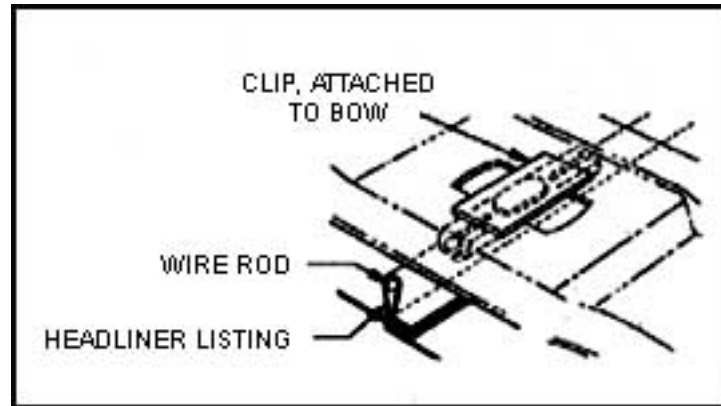


HOW TO INSTALL BOW MOUNTED HEADLINERS

Older cars (generally sixties and earlier) have headliners which “hang” from bows that go across the car. (Later headliners are of the “molded” type: fabric glued to a large, formed, backing that snaps and screws to the roof.) These bow type headliners should allow the patient handy car owner to do his/her own installation. The instructions that follow should cover all bow type headliners, with possible detail variations that will be apparent to you when you examine the original.

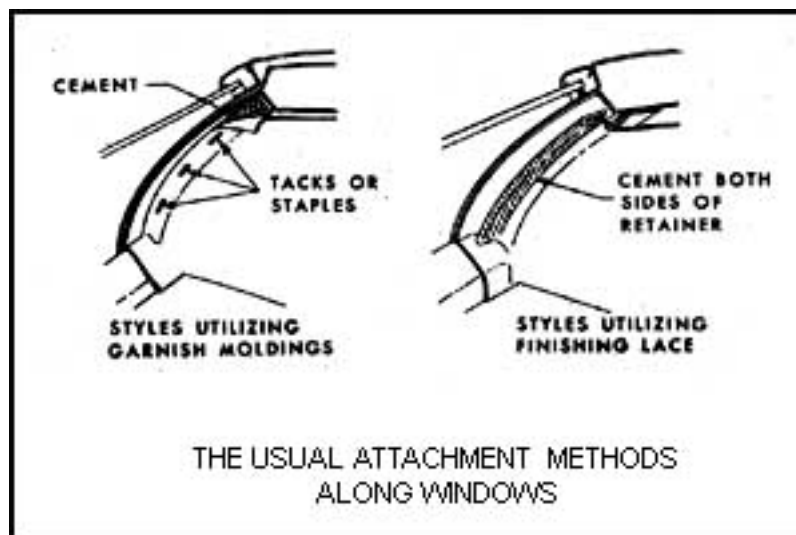
DESCRIPTION



Your headliner has looped pockets, or “listings,” across its width. In each listing is a wire rod that was inserted through it. Metal tabs or plastic clips hold the listing and its wire to the roof.

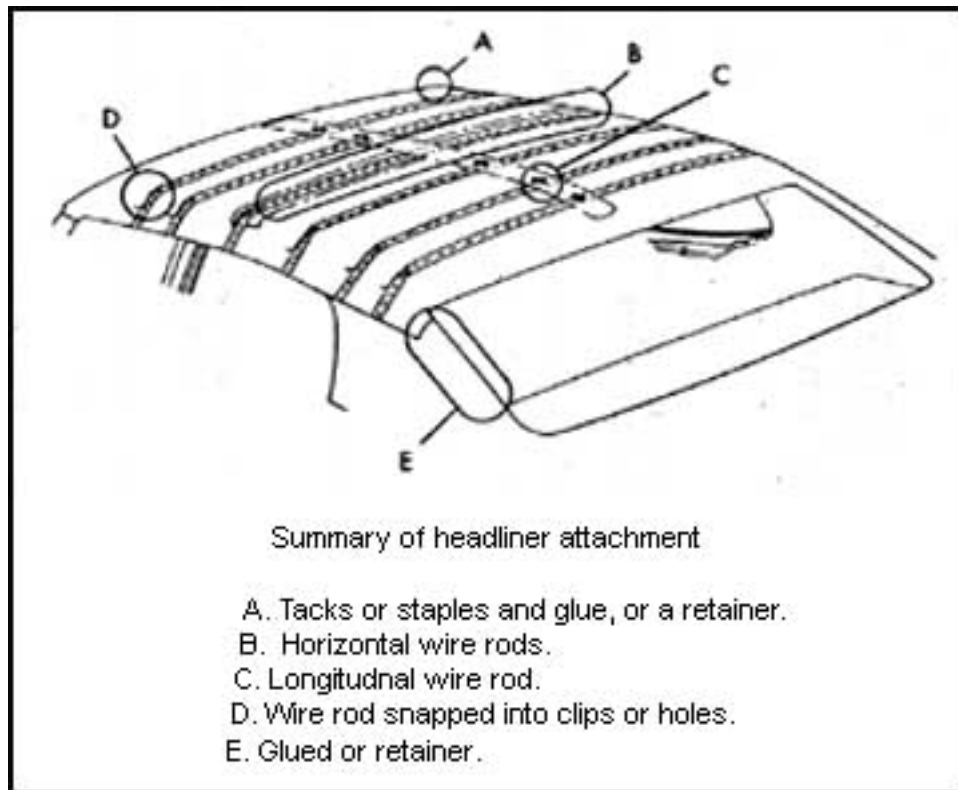
Listing wires are attached to the side rails at their ends. This is done either simply by manipulating the wire into holes at their sides, or by attaching to side mounted clips. Sometimes there is a ‘front to back’ bow (or two) with clips and receptacles too. This would enable the snapping in of a front to back rod as well. This is illustrated above.

Headliners are also cemented at the windshield and back window and/or tacked there as well. Staples or tacks are hidden by moldings. Gluing is done with contact cement or slower setting neoprene glue. Tacking can be done the old fashioned way with a tack hammer, or using a staple gun. In some cars there are retainers, called “finishing lace” which are simply cemented into place. The two schemes are shown in the illustration below.



Along the sides the headliner can be cemented to a retainer or held (pinched) into a retainer. The structure should be obvious when you investigate. There may be cover moldings or fabric finish lace along the sides, depending on the style of attachment there. Side moldings are usually attached to the retainer by clips.

The following is a step by step set of procedures that should guide almost any headliner restoration. Make careful observations during the removal process, such as tack or staple size, locations of clips, etc. so that when you do the new installation you are simply reversing the steps and referring to your notes. The illustration below gives a complete structural view of a bow mounted headliner.



Removal of Old Headliner

Make sure you cover the interior to protect it. Then remove the interior hardware, which usually includes the following: windshield molding or lace, rear window molding or lace, and side headliner moldings or lace, rear view mirror bracket, sunvisor brackets, lamps, coat hooks, straps, seat belt brackets, and all trim assemblies and panels.

Remove tacks or staples at the windshield and rear window.

Remove headliner from side rails by disengaging from retainers or lace and remove cemented areas wherever headliner is glued around the perimeter. Note: If headliner does not pull away cleanly then use lacquer thinner to assist with the softening and removal of cement. Also clean glue residue using lacquer thinner.

Start at the front and remove the listing wires from the side roof rails. Do this first for the first couple of wires only. Then remove the listing wires from the longitudinal bow (if present) toward the front of the car. Then do both these steps working forward from the rear. Mark each wire rod with a number identifying where the rod will go when it will be reused. Use masking tape to label.

Continue removing wire rods, either pulling from holes or bending down retaining tabs or else disengaging from the clips that hold them.

Remove wire rods from the old headliner listings. Each wire rod must be labeled so that you know where to reinstall.

Installing New Headliner

Using your identifying marks, associate each wire rod with its corresponding headliner listing in the new headliner and install the wires.

Depending on whether or not you have a longitudinal bow or bows (front to back) you may want to apply cement to the windshield areas, rear window areas and perimeter areas now or later. You will be attaching the wires into receptacles before you stretch and glue the headliner edges into place, so you want to have the glue in place before you lose access room. In most cases you can apply cement to all the areas before you begin attaching the wire rods. Because of odor and to prevent a possible accidental swipe you can delay the gluing for a while if you wish.

Lift the headliner to the roof and install the number 3 wire rod. Work toward the rear and install the side to side wires. Then, if present, snap the listing wire, or wires, into longitudinal bow receptacles. Then work forward and install remaining side to side wires. You can adjust the listing wires upward or downward by utilizing appropriate holes in the sides. You want the listing wires to be tight against the roof after they are installed.

Pull and attach the headliner at the windshield. If using a slow setting glue you will have plenty of time to tape into place while the glue sets up. Do the same at the rear window and rear quarters and the sides. Contact cement can be used if confident of alignment. Excess glue can be cleaned with lacquer thinner.

Reattach all the inside hardware and trim moldings.