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# THE SHIELD

## HOW TO KEEP YOUR CUSTOMIZED CORVETTE COOL AND QUIET

TEXT AND IMAGES BY STEVE TEMPLE



*It's the stuff you can't see that often makes the difference between a good and a great Corvette project.*



Just take a look at Craig's Schmidt's stealthy 2005 C6. At first glance, you'll probably spot several subtle but significant enhancements, such as Baer Eradispeed Z51 front rotors with red powder-coated calipers, fitted behind a set of chrome Z06-style rims. And Flowmaster mufflers produce that good old-fashioned rumble.

What's not so old-school, nor obvious, though, is a special treatment that keeps the noise level down inside the cockpit. The Corvette's non-metallic SMC body is a wonderful material in certain aspects, but not necessarily for insulating against noise and heat, especially when the car has some hot performance mods.

Besides being unpleasant, excess sound and temperature can interfere with a driver's reaction time and overall performance. That's why Schmidt sought out some expert assistance from Quiet Ride Solutions to help with quieting down his Corvette.

Let's address the noise aspect first. Note that sound can emanate from a least two different sources on a car: via a solid material (the frame and body panels) and through the air (such as from the exhaust pipe). So reducing noise levels starts with minimizing vibration, like placing your hand on the skin of a drum.

Dynamat, a material composed of rubber and asphalt, is the rough equivalent of placing your hand on the drumming motion of your cockpit panels. Quiet Ride, the country's largest distributor of Dynamat, starts an insulation project by laying down intermittent strips of this self-adhesive material on the body and/or frame.

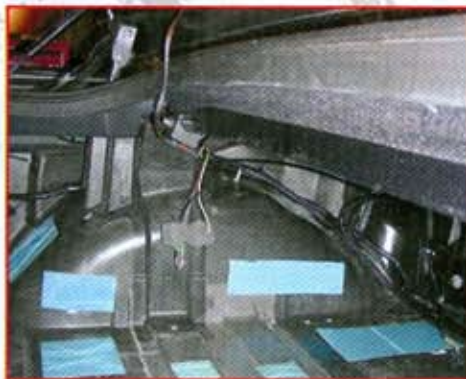
Next goes on a layer of Quality Heat Shield, dense padding bonded to a reinforced layer of aluminum foil. It's important that the foil be placed on top (instead of against the body or sheetmetal) for several reasons. It not only serves as a skin to protect the padding, but also creates an air pocket, similar to a double-pane window. It's that layer of air that provides the insulation, providing as much as a 50 percent reduction in noise, Quiet Ride claims, depending on the vehicle.

As for reducing temperature, the foil also helps to reflect back heat emanating from the engine and exhaust system. This material acts as a fire retardant, and reflects back 97 percent of infrared energy, the manufacturer says, resulting in a temperature drop of as much as 30 degrees.

It's fairly easy to put in the materials, and Quiet Ride offers a wide range of pre-cut kits for cars, trucks, RVs and other projects. A universal package that you can custom fit is available as well. It's important to make sure the materials form a consistent barrier or envelope that's sealed with foil tape at the seams, and is glued down securely. Once installed, you'll notice an immediate difference in the comfort of your Corvette, but without any change in its overall appearance.



The decibel meter and temperature gauge don't lie—this Vette ran cooler and quieter with Quiet Ride's shielding installed.



Start by loosely laying out the strips of Dynamat. You don't need to cover every square inch of the cockpit. It's sufficient to have spaces between the strips to break up the sound vibrations. The blue tape covers the self-adhesive side, so these strips will be turned over later on and pressed in place after determining their correct location, as indicated in the instruction sheet.



Note how thoroughly the foil-backed material covers every surface in the cockpit, and in every nook and cranny. To attach, simply spray on the adhesive included with the kit to the underside of the padding. A double application on the edges is a good idea to ensure a tight bond. Also spray adhesive on the Dynamat strips and cockpit surface. After drying a few minutes, the heat shield is simply pressed in place. Once the foil-backed padding is secure, seal the edges with foil tape in order to create a seamless envelope.



Even the Flowmaster mufflers were covered with sound and heat shield material, just for good measure.

#### SOURCE:

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