

Please read before installing your new Prestige Thunderbird replacement soft top. It is important to properly adjust and fit your soft top when it is put on for the first time. If you follow our simple instructions with care you will get the best results in fit and looks from your new top. This top has been inspected thoroughly by two inspectors before it was packed for shipping to make sure that it was free of any defects. We recommend two people when putting your top up and down.

#1 Lift the top up and set it down on the rear deck of the T-bird, centering the rear handle bullets over the front holes of the rear retainer plates.

#2 Fold out top so that it is fully extended and lock front side scissors into place. Insert front pins in pin retainer on top windshield molding. Make sure the pins go all the way in. You may have to lift the rear of the top up a little to align the pins up with the holes. When you are sure that they are seated, then fasten the front clamps. The "J" hooks are adjustable and might need to be screwed in or out to tighten properly when clamp is latched.

#3 Next, push the rear handles down into the front holes of the rear deck plate and turn handles to closed position.

#4 Make sure side pins are in side deck plates and adjust "J" hooks as needed like you did on the front clamps. Now fasten the clamps

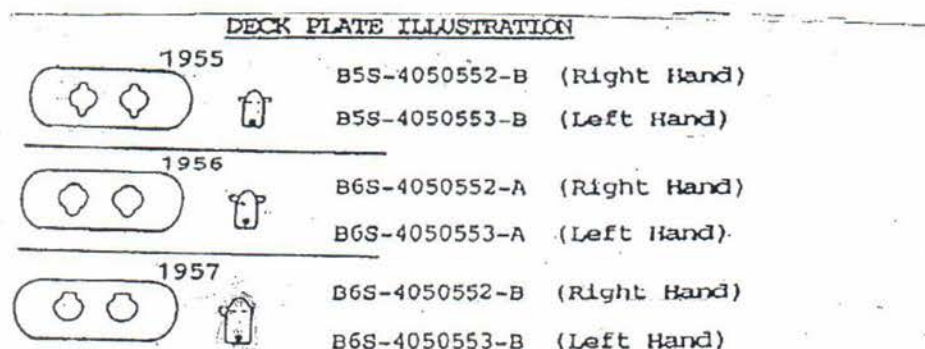
#5 To take the top down, unfasten the front and side clamps and release the rear handles and lift the rear of the soft top so the bullets come out of the rear deck, turn the handle lock to closed position so they don't go back in the hole.

#6 Fold the top to the down position on the rear deck making sure not to scissor the material in the frame as it folds together, and make sure that there are no tight wrinkles in the rear window plastic. This is very, very important because the vinyl cover could be cut when it is stored behind the seat due to the motion of the car if the material isn't pulled away from between the frame.

#7 To store the top behind the seat, fold the seat back forward and unfasten the drop cloth and fold it on top of the rear deck. Using two people lift the soft top up and set it down behind the seat with the soft top frame end first. Make sure the windlace is pulled out and away from the

soft top on each side as you tuck it into the top storage area. It is very important that you do this with care so that you do not damage the soft top or windlace when taking the top out or putting it away. Finally, put the drop cloth back in place covering the soft top and fasten down as before.

1. If the rear handles will not go in or tighten down properly, these are some things that you need to check:
 - A. Make sure that the bullets on the rear handles are compatible with the deck plates.
Use illustration to determine if this could be the cause of your problem. Note: The 1955 and 1956 bullets look similar but the 1955 cross pins in the bullet are smaller in diameter.
 - B. Another area to check is the installation of the rear deck plates. All three years have the same situation, there is a right hand and a left hand plate. They should be marked on the bottom of the plate with the Ford part number. The last number if it is odd, would be the left side and, if it is even would be the right side although some actually say right or left. As noted in the illustration, most 1955's are marked wrong, so do not let that fool you. When you put your soft top on, and the rear handles will not fasten into locked position, the deck plates are probably the cause of the problem.



NOTE: Most of the 1955 deck plates are marked incorrectly. The ones marked with a "R" on the bottom are really left hand, and those with a "L" are right hand.

The left hand side of the car is the driver's side. Check your plate to make sure that you have one of each, if not you will have to get another one of the opposite side.

These rear deck plates are adjustable by loosening the 7/16" nut on the underside of body behind the seat. You might have to move these to align up the front hole with the bullets. After doing this, be sure to tighten the nut back up so that they will not slip. These deck plates should have a thin gasket between plate and body. Our part #50534R.

The side deck plates should be inspected to see that they are not too badly worn. Sometimes the elongated hole has been damaged because the hard top side pin was not in the hole all the way. This damage to the deck plate could prevent the soft top side pins from staying in the side deck plates, allowing the top to move out too far sideways. This would also be true of the hard top fit, so it should be corrected. We have repaired and rechromed side deck plates in stock which we sell on an exchange basis. Our part #50503