

HOW TO APPLY FRAME WELTING

The key is locating and cutting the holes

By Lynn Sondena

WELTING'S PURPOSE is to prevent metal-to-metal contact. Frame welting is sometimes referred to as "anti-squeak welting." It is a thin, brown, woven cotton webbing that has been treated to prevent mold and rotting. Welting is placed from the front of the frame horns to a few inches past the running board splash aprons.

Passenger Model A's from the factory used welting that measured $\frac{1}{16}$ th inch thick and $1\frac{3}{4}$ inch wide. AA commercial vehicles used welting $\frac{1}{8}$ inch thick by 2 inches wide. Currently, Model A vendors offer welting in $1\frac{1}{2}$, $1\frac{3}{4}$, and 2 inch widths. It comes in $\frac{1}{16}$ th and $\frac{1}{8}$ th inch thicknesses.

PLACES WHERE frame welting is used:

- Between the front spring and crossmember. This welting should be about 10 to 14 inches long.
- Between the rear spring and the crossmember. This welting should be between 12 and 16 inches long.
- On top of the rear crossmember to prevent the floor pan from rubbing. This welting should be about 16 inches long. (Note: Not all models use this. The Victoria, A400, and De Luxe Phaeton 180A used a canvas spring cover that attached to the body panel under the rear seat frame. Check your body style, as other models might not use welting here.)
- Between the running board brackets and the running boards. The welting should be cut to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch width and 1 foot long.



Figure 1

- Between the top bows and the chicken wire on the closed cars, Pickups, and AAs.
- Between the front fenders and the frame.
- Between the running board splash shields and frame.



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

YOU MIGHT ASK why the welting does not extend to the end of the frame. Model A bodies use wooden body blocks that sit on rubber pads, which eliminates the need for the welting. The Model A Pickup beds have wood sills, and the welting can be placed between the frame and wood. There are also other body styles, such as the Victoria and A400, that have wood sills and do not use wooden body blocks. (This may also apply to other models, so do a little research.)

THESE ARE THE STEPS I use to mark and cut the holes in the frame welting.



Figure 6



Figure 7

- 1. STRETCH THE FRAME** welting onto the frame for the length needed. Use spring clamps to hold the welting firmly in place, as shown in figure 1.
- 2. TO LOCATE A HOLE**, place a finger under the top of the top frame rail (figure 2). Using the ball of a small ball peen hammer, press down lightly and rotate the handle back and forth to make a small indentation. Figure 3 shows the hand position on the ball peen hammer. Figure 4 shows the indentation made by the hammer's ball.

3. USE A LEATHER PUNCH to cut the holes in the welting (figure 5). I use a punch size $\frac{1}{16}$ inch larger in diameter than the needed hole. This allows for shrinkage of the welting and provides a little more clearance for installing the body bolts. Leather punches can also be used to cut holes in rubber, so restorers can make their own body mount pads.

| Frame hole | Leather punch |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| $\frac{1}{4}$ inch | $\frac{5}{16}$ inch |
| $\frac{5}{16}$ inch | $\frac{3}{8}$ inch |
| $\frac{3}{8}$ inch | $\frac{7}{16}$ inch |
| $\frac{7}{16}$ inch | $\frac{1}{2}$ inch |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ inch | $\frac{9}{16}$ inch |

- 4. USE A PIECE OF WOOD** 4" x 4" by 6 to 12 inches long, standing it on its end grain. It works best to punch into the wood's end grain (figure 6). The punch will penetrate deeper and keep a sharp edge longer. These punches are hollow ground, so it takes a lot of skill to sharpen them.
- 5. GENTLY ROCK THE PUNCH** back and forth to remove it from the wood and welting. Figure 7 shows a completed hole that is cut very neat and clean.

BY FOLLOWING THESE STEPS, the task of locating welting holes and cutting them becomes easy. ☹

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