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How To Be Cool... AND QUIET TOO

TECH

BY DAVE HILL
Photography: Dave Hill



We're not going to tell you how to be cool — only the Fonz could do that. However, we have the inside scoop on how to feel cool while cruising in your truck on a hot day and, at the same time, make your truck sound better than it did 30 years ago. Better yet, we'll show you how anyone can do it, even your little brother.

Our '57 Chevy 1/2-ton, better known as Project Yard Truck, came to us as a sweet old original truck, has continually proven to be sweeter than we originally thought, and gets sweeter every time we pull it into the garage. Our latest project is a thorough interior makeover, including full sound and temperature insulation. The truck now drives cooler (or warmer, depending on the season) and much quieter than when brand new. True, our plan for the Chevy is to keep it close to original, primarily updating it in the safety department. Since it's now going further away from the yard with each modification, we felt a few comfort enhancements wouldn't hurt — especially since they're completely hidden.

Insulation technology has come a long way since 1957, when our truck was built with virtually none to speak of. Now, Quiet Ride Solutions has simplified much of the work by researching the available materials, to find what's most effective, then locating a truck or car like yours and experimenting to determine what areas respond best to these materials. Quiet Ride Solutions accurately measured the various materials to produce patterns and then precision-cut them to fit perfectly. They're now packaged with complete detailed instructions and shipped right to your door. How simple is that? Follow along to see how easy it is. Then, check out www.quietride.com to be amazed at the hundreds of vehicles they make kits for, including almost every Ford, Chevy, and Dodge truck built between 1930 and 1986.

Project Yard Truck has been back together now for a couple of weeks, and the difference in the sound level amazes us every time we drive it. If we had a radio, we could probably hear it. The weather hasn't turned warm yet, but we expect to be plenty cool come summer. **CCT**



Quiet Ride's Acoustishield kits come with everything you'll need, including sound damper pads, heat absorber/barrier panels, special spray adhesive, and seam-sealing tape. We opted for a new firewall insulation pad to complete the package.



The high-tech absorber/barrier material uses an extremely dense fabric composition bonded to a reinforced foil layer. We used pliers to pull it apart like this.



The first step was to remove the seat. Here, you can see the low-tech shelf we built to keep our, well, stuff in, behind the seat.



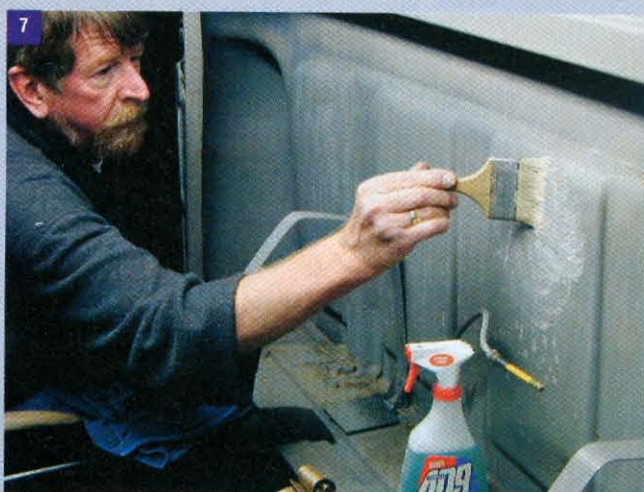
We hung a 4-foot two-bulb florescent light fixture from the headliner welling, for a perfect light source that stayed out of the way.



With the seat and rubber floor mat out, you can clearly see how nice the floor is. California weather and a cozy garage have been good to the old truck.



We loosened the gas tank and moved it forward to access the cab's rear wall. There was plenty of room to work around it.



When using any kind of adhesive, your worst enemy is a dirty surface. We used a popular household cleaner, then rinsed and dried all areas for a good bond.



The adhesive instructions called for 60 degrees or better, so we set up a couple of 500-watt halogen work lights and closed the doors until the thermometer hit 70.

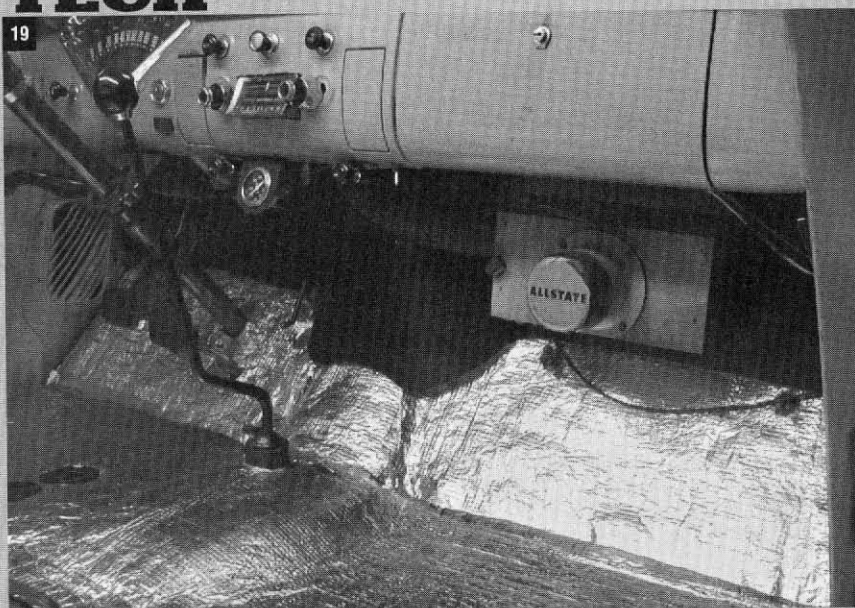


The sound deadening pads are pre-cut to size and adhesive-backed. A clearly drawn placement guide makes peeling and sticking them on rather easy. These panels deaden vibration, like putting your hand on a drumhead.



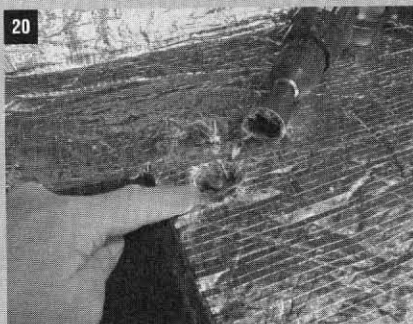
We used a wooden roller from the craft shop to ensure total adhesion.

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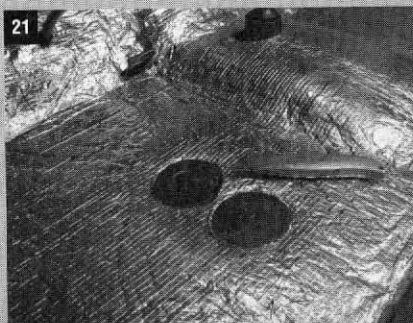
At this point, the floor and toe boards were covered, and the firewall insulator was installed. Luckily, it was both flexible and forgiving. The fit looked like a factory job.

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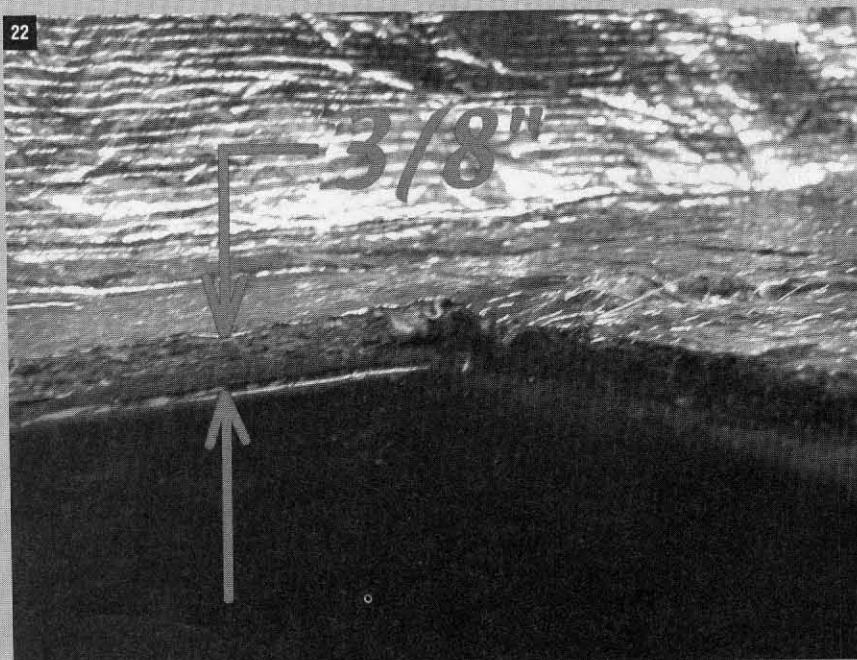
We used a hole-saw to trim away floor material, so the floor mat could be pushed down and locked over the original retaining buttons.

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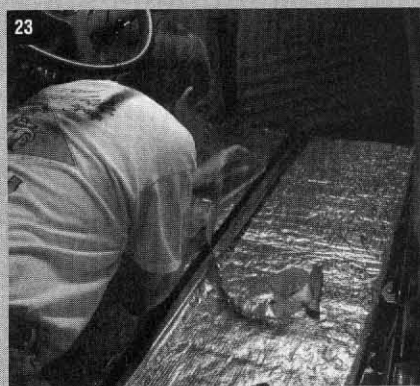
Next, we cut out access holes for our master cylinder fill plug. Earlier, we installed a Brothers dual master cylinder, so we needed the two plugs.

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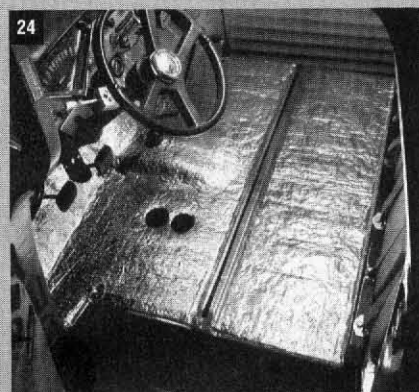
This floor level view shows the actual installed thickness of the system. The heat pad was 3/8-inch thick. We added another 1/8 inch for the sound deadener strips, and had 1/2 inch more material between us and engine heat or road noise.

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We sealed all the edges and seams with aluminum tape, and the job was done.

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This bird's eye view looks like something from the space shuttle. Our Yard Truck has taken a giant step away from '50s technology.

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The finished job looked so cool, we didn't want to reinstall the floor mat and seat. The difference was definitely noticeable as we cruised in soothing silence to the truck show in Santa Maria. The whole time we asked ourselves, is this just a Yard Truck?

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