

HOW I INSTALLED SEAT BELTS

in my 1930 Model A Ford Coupe 45-B Rumble Seat

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I am neither an automotive nor a safety engineer. I believe seat belts improve passenger safety so I installed them in my car. The reader is responsible for his or her own installation and assumes all risk. Neither this magazine nor I am responsible for your installation and use of these ideas.

I believe that these instructions should work for any Model A with a rumble seat; whether 28-29 or 30-31 and all coupes, roadsters, cabriolets, etc.

My seatbelts were purchased from Wesco in Camarillo, California. You can visit their website at www.wescoPerformance.com. I used belt **Item LB-74** and in TAN21 color (my color choice).

I used the longer belt as there is a bit of lost belt length as it passes through the crack between the upper and lower seats in the rumble and on to the connection at the rear body lower sill.

These are non-retractor type and are available in various other colors. I just didn't think I would have room at the rear body corners for retractors. I put in only two seat belt pairs. If you want to carry three people, you will have to figure out how to get the center belt set installed.

In my humble opinion the rumble seat is a very dangerous place for ANYBODY to sit and I certainly will not put my grandchildren in there except for slow and city street driving. A spin out or accident will likely catapult ANYBODY that is sitting in the rumble seat unless they are well belted in. I also show how I installed a quickly installed and removed foam tube so that the area



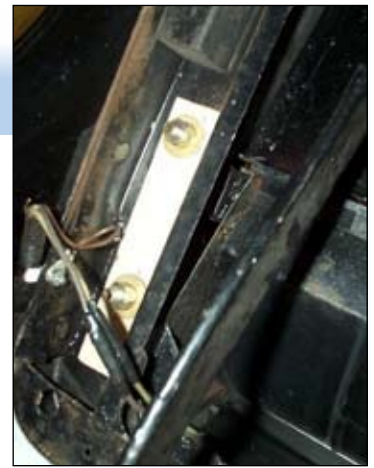
where the latch/drip rail sits is somewhat padded. The pre-slit foam tubing is the kind that you wrap hot water lines with to keep the heat inside the pipes.

1. Most people that are knowledgeable about this say to mount the seat/lap belt to the body sill and not the frame; since the body on the A may pull loose in a head on or a glancing blow collision. You want the latched seat belt to "come with you" rather than be anchored on the frame. If anchored to the frame; then the belt can squeeze you as the body moves and the seat belt remains anchored to the frame.
2. I used grade 8 size 7-1/16 NF bolts and nuts. They are available from the seat belt supplier in a kit or from your local hardware store.
3. I used 1/4 inch thick by 1-1/2 inch wide by 8 inch long flat steel bar stock to back up the mounting bolts at the side belt mounts; to resist "pull through" in the event of a collision

or any extreme strain on the belt mounts. The mounting bolts are on 5-1/2 inch centers. I painted them tan for the photo but will paint them same color black as the rest of the undercarriage.

4. Look at the photos and my installation will be obvious. Drilling the holes through the rear body sill is easy for the center belt mounts. The lower pan under the seat has to be cut away with a hack saw, sawzall, or whatever. I then installed wiring harness plastic protector around the opening so the raw metal edges do not cut into the belts. I put the outside (tab end) belts of the seat belt set in the body corners and at an angle; so that they give a comfortable "buckle up angle" across your lap.

5. Not shown in the photo under the car is the curved rumble spare tire support, but it will fit into place if you space the two bolts through the body sill as I did.
6. Total installation only took a couple hours. I had my young grandson Seth jump into the rumble seat



Passenger side, view from under car



area the other day and he was easily able to buckle up and felt quite comfortable with and without the required booster seat he has to use for some time yet. His only question was "Papa, how do I talk to you when you are driving?"

So, I guess I will be installing a roll down rear window someday after all.

7. Be sure to tighten the grade 8 bolts and nuts and lock and flat washers securely after you are satisfied with the installation.

Finished installation