1978-1982 Dash Replacement

by Ed Hurst

These steps are specific for installing a Corvette America replacement dash. First, disconnect the battery. To make the job easier, remove the seats. Use sandwich bags to mark and store the screws from each component.

1. Remove the console side panels.

2. Starting on the passenger side remove the two Phillips screws in the door jamb.

3. Remove the kick panel and remove the screws holding in the glove box insert.

4. Remove the glove box lamp by prying off the silver retainer and pushing out the light.

5. Remove the 4 screws holding the center gauges and the two 7mm bolts on the underside of the cluster holding it to the console.

6. Remove the radio knobs & nuts.

7. Remove the center gauge cluster by careful pulling it out of the dash. Be careful of the top light socket clearing the dash. Unplug the wire for the top light. Next unplug the gauge cluster plug by squeezing the plug top/bottom and pulling it out. Be careful not to tear the printed circuit.

8. Remove the four screws holding the lower steering column cover.

9. Disconnect the speedometer cable by pushing in on the clip and pulling the cable out at the same time.

10. Remove the left side door jamb dash screws and remove the kick panel.

11. Remove the five screws holding the speedometer lens (3 tiny ones on the top and 2 on the sides).

12. Remove the three screws holding in the speedometer cluster.

13. Remove the two bolts holding the steering column up.

14. Remove the speedometer cluster. You will need to pull the column down to get the cluster out. The cluster has a plug like the center gauges. Remove it in the same fashion.

15. Reach in where the cluster was and unplug the headlight & wiper switches. Remove the hoses from the headlight switch and mark the connection ports.

16. Remove the windshield trim pieces.

17. Pry the covers up on the dash sides and disconnect the radio speakers.

18. Remove the dash by pulling straight out. Use a flat blade screwdriver to pry it past the windshield pillars.

19. Place the old dash side-by-side with the new Corvette America dash.

20. Transfer the headlamp switch. Remove by turning the slotted screw counter-clockwise.

21. Remove the screw holding in the wiper switch. The outer bezel will pry-off. Drill a new hole and install the wiper switch.

22. Remove the left-side air vent. In the new dash, drill two holes and mount.

23. Remove the right-side air vent. In the new dash, drill two holes and mount.

24. Remove the glove box door striker. In the new dash, drill two holes and mount.

25. Remove the glove box door hinges from the old dash. In the new dash, drill 4 holes and mount the door.

26. Place the right-side radio speaker in the dash top, drill holes and mount.

27. Test fit the lower steering-column cover. When aligned, drill 4 new holes and attach.

28. Place the speedometer cluster into the old dash. See where it aligns/mounts.

29. Now place the cluster in the new dash. Align it, drill five new holes and mount.

30. Place the left radio speaker in the top of the dash. Drill new holes and mount.

31. Place the defroster vent in top of the new dash drill one hole and mount.

32. Remove the steering column cover and cut the bottom piece off at each end, using the old dash for reference.

33. Remove the two dash clips from the underside of the old dash. Drill 2 holes in the new dash and mount.

34. It is now time to mount the new dash. With a helper, put the dash back in the car maneuvering around the steering column and the pillar posts.

At this time, leave the dash lose.

35. Make sure the indent holes are going to align up to the clips in the door jamb area. If they do, drill your holes.

36. Now make sure the dash is over the brackets under the windshield and push it all the way in.

37. Starting on the passenger side install the two door jamb screws to the cowl.

38. Install kick-panel and plug in the speaker wires.

39. Install the glove box insert & light.

40. Plug the wiper switch & headlight switch back in.

41. Next install the driver side door jamb screws and install the kick panel.

42. You are now ready to install the center gauge bezel. I strongly recommend changing all the dash bulbs - No. 194 bulbs (8 of them). Just turn the sockets to remove. Pull the bulbs out and push the new ones in. Also, if your gauge lens need cleaning, now is the time to do it. There are four ¼" screws that hold the back cluster on. If your car has a clock you will need to remove the clock stem screw. It's small, so don't lose it. Also, there is a small rubber insert that goes around the stem.

43. Now carefully plug-in the dash cluster harness and the top light. Place the gauge cluster back into the dash. Check for fit at the top & sides. If it's good, drill the 4 mounting screw holes and mount. Install the radio mount nuts & knobs. Install the two console screws.

44. Reconnect the battery and start the car. Verify that your gauges & radio work.

45. Reach in and put the headlamp hoses back on the headlight switch. Start the car and make sure the lights open & close correctly.

46. I recommend replacing all 14 dash bulbs they are No. 194 bulbs.

47. If your speedometer cable is noisy and the needle jumps now is a good time to lube the cable. Do this by pulling the cable out of the case with needle nose pliers. Coat the cable with a light coat of grease and put the cable back into the case.

48. Place the speedometer cluster back into the dash. Plug in the harness and install the top three screws.

49. Clean the lens on both sides.

50. Place the lens cover on and install the 2 side screws and the 3 tiny top screws.

51. Reach up and install the speedometer cable. It will click in place when in.

52. Bolt the steering column back up.

53. Install the lower column cover.

54. Install the center console side covers.

55. Install the seats.

56. Test drive and make sure speedometer & tach work.

57. If everything is OK, you're done!!!!