

Mon, 1 Jun 1998

I finally installed a sunroof in my '91 Westfalia.



First, let me say that I am strictly an OEM kinda guy. I would have never considered this had not some PO replaced the stock skylight/vent with a standard RV type "Mushroom" roof vent (barely visible in the above photo). As it was, the opening had been enlarged in order to do this, so there was no going back to the original hatch/mechanism (without a donor roof section and some fiberglass work).

So on Saturday afternoon (when the sun is shining on the back side of the house), I commenced. I drilled out all of the pop rivets holding the "Mushroom" on and removed it (along with the roof cement used to seal it). The glass sunroof I installed is a 15x30 inch unit which I purchased at Manny, Moe, and Jack's. I simply laid the pattern out, marked the opening, and cut it with a saber saw using a metal cutting blade.



WHAT A MESS! In the process of "noodling out" the installation, I finally determined that I would have to slightly relieve the depressions in the pop top to clear the frame during installation. I'd also have to significantly modify the underside spacer to allow for the extra thickness of the fiberglass roof (the unit is made for installation in a sheet-metal roof).

I ultimately installed the unit using the supplied sealant as well as a liberal application of white silicone caulk, which cleaned up well after everything was tight. I didn't do a leak test, but I

imagine I might have a problem to fix later.

The thing looks a lot better than before; plus it's quiet when driving. I've got to make a screen for camping. I wouldn't recommend this as a replacement for the stock unit unless you have the same problem that I had. I do believe that this has somewhat compromised the rigidity of the roof.

Oh, and a little "funny" here - after I cleaned up all the fiberglass dust and took a shower, I go out for a test drive. Everything's okay until I turn on the A/C and get a fresh dose of fiberglass down the back of my shirt. Two showers in one afternoon!

