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DIY HowTo replace wiper inserts/refills instead of buying expensive wiper blades



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05-14-2009, 07:33 PM

#1

theholycow

Formula 5000 Driver



Drives: 1980 Buick
LeSabre 4.1 5MT
Join Date: Feb 2008
Location: Gloucester,
RI
Posts: 1,911



DIY HowTo replace wiper inserts/refills instead of buying expensive wiper blades

With old-fashioned mutli-hinged blades the frame/hinges wear out and it gets sloppy about the same time that the rubber wears out, so it used to be pointless replacing the refills. With these modern beam-style wiper blades, I suspect that you can replace the rubber insert (aka "refill") multiple times and have the blade last many years..which is good because they're kinda expensive. Refills cost under \$5.

There is an old HowTo floating around. It's been posted to various forums. The photos have disappeared from most of them. Here's one I can find that's still alive:

http://www.kramerkreations.com/PDF_f...rblade_fix.pdf

However, **it's out of date!** The end cap design has changed. The clip that they show does not exist anymore, and both ends share a single style of end cap.

For the rear wiper...User bazzle posted a DIY HowTo for replacing just the insert:

<http://www.golfmkv.com/forums/showthread.php?p=1688598>

The wiper blade is constructed of the following parts:

- 2 parallel beams/rails with a bracket in the center that they seem to be stuck to.
- 2 aerofoils (or whatever you want to call them) whose ends slide into the center bracket. They hold the beams parallel to use as rails for the insert, too. There is one on each side of the center bracket.
- 1 rubber "insert"/"refill".
- 2 end caps.

How to replace the inserts/refills in the front aero wipers that come stock on VW 2008 MKV models:

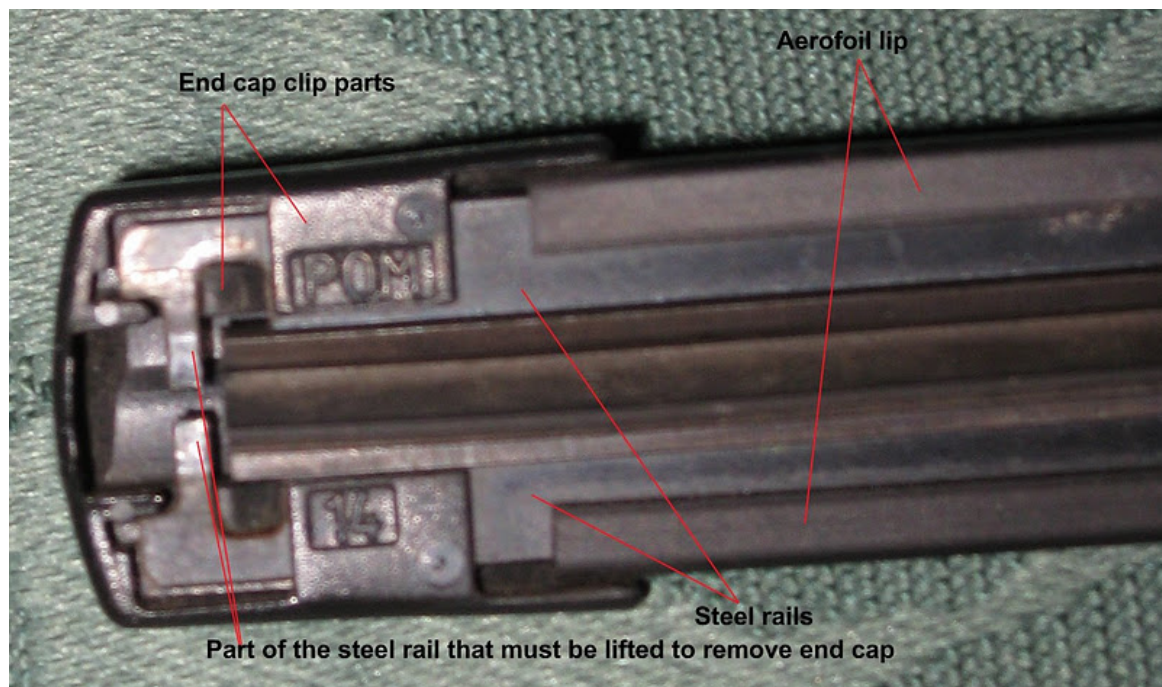
1. **Buy a wiper refill**, or if you can't find one, buy any cheap blade of appropriate length and disassemble it to remove the refill. I found an insert long enough for the drivers side for \$3.38 at a local auto parts store. They're mostly standard. I doubt there is much quality difference from one to the next, except for special ones like Tripledge (which not only is a different shape, but is treated with stuff similar to Rain-X which wipes onto your glass). **Remove all clips/metal/other attachments so you're left with just the rubber part.**

2. Remove blade from car.

- Put wipers in service position (hit wiper stalk after turning car off but before removing key).
- Angle blade away from wiper arm.
- Press button on arm's end and slide blade out of arm.

3. Optional: Remove one or both end caps. More optionally, disassemble whole thing. **This is different from the old HowTo!** In the old one, it was required to remove the end cap, and it was done differently.

- Use a flat screwdriver of exactly the right width to pry up both metal beam ends from the plastic teeth and the end cap slides right off. Be careful not to break the plastic.



The little tabs hanging off the end of the steel beams in the second picture are just paint flakes.

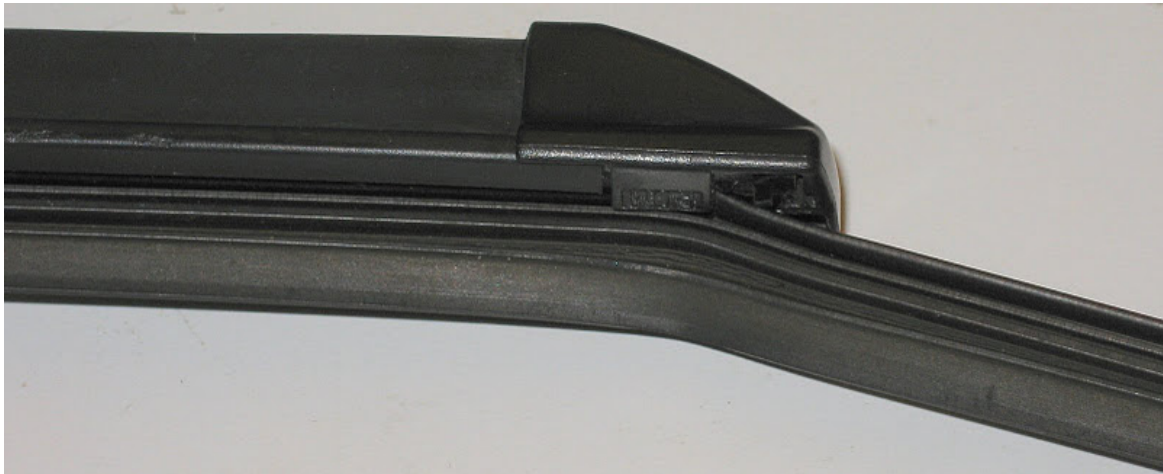
- If you want you can remove the plastic sleeve/aerofoil that covers half the length.



If you want, you can repeat one or both of the above for the other end. **I don't recommend removing the sleeve/aerofoil.** When you do, the twin beams in between which you're supposed to slide the refill will not stay parallel and it will be a PITA to put the refill in.

4. Slide the old refill out and slide the new one in.

- If there are multiple notches in your refill, use the upper notch such that the rest of the notches are visible when it's all back together. There's not a lot of clearance between the beam and the center bracket, and anyway that's the proper height.
- If you didn't remove an end cap, be careful as you thread the new one in past the end cap.



- For the drivers side, be patient. It's long and there's a lot of friction, so if you tug too hard on the refill it will tear. You can inchworm it along a little bit, or just press the end of the blade into something and use both hands to pull the refill in, one hand at one end and one in the middle.

5. If you disassembled stuff (aerofoils, end caps), re-assemble it. It's pretty obvious how it goes together.

6. Reinstall to the car and enjoy.

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2002 GMC Sierra 1500 4x4 5.3 - 180,000 miles and running strong
1980 Buick Lesabre family heirloom with 36,000 miles



Quote:



Originally Posted by **labels skate**
those things can make crazy hp easily with an engine swap...

05-15-2009, 07:53 AM

#2

**Lil mo with the
gimpy leg**

Hater of ALL



Drives: 04 WRX, 07 GTI
Join Date: May 2009
Location: HdG, MD
Posts: 77



NEAT!

You can't win!



05-15-2009, 04:30 PM

#3

thedamaja

I like to rock the party

How wide is top (flat part) of the OE blade insert you removed? Is the passenger side insert the same top width as the drivers side?