

How to install a 100% correctly made 1963-1985 N.O.S. (new original stock) Avanti dash pad and glove box door pad

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I have personally replaced more N.O.S. Avanti dash pads than anybody else in the world, over the last 45 plus years.

Avanti Motors and Studebaker never had any written instructions on how to replace the factory dash pads, they only had instructions on how to remove and reinstall a complete dash assembly.

No special tools or skills are needed. I purchased all

the original Avanti dash pad tooling and blue prints from Avanti Motors long before I purchased the Avanti parts division from Avanti Motors on November 9, 1989.

It took a very talented, bright and persistent, journeyman toolmaker about 2½ years to rework the original Studebaker Avanti dash tooling to the original Studebaker Avanti dash pad blue print specifications, and to make his very first 100 percent correct Avanti dash pad that wasn't scrap.



This is what you will see in the special box.

I am also a journeyman toolmaker and knowing the shortcomings of fitting a dash pad made by Avanti Motors to the fiberglass dash buck was my contribution. What he, my long time friend and partner on the dash pad project, achieved was to create a dash pad that anybody can install with my instructions.

What he excelled at was attention to details in restoring the original tooling to the original blue prints and getting the correct vinyl and foam to work in tooling designed and made in about 1962. Every N.O.S dash pad will fit like a custom pair of gloves, every time. That's because he got all the tooling much closer in required tolerances. We had

to get the correct vinyl manufactured with the correct grain, color (fawn) and softness (to the touch). It's not the readily available vinyl that's way too hard like others are making the reproduction dash pads from. Getting foam with the correct density to expand and migrate to all required areas before the foam stops expanding and migrating was the last critical challenge.

Installing a N.O.S. Avanti dash pad can be very intimidating and challenging, but I have made it very easy and rewarding, even for a novice. Just follow my instructions on the following page and call with any questions, Dan Booth at Nostalgic Motor Cars, (248) 349-4884.



Testing your glue and vinyl for adhesion.

1. Cut some strips of vinyl from the pull over vinyl on the top of the dash pad, that will be glued down.
2. Brush or spray some contact cement to the dash buck and vinyl test strips, let them flash off.
3. Place the vinyl strips on the dash buck. Pull up on one end of a strip and place it back down on the dash buck. Do this a couple of times to see how many times you can pull it away and reattach before it won't stay glued anymore.
4. Let the second strip set for an hour or so and try to remove it. It should be extremely difficult to remove.



It is very important that the original fiberglass dash buck has not been modified in any way. The dash buck must also be clean and free of any old glue.



Remove the dash pad support from the dash pad. Don't let the unsupported dash pad flop around. It should be supported with 2 hands, one under the gun site and the other under the glove box door opening.



5) Place the pad on the dash buck. If you don't have three holes over the glove box door opening, you will have to mark the dash buck for the center hole. Drill the center holes. I always file all three holes a little larger top and bottom. This will allow for a little more adjustment.



6) Very carefully place your speaker grill with its four studs down through the four holes, in the speaker grill recess (do not cut out for the speaker at this time) You will have to stretch the pad to achieve this. Now stretch the dash pad so the speaker grill and the 4 studs go down through the dash buck 4 speaker stud holes.



7) Pull the vinyl out and over the dash buck. Notice how this pad is fitting like a glove.

8) Place the gauge overlay in place checking for fit.

9) Place the radio overlay bezel in place. Notice how both overlays lay mostly flat against the fiberglass buck and fit perfectly around the outer edges of the gauge and radio overlays.



10) Place the 11 dash pad retainer clips in a vise and slightly spread the mouth of the retainer clip wider. This allows the clips to slightly float on the steel retainer strips that are glued to the back of the dash pad. Do not remove any of the Tyvek tape—it stays on the dash pad permanently.

11) Very carefully install the 11 retainer clips on the dash pad. Please make sure they will move around a little on those steel strips.

If your dash pad is original to the car, and you are missing a clip around the glove box door opening. (normally at the top left corner) it probably did not fall out when it was installed, but was left out as the hole may not be in the correct location.

Note: if you have a 1964-1985 Avanti and the dash pad needs to be dyed, now is the time to dye the edges of the pad, where it meets the dash buck (this is called cutting the edges).



12) Carefully install those clips in their locations. Again Support the dash pad with both hands and place on the dash buck. Push the three studs over the glove box opening, down through the holes. Start the three washers

and nuts on those studs. Carefully stretch the dash pad and start snapping in those 11 clips. Stretch and pull the dash pad cover so you can push the speaker grill and 4 studs down through the holes.

13) Install four fender washers and nuts on those 4 studs.

Do not cut out for the speaker at this time. Lightly tighten all seven nuts.



14) Place the gauge overlay and radio bezel overlay in their respective places, checking for proper fit only. Do not cut out for the gauges at this time.

Start stretching the vinyl over the top of the dash buck on the top of the dash buck checking for fit. The old glue line on the backside of the dash buck should be a guide of where the new glue will be applied, usually about 1 1/2 to 2 inches wide.

Brush or spray the contact cement on the vinyl and the backside of the pre-cleaned dash buck. After the contact cement has flashed off (see instructions on container) start pulling and stretching the vinyl in the top middle of the dash and attach.

Continue across from the center, to each side stretching to the side as you pull towards the front at the same time and attach. Don't worry if you get a small wrinkle, you can normally pull the vinyl off and restick it a couple of

If the door drags a little too much, on the side of the dash pad on the left side (the right side you will pull over when you glue the ends) cut a piece of soft wood 2" x 2" about 4" long. Wrap it with a soft cloth. Place it on the left side of the dash pad. You must feel for the metal strip that's glued to the back side of the dash pad. Very carefully tap that metal strip over to the left a little more (do not tap on the foam). Reclose the door and check for drag. It is normal to have a little drag on both end of the glove box door.

times. Cut off the extra vinyl that didn't get glued.

15) Remove the temporary screws from the glove box door pad (do not use these screws to attach the fiberglass door, they are wrong and too long) and discard, also discard the plastic strips. If you have to dye the glove box door pad, now is the time to cut in the back edges on the door pad. Install the fiberglass door on the pad. Make sure the screws are not too long as they may poke through the front of the door pad.

16) Install the door assembly on the dash (you may have to file the holes bigger in the hinges) to get the best fit. Adjust as needed. It is normal to have about a 3/8-inch gap on the top of the door where it meets the dash pad.



17) Pull the vinyl over the end of the dash buck. Paying close attention to how the old dash pad was cut and glued on these ends. The vinyl has to be pie cut. Take care not to cut out too far as the end cap may not cover a wrong cut!

I cut the vinyl in about the same places as the old cover was cut. Stretch and glue one piece as a time. Do not glue vinyl on top of vinyl, it has to be flush as it might be too thick if you have vinyl over vinyl.

You can slightly control the glove box door to dash pad gap by pulling the vinyl away from the glove box door pad when you are gluing.



18) Place the gauge overlay in place. Trace around all the holes with a ball point pen. Take your time and cut out each hole a little bigger than the gauges. Install all the gauges, wiper switch, ignition switch and etc. Notice the outstanding fit (unlike the reproductions and rebuilt dash pads) of the gauge cluster overlay in relationship to the dash pad.



19) Place the radio bezel in place, mark for the two holes and trace around the radio face plate opening. Cut out the two holes, make a vertical cut on each end of the radio face opening and one center horizontal cut the length of the radio face. Sometimes these two flaps were glued down to the back of the dash buck and sometimes they weren't. If you are going to glue both or just one. You may have to file back the fiberglass before gluing the vinyl. Just make sure your radio face will come through and fit properly. This will be your decision, as both are correct.



Avanti Repair

20) To install the radio, remove the four nuts and fender washers from the speaker grill. Cut out the speaker hole in the speaker recess.

21) Install the speaker, discard the four fender washers then install the radio.

22) Place the glove box lock in the door assembly. Take care when pushing the lock through this hole, it's a snug fit! Make all final adjustments to the hinges, door check, lock assembly and lock keeper.

23) Glue the vinyl down around the steering column relief. If you are installing a dash pad on a late 1971-

1985 Avanti that has the ignitions switch in the steering column instead of the gauge overlay, you will have to cut back the vinyl for the large diameter steering column and glue it down. Just use the old dash pad as a guide.

If you are ordering a dash pad for a 1971-1985 Avanti you must tell me when ordering as they are made differently in this area.

24) Tighten the three nuts in the glove box opening.

25) Install your gauges.

