

AC vent rattle repair

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Have you been annoyed by your center ac vents rattling? Here is what I discovered when I dug a little deeper.



About the hardest part is removing the center console trim that contains the AC vents.

First thing I did was to remove the shift ball and then the shifter bezel, simply pull up on the rear by grabbing the inside of the ring and lifting up and back. Then disconnect the lighter plug. Next I pushed the switches mounted at the bottom of the panel through the front. Then I disconnected the switches and removed them.





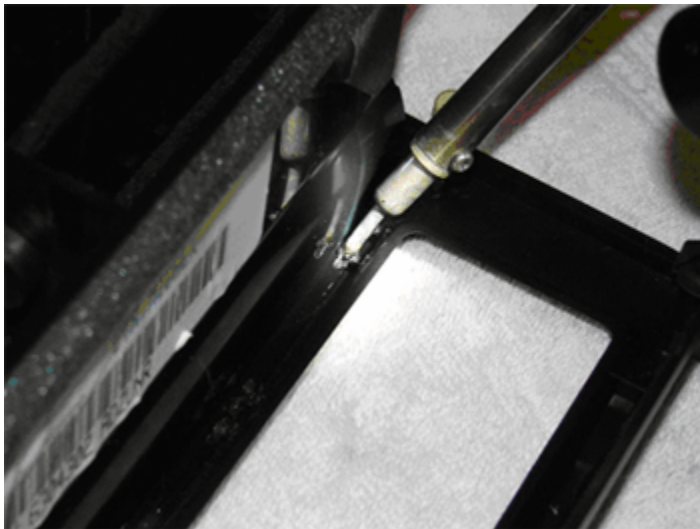
There are 6 connecting points, two on the bottom, two in the middle and two pivot points on the top. Start by pulling the bottom out first, then you should be able to slide your fingers in from the side and carefully pop the middle connectors free. With the lower and the middle connectors free, tilt the panel out, leaving the top in until you have some clearance and then you will be able to pull the panel down and clear the top pivot points and the panel is out.



Here is the panel removed. The 8 white posts are not the connectors but are just rubber bumpers that support the panel. The vent cage is a separate component and is held in place by various methods. The top on mine was nicely secured with three tabs that had been either pressed or melted. The sides were just barely melted and expanded.



The problem on mine appeared to be the bottom side where 8 tabs were melted over. These tabs had not melted into the plastic but had only been melted over and had become loose. They were probably not that tight to begin with. The picture below shows the tabs after I removed the melted over plastic to make sure the pieces were fitting flush. I guess in hindsight I could have left it in place.

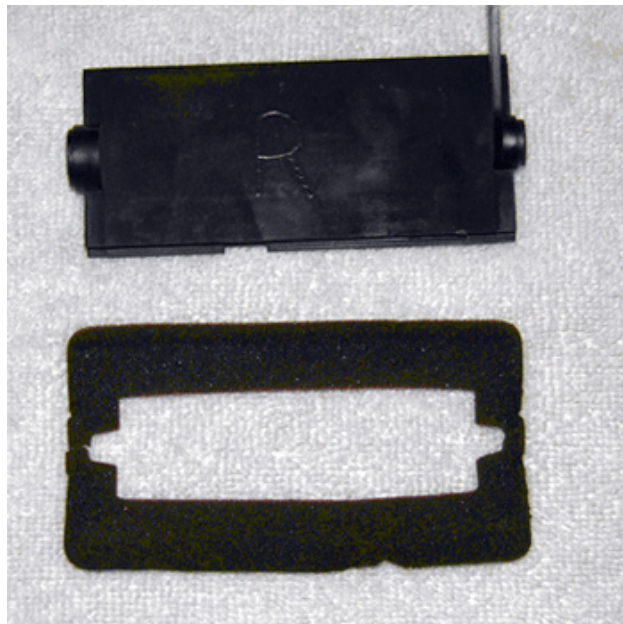


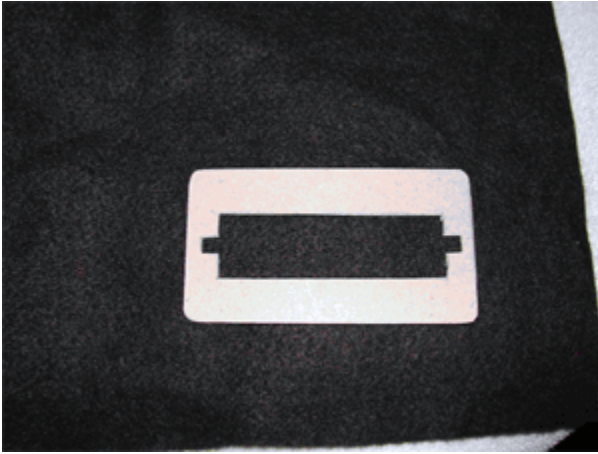
I first used a soldering iron to VERY CAREFULLY melt the side tabs. Next I VERY CAREFULLY melted the 8 tabs on the bottom. You do not want to melt too much because you will RUIN the panel. NOTE: If you are uncomfortable melting the plastic then I would suggest you only use the glue to secure the parts.

Next I used epoxy to glue all around the vent box. I used "Loctite® Plastic Bonder" from Lowes. There are a lot of epoxy's available but this one was listed as suitable for "ABS" which is what the vent panel is made out of.



While inspecting my repair I noticed that there was a small piece of foam that fits around the vent doors that had started to fall apart.





I was able to remove the other door foam and use it as a template to cut a new seal out of felt. Here you can see the felt seals on both doors.

You are ready to put the panel back in.

Remember how you had to tilt the panel out to get the top to pivot out? If you look at the top of the panel you will notice how the prongs pivot out of the way when you install the panel. You can simply push the panel straight in instead of trying to pivot it in.

You may need to reach in from the bottom to align the bottom posts. try to get them lined up before pushing the middle posts all the way in.

Install the switches and the shifter bezel and shift ball.

Enjoy your rattle free AC!