



# Hard Core & M2 Hard Core Installation Instructions

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## HARDWARE KIT:

- Foot Plate Mounting:
  - 2 - bent back-up plates (front)
  - 2 - flat back-up plates (rear)
- 12 - 3/8" x 1.25" bolts
- 12 - 3/8" lock nuts
- 22 - 3/8" flat washers
- seat belt reel plate mounting
  - 2 - 7/16" (11mm) x 1.25" bolts

## TOOLS NEEDED:

- safety glasses
- #2 phillips head screwdriver
- wrenches
  - 16mm or 5/8"
  - '94 & later - 17mm or 11/16"
  - 2 - 9/16"
  - 10mm
- jack and jack stands
- drill w/ 3/8" drill bit
- hack saw or aviation snips for cutting package shelf and interior panels
- belt sander or half round file for fitting plastic interior panels
- t-40 torx drive for removable hard top latches - obviously not everyone will need this one

1) This step is my favorite part: PUT THE TOP DOWN!

2) REMOVE THE TRIM PANELS COVERING THE SEAT BELT TOWERS. (THESE PIECES ARE CALLED QUARTER TRIM BY MAZDA.)

First remove the metal cap at the top of the panel just behind the door. This is held in place by a threaded fastener that is used to attach the top boot (10mm) and a Phillips head screw on the pre '99 cars. The M2 version is similar but an extra rubber molding has been added that is held in place by a plastic insert inside the top of the door jamb and another under the lip of the body just behind the door.

Remove the weather-stripping that runs along the front edge of the trim panel at the rear of the door opening. (you might find it necessary to loosen the 4 Phillips head screws in the scuff plate that runs along the bottom of the door sill on some early models)

Remove the plastic cover from the shoulder harness guide (it just snaps off), loosen the bolts and remove the bolt and spacers from the guide.

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On the '94-'97 models Remove the cockpit brace end covers (they also snap), loosen the bolts and remove the cockpit brace.

There is a small plastic clip at the rear of the trim panel just behind the hole the shoulder harness guide bolt goes through. Remove the clip by pulling it toward the rear of the car.

Remove the rectangular seat belt trim ring at the front of the panel and the 2 fasteners in each trim panel located on the inside just above the package tray, one is a kind of plastic rivet that is loosened by lifting the center portion and pulling it free, the other is another one of those fancy boot cover snaps with the 10mm head. If you have a '99 with the wind blocker remove the screws and lift the wind blocker out. The trim panel can now be removed by pulling it toward the center of the car, there's a couple of snap type fasteners down low just behind the door that you will need to pop loose as the panel is pulled free.

3) PUT THE TOP UP - Remove the carpet from the fuel tank cover (the silver cover that makes up the front part of the package shelf) and fold it back. A claw hammer is a good tool for removing the plastic carpet fasteners. Lower the top. (Pre '99 leave the window zipped in, be careful not to crease the window) Some sort of cover for the window is not a bad idea. Remove the large silver metal fuel tank cover that makes up the front part of the package shelf by removing the several bolts w/ 10mm heads that hold it in place and releasing any wire loom fasteners. Lift the cover up and out of the car.

On the '94-97 models there's a computer mounted behind the passenger seat, the outer mounting bracket will need to be modified and the upper mounting stud removed to allow clearance for the roll bar mounting plate. (FIG# 8)

You will need to trim the package shelf area just behind the fuel tank cover opening as shown in FIG# HC1. You will also need to remove the spare tire and the metal panel at the front of the trunk on the driver's side (the one with the jack handle attached) if you are working on a pre '99.

While it's not absolutely necessary to do so, I find it helpful to remove the front trunk panels in the '99, they are held in by several of those nifty little plastic rivet fasteners.

4) REMOVE THE LOWER SEAT BELT REEL BOLTS (16mm pre'94 17mm '94 and later) AND SPACERS.

5) GO GET SOME HELP!

6) Y'ALL SET THE BAR IN THE CAR - BE CAREFUL The rear brace foot plates will just fit under the front edge of the package tray, work the rear braces past the several wiring harnesses in this area being careful not to mess up any of the wiring. Also watch the front mounting plates, they will be very close to the seat backs at this point. The lower mounting points align (hopefully) with the lower seat belt reel bolt holes. The roll bar plates fit against the seat belt reels which stay in their original location but do NOT use the original spacers.(FIG# HC2) Once the Sport Bar and those rascally seat belt reels are in position start and tighten the seat belt reel mounting plate bolts from the hardware kit, make sure that your seat belts are on the inside of the roll bar.

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7) JACK UP THE REAR OF THE CAR AND SUPPORT WITH STURDY JACK STANDS - Remove the wheels and plastic splash panels from the front of the inner fenders. (pre 99 - 4 bolts w/ 10mm heads / M2 - 4 plastic fasteners w/ Phillips heads)

8) GET THE DRILL AND SAFETY GLASSES - Locate the position for the rear back-up plates by drilling the first hole down from the top. It's tight in this area, an angle drill is helpful but not absolutely necessary to do these holes. Once you get the first hole drilled, bolt the back-up plate in place, the others can be done from under the car using the back-up plate as a template. (FIG#HC3) The nuts closest to the frame rail do not use washers because of their proximity to the rail. (FIG#HC4)

The front plates are easy, just drill from the front and bolt the back-up plates in place using washers under all nuts and bolts. Tighten to 35-40 ft-lbs. On the M2 part of the evaporative emission system is located in the front of the wheel well on the passenger side, a snap fastener holds a small filter just behind the battery cable grommet and the front plumbing is held by a 10mm hex head fastener, loosen for roll bar installation. Reinstall the front fastener and relocate the small filter by tucking it behind the wiring harness after the back-up plate bolts are tightened.

Spraying the back-up plates with undercoating after the fasteners are tight is a good idea. Install the splash panels, rear tires, trunk panels and spare.

9) TRIM THE FUEL TANK COVER

10) CUT QUARTER TRIM PANELS - This will only hurt a little. In order to reinstall the trim panels they can be cut into two pieces, or you can cut a notch to clear the main hoop foot plate, (see Image 1), it's not really all that bad, it just takes some time to do it right. I use a small air powered reciprocating saw to do the dirty work, but a hack saw or a pair of aviation snips (tin snips) will do just fine. It's fairly evident as to where the cut needs to be made, just cut the panel and trim to fit up to the roll bar, but maybe FIG# HC5 will help to make things easier. A belt sander gives a nice straight finished edge but a large fairly coarse (wood type) file will suffice. Take several small cuts to get a good fit, you can always take more off but it's hard to put back.

11) REINSTALL THE REMAINING PARTS - If you are working on an M2 with the windblocker it will need to be relocated toward the front by drilling a new set of holes and attaching with sheet metal screws or left out completely. You will have some leftovers: seat belt reel spacers, bolts and alignment screws.

HAPPY MOTORING

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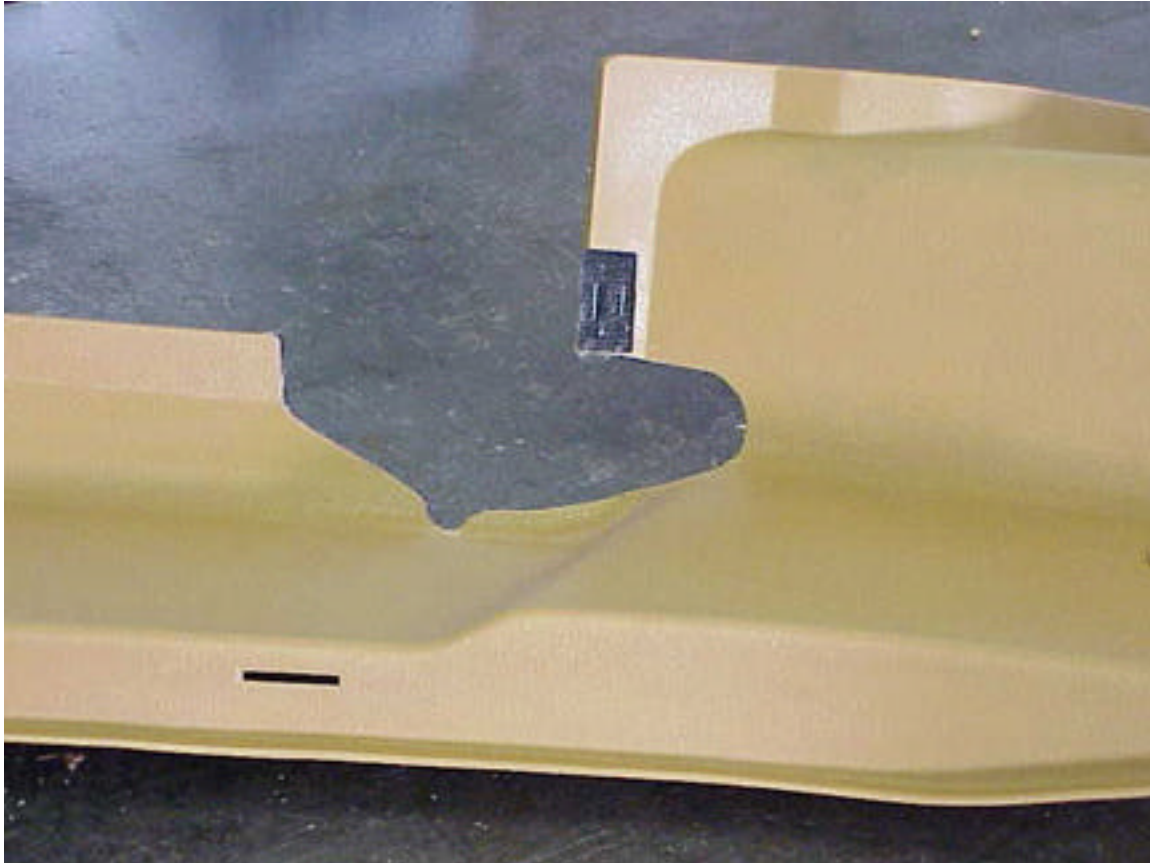
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IMAGE 1:



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