



## Tech Talk: Sagging Convertible Rear Deck Lid Springs

by Duane Ravenberg (from Spring 2012)

The convertible deck lid springs on my 1964 convertible have been sagging ever since we bought the car back in 1990. While it was not that bad, it bothered me because it wouldn't stay open all the way up. After procrastinating for 20 some-odd years, I decided to do something about it. One Corvette parts vendor sells a tool that will expand the spring and helps you fix the problem, but it appeared to be more money than it was worth. So, I put my backyard-mechanic's mind to it and came up with a simple solution that worked for me.

If you are as lucky as I was, the upper coil of the spring will be in one of the lower two slots in the retaining bracket. If that upper coil is in the third (highest) position, your only solution will be to replace the spring and that is a whole different procedure.

**Step 1:** Get the convertible top out of its storage position and out of your way. I chose to remove the top completely since I had other non-spring related tasks I wanted to tackle at the same time. You can also just raise the top and fasten it forward with a couple of bungee cords while you tackle the lid spring adjustments. You may also want to remove one of the seats to give you more leg room for accessing the springs.

Once the top is out of your way, cut a long piece of  $\frac{3}{4}$ " by 2" piece of wood to any length that will hold the deck lid up as high as it will go. At the same time, cut 20 pieces of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick wood into 2-1/2" squares (this is slightly wider than the diameter of the deck lid spring). These wooden pieces will be used in the following steps.

**Step Two:** Those who get claustrophobic should go no further as you now have to crawl into the rear compartment (why removing one of the seats is a good idea) and close the top until it latches. At this point, the springs are fully extended. Using the  $\frac{1}{4}$ " square pieces that you cut earlier, slide each piece in between the coil layers of each spring. Release the deck lid latch while holding on to the top and slowly let it open while making sure that the square pieces don't fall out of the spaces between the coils.

**Step Three:** Now is the time to raise the rear deck lid as high as it will go and prop it open by wedging that  $\frac{3}{4}$ " by 2" piece of wood that you prepared between the carpeted floor pan and the



underside of the deck lid. This will relieve any remaining spring tension.

**Step Four:** **CAREFULLY**, and with a flat bladed tool (**DO NOT USE YOUR FINGERS**), slide the upper coil of the spring up and into the next slot. If the upper coil was in the lowest slot and it takes a moderate amount of effort to slide it up to the next slot, you should leave it there. If it slides with little or no effort, try sliding it up to the next higher slot. **Make sure that the upper coil is firmly lodged into the slot.**

**Step Five:** Remove the stick propping the deck lid up and close the deck lid until it latches. Check again to make certain the upper coil of each spring is firmly lodged into its new slot. Then and only then, remove the wood squares from between each coil (if they haven't already fallen out). Release the latch and notice the improvement in how high the deck lid opens.



**Step Six:** Reinstall the seat (if you've removed it) and either stow the convertible top under the lid or attach the rear section of the top to the deck lid.

**Stand back and admire your handiwork!**