

55-57 Chevy Floor Replace



This photo shows a typical rusted out floor panel on a 55,56,or 57 Chevrolet. Although the following technique will work with any floor pan.

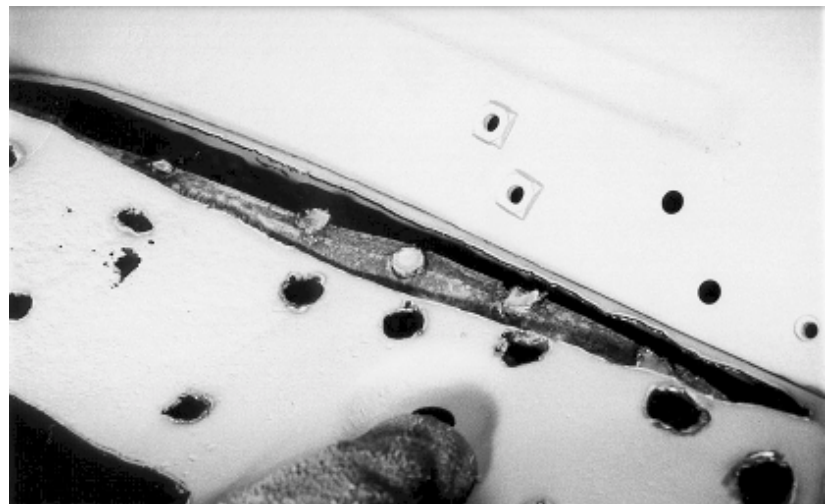


1. We started by setting a new reproduction floor panel from C.A.R.S. Inc. (800 521-2194) on top of the old piece. Line up the floor brace holes to the top of the existing body bolts. Take a carbide scribe from A and I Supply and scribe on the outside edge leaving a nice line. 25 PHOTOS



2. Take a plasma cutter like this Hypertherm MAX 20 and cut one inch below the scribe mark, as seen.(or use a cut off tool with a 3/32 wheel) This is just to get some of the metal out of your way so the new floor will fit down into place, giving you a better final fit. You can also use an Ingersol Rand cut off tool with a 3/32 grinding wheel to cut the floor if you are on a budget.

3. Remove both front body mount bolts going through the floor. Using the plasma cutter barely tap the trigger while making a circle around the outside of the spot welds. Or drill out the welds with a spot cutter. They are towards the front. Where the floor brace meets the seam. Take a wire wheel and an electric drill to make them stand out more before drilling.



4. Drill out or plasma cut the spot welds where the outside rocker meets the floor. Then take a chisel and a hammer and separate the metal from the rocker panel edge.



5. Take an Ingersol Rand 302 angle grinder and grind down all the welds that were left behind from cutting the floor free from the brace. A Mirka Trim Kut disc works well to grind them smooth.

6. Use a spot weld cutter and drill out the welds here to separate the toe panel from the bottom floor.

You may have to chisel the toe panel and floor apart by tapping lightly to separate if they are stubborn. After all the metal is removed go around the edges with a dolly and a hammer to straighten up the edges of the rocker, floor brace and toe panel. Sandblast all exposed surfaces if you can and apply one coat of Ditzler DP-90 Epoxy Primer.



7. Lay down the new floor panel, and take a round punch and line up the floor brace to the hole in the floor pan where the bolts went through, Then install a new bolt through the hole in the new floor towards the rocker. Tighten it down. See white arrow. This will pull the floor down tight for a better fit. Run a scribe completely around the perimeter edge leaving a nice line.



8. Remove the new floor pan and cut about a 1/2 inch below where you scribed your line on the cars existing metal.

9. Take the Ingersol Grinder and grind down the edges left from the plasma cutter or cut off tool, Grind it as smooth as you can. Preferably use a 120 grit Mirka Disc.

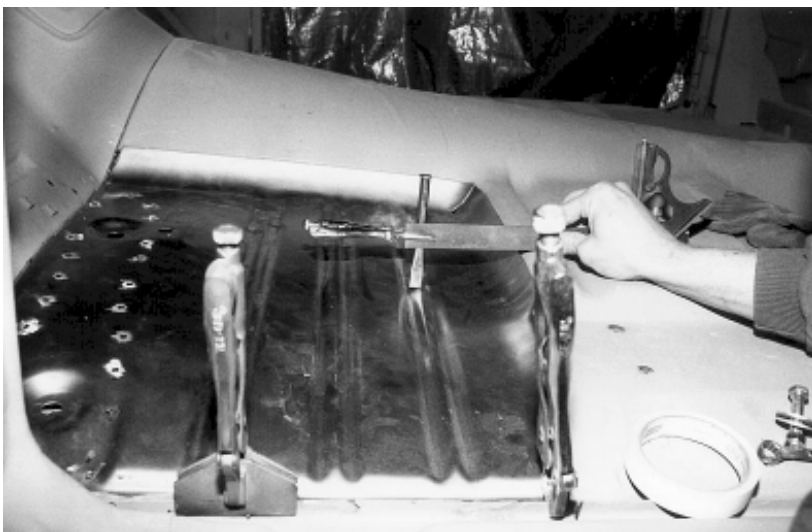


10. Take the new floor panel and flip it over. Remove all traces of oil with thinner and spray a coat of black Krylon or DP90 black around the edge. This will make the final scribe mark stand right out. Let it dry for ten minutes.

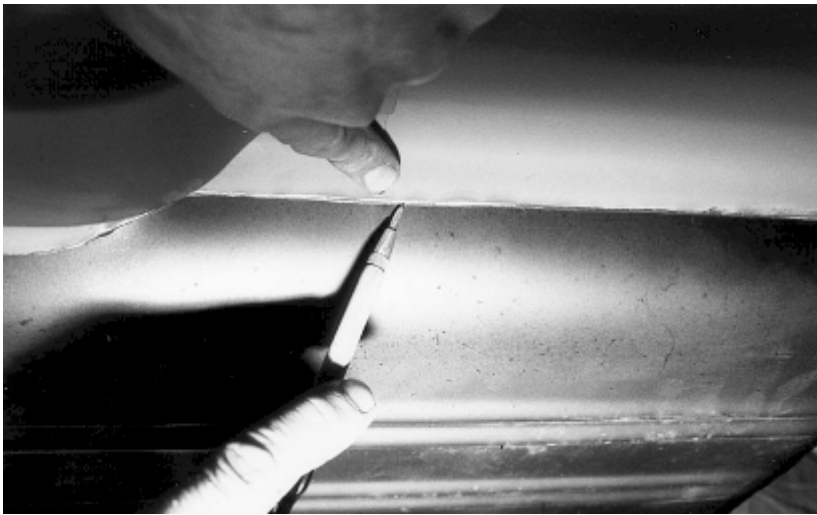


11. Re-install the floor as in step 7. Clamp the edges below the firewall, make sure the edge of the floor inside the interior is flush with the toe panel where your toes would rest as seen in Photo: #7.

12. Go underneath the car, using a marker run it all along the outside edge of the floor brace. This will give you exact measurements to center holes for welding the floor to the brace.



13. Take a measurement from the other side floor and transfer this data to the new floor, meaning how far down the floor should sit. Make sure it is the same. If you are changing out both floors take your depth measurements before you remove any metal!

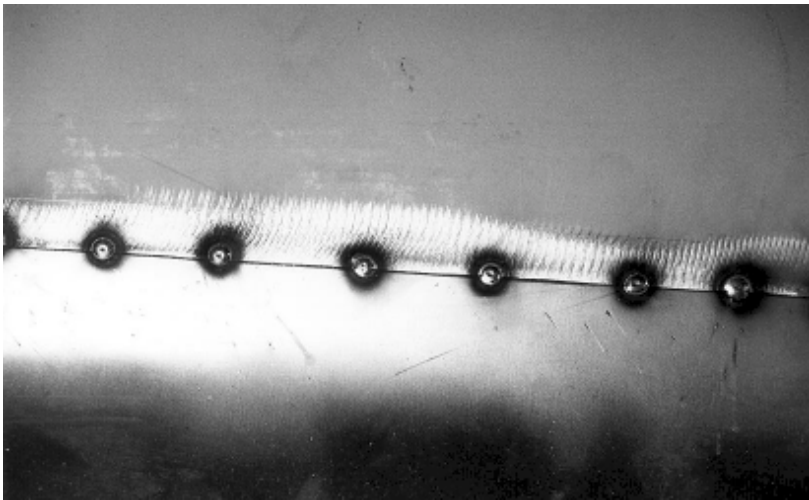


14. When all is satisfactory, go back under the car and scribe right against the edge of the original floor pan and black painted reproduction floor piece.

15. Remove the new floor again and trim the edge exactly on the silver scribe mark that stands out against the black paint.

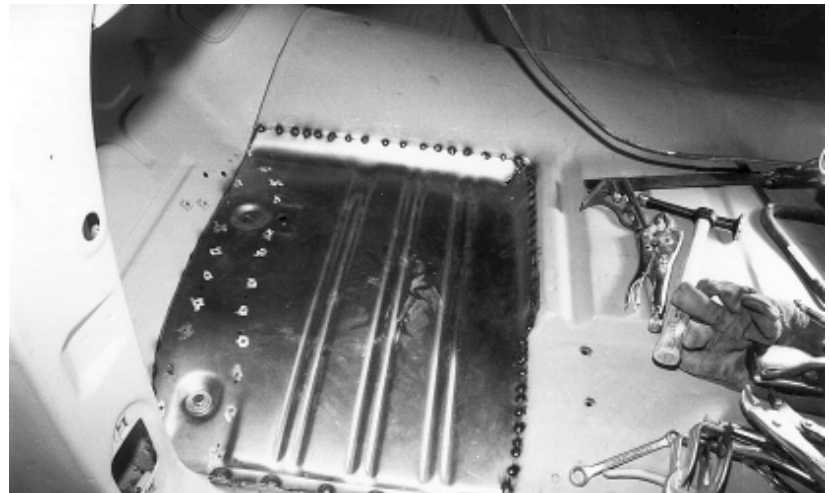


16. The floor brace is $\frac{1}{2}$ wide. So measure $\frac{1}{4}$ from the marker line drawn in step 12 toward the inside brace. This will assure centered brace holes for welding the floor to the brace. Drill a $\frac{1}{4}$ hole every two inches.



17. Install floor pan the final time. Align the panel butt fit together with a 1/64 gap. Tac weld it in place every one inch. This holds everything in place so that when you weld it up solid it will not warp.

18. As seen, the floor has been completely tacked in place and is ready to weld in solid.

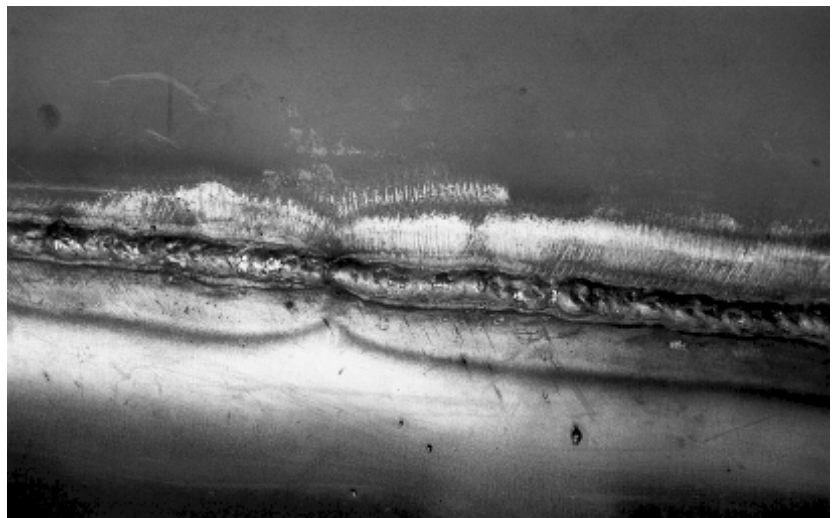


19. The seam needs to be welded where the floor and toe panel meet.



20. Take a Porta Power and press against the floor brace to make it tight up against the floor. Use a block of wood between the Porta Power and the brace. If your on a budget, use a floor jack with a 2 X 4.

21. Weld it up solid, weld a 1/2 inch at a time using a good mig welder, I prefer the Century 2150 with a built in stitch timer. With this timer you can lay down perfect beads without burning through.



22. Grind the welds with a Cut Off tool using a 3/32 wheel for optimum results.



23. Now check for pin holes, by turning off all lights in the shop . Place one strong light under the panel. Any light shining through indicates areas that need to be welded. Mark a circle around these and repeat the welding and grinding steps. Finish all welds with 120 grit grind disc for extra smooth metal work.



24. Take Vari Prime from Dupont and mix it accordingly. Spray the floors.

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