Belting The Vic

by Tom Endy

The installation of seat belts in a Model A Ford is something every owner should consider. Each body style, however, offers a unique engineering challenge. Before preceding with an installation an evaluation of where the belt attach points should be located must be considered. The belts must be securely attached to either the frame or the body such that in the event of an accident the belts will not fail.

Various styles and types of belts are available including retraceable and rigid types. The Victoria body style offers a unique advantage for seat belt installation. In this article only front seat belt installation is described.

The two outboard front seat belts are installed with single L-brackets attached with the body to frame bolts located next to the outboard side of each front seat right at the back edge. The inboard two belts are attached to a longer single L-bracket attached to the front seat back rest plate located between the two seats.

The type of seat belts selected for my Victoria installation incorporate the rigid style for the outboard belts. The inboard belts are not retractable and lay on the floor between the seats when not in use. When the belts are in use the center belts are placed around the occupant's lap and attached to the outboard rigid belts. This style works well as there is no seat belt falling out of the car and chipping the paint on the splash aprons.

My seat belts were purchased from Buckle-Up in Fullerton, California. Seat belts are their only business and they carry a wide range of styles and colors.

Buckle-up is located at 1889 W Commonwealth Ave. Unit N, Fullerton, CA 92833.

The complete seat belt installation hardware including the purchased seat belts and the fabricated L-bracket hardware.

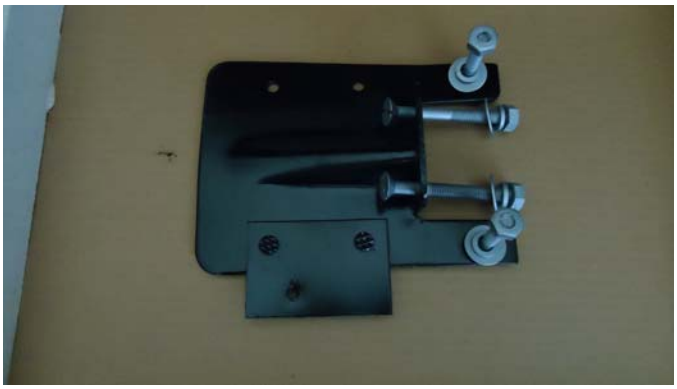
The center belt L-bracket attaches to the passenger side of the seat back rest plate, The bracket at left attaches to the L-bracket to provide a platform for the back inboard passenger seat back peg to rest on.

The L-bracket for the inboard belts is attached to the front seat back rest plate located between the front two seats.

The outboard seat belts are attached using the body to frame bolts that are located next to the rear of each front seat. A single L-bracket is used on each side to make the attachment.

All bolts used are half-inch grade 8 bolts. The nuts used are aircraft style locking nuts that can be tightened such that they put tension on the belt attachment to allow the rigid belts to be repositioned and then maintained in place. The original body to frame bolts were replaced with 7\16" grade 8 bolts.

Both the early and late Victoria's incorporate a front seat back rest plate located between the two seats. The plate is there for the inboard rear seat peg of each front seat to rest on. This is required because the Victoria has a dropped floor pan in the back. The late Victoria with the sliding driver's seat has two holes located in the right side of the plate. These two holes can be enlarged and the long L-bracket for the inboard belts can be bolted there. The early Victoria plate does not have these two holes, but they can easily be drilled.



The late Victoria seat back rest plate is shown. The two holes used for the L-bracket is seen at the top of the bracket. Note that the 4 bolts only bolt the plate to the wooden floorboard and will not adequately secure the seat belts.

To properly secure the front seat back rest plate it is recommended that additional brackets be attached from the plate to the frame under the car. Existing bolts that come down through the floorboard to attach the seat plate and the sliding rails for the driver's seat were used to attach a steel bracket. From the steel bracket additional brackets were welded to it and attached to the cross member that the stop light switch is attached to. There are four existing holes located in the cross memeber that are not utilized.

The three brackets were fabricated from one and a half inch wide 3\16" thick steel. Holes were drilled to match up with existing bolts that come down through the floorboard.

The support brackets are shown installed under the car to provide support to the seat back rest plate.

Seat belts are an important safety addition to a Model A Ford. If nothing else they will keep your passenger from tumbling out the door during a left turn.