

42 Draft Designs

Mk3 Quad Gauge Panel – Installation Instructions

Tools Recommended:

thin flat-head screwdriver, interior trim removal tool (plastic), phillips head screwdriver, flashlight, rotary cutting tool (Dremel, etc), sharp knife, tin snips

Before You Begin:

This gauge panel takes the place of the factory (or aftermarket) radio currently installed in your vehicle. Before installing our gauge panel your radio must be removed or relocated. These installation instructions will cover installation of our gauge panel in an empty console.

1. Remove the factory blank/warning light to the left of your headlight switch by prying outward. Use a thin flat-head screwdriver or a plastic interior trim removal tool. Pry gently from the top and bottom until the blank pops out. Be gentle and avoid marking the surrounding dash. Unplug the warning light once removed (if equipped)
2. Remove your headlight switch by pressing the release tab on the left side. Pull the switch out and unplug. Using a phillips head screwdriver, remove the left screw from the instrument cluster surround.
3. Remove the heated seat switches/blanks located to the left of the factory radio by prying outward. Again, be gentle to avoid damaging the surrounding dash. Unplug the heated seat switches once removed (if equipped). Remove the right screw from the instrument cluster surround.
4. Remove the instrument cluster surround by pulling out towards the steering wheel. Some force may be required. Remove the blank located to the right of the factory radio by prying from the top and bottom gently. Remove the lower right screw from the radio console.
5. Close both air vents located in the radio console. This is very important! Open vents = lost screws. Use a flashlight to locate the console's two upper screws. Look through the upper left and upper right corners of the air vents. Remove these screws and pull them out of the air vents using a magnet or the tip of your screwdriver. Remove the empty radio console by pulling outward.
6. On a clean workbench, install your quad gauge panel. Simply press the gauge panel into the console taking the place of the radio and the blanks. Fitment is exact, so there should be no side-side or up-down movement once installed. Using a paint pen, trace the shape of the left most gauge onto the console plastic. This area must be accurately removed. We recommend using a Dremel with a 1/8" plastic cutting bit to mill out the circle.
7. Once your hole is cut and de-burred re-install the panel and test-fit this gauge. Remove the gauge and test fit the console and panel in the dash. Looking through the left most hole, check for clearance with the dash. Test fit a gauge if necessary. Some dash material may need to be trimmed. Trim as necessary with a sharp knife or a Dremel tool. Be sure to remove the sheet metal U nut from the dash material.
8. Grab the console and gauge panel and head back to the workbench. Lay down a t-shirt to avoid scratching the panel. Flip the console over on the face of the panel and install the backplate. The thin edge of the backplate goes down, towards the floor (when positioned in the car). Insert the two tabs on one side of the panel into the corresponding slots in the console. Slide to that side, lay the backplate down and center it. All 4 tabs should now be in their respective slots and the two panels should lay flat on each other.
9. Install the gauge in the center of the backplate by pressing it through both panels. Install the mounting bracket for this gauge and determine if the bracket needs to be trimmed. Our panel is thick, so most gauge brackets will need to be trimmed slightly. Once your center bracket has been trimmed to fit, trim the brackets for your outer two gauges in the radio slot. Install a gauge in the first hole and determine if the bracket should be trimmed. If necessary, trim the bracket.
10. Install your outer 3 gauges and lock them down with the proper brackets. The gauges and gauge panel should now be completely installed in the radio console.
11. Before re-installing the radio console, complete your gauge installation by testing all wiring, tubing, and lighting. You should leave significant slack on any wires to allow simple removal of the console when necessary. This is important! In order to access the back of the gauges the entire console must be removed.

12. With all gauges tested and working, re-install the console. Keep the vents closed and carefully tighten both upper screws. Re-install and tighten the lower right screw.
13. Re-install the instrument cluster surround by sliding the right tab underneath the gauge panel then pressing the surround into place. It may be necessary to trim the right tab of the surround in order to re-install. If necessary, trim the tab as little as possible with tin snips. Test fit until console clears left most gauge. Tighten the left screw. The right screw will no longer be used.
14. Plug-in and re-install the headlight switch. Plug-in and re-install all the switches and blanks previously removed.

Go Drive!

A Few Tips:

- Take your time to trim the console accurately. There's no need to hack the console out. In fact, the more you remove the less sturdy it becomes. Remember, a mounting screw is removed in order to run this gauge panel and there's no screw to take its place. If the console is cut out completely behind the first gauge the structural integrity of the console will be compromised. Only trim what's necessary, as described in step #6.
- Save the un-used dash screw and U nut just in case.
- Radio relocation is a similar, but strategically different modification. The basic steps of removing the console are the same but anything beyond that is your project. Our installation instructions cover removal of the console and installation of our quad gauge panel.
- If you need help or ideas for relocating your radio try searching the forums online. Radio relocation in the mk3 has been covered in detail online.
- Because of the thickness of our panel, most gauge brackets will need to be trimmed. Gauge brackets differ greatly by manufacturer, so the best advice we can give is be cautious. If you're unable to measure how much to cut, trim 1/8" off each leg until they fit. Without metalworking equipment, trimming brackets can be an annoying task. If our panel wasn't this thick there would be no way to properly install it. We apologize for the annoyance in advance, but hope you enjoy the rock solid installation.
- We recommend that all gauges be wired in and tested prior to installing the panel. Seriously... have everything wired and tested including lighting before you re-install the entire dash. If something's not right the entire installation will need to be repeated in order to fix it.