

So, you hate those stock 89-93 automatic seat belts, right? This little article will walk you through the installation of the 94-97 style manual seat belts into a 89-93 MN12.

Disclaimer: I take no responsibility for any damages that may occur to your car or yourself resulting from this procedure. This is merely an account of how I installed manual seat belts into a 89-93 MN12.

First off, you'll notice that the A-pillars, sail panels, and door sills are different in the 94-97 cars. Ford decided to hide all of the interior fasteners in the newer interior by using a lot of small clips to secure the panels to the body of the car. While this does look much nicer, it leads to a few problems.

Let's start with the sail panels. The good news is that all of the clips line up with slots already made into the body of the car except the front lower clip. I chose to simply remove the lower front clip on my sail panels, as the seat and door sill hold that portion of the sail panel firmly in place. However, you could create a slot in the body of the car using a cut-off wheel or a dremel (more on this later).

The first problem that you will notice with the newer sail panels is that the 89-93 body does not have a provision for mounting the upper seat belt mount in the correct location.



There is a mounting location on the 89-93 body (presumably for the Canadian cars which came with the manual seat belts), however it is approximately 3" higher than the 94-97 location and will not line up with the hole in the 94-97 sail panel.

To remedy this, install the 94-97 sail panel into the car, and mark the proper location for the seat belt mount with a permanent marker. Remove the sail panel. I used grade 5 hardware for this mounting point in my car. I would advise that you use nothing less than grade 5 hardware, as this point will take a large amount of force in an accident. You don't want the hardware to fail. I drilled a hole in the marked location, just slightly larger than the 7/16" bolt that I was going to install there.

Now, to get the bolt in there, I cut a 1 1/4" access hole using a holesaw. The larger the distance between the access hole and the new bolt hole, the stronger your new mount will be. Once you have cut an access hole, I recommend using a length of fishing line to pull the bolt through the access hole and into the new bolt hole. Install a washer onto the bolt, then wrap the fishing line around the bolt, laying it into the threads, and tie it off. After snaking the other end of the fishing line up through the access hole and out the new bolt hole, use the fishing line to pull the bolt into place. Place another washer onto the bolt, followed by a nut. I recommend using some Loctite on the threads of the bolt to prevent the nut from ever coming loose. Tighten up the nut, and you now have a new upper seat belt mount.



The seat belt retractor mount is already in the correct location. After bolting in the seat belt retractor, install the sail panel, slide the upper seat belt mount over the bolt, and secure it with another nut (once again, using Loctite on the threads of the bolt). Repeat on the other side, and the sail panels are done.



Now, on to the A-pillars. Unfortunately, the 89-93 body doesn't have all of the necessary slots for the 94-97 A-pillar mounting clips. I used an air-powered cut-off wheel to create the slots, after marking their proper locations with a permanent marker. This procedure creates a lot of sparks, so you may not want to have your headliner, seats, or carpet in place while doing this.

Here are two pictures of the 94-97 A-pillar. The slots circled in yellow are the slots that must be cut into the body of the 89-93 car to use the 94-97 A-pillar trim. The one slot circled in blue is already present on the 89-93 body.



Once the new slots are cut, the A-pillars snap right into place.

The door sills have the same problem as the A-pillars, however they require less cutting than the A-pillars. The front most slot in the picture below already exists on the 89-93 body, but it must be enlarged slightly. The rear most slot in the picture below must be cut into the body, as there isn't a slot in that location on the 89-93 body.



Once those slots are made, the door sills snap into place.

That's all there is to it. Now you can enter and exit your vehicle without messing with the noisy and unreliable automatic seatbelts.

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