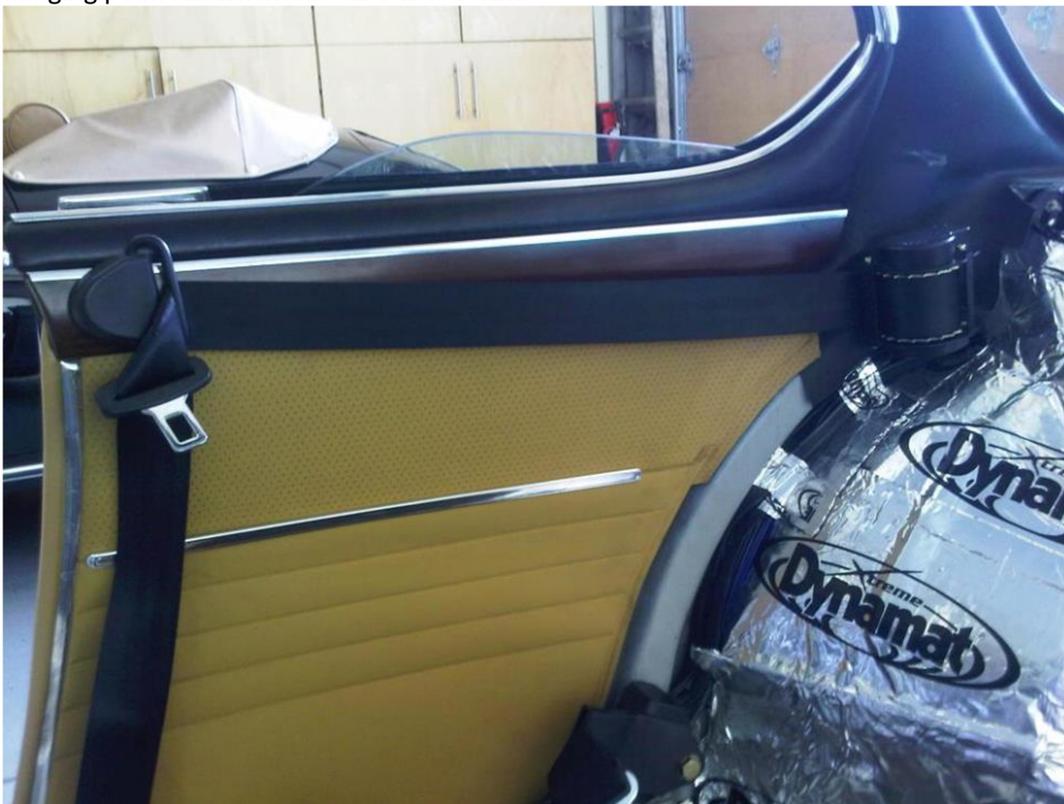


This is what I wanted in my car; it is the solution BMW used in '74-75 to my understanding. But you can see this uses the wider armrests in conjunction with the '74+ rear seat.



You need to mount the retractor as shown below. Hidden behind the armrest. The mounting position should be up high, some report a second threaded nut lower down the wheel well but usage is unknown. I will not be using the hanging point shown in this car's wood trim.



Now to armrest mods. But before that, you may know that some have thought about buying the '74+ armrests for their pre-'74 back seat... Coupeking has informed - Those parts should be easily obtained, as they come in any of the '74 and later coupes. Please be aware that these armrests are higher and will look odd if placed into a '72 car. The '74 rear seats are also a bit taller than the corresponding early seats to compensate. The later cars also have a special reinforced mount that is not there in the early cars, to bolt the seatbelt retractor to the body. Here is the height of the newer, wider armrests he spoke to >



Now on to the mods I am doing on my '71 armrests.

Shown below is 1) unmodified armrest, 2) modified test armrest (scrap), 3) modified armrest ready for new leather. You can do this mod without recovering the armrest as shown by the test armrest.



Compare the unmodified '71 armrest to the '74 above. This '71 has a wood block in the way of the retractor. But it is lightly glued and stapled and easy to remove.



The test modification armrest below is disassembled but shows: 1) the block removed to allow volume for the retractor, 2) the wood side panel cut away (this is seat side) to allow the slimmer armrest to accommodate the retractor (similar to the '74 armrest above, also note I found I could leave the vinyl/leather over that cut-away) , 3) a steel bracing plate which compensates for the removed wood block. There is no weight on this upper armrest but brace is required to maintain shape and a present much smaller wood block for stapling upholstery to.



The armrest that will be going back into the car. This again shows block removed, shows side panel removed, shows steel brace attached having wood stapling block and some upholstery foam around the stapling block. Also shows, not visible in the previous pic, a cut out in the foam and (look closely) in the wood. This is the slot where the belt passes between armrest and doorcard. In the test armrest I did this and pulled then restapled the vinyl and a nice inconspicuous slot was achieved. The '74 factory arm rests had a small plastic frame to keep the vinyl/leather back to achieve the slot. I was happy with the look when the test armrest was fitted so I'll not bother with that frame.



I only have this picture of the test armrest fitment. This is a poor picture because the test armrest is blue versus black leather seat. Wood is out, door card and window trim is just temporary setback in place. The flash makes it ugly. And I'd say instead of **maybe** noticing the slot in the fuller view of the back seat this focusses right on the modification – but I wanted to show the slot and fitment >



If this arm rest mod is not scarring you off I can send all measurement, step by step, even have some spare steal brackets. Also any auto-upholstery guy should be able to do this nicely to your 2800 or pre-'74 armrests.