

Bumper Fit (1958-1962)

by ROY BRAATZ

I had a call from a person asking how to correct the bowing out of the fender above his tire opening on a 1958 Corvette. The 1958 Corvette was the first year that used bumper brackets that were bolted to the frame (right and left front corners) as later were also. The thing to remember here is that the brackets besides being bolted to the frame, is that they were also bolted through the fender (in two places, each side).

Fig. 1 view A, you see a cushion, spacer and most important the shims. Now think of the PRESSURE, that would be applied right above the fender at the top of the tire if the bumper were to be pushed inward from a vary little bump to the corner area of the bumper, which in turn would bend the bracket inward. This can be detected or seen most often where the bumper is bolted to the grill teeth BAR (there you will see a gap where the two come together (I have seen this, even on restored vettes). Where the owner hasn't realized that the bracket is bent, or hasn't used the right amount of shims. Here is where the shims come in to play. As I wrote before about the need and use of shims in the last issue. On 58-62 concerning

shims or washer, meaning the same thing, you determine as (required), when dealing with the bumpers, how many shims are needed to add or release PRESSURE to the fenders. You either straighten the brackets or add more shims to relieve the PRESSURE, causing the bow to lessen, which may or may not correct the problem completely.

This condition is seen most often in years of 58-60. The 61-62 body is thicker, and the 62 cove area where the side s/s would be is now gone and replaced with a ridge of even thicker glass. Also an extra bonding strip is added at the lower front fender that I wrote about in one issue.

3 Inch Holes

All power top corvette bodies will have these two holes, where the cylinders lines that raise the top frame come through. The reason that they are so large is do to the fact that the unit was assembled completely having fluid and lines installed and tested. Then they just past them through cylinders and all .This is the easy way to tell if a corvette had the power top option.

You can see them in Noland's book where he talks about power tops.

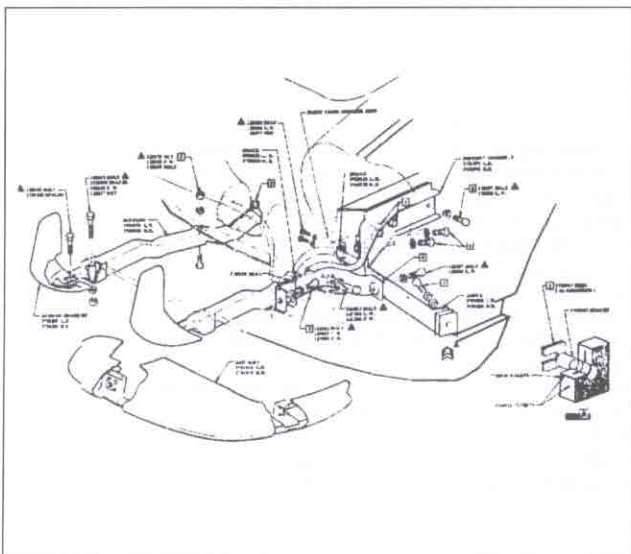


Figure 1 "View A" cushion, spacer and shims.

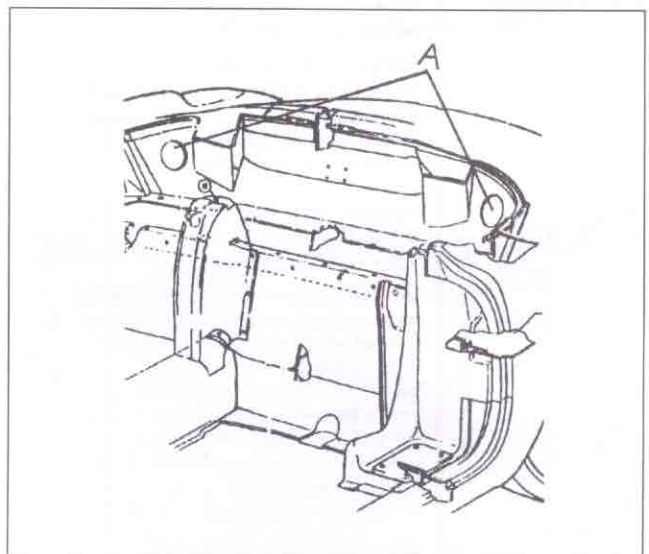


Figure 2 "A" rear trunk area having three inch holes.