, Pat Lovejoy, Cliff Moebius, Tom Moniz, Dudley Moordigian, William (Rusty) Nelson, Jim Orr at the Benson Ford Research Center at The Henry Ford, Dan Partain, Ron Rude, Joop Plaggenborg, Steve Plucker, Jim Sinclair, John Stone, Marco Tahtaras, Scott Walker, Steve Wastler and Lindy Williams.