

Instructions For Converting A Rumble Seat to A Trunk in Roadsters and Coupes The Ford Way Part 1 as of May 15, 2015 by The Model A'ers

The following article is a spin-off of the May 2, 1928 Indianapolis Ford Service Letter titled "*Instructions for Installing Rumble Seat in Roadsters and Business and Standard Coupes*".

The only exception is that we will be going the other way, converting a car with a rumble seat back to a trunk.

Step 1. For easy access, remove the left and right rear fender guard assembly, and the rear spare tire carrier. There were two types of spare tire carrier assemblies: The first, to the end of March 1928, had the upper bolt passing through the spare tire carrier to the underneath back side of the rear panel and was attached with a castle nut and cotter pin (In some cases, there may be a lock washer, nut, and cotter pin). The second type of assembly had the bolt and lock washer passing through the underneath back side and was screwed into the spare tire carrier assembly and remained so throughout production.

Step 2. Remove the right rear fender and the fender step plate, A-41563, from the top of the fender. The step plate hole in the fender will have to be filled, and the fender repainted. There were various styles of step plates throughout the Model A production years.

Step 3. Remove the lower step bracket and step plate. There were two types of assemblies. With the first type the step bracket, A-41566, was attached to the rear body sill where the forward hole in the step bracket engaged the rear fender iron bolt on the inside of the sill, and the rear end was bolted to the sill at the hole in the corner plate at the end of the sill. With the second type the step bracket, A-41572, was attached to the rear bumper arm assembly.

Step 4. Open the rear deck door and remove the seats, floor mat, and the left and right side cardboards. This will give easy access in removing the deck door and hinges.

Step 5. Remove the left and right deck door hinge and arm assemblies, also called arm (deck door hinge) and base assembly, from the deck door body hinge, leaving them attached to the deck door, and remove the deck door. Then remove the left and right deck door body hinges from the rear deck pillar and drain trough.

Step 6. Remove the deck door hinge and arm assemblies from the deck door, the lock and handle assembly, and the deck door lock from the front end of the deck door. The hole in the deck door must be filled and the deck door repainted. An option would be to install a rubber plug, A-41540, in the hole left in the front edge of the deck door providing you can find an original as they do not reproduce this plug.

Step 7. Remove the wood slats from the left and right side of the compartment.

Step 8. Remove the left and right upper deck door guides, A-41514, from the upper corners of the deck door opening. Remove the left and right deck door bumpers, A-41518-A, from the upper corner plates of the upper deck opening.

Step 9. Remove the striker plate, A-52500, from the front of the deck door opening. (Some cars had screws in these holes where trunks were used, some did not.)

Step 10. Remove the rear floor pan (rear curved Inner panel) by removing the screws, nuts and lock washers at each side of floor pan from the rear deck corner plates. Remove the deck door bumper brackets, A-52486, for coupes, and A-41536, for roadsters, from the bottom of the floor pan. Remove the remaining screws, nuts and lock washers from the rear edge and the front edge in the center and remove the rear floor pan.

You are now ready to assemble the items for the trunk assembly.

THE DECK DOOR

The deck door assembly, also called the deck door, was exactly the same size for 1928-29 and 1930-31. Those which were assembled for rumble seat compartments were part # A-52435, and those for trunk compartments were part # A-41440.

If the deck door was assembled on a car which came with a trunk, it is likely the deck door did not possess the "D" nuts which were required for the rumble seat hinge brackets for a conversion from trunk to rumble seat. However we have seen trunks on original cars with "D" nuts already installed and ready for the conversion.

Although the 28-29 deck doors are the same size as the 30-31 deck doors, they differ from each other on the inner skin construction.

The 1928-29 inner-skin construction of the deck door is recessed on both ends (Fig. 1) where the deck door handle shaft comes through the outer skin for both trunk and rumble seat assemblies. This requires the short extension handle and the A-41604/A-41604-A lock assembly.



(Fig. 1)

Note to Helen: Please point, with red arrows, the recessed areas, upper and lower of the Deck Door.

The 1930-31 deck door inner-skin construction is stamped straight across on the upper end (Fig. 2) for a rumble seat assembly. This requires the long extension handle and the A-41604-B lock assembly. However, on the lower edge of the 30-31 deck door, it is the same configuration as the 28-29 deck doors (Fig. 1) which was used for trunk assemblies, thus requiring the short extension handle and the A-41604/A-41604-A lock assembly.



(Fig. 2)

Note to Helen: Please point, with red arrows, the recessed areas, upper and lower of the Deck Door.

Model A deck doors came several ways from Ford. Some of those combinations are as follows:

1. Rumble seat deck doors which do not have the lock cut-out for trunk assembly.
2. Rumble seat deck doors which do have the lock cut-out for trunk assembly.
3. Rumble seat deck doors which do not have the "D" nuts for trunk deck door support bracket.
4. Rumble seat deck doors which do have the "D" nuts for trunk deck door support bracket.
5. Rumble seat deck doors which do not have the hole in the inner skin for the trunk deck door lock.
6. Rumble seat deck doors which do have the hole in the inner skin for the trunk deck door lock.
7. Trunk deck doors which do not have the lock cut-out for rumble seat assembly.
8. Trunk deck doors which do have the lock cut-out for rumble seat assembly.

9. Trunk deck doors which have the "D" nuts for rumble seat deck door hinge and seat assemblies.
10. Trunk deck doors which do have the "D" nuts for rumble seat deck door hinge and seat assemblies.
11. Trunk deck doors which do not have the hole in the inner skin for the rumble seat deck door lock.
12. Trunk deck doors which do have the hole in the inner skin for the rumble seat deck door lock.

THE DECK DOOR LOCK

There were two styles of lock (deck door) assemblies. Shown in Fig. 3 on the left is the type of lock, A-41604/A-41604-A, that is used with 1928-1929 rumble seat and trunk assemblies and 1930-1931 trunk assemblies which take the short shaft handle. The lock on the right, A-41604-B, is for 1930-1931 rumble seat assemblies which take the long shaft handle. The first thing to do is prepare the deck door so it is ready for the assembly of the deck door body hinge brackets, the lock, the lock and handle assembly, and the deck door support hinge.



(Fig. 3)

DECK DOOR HANDLES

There were three known types (but many variations) of lock (deck door safety) and handle assemblies, also called deck door handles (Fig. 4). **(A)** The “T” handle with short shaft for 1928 and early 1929 trunk and rumble seat assemblies; **(B)** the “L” handles with short shaft for 1929 trunk and rumble seat assemblies and 1930-31 trunk assemblies; and **(C)** the long shaft for 1930-1931 rumble seat assemblies. The earlier handles were bright nickel plated brass. In 1930 they changed to chrome plated brass. Sometime in 1930, the chrome plated brass was changed to stainless steel and remained as such throughout production.



(Fig. 4)

Note to Helen: Please put A, B, C, under the handles in the above photo.

The "T" handle had a small recessed pin on the bezel (Fig. 5) to position the handle in the correct position, which fit into the 5/32" hole as seen in Fig. 7. Except early 1929, the later "L" handles did not.



(Fig. 5)

Note to Helen: Please put a red arrow pointing to the recessed pin on the bezel.

According to Hans "Doc" Kalinka: *"There is a slight difference in the surface appearance of the 1928 and early 1929 rumble/trunk lid handle. This is the Tee shaped handle. Observe the end or tip of the handle (Fig. 6). The left handle has a closed bezel or complete ridge around the end of the top surface. The handle on the right of the photo has an open or completely flat surface at its end. The handle style at the right is the earlier of the two handles. This slight variation may be a supplier difference. However, we do find more of the left style handles on late 1928 and early 1929 vehicles"*.



(Fig. 6)

There were three configurations of the deck door lock handle holes. The first configuration (Fig. 7) was for the "T" handle, A-41618-AR, used in 1928 and very early 1929. The hole was $15/16$ " diameter with a smaller $5/32$ " hole at the bottom for the recessed pin on the bezel of Fig. 5.



(Fig. 7)

The second configuration (Fig. 8) of the deck door lock handle hole was short-lived in early 1929. This occurred when the "T" type handle became obsolete and the "L" type handle was introduced.



(Fig. 8)

This second configuration had the appearance of Fig. 9 except it still retained the small 5/32" hole at the bottom as shown in Fig. 7 for the recessed pin on the bezel (Fig. 5) for the early 1929 "L" type handles.

The third configuration (Fig. 9) was used for the "L" type handles, A-41618-C, except the 5/32" hole was deleted from the configuration. This configuration was used from early/mid 1929 through 1931.



(Fig. 9)

After the removal of the rumble seat deck door handle and lock assembly, you have two choices, either put a rubber plug (A-41540) in the hole or repair the hole that was used for the rumble seat deck door lock handle, by welding in a patch (Fig. 10). This will require repainting the deck door.



(Fig. 10)

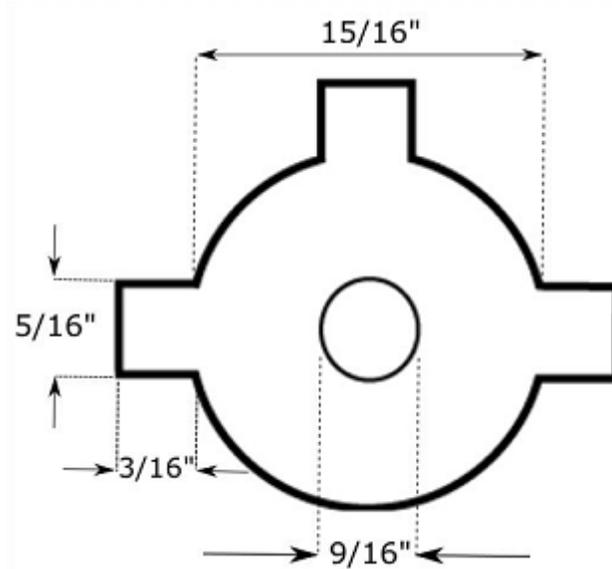
To position and center the holes for the deck door lock handle, first position and secure the deck door lock in the designated area within the deck door. With a piece of key stock, which has a pointed end and is the same size as the deck door lock handle shaft, punch a good dimple onto the deck door which will show up on the reverse side of the deck door. Remove the deck door lock and drill the new hole.

For 1928 deck doors utilizing the "T" shape handle, the May 2, 1928 Indianapolis Ford Service Letter explained just what to do and how to make the hole, as shown in Fig. 7, for the rumble seat assembly on the front edge of the deck door: *"Remove deck door lock (from back edge of door) and drill 15/16" hole in front edge of door locating from hole in under side. Drill 5/32" hole 11/16" forward from center of 15/16" hole, install lock on front end (front edge) of door"*.

That being the case, the same configuration as that of the front edge (Fig. 5) would have been used for trunk door assemblies utilizing the "T" style handle, during this time period (1928).

For 1929-31 deck doors utilizing the "L" shape handle, you must duplicate the hole configuration in (Figs. 9 and/or 10) for trunk door applications on the back lower edge.

The inner hole is 9/16" inches in diameter and the larger outside hole is 15/16" inches in diameter. The notches are 5/16" inches wide by 3/16" inches deep. These position the handle perpendicular or horizontal to the edge of the deck door (Fig. 11).



(Fig. 11)

The deck door lock is then installed on the back edge of the deck door (Fig. 12) using the same screws that were removed on the front edge for the rumble seat lock assembly. This is followed by the assembly of the deck door lock handle to the deck door using a special nut (blind nut/acorn nut) and special washer (Fig. 13). These are available from suppliers.



(Fig. 12)



(Fig. 13)

As you can tell from the photos, Fig. 12 and 13, there appear to be four different styles of blind nuts or acorn nuts for the deck doors. Just which is the true Ford blind nut/acorn nut is not known at this time.

UPPER DECK DOOR HINGE BRACKETS

The following is the correct placement of the upper hinge (deck door body) brackets, A-41545, and hinge pins.

There were two pieces to the brackets, one for upper inside corners of the deck door and one for the outside upper rear corners of the deck door drain trough or the inside of the rear quarter panels.

The pieces which attached to the upper inside corners of the deck door are thought to be the same for all years (Fig. 14).



(Fig. 14)

The brackets were placed on the upper left and right inside flange of the deck door with the notch facing the deck door flange and oriented to toward the lower end of the deck door (Fig. 15). Note the shim (Fig. 17) protruding from top right corner under the bracket (Fig. 15).



(Fig. 15)

Note to Helen: Please put a red arrow showing the shim protruding ever so slightly between the bracket and the edge of the deck door.

The bracket pieces were attached with a flat head countersunk $\frac{1}{4}$ " diameter rivet in the center hole and a $\frac{1}{4}$ "-20 x $\frac{5}{8}$ flat head countersunk screw with lock washer or external tooth shake-proof lock washer and hex nut going through the notched part of the bracket pieces towards the inside, thus leaving the outside edge of the deck door flat (Fig. 16).



(Fig. 16)

Apparently when the bracket was riveted to the deck door, it was done to allow the notched end up and down movement of the deck door to align or level it with the quarter panels.

There is also a shim (deck door hinge), A-41556, shown in Fig. 17, which is barely seen protruding out from between the bracket and the inside flange of the deck door in Fig. 15. These shims may or may not have been used in the assembly of the upper deck door hinge brackets. However, all of the shims found in our research were on 28-29 deck doors. They were apparently installed first before the placement of the bracket and before the rivet was seated so the half moon holes would seat on to the bolt and rivet so it would not fall out. The curved end of the shim was mated with the curved end of the bracket.



(Fig. 17)

A small number of deck door hinge shims (Fig. 17) have been reproduced. Call Dudley Moordigian, at 559-453-1949, for availability.

The other bracket part is for the deck door hinge bolt (Fig. 18). This is referred to as the hinge (deck door body) bracket, A-41545, and is placed in the outside (Fig. 19) or inside (Fig. 24) upper rear corners of the quarter panel and/or deck door drain trough, depending on the body style of the car.



(Fig. 18)

There were two types of assemblies of the hinge (deck door body) bracket: for those cars which had the "T" molding, and for those cars without the "T" molding.

For those cars with the "T" molding, as seen in Fig. 19, which included the 1928-1929 Standard Roadster, Standard Coupe, Special Coupe, Business Coupe, Sport Coupe, and 1929-1931 Cabriolets (if a trunk was desired) the bracket, A-41545, was placed on the outside upper corners of the deck door drain trough, left and right, just below the "T" molding (Fig. 19). They were attached with two flat head countersunk slotted screws, lock washers, and square nuts. This bracket, A-41545, measures 3/16" at its highest point where the deck door hinge bolt screws in.



(Fig. 19)

Trunk compartments up to mid- to late 1928 or slightly thereafter were assembled without a hinge (deck door body) bracket reinforcement behind and underneath the upper rear corners of the quarter panel and/or deck door drain trough (Fig. 20). After this, all trunk compartments had the reinforcement (Figs. 21 and 22) through the 1929 models and those later models with the "T" molding. It is thought that this took up the slack of length of the deck door hinge bolt and that it gave this area added strength for the pivoting of the deck door itself. No part number was associated with this part.



(Fig. 20)



(Fig. 21)



(Fig. 22)

For those cars without the “T” molding (Fig. 23), which included the 1930-1931 Standard Roadster, Deluxe Roadster, Standard Coupe, Deluxe Coupe and Sport Coupe, the bracket, A-41545-B, was placed inside the quarter panel, left and right, where it was not seen (Fig. 24), and was attached with two flat head countersunk slotted screws, lock washers, and square nuts thus leaving the outside edge of the deck door drain trough flat. Later trunks may have had hex nuts. This bracket, A-41545-B, measures 5/16” at its highest point where the deck door hinge bolt screws in.



(Fig. 23)



(Fig. 24)

Once the brackets are attached to the quarter panels and deck door drain trough, the deck door is now ready to attach to the back of the car. This is done by positioning the deck door and inserting the deck door hinge bolts (Fig. 25) and lock washer from the inside through the center hole of the deck door hinge, which is threaded, and into the upper most forward holes in the deck door, left and right.



(Fig. 25)

There are two known sizes of deck door hinge bolts, A-20910. For those cars which had the “T” molding, the bolt length was approximately $7/8$ ”. For those cars without the “T” molding, the bolt length was approximately $1-1/8$ ” (Fig. 25).

According to the Part Releases, the deck door hinge bolt (without rumble seat), A-20910, (Fig. 25), started out as a $3/8 \times 16$ USS x $15/16$ ” special hex head bolt. The length of the bolt was approximately $15/16$ ” in length.

Somewhere in the process, the length of the bolt was changed from the underside of the head to the end to $1-1/16$ inches in length. This may have been when the reinforcement was added to the assembly (Figs. 21 and 22) thus increasing its length. In June of 1929, the Part Release tells us that the bolt was “Retraced on standard sheet and changed dimensions to conform with manufactures standards”. What that was about is not known.

In November 1929, the bolt had the suffix “AR” added to the part number. Other features of this bolt were that the length of the underside of head to end of threads was $9/16$ ” and the length of the threads were $7/16$ ”, leaving $1/8$ ” for the lock washer.

In August 1929, a new bolt was adopted as an experimental bolt. This was AX-20910. In November 1929, the "X" was dropped from the part number and A-20910-B was *"Released for the 40-B and 45-B"* (1930 Roadster and Coupe without rumble seat). This bolt's features were that the distance from the underside of head to end of threads was $7/16$ " and the length of the threads were $5/16$ ", again leaving $1/8$ " for the lock washer. The total length of the bolt from underside of head to the end was $1-3/16$ " *"...for better assembly because of variation in panels..."* and which was $1/8$ " longer than the earlier A-20910.

THE DECK DOOR SUPPORT HINGE

There are two known types of deck door support hinges, A-41547: The early to mid-1928 style (Figs. 26 and 27), which started to be phased out of production in August 1928 and became obsolete October 23, 1928; and the late 1928-1931 style (Figs. 29 and 30). (See page 283 of the September 1928 Ford Service Bulletins for correct assembly).



(Fig. 26)



(Fig. 27)

In researching the bracket in Figs. 26 and 27, we concluded there may have been a very early design that only saw a very limited production before the newer design came into service in very late November 1927.

There was also a reinforcement attached to the inside upper flange of the deck door drain trough as seen in Fig. 28 for the early design deck door support hinge, which was attached with a special 1/2" X 5/8" bolt and 7/16" nut. (Note: The September 1928 Ford *Service Bulletins* references both a "bolt" and a "rivet" in this spot, so which is correct is not known at this time).



(Fig. 28)

The reinforcement location was used in this position until sometime between September 1928 and February 1929 when it was moved to the "outside" of the deck door drain trough (Fig. 31) where it remained throughout production.

The change from the old design deck door support hinge to the new design deck door support hinge (Figs. 29 and 30) was sometime either before or during September 1928.



(Fig. 29)



(Fig. 30)

When the new design deck door support hinge came into service, Ford apparently moved the reinforcement to the outside of the deck door drain trough (Fig. 31). We observed this on all late 1928, 29, 30 and 31 roadsters and coupes.



(Fig. 31)

The new design deck door support hinge was attached to the deck door drain trough as shown in Fig. 32.



(Fig. 32)

The support attachment assembly to the deck door drain trough for the new design deck door support, as shown in (Fig. 32), and which was also mentioned in the September 1928 *Ford Service Bulletin*, included:

1. **A-20597** 1/4"-20 x 23/32" special screw
2. **A-22266** 3/8" (1/16 "x 1") plain flat washer
3. **A-22154** 1/4" (1/16" x 3/4") plain flat washer
4. **A-22165** 1/4" (1/16" x 35/64") lock washer cadmium plated
5. **A-21668** 1/4"-20 USS (3/16" x 1/2") hex nut cadmium plated. This nut may have been changed to a 1/4"-20 USS (3/16" x 7/16") hex nut raven finish in 1930-31. Square nuts have also been found in this area.

These sizes were taken from the Ford Parts Price Lists and the Part Releases from the Ford Archives.

The special screw, A-20597, (Fig. 33) was a 1/4" bolt with a 7/16" hex head 5/32" thick. Below the head is a shoulder 3/8" diameter by 1/4" long. The bolt is 23/32" long from the bottom of the hex head to the tip of the bolt.



(Fig. 33)

In comparing an original special screw with the reproduction that is offered, there is absolutely no difference in measurements. However the plain flat washers in the reproduction kit are slightly thinner than those of the originals and the holes are larger than those of the originals. The smaller reproduction flat washer can be substituted by using A-22166 1/4" (1/16" x 3/4") for A-22154. This is the same flat washer which is used for the front and rear fenders, except it is flat and not a Cadmium Plated Washer as with the fender washers which also have a slight curve to the washer themselves.

Both the early and later design deck door support hinges were attached to the deck door by two oval head/French head screws.

However, the 1931 68-C (Cabriolet) did not have the reinforcement (Fig. 34) but retained the new design deck door support hinge hole if a trunk set-up was required.



(Fig. 34)

The Model A'ers who have contributed their research and photos to this article are: Darrel Beavers, John Cochran, Dave Gillingham, John Hash, Ray Horton, Hans "Doc" Kalinka, Gary Karr, John Layton, Tom Moniz, Dudley Moordigian, William (Rusty) Nelson, Jim Orr at the Benson Ford Research Center at The Henry Ford; Dan Partain, Ron Rude, Steve Plucker, Jim Sinclair, Marco Tahtaras, Scott Walker, and Steve Wastler as of May 15, 2015.

This completes Part 1 of 4. Part 2 will be about the A-41510, plug (deck drain trough); A-41516, guide (deck door) lower; and A-41518, bumper (deck door).