By Rob Siegel The Dashboard consist of 5 main pieces: *the wood backing and floor*; *the top*; *the rim piece* (with holes for the glove box button) *and its molding*; *the instrument cluster*,and *the cowling covering it*. (This terminology is mine). If you try to order a "rim piece," odds are small that anyone will know what you're talking about.

First, *remove the steering wheel*. If the car has automatic transmission, you may need to remove the gear indicator on top of the ignition switch housing. *Remove the under dash piece to the right of the steering column*. Open the glove compartment and the hood latch cover. Down the road, you may need to pull out the console, or just try to fudge your way around it.

The first things that must come out are the *top and cowling*. This is the piece that sits almost flush with the bottom of the windshield. The cowling that covers the instrument cluster is held on to the top piece with two Phillips head screws that are only accessible from the front. Thus, to take off the cowling, the top piece and cowling must be removed as a pair. I suspect if the windshield is out, the cowling screws can be reached from the front, but don't take my word as gospel. The top piece is held to the body of the car by *four pop clips*, two somewhere in the middle and one at either end. The cowling, in addition to being screwed to the top piece, is bolted down by *two 8mm nuts* on studs that protrude from the bottom. Remove the nuts and use a long screwdriver to ever so carefully pop the clips holding the top piece. Very carefully, tilt and maneuver the assembly out. (Note the gratuitous use of the word "carefully"). The ends are usually very brittle. The top piece has to be tilted to clear the tops of the defroster ducts.

Next comes *the rim piece*. It is held on by an array of Phillips screws. With a screwdriver, carefully pry off the two silver strips that cover the screws. Note: The back of the strips has posts that hook into clips buried in the rim piece. Sometimes these clips pop out when the strips are pried off. Undo all of the Phillips screws. Note: the large ones at each corner screw directly into the wood dash, and the small ones go through the metal tabs, then into the wood. When every screw is removed, carefully lift the rim piece out.

The *instrument cluster* is next. Undo the Speedo cable; pull out both of the plug connectors, and the trip odometer. Remove the *two 8mm nuts* from the end of their studs and pull the cluster out of the way.

The dash is held onto the underlying metal shelf by three *10mm bolts*, one at each end, and one in the middle. In addition, there are *two idiotic Phillips screws* on either side of the cowling. The console hides the right hand screw. As stated above, since I was pulling it out of a junky car with an even junkier console, I got a bit rough with the console pieces. It may be necessary to pull out the console to get at it, and if the car has a/c, *the condenser* may have to be swung out of the way. At the top of the dash, you'll see a silver strip. Undo all the Phillips screws holding the strip to the body of the car. Remove the strip. Very, very carefully tilt the dash and pull it out. **"Do not force it".**

Removal is the reverse of installation, with some problems. Replace the wood dash and floor by very carefully maneuvering it into position. Put the chrome strip on the top front of the dash; screw the strip to the dash and to the body of the car. Replace the *three 10mm bolts* and those idiotic Phillips head screws (or not.). Replace the instrument cluster, hook it up, and put the *two 8mm nuts* back on their studs. Insert the rim piece, making sure it sits forward of the metal tabs (look backwards through the windshield).

Put in the *two big screws* on the side first. Make sure they go back in the holes in the dash. Replace the lots of screws. If parts have been changed, the holes in the metal tabs mat not line up with the holes in the wood. When the rim piece is installed, replace the chrome strips.

Finally, the top piece and cowling. This is damned near impossible with the windshield in the

car. First, look where the clips are. There should be four, one at each end, and two near the middle. If the clips are lodged in the car body, turn them sideways and slide them through. Reach underneath to catch them. Replace them in the top piece by inserting them in the holes, remember, this piece sits as forward as possible. When everything is in position, push down sharply over each of the four clips until they pop into their slots. Problem is you can't push down straight with the windshield in the way. Again, best route is to do the work in tandem with painting or headliner replacement when the windshield is already out.
Good Luck.
Rob

By John Beaumont (74 3.0CSA)
The windshield is out. I got the glass company to make a house call. I did not want to try it with the windshield in. The front gasket was worth saving. Technician used a very special "L"-shaped ice pick (blunt) to loosen the gasket without damage to the headliner or vinyl. They lap over the edge of the lip and there are special "gripper" clamps on top, bottom and sides. All are potential problems for the inexperienced. Let an expert do it. If the windshield has ever been rock damaged and repaired, you risk breakage at the weak point. Mine did have a repaired spot, but did not break. The console (lft., rt.,top) is also out, but the heating/cooling are still in. The seats are out, as are both glove boxes (lft & rt). I left the steering wheel in.
Before you scoot under the steering wheel, take the following items and place them within reach for when you are flat on your back looking up under the dash:
1. light source
2. 5/16" wrench or socket (or both)
3. long shaft medium to large blade
4. steno pad and pen.
5. a #1 phillips screwdriver

Now get under the dash and locate the headlight switch. Behind and to the (right or left) remove the roundhead phillips screw (secures left leg of cowl covering instrument cluster). Some wires may be in the way.
Look up and to the right (where wood curves) and find "V"-shaped pop clip. Using large screwdriver, push on inner edge so it slips into hole and releases
Look back to left (slightly); locate two 4mm nuts. Using 5/16" tool, remove both (one holds left leg of cowl to wood trim/frame-other holds instrument panel to frame).
Using the steno pad, diagram each electrical connection on the fuel gauge (far right), label each with the wire color code (look carefully for secondary color) listing predominant / secondary colors. For me, this is easier than trying to read a wiring diagram on my back. Disconnect wires and loosen "fat nut" (upper right-finger tight). With one loose, remove instrument, carefully moving wires.
Find the defrost vent hose; loosen the clamp and remove hose (only), gently, lest you damage the outlet that pokes up through the dash. Now that you can see into this area, find back of the clock,

diagram and remove, maneuvering it through mass of wires. Locate the left pair of 4mm nuts and remove (you may have to come out and do this from front). Before you move, locate the next pop clip (in the same vicinity as 4mm nuts). This one is a bugger If you have the right screwdriver (I didn't), you may be able to pop this one loose. Maybe super narrow, long needle nose pliers will work. Good idea to go ahead and diagram and remove the next instrument leaving the speedometer for last.

Now get out and have a beer before tackling two buggers:

First bugger (if the condenser / A/C blower are out it would be a breeze)... Tools needed: long, large blade screwdriver, needle nose vise grips (mine approx. 6"-7" long) and a #1 phillips head tip (1" long type that goes in slotted screwdriver). Locate the second #1 phillips roundhead screw. Remember this one holds down the other vertical leg of the instrument cowl. Clamp the phillips head tip in the needle nose vice grips and using the screwdriver blade as a wedge, push the tip up into the phillips screw. You will get about 1/16th of a turn. If you can find a #1 phillips 1" stubby screwdriver, buy it. (The very next week, I found one. It would have been much easier).

Stop, have another beer.

Next, using a 10mm wrench (size?), remove the bolt that holds a "U"-shaped clamp. Remove two others; one to the left of steering column, and one in glove box area.

If you have an automatic, us a #0 phillips to disassemble the shift indicator on dash. I unsoldered the connections. I did not mark them because I'm converting to a 5 speed. You should mark and record in your note pad if you will remain automatic. Note the plate for both this and the next item are not glued. After removing screws, use a hair dryer or heat gun (on low) to heat area, and they will come loose with gentle pressure.

Go ahead and remove the "fasten seatbelt" indicator. Label the electric connector using masking tape. Using a small slotted screwdriver, gently pry the wooden speaker grill loose and remove the speaker. With these two openings (clock & speaker) you can now feel that pop clip. To see it, use a small mirror and point a light source at it so you can see what you are doing (backwards). I used a small screwdriver with a long (4") shaft that I had previously bent. After a half hour, I managed to pop it loose. Now reach on the right side of the speaker opening and locate the third pop clip. Fairly easy. The last one is to your right (opposite of 1st one). It is also easy.

While you are there, remove the defrost vent hose (only) on this side. The cowl and top are one piece so they come off together. Before you attempt to lift it off, check both tip ends of the top plate. I found a 1" screw that came in through the door jam holding the tip to the "A" pillar. In addition, you have pressure/squeeze points in several places. Make note of each. The vertical legs of the cowl may stick to the Naugahyde™ surface. Heat with hairdryer and gently pry up with your finger. Then apply pressure to the entire top, trying to see if any of pop clips have re-clipped. Re-release them and apply pressure to top again. The objective is get a tip end up past the pillar moving it up and back (I should have used a cooking spatula to slip between the Naugahyde on the pillar and the tip. It would have prevented damage). But remember those 4mm studs on the cowl that fit through the wood? As you lift, just a little, these studs are trying to exit

their slot shaped holes. The back edges of the cowl legs may stick to the wood too.
So you are trying to maneuver the tip ends, the studs and, OH YEAH, those defrost vents. Stop for a moment; make sure you got them moving around some from below. Don't bind. Break one and it will be the one NLA. Use the spatula under the left tip end and slide it up past the pillar (I did but not sure it was the best way), I wonder if I had pulled up and toward me that it would have worked better? I do not know! Are the pop clips free? Are the studs coming loose? Once they are and the whole top part is up about 1-1/2 inches, maneuver the defrost vents free from the special clips (underside) on both sides and push them down and away from the top part. If everything is free, stop, and gently push the electrical socket for the "fasten seatbelt" indicator down and through the hole until it is free. Now you can lift it gently away.
Have another beer. It's downhill, almost, from here.
You are now going to remove all the #1 phillips heads screws that hold the trim piece to the wood top edge. Once done, remove the round head Phillips screws that hold the trim to frame. Remove the trim pieces. Now you are going to start on the padded lip of the ledge. First remove the headlight switch knob by turning counter clockwise. Use circlip pliers (may have to adapt tips to fit in the slots) to turn and unscrew the face plate on the switch. Careful, do not scratch. Now with your fingertips pull the matte chrome strip away from one end of the lip. There are numerous pin/clips (about every 7" or 8") and once you get the first two loose (either side), measure the distance between them so, you can estimate where the next one is. There are none over the steering column. Disconnect the "hazard light" now. Several of these clips would not come loose with gentle pressure, so I used a long shaft, medium screwdriver and started at the console area where the trim tapers down and worked the screwdriver in to where the next pin should be. Then I turned the blade to wedge and pry (carefully). Not only did it come loose, it pulled the female part out of the lip. Slipped them back in with no problem. This took about 20 minutes. Then you can remove the lip by removing all the screws. By the way, you should be putting all these screws and stuff, with labels (what from what) in plastic zipper bags. I got a whole slew of them from a local jewelry store, because I wanted little bitty ones and you cannot buy them at Safeway.
The instrument panel is next. Use a little heat (careful, just a little or you will burn the thin material) if it sticks. Once loose, you can better see and diagram the backs of speedo; disconnect wires and cable and remove both.
Now using a screwdriver, loosen the bottom part (or shelf) a little at a time. Get the wood trim to move up and down some because it is a tight fit. The far left is the weak point, so do not stress (!!!) either side too much; you could crack that thin piece of plywood.
Once the bottom part is out, you will need a fine screwdriver to remove the screws that hold wood trim to the bottom. And an even finer one to clean the slots of the screw heads so you get enough bite and not strip the slot. My screws are pretty rusty and if I had not cleaned the slots, I would have certainly stripped one.
If you want to remove the little spear-like dividers that are affixed to the bottom part (I have not done this yet), I am told that they are glued to a "biscuit" and some heat on the reverse side

should cause the glue to release. I am going to use a heat gun and do it this weekend. In fact, I did break one so be careful. Now, carefully maneuver the right defrost vent out.
Well, there you are. If I can do this, you can too! Be careful and try not to mess anything up.
GOOD LUCK!