

How to Fit an Armrest to the Driver's Seat.

I managed to get hold of a driver's seat back complete with armrest from a breakers yard, I was not bothered about the colour or even if it was leather as I was just going to use the seat frame and armrest mounting and use my cloth covering off my old seat back to recover the seat back..

Anyway my plan soon went out of the window when I started to strip the seat back down, it had been left open to the elements and was soaking and it the smell was terrible so I ended up cutting the armrest mount off the old seat frame and welding it back on to my original seat frame. So here is a small how to if anybody wants try it. I found it fairly easy and straight forward to do, no special tools required.

First thing to do is let the car go to sleep and **remove the positive battery terminal** this is a must as you're going to be removing the seat which has an airbag inside it.

Ok start by removing the driver's seat you need to remove the four plastic covers by pulling them off from the seat mounting frame to expose the 5 torx bolts, then remove the main plug from the main car loom to the seat, this is held on to the connector with an 8 mm headed bolt, unscrew the bolt and the seat connector will come apart like the picture below.



Once apart you can now undo and remove the 5 seat mounting bolts and place in a safe place, next remove the plastic cover from the seatbelt mounting point on the seat and remove the seatbelt securing bolt from the seat, the seats are quite heavy and need to be in the mid position and the seat back as far forward as the adjuster will let it go.

Now lift the seat out of the car and place on a suitable work surface, I use my freezer in my garage much to the annoyance of swmbo.

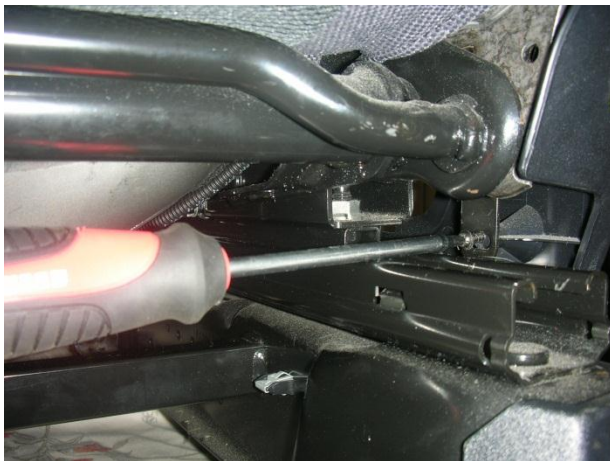
Now looking under the seat from the rear of the seat remove the black connector from the main connector block by holding down the little locking tab and pulling the plug from the main socket. This is the connector for the seat back heated seat element.

Now remove the yellow connector from the main connector block using the same method as above for the black connector, this is the side airbag connector.

You can see both cables that need to be disconnected from the rear of the seat as the heated seat cable is on the left side of the seat and airbag connector is on the right side of the seat.

Now once these are removed you can start to remove the seat back from the seat base.

Start by removing the screws from the rear portion of the right-hand side of the plastic cover and pull the seat back adjuster wheel from the seat, just grab it with both hands and pull hard and it will come off.



You don't need to remove any more from the right-hand side of the seat as access can be obtained to the seat back bolts quite easily.

The left side of the lower seat plastic cover is a bit fiddlier, there are two screws to remove on the outside and two on the inside, but on my seat one was missing.

Once the left side cover is off, we can remove the headrest from the seat, to remove the headrest, then remove the two plastic covers by prising them off to reveal the two bolts that hold the grab handles to the headrests.



pull the headrest up and feel the left chrome rod down to where it comes out of the seat on the outside of the headrest tube there is a plastic lug that you need to press in to release the headrest from the seat. Pull it all the way out.

Now we can remove the bolts that hold the seat back on to the seat base there are two at each side remove these bolts while supporting the seat back.
The picture below is on the right-hand side of the seat

The left-hand side is the same but you just need to access one of the bolts by pulling the plastic cover away from the seat base to get your socket on it.



Seat back removed



Now the worst part of the job to remove the seatback cloth cover enough so you can fit the armrest mounting and weld it in place without setting fire to the seat.

Start by removing the two tabs of seat cloth that are looped over the black metal uprights in the picture above on both sides of the seat back.

Next place the seat face down and start to release the seat back from the seat front as shown below this is plastic v lock that you need to prise apart.



Now start to peel up the front and rear of the seat to expose two tensioner strings one on each side of the seat see the below picture.



Just loop your finger through these and lift and pull them both out and thread them through the inside of the seat this now allows you to pull more of the seat cover up to the next set of cloth tensioners.

There are two more tensioners to remove to allow you pull the seat cloth up enough, shown below is one of the them , one at each side simply just support the black plastic under the metal cross member and pull out the black plastic clip this then releases the tensioner, do the other one and you now have enough slack in the seat cloth to expose enough of the seat frame to attach the armrest mounting bracket.



Once you have peeled back the foam rubber that cover's the seat frame you need to cover the seat as much as you can from the spatters that come from welding, this is unavoidable but if you cover the seat well enough with thick padding it will be fine.

I just cut the armrest mounting from the old seat by grinding away the welds, I then took a measurement from the centre of the armrest to the centre of the seat winding mechanism and welded the new mount in place this was the easiest part.

You can see in the picture how I used some old towels to pad around the welded area and you can just see the burns from the spatters, I had a bottle of water handy just in case.

Bracket now in place its time to start to rebuild the seat back and recover the seat.



Pulling the seat cloth back over the seat frame once the weld had cooled down enough I now needed to cut the hole in the side of the seat cloth to allow the mounting to poke through.

I made sure that the cloth was tight on the left hand side and cut the hole and then placed the big washer spacer on the shaft and then knocked the biff pin to the mount enough to allow me to fit the armrest back on.



Now rebuild the seat in the reverse order refit it to the car and you should end up looking like this.. it took me about 3 hrs. total and cost me £50.00



Flack