

Bumper Cover Installation Suggestions from Willcox.

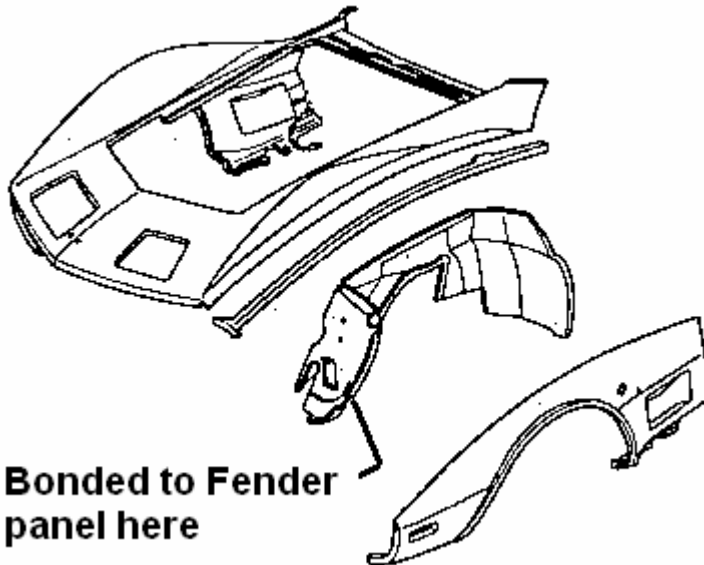
There are instances where bumper covers do not align or fit perfect. To most old timers, it is a known fact that the original GM bumper covers did not fit the cars perfect! Knowing how the front and rear clips were assembled at GM during production would offer you a better understanding. The 1973 (front) and the 1974-1982 front and rear clips were assembled in a manner that allowed for variances in both front and rear clips.

The front surround was placed in a large jig and centering mechanism was pushed, then the two fenders were inserted in another jig and again a centering mechanism was pushed. Once in the jig, a large amount of the glue was squirted in place and the bonding strips added. In this process the bonds were subject to discrepancies and did not allow the bumper covers to fit the nose of the car perfect. The same holds true for the rear clips which were assembled in a similar manner. One issue that will manipulate the front fenders and the rear quarter panel is the amount of glue used to bond in the inner fenders, or the rear quarter well panels. Excess glue and the fenders pushed outward, not enough and they were to skinny.

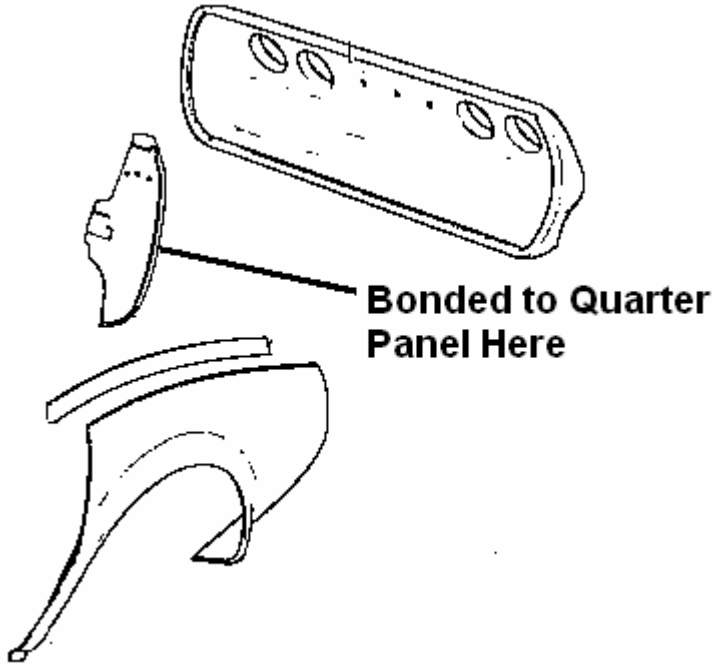
Bumper covers, if purchased in urethane, fiberglass or flexible fiberglass will not fit the front or rear of the car perfect! Some repair shops will blow this out of proportion when installing and I suspect they do this since they don't want to produce something that is not perfect. With a urethane bumper cover you are stuck with what you get, with fiberglass and flexible fiberglass covers you can fill the sides to meet the edges perfect. In some rare cases removal of material may be required to allow for a better fit. The fiberglass and the flexible bumper covers can be filled to fit with little problems by an experienced shop. Urethane covers can be stretched to fit closer to the original nose or rear end of the car but doing so will only give you waves and dips in the cover.

FRONT BUMPERS: We have documented many no hit cars where the original bumper covers fit one side of the car and do not fit the other. Some instances are as much as one quarter of an inch on the side of the cover. This problem is more common on the passenger side than driver; however it can be present in both sides of the car!

You can make adjustments in the fender alignment of the car to allow the fender to move outward or inward for a better fit. Doing this takes a professional and will not guarantee a perfect or even a close fit. The inner fenders are bonded to fender side panels (see picture below) and you can cut loose the bonding material on the forward lip to either move the fender in or outward to make a correction. Again, this will not fix the entire problem if one exists and will only make the cover fit better. A filler agent can be used in place of this to save both time and labor.



REAR BUMPERS: Rear bumper covers and be tweaked for a better fit by following the same advice as above, only instead of the inner fender you need to cut loose the rear quarter wheel well panel (see picture below). You should be able to locate it under the car to the rear of the wheel. If you remove the bonding agent between the quarter panel and the well panel you can move the quarter panel inwards and outwards a slight amount.



Once you have the bumper cover in place, then you can re-bond these panels to either the fender or the quarter panel. Please be advised these are only suggestions. We advise you seek a professional shop with Corvette Experience. Moving fenders and quarter panels can crack your existing paint.

Please refer to repair suggestion from the manufacturer on the installation of bumper covers. Property of Willcox Inc. 2007.