

TMI Molded Headliner Installation

Gain headroom and restomod style with TMI's latest interior product

If there's one thing vintage Mustang owners will agree on it is we all despise headliner installations. Sure, a new headliner is under \$30 but the low price of entry has certainly fooled many into thinking it is an easy job. Short of major body work the vintage Mustang's vinyl headliner, which is retained by bow rods and glued in place, is one tough project; especially on a finished car. It may be one thing to install a new headliner in a freshly painted shell before all glass and trim is installed, but replacing a headliner in a finished car means removal of the front and rear glass, which of course usually means new windshield gaskets, and a whole lot of gluing, stretching, and the use of a heat gun or steam machine to get the material perfect.

While far from a correct and original look, if you're vintage Mustang is a weekend cruiser, daily driver, or shown in the modified classes TMI's new molded headliner may be the answer you're looking for in replacing that torn and threadbare headliner you've been putting off replacing. TMI's new molded headliner is made from a thin fiberglass mold for light weight, yet strong enough to retain its shape after installation. The molded headliner features a Uniseude material, available in black, gray, red, dark red, and parchment, or you can optionally configure the new headliner with stock-look vinyl in OE colors. The headliner includes A-pillar trim covers covered in the same material, and rear quarter trim pieces are included as well. Best news of all

(especially for the tall folks in the audience) is that the new molded headliner increases head room by well over an inch. The headliners are currently available for '65-'68 hardtops only, with '65-'68 fastback versions available soon we're told. Retail on the new TMI headliner is \$349.99.

To install the new TMI headliner requires removal of the rear upholstery and package tray, the removal of a few accessories, and then the old headliner can be cut out of the car without disturbing the front or rear glass or their gaskets. The bow rods are not retained with the new TMI molded headliner, but we do recommend holding on to them in case you ever wish to return to a stock/correct type headliner in the future.





Ironically, the stock headliner in this '65 hardtop was actually in decent shape. However, the 6-foot plus tall owner was looking for a bit of extra headroom and to update the car's looks with a more modern feel to match the rest of his recent interior upgrades (which you can see in the March 2014 issue).



Grab the pinch-on windlace that finishes the headliner on each side and pull it off of the pinch-weld. Save these pieces for reinstallation with the new TMI molded headliner, or purchase new windlace if yours does not have sufficient grip.



Now it is time to get on to the semi-destructive portion of the project. The headliner's edge on the pinch weld can be carefully pulled free to separate the vinyl from the pinch weld as shown.



The rear seat and trim need to be removed in order to properly remove the old headliner and fit the new TMI quarter pieces. The rear seat cushion is removed by simply pulling up on the seat base firmly. The seatback frame is retained by two tapping bolts at the bottom (one on each side) that, once removed, allow the seatback to lift straight up and off the seatback's retainers.



While working in the door opening area removing the windlace on each side now is the perfect time to remove the coat hooks from the roof structure. In our case we planned to not reuse the coat hooks with the TMI molded headliner, but you are welcome to do so if you utilize them in your travels.



Around the perimeter of the rear glass gasket a hobby knife is used to carefully cut the headliner behind the rubber gasket as close to the edge of the pinch weld as possible. The same process must be done for the front glass gasket at the top.



To remove the lower quarter trim panels you will need to remove the door sill plates, the quarter trim's pinch-on windlace, the window crank handles (Allen head set screw in the base of the handle), and finally a few Phillips head screws.



The rearview mirror assembly on the '65-'67 Mustangs must be removed from the front of the headliner as well. This mounting bracket will be reused to secure the headliner to the roof structure.

Separate the headliner trim from the quarter panel area by pulling down on the vinyl until the metal teeth from the quarter panel are free of the material and then lift the material out of the way. Reach up behind the headliner and pull the headliner bows down by rotating them (the rear bows have two wire retainers that must be unclipped first) and then carefully bend the bows until one end releases from the roof structure. Remove the headliner with bows still in place and store the bows in the headliner to ensure the bows stay in order.



The package tray is held in place by two metal clips at the top of the rear seat structure. Carefully pull these clips free and then slide the package tray forward.



Lastly, the sunvisors are removed from the car as well. Retain the visors and mounting screws for reinstallation, or better yet, order matching TMI visors that will complement the headliner kit from TMI.



TO INSTALL THE NEW TMI HEADLINER REQUIRES REMOVAL OF THE REAR UPHOLSTERY AND PACKAGE TRAY, THE REMOVAL OF A FEW ACCESSORIES, AND THEN THE OLD HEADLINER CAN BE CUT OUT OF THE CAR WITHOUT DISTURBING THE FRONT OR REAR GLASS OR THEIR GASKETS.



If there is any original insulation left now is the perfect time to carefully remove the remnants and install a better, more efficient thermal and sound insulating solution, just be sure to wear breathing protection.





Use a plastic scraper to clean the roof skin of any remaining insulation. You want all stray insulation removed to allow your new insulation to adhere to the roof skin.



Once the insulation is installed (you can see the foil backed insulation directly over the TMI molded headliner) the TMI molded headliner is slid through the door opening and rotated into place. Using the proper indexing hole per the TMI instructions, a pick tool is inserted through the hole so that it can be positioned in the rear view mirror mounting screw hole to properly place the headliner.

With the headliner centered using the pick tool a second helper temporarily secures the headliner to the pinch welds at each door opening using high-strength rubber coated spring clamps. These clamps are the "trick" to getting the headliner properly located and kept in place while you work.



We opted for QuietRide Solution's headliner kit since we were so impressed with their body and chassis kits we installed on the same car previously. The QuietRide Solutions kit includes strips of Dynamat that are installed with a roller to reduce sheetmetal resonance before the insulation is installed. The insulation is pre-cut and includes spray glue and foil tape to completely seal the insulation to the roof skin.



Using a plastic spreader or trim tool carefully pull back the front windshield gasket at the top so that the headliner's forward lip can be tucked behind the gasket.



Shown here is the front lip of the molded headliner in place behind the windshield gasket (save for the last few inches we still need to do). Repeat these steps for the rear window gasket and then carefully install the pinch-on windlace over the pinch welds on each side of the headliner, removing the clamps as you go.



Using a small dental-type pick carefully find the screw holes for the sunvisors and the rear view mirror bracket and install these items to further retain the headliner. As noted earlier we opted for matching Uniseude visors at \$84.99 for the set. The owner also picked up a new sunvisor bracket kit as well.



Before you get the last foot or so of windlace on each end install the A-pillar trim covers and the rear quarter trim panels. Both of these parts simply tuck in behind their respective glass gaskets and are then retained by the rest of the pinch-on windlace. The A-pillar trim is shown here.



The finished installation goes extremely well with the rest of the TMI interior and matches the Uniseude inserts in the seats and door panels perfectly.

SOURCES

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