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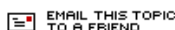
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DIY: Heater core replacement on a B3 GLX

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 W Va
94 B3 GLX, 97 GTI,
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Audi B3 TDI


I bit the bullet too, not long ago, and finished the heater core replacement a few days ago. Took me a week, but I am lazy and worked only like an hour or two daily in the garage; plus, we have two other cars to roll in.

I would like to elaborate on the new heater core a little bit. Actually my girlfriend bought it while I was back at home in Bulgaria sick as a muthafukka; she did purchase it online from Adirondack - German Auto Parts. She paid \$60 and drove me nuts

- the heater core was NO NAME NO BRAND, plastic base, etcetera.

Autohaus AZ sells the very same no brand core for around \$30.

Anyhow, I was debating whether I should return it and get an all-metal one, but that seemed as too much hassle at thime, already having one ready to go in.

The part number for a 1994 Passat from ETKA is 1H1 819 031 A.

Best price I could find online was \$35 at AutoHaus AZ:

<http://www.autohausaz.com/sear...9031A>

That's an OEM replacement part with PLASTIC flanges/outlets, which are usually the culprit for the leak at the base.

Some people bought the all-metal heater exchanger from NAPA:

<http://napaonline.com/masterpa...+Core>

Which shows for \$90 online, item # :NHC6603328

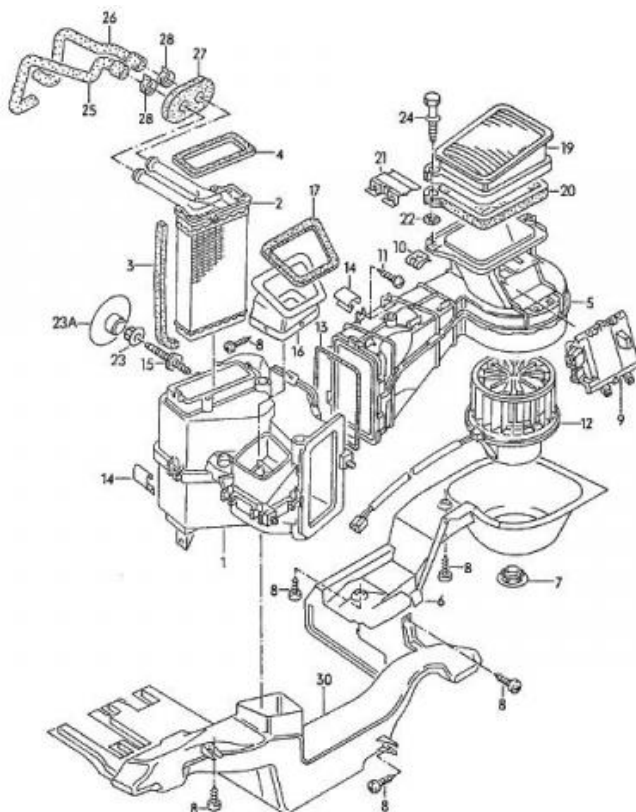
Reason I settled on putting this one in is that if the old OEM original heater core held well for a good 13 years, I thought, this one could do at least another decade; I don't plan on torturing the Passat for that long.

I did not take step-by-step photos after removing each bolt or screw; I figured most of it as I was going, partially from some threads here on PAOM, and the write-up on the Corrado Club of Canada:

<http://www.corrado-club.ca/for...112;p=>

A thing that helped was to attach all screws/nuts/bolts I removed with masking tape or scotch to the respective place I took them off of.

I also used masking tape cause it is paper and easy to write on- I marked lots and lots of stuff to help assembly later on.



It is not a complicated job, just as other people have said - very time consuming; take your time, I orderly arranged and cleaned everything I took off of the car; don't sweat on the wiring connectors - although there are lots of them, they are so shaped you cannot mismatch them.

I actually put the new heater core while inside the car, because I didn't want to disconnect if possible the moving cables from the back of the HVAC controls.

I bought a roll of window insulation foam, adhesive, and cleaned all vents and the flaps inside the heater box, then put new insulation in. Old one was flaking, badlt at that, and some of it flew out of the vents when I put everything together.

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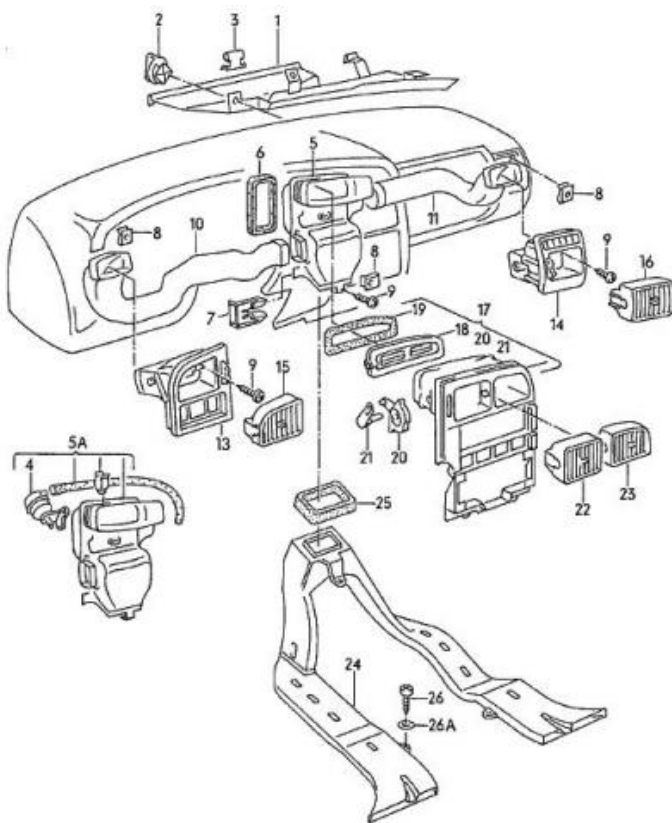
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 Clearing the work area [»](#)

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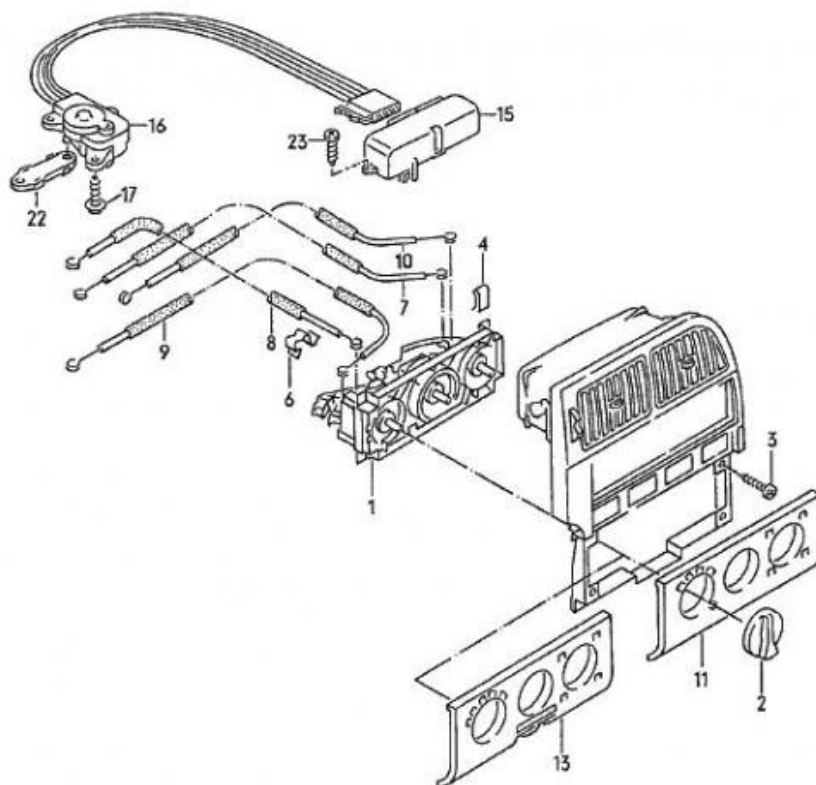
I started by removing all accessories from the dash shell:

Pry out the covers for the tweeters, and remove them.
 Headlight switch - pull straight out, CEL/ABS/e-brake light - pull, even easier if you remove the vent above them first - and gain space to push them out from behind.
 That leftmost vent is held by three screws.
 It is easier to use a magnetic screwdriver if possible.

Then I removed the rear windows switch, foglights and defrost switches. Might have another one instead of a blank if you got leather.
 Pry out the cover on the HVAC controls, and undo the four screws that are holding the knob assembly.
 Unhook and unclip the light above the ashtray.

Remove your stereo.
 Remove the light from the glovebox /B4 owners jealous?/

Some people might not have to do it, but I took out the center console as well, two screws where the feet are, and two nuts below the shift boot/gear selector plate. Take out the shift knob/boot first. Be careful because the cigarette lighter is wired, as well as there are some electronics just below the ashtray on the back; I didn't unplug them, but rather loosened the plate these are attached to and laid it down, like I did with the HVAC controls. Unclip the white and black connectors from the base of the center console.



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[Steering wheel area >>](#)

4:20 AM 2-15-2007

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I took my MOMO steering wheel out, which required a huge-a\$\$ socket. The plastic surround over the stalks is held by two screws accessed from below. The cluster surround is also held by two screws, tilt down the steering column for easier access - these are also accessed from below. Take them out, and pull the plastic towards you. Another two screws holding the actual cluster, easy to see - left and right. After removing them, tilt the cluster and unclip the big connector on the back. Take the cluster out carefully. I also removed the wiper/turn stalks. Three very long tiny bolts, and lots of flat thin connectors.

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[Removing the dash shell and knee bars/cubbies >>](#)

4:21 AM 2-15-2007

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The dash shell is held by two screws EACH side, open the doors wide to see them. They are under round plastic caps. Then there are two screws that hold the bottom of the center attached to two 'horns' in front of the shifter

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mechanism.

If you have the US-spec OEM knee bars, pop the plastic covers on each side, and undo two screws each side again. There is another plastic cover at the driver's right leg position, with an allen key bolt that holds the two pieces together. Open doors wide and slide the knee bars right out.

If you have the Canadian-spec knee bars with storage areas, undo all screws that hold them. I am using those and it's a lot of screws - like four or five each.

Then the glovebox. Three screws when you open the door, and mine had another one just below the door, right above where the knee bar was. Pull straight out. The blower motor box is exposed now. Also, you need to take the glovebox out first in order to be able to remove the passenger side vent.

No really easy way to do it, but I wiggled and pried and cursed till all the vents came out. Both sides, plus the ones in the center - dusty, I cleaned them with an old small brush.


Now have a look around and throw out anything I missed, and you probably too; then proceed to unhooking whatever wiring there is. There are SEVERAL plastic clips on the bottom of the dash shell, behind the cluster, behind the central vents, and so on. Unclip all wiring loom that goes through them.



Finally, the dash shell with a lot of sweat might come out. Lift a little bit, and pull straight towards the back. You will figure soon enough if you forgot anything and if you will have more tormenting time finding what it is.

Sort all of the dangling wiring and put it aside, out of your merry way.

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Now you should be looking at the vent piping. The two plastic parts that lead to passenger/driver side vents are easy enough- they slide just out. The square funnel that goes up is held by two screws, undo them if you so desire, I did. Now there is a big plastic thin thing, held by a screw at it's bottom and two metal clips on the left/right; those slide just out. Pull without breaking no plastic. The bottom part below the heater core box is a bit tricky, a few screws, don't remember the exact count - pull out too. This is the part that routes air to the rear, under the front seats.

After you remove all plastic and other crap attached to the heater box, you should be looking at something like this pile of whatnot:



Now, the heater core box is attached strongly to the blower motor housing with several clips. I had one on the bottom, one or two on the back of it, one on top, two at the front. Do the math. I removed ALL except the ones on the back. Don't lose them. They will just pop /hopefully/ when you start severely wiggling the heater box around.

Pop the hood if you haven't already, and have a look below the in/out leads of the heater core, assuming you already removed the coolant hoses or even had a bypass.

The heater core box is held to the firewall by two nuts/bolts. There is a big round plastic cover blow the heater core hoses, unscrew, and use a deep socket to remove the nut. That's the top one.

The bottom one had no plastic cap, but was underneath a flap on the heat insulation.

Pull lightly that flap and undo that nut as well. Some people advice to losen the blower motor box nuts as well - I did not. In case you feel eager to do it, these are around where the A/C lines go into the firewall.

On the DIY on the Corrado website is mentioned a bolt/nut in the raintray; that's for a C though, my heater box was held ONLY by these two nuts I mentioned.

Back inside the car, it took my great mind about two days to figure whay the heater core case won't budge away from the blower motor box; I started by pushing it front and back, which it did because the nuts on the firewall were removed, then I went to kicking, and cursing, and sweating, and nada. At this point I decided to leave the battlefield to prevent myself from buying new interior.

Turned out the stupid thing was just like STUCK where the two boxes mate; finally I took the good old pry bar that I use when replacing the accessory belt, and simply pried the boxes apart. A loud "POP" and the heater box came lose.

I just pulled the box towards me, and noticed the old core didn't even have screws to fasten it up. At this point of time I wiped all leaked coolant that was inside, and that evaporates and fogs wour windows from the inside, if it does not spill on your legs. I used a clean rag and rubbing alcohol to clean all surfaces, and clean all the foam that covers the flaps inside the heater box. Then I used the window insulation adhesive foam to replace all the old foam, and vacuumed the inside of the box to prevent dirt and foam blowing into my face when I first start the heat afterwards.

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 You're good to go ahead and FINALLY replace the sucker of a heater! [»](#) [«](#) 4:22 AM 2-15-2007

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Some people reported that the new heater core is covered in some sort of grease, or whatever other poison to keep it from rust or I don't know what other disease. When installed, that evaporates and smells pretty badly so what you can do is to give the new heater core a thorough but careful bath.

Slide the nice shiny reason for your troubles down in the rectangular hole.
Put two screws to hold it tight. You've went through so much for that glorious moment!

Wiggle the heater box back on place, mate it to the blower box,
and make sure both bolts go through the holes on the firewall.
Go under the hood and put the nuts on, just don't tighten them fully
since you might have to wiggle the box a little bit more.

I had a hard time seating the bottom portion on top of the hole
in the center tunnel part of the floorpan, the hole
that leads hot air under the front seats. What I did is to lift the
heater box UP as much as it allowed me and push forward.

Assuming you already removed the vacuum line between the in/out flanges
WITHOUT breaking the small tiny plastic adapter, go ahead and replace it
if you want, and attach back.

When the heater core box is AT LAST properly seated, you can go ahead and fasten
the bolts on the firewall, and put the plastic cap on the top one.
Start piling up all that plastic junk that you have on the backseat and
laying around the car. Try to route the wires that control the flaps well,
so the knobs will turn with ease; also you can lube those a little bit.

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 Putting the ductwork, dash and other plastic parts back on [»](#)

[«](#) [»](#) 4:23 AM 2-15-2007

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Before you try to put the dash shell back in, lower down the steering wheel column. The shell slides back on, again needs to be seated properly. There are these plastic clips inside of it that hold the wiring loom.

Next comes this alien-shaped piece /in the center of the photo/ that leads air to the center vents and the side vents pipes attach to. You cannot put it back on before the dash shell is seated, because it's on the dash shell in. I slid it in underneath the blower motor box by lifting the shell a little bit. Position it properly over the two bolts that stick from the heater core box, and slide the plastic tabs on. Then one screw on the bottom of it, not sure if there were more.

Now you can go ahead and put the four bolts - two on each side, and the two that go for the two horns right in the middle in front of your shifter. Put the four plastic caps as well.

Then attach the two pipes to each side of the alien-shaped piece, and route any wiring around them. I separated the actual moving part of the vents from the frames. Put the frame on the left side first, and screwed it in. Pull the CEL light connector out, as well as the headlight switch connector. Connect them and slide them into place. Now you can snap the moving grill into the vent frame.

Now comes the center piece around the radio and HVAC controls. Slide it into place, put all screws, pull the wiring through the holes, connect and seat the switches. Carefully seat the HVAC control box and put the four screws that hold it into place. Connect the wires to the back of it. Connect and install the light fibre over the ashtray, then snap the cover over the knobs.

Then you can put the two vents back. I used an old toothbrush to clean the dirt/dust between the grills. Put the metal sleeve /if any/ for your radio, and you can put the radio back in now or later, up to you.

Now I put the passenger side vent in and tightened the screws. Then comes the glovebox, whose right side overlaps the base of the vent - put in all screws, and attach the light.

Having that done, I proceeded to the cluster box. Slide it in, I have aftermarket gauge overlays, did their wiring first, then the cluster connector; two screws each side. Because I removed the turn/wiper stalks, I had to carefully put them back in, match all wiring couplers, and put the three long thin bolts. Then the two plastic pieces, top and bottom, these are held by two screws placed on the bottom part. Now you can go ahead and put the frame in front of the cluster, another two screws on the top part of it.

I don't remember what it was about the OEM steering wheel; but I had to attach the hub adapter for my MOMO Commando with the big nut, then position the steering wheel and tighten all of the allen headed small bolts. Connected the horn wires.

Two 4 1/2 inch tweeters on each side of the dash top, connect wires and because I have Pioneer speakers, I put the screws to fasten them; then position the grills over them and push to clip them.


Now I had to slide the center console back into place, two plastic pieces above the ashtray help you do that - they go into two holes just below the HVAC controls. Attach the plate that holds the electronics to it. Connect the wiring to the ashtray. Snap the two OBD connectors to the where the shift boot plastic base is. Those slide in/out with some effort. Two screws on each side, where the feet are. Another two plastic nuts just behind the shifter mechanism. Be careful not to overtighten and strip them.

If you feel comfortable, put the shift boot and the knob on. My MOMO knob is not like the OEM knob, it is held by three tiny bolts.

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izzo
Member

 MK3 cupholder in the center console [»](#)

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Audi B3 TDI



Here is a little cupholder mod which I am VERY fond of. It's a dual cupholder off of a MK3 Jetta.

I had to use a dremel and cut a rectangular hole in the front part of the B3 cubby below the ashtray, working my way in baby steps. The clips on the cupholder hold it just great in the hole. It looks OEM and is very comfortable.



I didn't lose much of the functionality of the cubby there, because the cupholder has a storage area as well at the back portion; I just had to take off just a little bit off of the left and right side of the cupholder to fit it in the cubby; appears that the B3 cubby is slightly more narrow than the MK3 console.


I have a B4 rear armrest console, and thanks to Soviet B3 who was parting a GLS B4 now I even have the support bracket for it. Otherwise, put the stinky B3 piece by sliding it in around the handbrake lever, and tighten. It's a good idea to check on the parking brake cables and tighten them if necessary, before you put the plastic back over them.

Now you can go ahead and put your knee bars/trays back on. Again, look around for something you missed/messed.
Make sure you check ALL of the buttons/switches that were removed to ensure they are properly connected
and working; cluster lights, wiper and turn stalks.

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 Adding coolant [»](#)

[«](#) [»](#) 4:24 AM 2-15-2007

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Audi B3 TDI



You are pretty much done inside the car, gather your tools and clean /optional/.
Last steps, go back under the hood and fit the coolant hoses to the outlets of the heater core.
Attach the vacuum hose BEFORE that. In my case it is kinda tight to work, because I have a Neuspeed strut bar /Sorry, dqwolf 😊/ and didn't want to remove it. Unscrew the cap off the coolant bubble, and top it up to the MAX point. Do not close the cap, not just yet - the system has to bleed itself.
The moment of truth, go ahead and start the car. Check for any leaks around every area you workd at.
As the car reaches normal working temperature, with the cap off the coolant tank it should bleed itself and any air pockets should disappear. Top off coolant again, if necessary.
Make sure to watch the coolant expansion tank, because when the car warms up it may spit coolant out.
Tighten the cap back on.
Do search around if you want detail instructions on bleeding the cooling system 😊

If you are lucky enough, you will have a non-leaking cooling system, plus working heat.

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 VOILA [»](#)

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Audi B3 TDI



Feel free to contribute, correct me and whatever. I am glad I saved myself the money, and very satisfied because I did the job myself. I took my time with it, cleaned around, etc. [Searching](#) the Vortex forums helped a lot.

Forgive my spelling and wording, since i don't speak English, Farsi is my native




[And finally, why all the hassle when you could MAYBE read this thread?!?!?](#)

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 And just for kicks.... [»](#)

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Audi B3 TDI



Forgot to throw these in:
my daily, old pic:



winter, new (to me) A4 1.8 TQ:



back in Bulgaria, my father's Citroen C5 2.0 HDI:



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jaesiv
Member

Offline

Member Since
1-30-2002
1051 posts

western mass
Down to 1 passat
wagon, an outback,
and a dumb cabby



Re: MK3 cupholder in the center console (izzo) »

« » 4:39 AM 2-15-2007

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Nice writeup! Pretty straight forward and clear. I read, and read, and read about replacing mine before I actually did it and wish I read some more. Or had pictures. When I put the new heater core in, the foam padding on top didn't have a hole for the vacuum nub, so I had to make one. Sounds easy, but everytime I put the dash back in and tightened things up, the damn hose fell off!

I finally got it, but in the process I broke a clip on the door of the heater box and now it blows from all the vents no matter where you put the selector. I have since sold the car and the new owner knows of it, but overall it wasn't as bad as I thought it was going to be.

Oh, and until I read all the way to the end, I was thinking you have a b4 armrest console. I was right. I just put in the same thing on mine. 🙌

I've already spent my kids college fund on my vw habit. Does that make me a bad father?

viciousvento
Member



Offline

Re: Removing the dash shell and knee bars/cubbies (izzo) »

« » 4:58 AM 2-15-2007

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Quote, originally posted by izzo »

Member Since
3-14-2001
4473 posts

germansquadville NJ
G-Unit!!



I'm having nightmares again seeing this pic.. I just did my friends last weekend

[Germansquad....You gotta want it!!!!!!!](#)

[Fast.Road.Specialties.](#)

[MySpace.com/1fly35i](#)

dsimic
Member



Offline

Member Since
3-23-2004
1268 posts

Banja Luka , Bosnia
and Herzegovina ,
Europe
1992 Passat B3
Variant 1.8l 8v



Re: You're good to go ahead and FINALLY replace the sucker of a heater!
(izzo) »

» 11:49 AM
2-15-2007

Reply

Quote, originally posted by izzo »

Some people reported that the new heater core is covered in some sort of grease, or whatever other poison to keep it from rust or I don't know what other disease. When installed, that evaporates and smells pretty badly so what you can do is to give the new heater core a thorough but careful bath.

Wiggle the heater box back on place, mate it to the blower box, and make sure both bolts go through the holes on the firewall.

Nice DIY write up! 👍

Just to confirm that replacement heater core does come covered with some sort of oil, and it's surely a good idea to give it a good bath prior to installation.

Also, while taking apart my Climatronic HVAC box I noticed that all joint points of all pieces that actually make the HVAC box, are covered with some kind of silicone sealant for better

sealing. And also that was the main reason why I had quite a hard work taking apart all of those pieces as they're holding together pretty strong after removing the clips. Did you notice that sealant, probably cleaning and re-applying the sealant is a good idea?

Modified by dsimic at 10:51 AM 2-15-2007

vasillalov
Member

Re: You're good to go ahead and FINALLY replace the sucker of a heater!
(dsimic) >>

<< >> 1:58 AM
2-17-2007

Reply



Dang. That IS a lot of work... 👍 🍺 😊

Offline

Member Since
11-4-2003
6052 posts

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Bowling Green OH
1999.5 Jetta GL

Quote, originally posted by the_q_jet »

the_q_jet (12:35 PM 11-30-2006): oh might guru of the mk4 2.0 how art thou!?

Quote, originally posted by dvlax40 »

wheres vasillalov when i need him 😊 🍺 🍺



jamesn67
Member

Re: You're good to go ahead and FINALLY replace the sucker of a heater!
(vasillalov) >>

<< >> 2:22 PM
2-17-2007

Reply

Offline

Member Since
11-15-2001
3512 posts

Nice job Izzo 👍

Beverly MA
1993 B3 VR6

Slainte!!!



otisranson
Member

Re: You're good to go ahead and FINALLY replace the sucker of a heater!
(jamesn67) >>

<< >> 11:41 PM
3-1-2007

Reply



👍 Good job! Heater core replacement is never fun. 🍺

Offline

Member Since
12-18-2005
400 posts

dafjklda;jvnmroiwqvnpoirwnqvnoiwjndlka;mlzcmxvkmcx.mviwopjqp!

Kennesaw GA
1997 VW B4 Passat



kayser`soze
Member

Re: And just for kicks.... (izzo) >>

<< >> 7:42 AM 3-2-2007

Reply



🍺 cheers bro, great DIY 👍 😊

Offline

your B3 is wicked !!! ...

Member Since
8-14-2004
417 posts

The Dark Side of
The Moon



izzo
Member



Online

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3-18-2004
5473 posts

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VWJettaCarat
Member



Offline

Member Since
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2659 posts

Richmond Hill
Ontario
1996 Golf GL 4x4,
1986 Golf 16vT



**Ghetto
Gamer**
Member

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Member Since
12-23-2003
1237 posts

Raleigh NC /
Annapolis MD
1995 Passat GLX



izzo
Member



Online

Member Since
3-18-2004
5473 posts

W Va

Respek !

Re: And just for kicks.... (kayser` soze) >>

<< >> 8:16 AM 3-2-2007 [Reply](#)



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>>

<< >> 9:29 AM 3-4-2007 [Reply](#)

it took me about 2 1/2hrs from start to finish to do mine, and that was not fun... I hated that job...

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Check my biography for previously owned dubs
Parting out: 91 Passat GL <http://forums.vwvortex.com/zerothread?id=3104587>
1986 VW Golf 16VT

>>

<< >> 3:48 AM 3-23-2007 [Reply](#)

Great job on the DIY. I know there was another one before with pictures but last I checked they were all broken.

I get nightmares thinking about when I did the heater core on my car...

Re: (Ghetto Gamer) >>

<< >> 5:58 PM 3-25-2007 [Reply](#)

There is always the Corrado write up, I posted the link in the beginning of my DIY, but it is not the same. It has all the photos working though

94 B3 GLX, 97 GTI,
84 Rabbit GTI, 06
Citroen C5 HDI, 00
Audi A4 1.8TQ, 93
Audi B3 TDI

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Action Jackson
Member

Re: (izzo) >>


<< >> 3:34 PM 3-26-2007

[Reply](#)

Offline

Haha, good job izzo. I've done this one twice now. A B3 and a B4. Its not really a hard job, just a PITA job.

Member Since
11-20-2001
4444 posts

Love the pic with the trouble light hanging from the ceiling mounted grab bars. That's exactly were I hang mine too 

Kitchener ON
B4 Sedan & MkIV
Golf-4dr turbo



Volkswagen built my car
it's a love affair
mainly Volkswagen and my Passat

Sometimes posting wirelessly from my BlackBerry 

izzo
Member


Re: (Action Jackson) >>

<< >> 6:30 PM 3-26-2007

[Reply](#)



Online

Thanks, AJ.
Do you mean the O-**** handles ? 
And I need to do something about that light. It swivels too easily all around, and throws light wherever I don't need it.

Member Since
3-18-2004
5473 posts

W Va
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84 Rabbit GTI, 06
Citroen C5 HDI, 00
Audi A4 1.8TQ, 93
Audi B3 TDI

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kcorsiew
Member

Re: DIY: Heater core replacement on a B3 GLX (izzo) >>

<< >> 3:34 AM 4-11-2007

[Reply](#)

Offline

Do you really have to take off the steering wheel?
I am at the odd crux of not being able to remove the dash, and if that is the only thing holding me back, I will be quite angry with my self.
Thank you,
Cory

Member Since
4-10-2007
1 posts

milwaukee wi
1992 passat



Ghetto Gamer
Member

Re: DIY: Heater core replacement on a B3 GLX (kcorsiew) >>

<< >> 4:33 AM 4-11-2007

[Reply](#)

Offline

Quote, originally posted by kcorsiew »

Do you really have to take off the steering wheel?
I am at the odd crux of not being able to remove the dash, and if that is the only thing holding me back, I will be quite angry with my self.
Thank you,
Cory

Member Since
12-23-2003
1237 posts

Raleigh NC /
Annapolis MD
1995 Passat GLX



I did my B4's heater core without remove the wheel. I did however drill out the headless bolts so that I could drop the wheel and steering column lower and out of the way. I pulled the dash partially out but not all the way. I had enough room to get to the heater box and all, but it was cramped that way.

izzo
Member



<< >> 5:53 AM 4-11-2007 [Reply](#)



Online
Member Since
3-18-2004
5473 posts

Yeah, I think Ghetto Gamer is right - you might get out even without removing the steering wheel, which in my case would have been even easier, since my MOMO is held by lotsa-boltsa. But it might be easier to pull the dash shell out without the steering wheel in the way....

W Va
94 B3 GLX, 97 GTI,
84 Rabbit GTI, 06
Citroen C5 HDI, 00
Audi A4 1.8TQ, 93
Audi B3 TDI

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izzo
Member

Re: DIY: Heater core replacement on a B3 GLX (kcorsiew) >>

<< >> 5:54 AM 4-11-2007 [Reply](#)



Online
Member Since
3-18-2004
5473 posts

BTW kcorsiew - welcome to the Vortex PAOM 😊

W Va
94 B3 GLX, 97 GTI,
84 Rabbit GTI, 06
Citroen C5 HDI, 00
Audi A4 1.8TQ, 93
Audi B3 TDI

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