

1965-69 Corvair Trunk or Engine Compartment Weather Strip Installation.

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Replacing the old trunk and engine compartments weatherstrip is a nice improvement to your Corvair. The old rubber weather strip seal around the trunk or engine opening fails and can allow dirt and water to enter. A deteriorated seal is unsightly and negatively impacts your Corvair's appearance. Several vendors sell reproduction Corvair weatherstrip seals.

Before installing a new seal, the old seal must be removed. There are different methods to remove the old rubber seal and adhesive. If the car is going to be repainted then a small wire wheel on an electric drill effectively removes old weather strip and adhesive down to bare metal before it is painted. Other less aggressive methods can be used to leave the paint intact.

This article will discuss and illustrate weatherstrip installation problems encountered over the years by Corvair owners. The improper installation of the seal can result in difficulty closing the trunk lid or engine lid and can cause the trunk lid to bulge above the fender surface when closed.

During installation of either the trunk or engine compartment weatherstrips they must be; correctly orientated, formed around corners, and properly set in the metal channel. The weatherstrip ends must be mated to each other after the proper length is determined.

Were to glue the weatherstrip ends together - A starting position for one end of the weatherstrip seal should be selected. Years of observation indicate the weatherstrip ends are never joined in the channel along the fender on either side of the car.

Trunk compartment - The 1965 Corvair Body Service Manual states *"trim ends of weatherstrip to form a butt joint at front center of opening."* Some prefer the butt joint to be placed in the center of the channel closest to the windshield. Either orientation works.

Engine compartment - The 1965 Corvair Body Service Manual states *"trim end of weatherstrip to form a butt joint at rear center of opening."* The Body Service Manual Figure 5F10 has a picture of the Corvair engine compartment with the butt joint in the license plate area of the rear panel channel. The channel in this area curves and some prefer to join the weatherstrip on the long straight channel closest to the rear window. Either orientation works.

Fitting the weather strip into the metal channel - The weatherstrip is elastic. Care must be taken to prevent stretching the weatherstrip while fitting it into the channel. Stretching a new weatherstrip will result in problems due to shrinkage as it ages. It is recommended that the weatherstrip be trial fitted WITHOUT adhesive. This will provide you with fitting experience and allow you to refine your technique. One area of concern is the corners. The weather strip is molded in a straight piece and must be formed around the channel corners. If the weatherstrip is pulled too tight at a corner, the outer radius will tend to pull up and out of the channel causing a poor fit. It is better to allow the seal inner radius to pucker with excess seal material. Once you are confident with the fitting process, remove the seal from the channel and select a starting point for the end of the weather strip seal. Apply adhesive (typically adhesive is applied in the metal channel) to a short area of six to twelve inches and insert the weather strip in the channel, then do the next adjoining section. Use caution as the adhesive can damage painted surfaces. When you reach the other end of the weatherstrip, you must determine the weatherstrip length.

Determining weatherstrip length - DO NOT cut off the excess weather strip length until after the majority of the weatherstrip is glued in place to compensate for the weather strip is elasticity. After the majority of the weatherstrip is glued in, then then cut off the excess seal length and apply a small amount of adhesive to the ends and connect the ends to each other. NOTE: The weather strip will shrink with age. Trim the weather strip length about a half-inch longer and compress the weather strip to fit. When you get a satisfactory fit, then glue the ends together.

Adhesive Type - The 1965 Corvair Body Service Manual recommends using a black weatherstrip adhesive that is compatible with neoprene rubber. **CAUTION:** Weatherstrip adhesives can soften or damage paint. Only apply the adhesive to the area were the weatherstrip contacts the painted channel. DO NOT apply excessive adhesive. The adhesive might dry fast. Only apply adhesive to short lengths before inserting the weatherstrip. The same adhesive is used to glue the seal ends together in a butt joint.

Trunk compartment - Except for the corners, the trunk opening weatherstrip channel shape is the same around the trunk opening. Sometimes after installing a new weatherstrip seal folks comment that the trunk lid is difficult to close, or when closed the lid bulges above the fender edges. The problem is usually the result of an incorrect weatherstrip seal installation. Three issues have been identified:

1. Remnants of the old weatherstrip and adhesive are not completely removed preventing the weatherstrip from seating completely into the metal channel.
2. The weatherstrip is not fully seated into the channel. Pushing the seal lip below the metal flange requires the careful use of a putty knife or tool that has no sharp edges. See Figure 1.
3. The weatherstrip is installed with the top curved surface incorrectly pointed inward toward the trunk opening instead of pointing outward. See Figure 2.

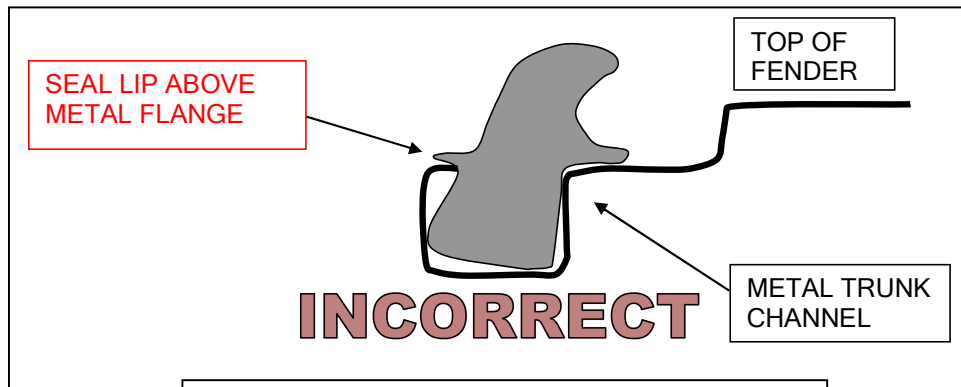


FIGURE 1. - Weatherstrip not seated below flange.

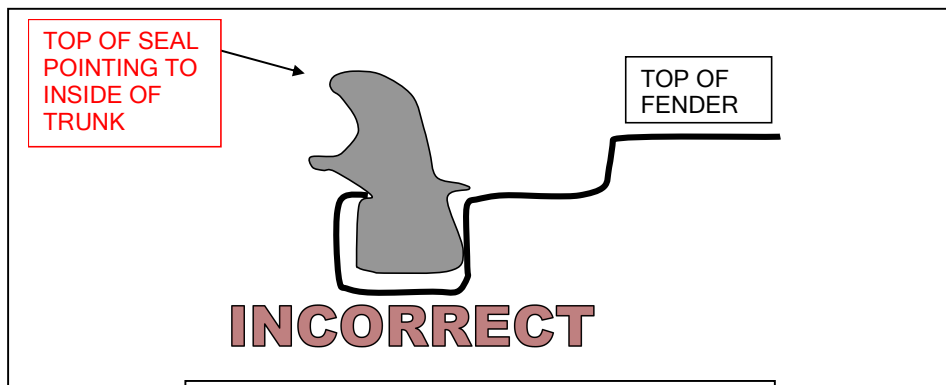
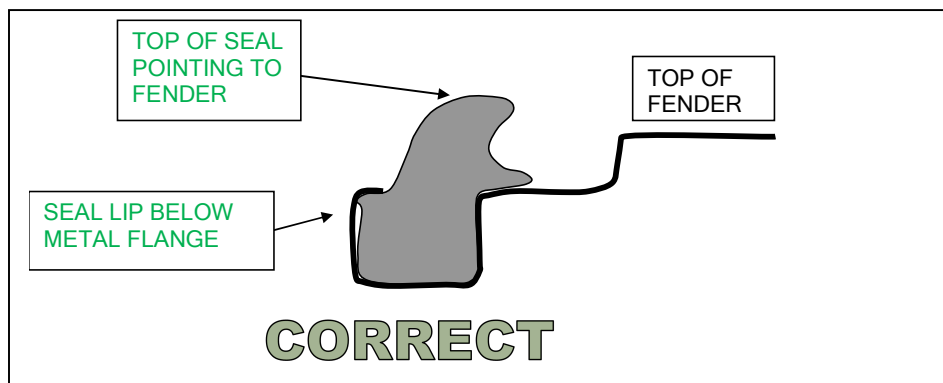


FIGURE 2. - Weatherstrip incorrectly oriented.



Engine compartment - The engine compartment weatherstrip seal is similar, but not the same as the trunk weatherstrip. The weatherstrip body channel does not have an inner flange on the channel along the rear fenders. Three installation issues have been identified:

1. Remnants of the old weatherstrip and adhesive are not completely removed preventing the weatherstrip from seating completely into the metal channel.
2. The weatherstrip is not fully seated into the channel. NOTE: The weatherstrip channel only has a metal flange to fit the seal under along the side toward the rear window/air inlet and the side along the taillight panel. Seating the weatherstrip requires the careful use of a putty knife or blade that has no sharp edges. See Figure 1. and 2.
3. The weatherstrip is installed with the top curved surface pointed inward toward the engine compartment opening instead of pointing outward. See Figure 3.

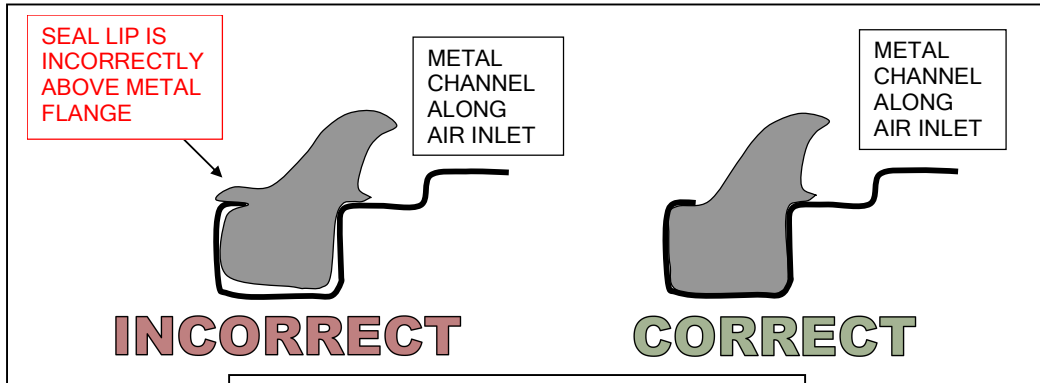


FIGURE 1. - Weatherstrip along air inlet side.

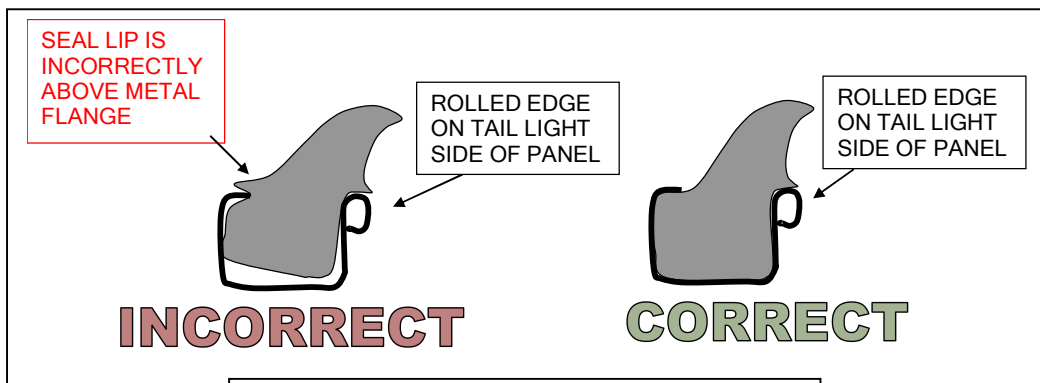


FIGURE 2. - Weatherstrip along taillight panel.

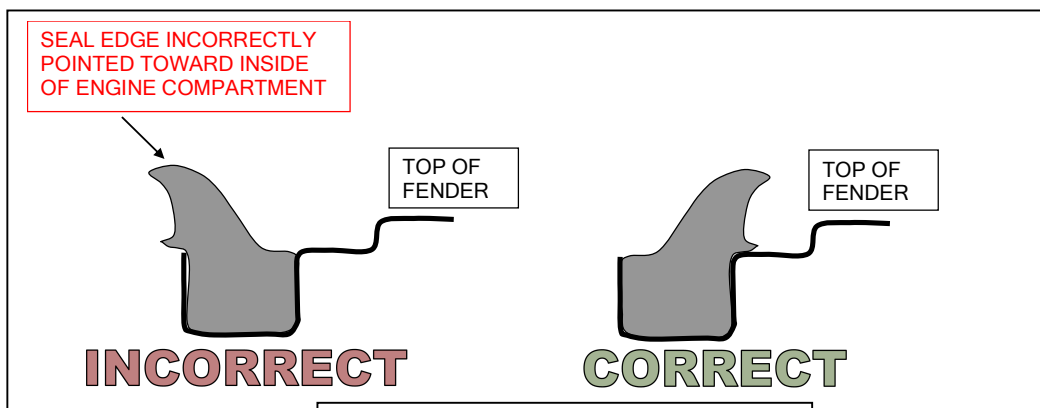


FIGURE 3. - Weatherstrip orientation.