

Tech Tip

Adjusting Door Gaps (By Steve Swain)

Problem: Uneven quarter panel / door gap.

Tools needed for repair: Small piece of sheet metal, mig welder, die grinder, gap gauge and lots of time and patience.

How to Repair: I am “NOT” a body man, but I have learned a lot about how to set body gaps and align body panels in the last 5 months on my '79 Trans Am. I have never really paid much attention to body panel fitment when looking at a car, until I started restoring my T/A. I have learned that you set the back and bottom gaps of the door first to the main body structure and then align the fender, hood and front end. My driver's door lined up with out a problem, but the passenger door was a pain! The problem was that the gap was very wide between the top of the quarter panel and the top of the rear door down to about the door handle. The gap was even between the rocker panel and door and from the bottom of the door between the quarter panel looked great up to about the door handle. Marty my body man said that he did not want to fill the quarter panel with bondo to make the gap right, so this is how we fixed it.



I made a shim out of sheet metal that fit perfectly in the space to fill the gap and then welded it in place

(the holes in the middle were for weld penetration).



Once finished welding, we ground it down, sanded and applied a thin coat of bondo and now it looks great!

