

Early Bug Buckets in a Ghia

Tuesday, June 10, 2014
11:17 PM



I only want to post to be helpful; the Rants are gone.

This is what I have done here in the past few days. After searching; with no results on how to install bug headlights into a ghia, thought I'd give it a shot for myself. There seems to be more than a few people interested based on the number of views on related topics and threads that are closed. I will try to explain what I did the best I can. I want this to be easy for anyone to do, if you have patience.

First off the ghia was totaled through insurance STATE FARM due to hurricane damage in 04' Charlie.

Extensive body damage..Great for a custom ghia!!

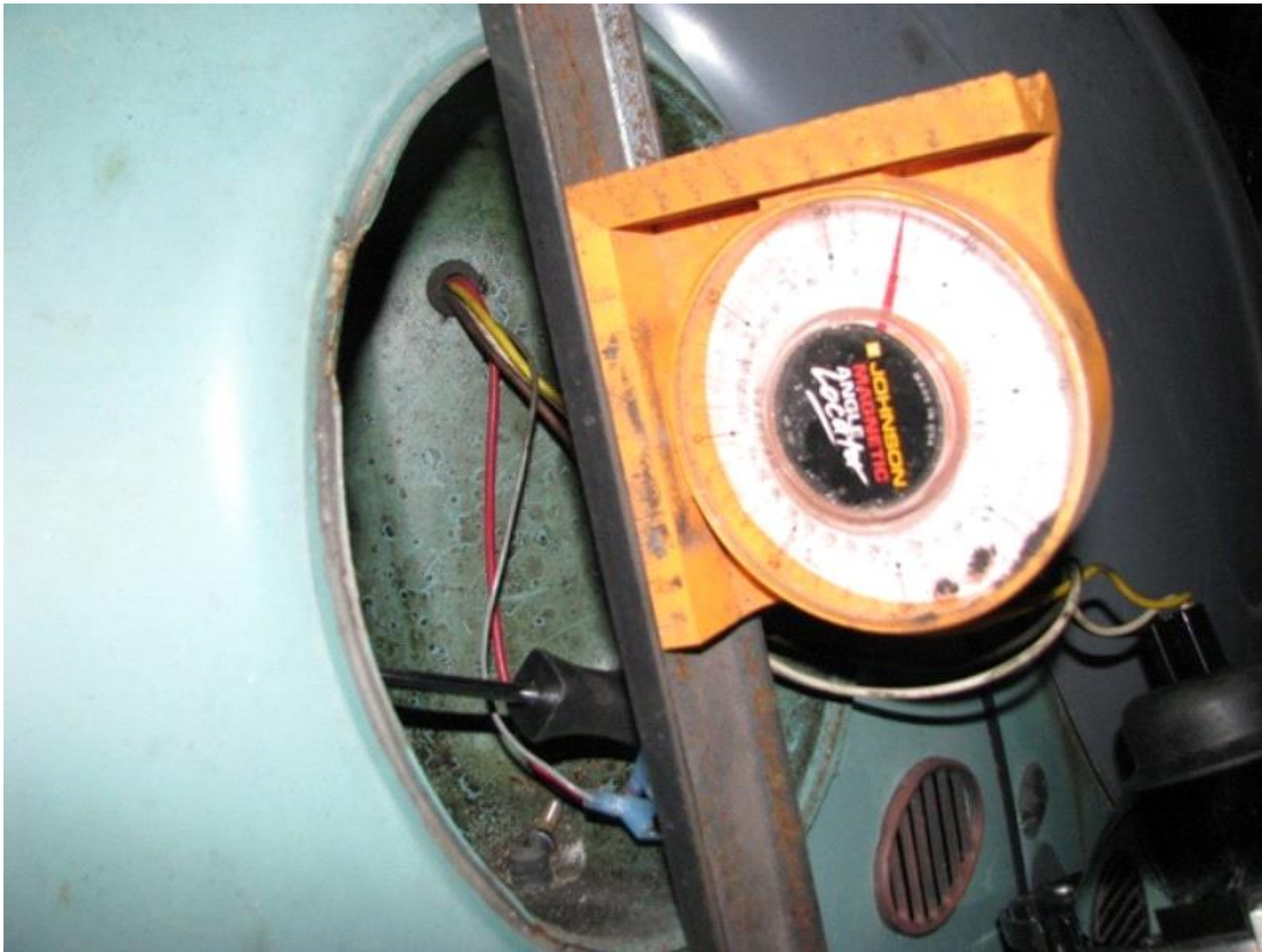
Pulled body off, Airkewl air-ride at all 4 corners

Striped 'er down naked. Blasted the paint off to see what she is all about. Drivers rear quarter smashed in pretty hard, about 6" of bondo full length of the panel.

Found a donor panel for free...It needs some work also. Not a big deal. The old was cut off and new "donor" was welded on...Then the car sits for 3 more years.....

I wanted to install some early **headlight** buckets from a early bug/bus to the ghia, why not? I like the look..

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Protractor against **headlight** bucket for reference.



then, I used a compass to trace around the lights. When you get around the set screw at the bottom give yourself about the the size of a coke can in that area..I first went half an inch around the ring. Later I realized I should have gave myself an inch, You end up trimming off what you dont need later anyway. Tip # 1

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Take note at the set screw, half circles. They could be square if you wish. Just give yourself some room here

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Heres the outline I cut away from the bucket. Now is the time to clean your painted/rusted metal up for easier welding. Tip # 2

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Heres what I had to work with.. Its hard to weld to rust/paint even with gas, It just makes for a cleaner weld. Again, clean all your surface areas now and you will be happier latter as you start welding.

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Make a jig

I used cardboard. You could use anything with structure. Trace out the buckets you will be using. You only need one to mock up for reference. The cardboard doesnt have to be exact 100% just close enough. In fact, mine was slightly larger than what I traced...This is a throw away item. No pressure. Seems like everything is grade school so far; use of a protractor, compass and staying with in the lines cutting shapes.

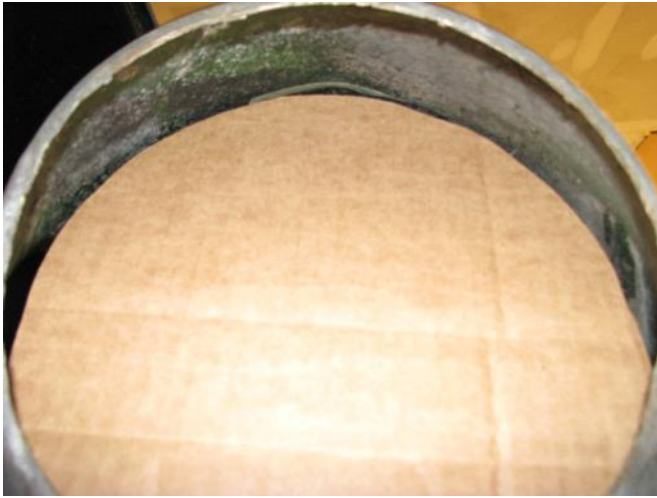
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I dont have a picture of this next step.

You need to remove you **headlight** ring and **headlight**. Next, you will need to use a cut-off wheel or plasma to remove your old **headlight** bucket. No need trying to be neat and drill out the spot welds; that will be just a waste of time in the next few steps.

Safety first, protect your eyes.

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With the bucket out of the way, place your cardboard jig in from inside the fender with duct tape. I found that I was going to have to cut back 4 1/2 inches out of the top to achieve 66 degrees of rake. This is nerve racking. The next couple of photos will explain more.

This is what your bucket needs to look like. Adjusting the tape until you have a proper fit of your likes

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By putting the protractor against the top of the factory bucket, I gently pulled away from the bottom

trying to find 66 degrees. Thus, measuring this difference gave me roughly 4 1/2 inches.

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Once you find that desired degree, this next step is kinda fun. I found that by using 1/4 fine line autobody tape worked best. Primarily used for custom paint work. You could use any width tape as long as you think what your doing. I centered the tape vertically and horizontally. The radius of the bucket across was 8 1/2 If my memory serves me right. So, at 4 1/4 horizontal & vertical; I had my eye on you in the cross hairs. Then by eye, I found center on the quarters. In the end this is what you want or something close depending on the tape you use.

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with the jig "cardboard in place" you can start measuring inside of your bucket back to the cardboard. Pay close attention on how you read your tape measure. Meaning the jig is in an angle, I added another 1/4 inch automatically. Just look at the cardboard and the end of the tape, you dont get a correct read. TAKE YOUR TIME HERE. This is where if you goof up, its gonna upsetting fast. Use a sharpie to make marks. Sorta like connect the dots. Use tape to outline your marks. This takes time. Dont be in a hurry here, you will pull your tape off several times trying to make the outline look straight. Dont worry to much if the lines ares crooked or wavy, try to get something what I have here.

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I wrote all over the place, changing my measurements. My tape was falling from undernieth watch out for that gremlin. Make sure your cardboard stays somewhat straight also. If it gets bent it can give you a goffy read once you start to outline, Like I did here. See the bold arrows. This all comes off with lacqre thinner / acetone.

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just sit back and look at your lines and adjust if need so

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With both sides laid out in tape, the side you took endless time measuring on and correcting. If you did like I did and put the measurements on the fender; it makes it a lot easier to transfer the measurements to the other side.
Here are a few shots with the measurements

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Almost ready to start cutting....getting nervous yet?

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Save your eyes!!!!

Start cutting, go slow.

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This brow is a thing of the past.

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after the brow is removed, you will need to make a series of 1" to 1 1/2" small cuts about an inch or so apart like these. This helps bend the metal and shape to your new bucket.

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I tried several things at this point to try and figure out my next move. Everything was kinda off the cuffI put the bucket inside the opening from the inside and just couldnt get it right without using alot of plastic filler. There may be a better way, this worked for me.

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I decided not to go this route, I went from the outside in..

Pictured is insde out. From inside on fender.

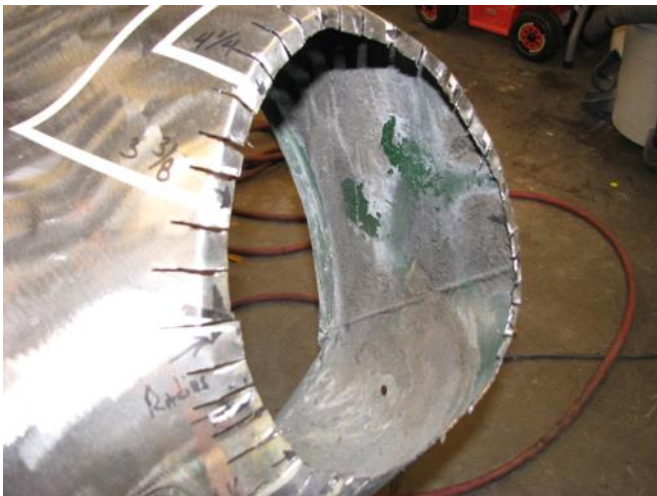
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From this angle you might ask why did he not finish up this way...

I felt it just wouldnt look right...

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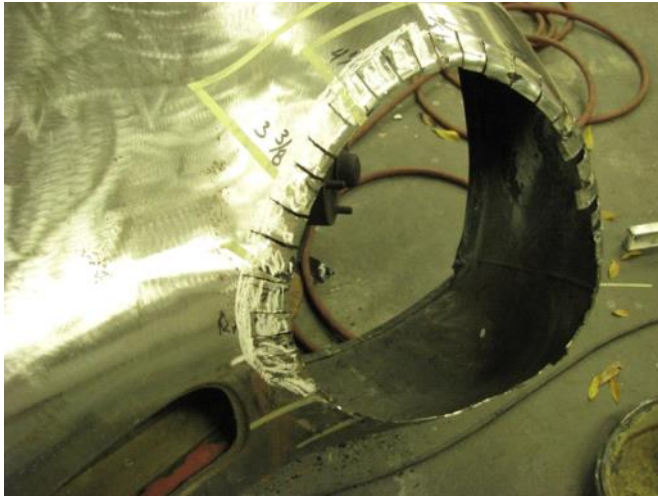


I bent the slices in "tabs" about 1/4 " for the inside of the ring that was cut earlier would sit flush.

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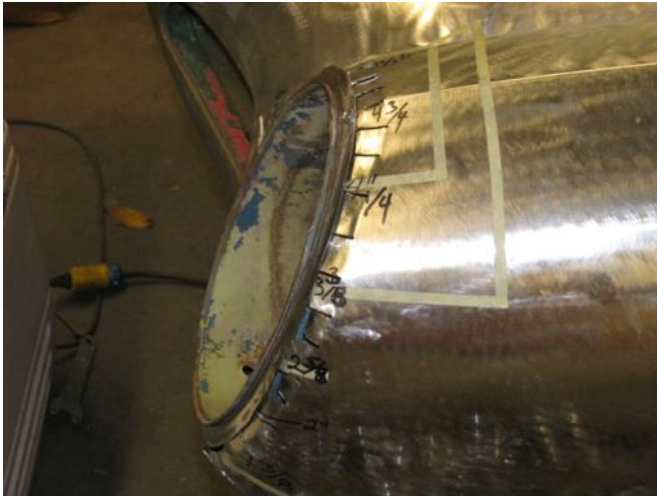
everything in white chalk had to be trimmed back 3/8". Had to give some room for the outside of the fender with the ring on the bucket

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once I got into place, used a sheetmetal screw to help hold in place until I was satisfied with the fit. You will bend a have to re shape some metal. Just for flow.....

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getting there. just have to straighten out some metal. Hammer time!!

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Tack it up!!!

This is where i am presently. I will come back to show all final metal work.

Just take your time, whatever you do to one side, do the same to the other side.. Take plenty of measurements

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I hope this helps others in their quest of installing the early buckets. I will come back in a few bays with up dates.

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