

## SIDE CURTAIN COVERING KITS for MG TC, TD & TF

### Background Information

The hoods (tops) and side curtains for all MG TCs, TDs, and TFs were originally produced by the Coventry Hood & Sidescreen Company and were supplied fully finished to the MG Factory at Abingdon. Even the hood was fully attached to the top frame and only needed to be screwed into position at the MG factory. This system, though very efficient, resulted in less than a perfect fit and was part of the reason that the term "Rag Top" was universally understood.

Experience has proven beyond doubt that the original side curtain frames did vary to a certain extent and in the case of TDs and TFs, the mounting position of the side curtain fixing plates also varied. Reproduction frames have also been produced for many years by numerous makers, which increases the chances for ill fitting weather equipment. During our careful examination of genuine new old stock factory covers we could clearly see the pencil line under certain critical stitch lines that were part of the manufacturing process and always insured consistent accuracy of the covers. Moss utilizes these same manufacturing techniques and our patterns are identical to factory originals. In essence, the variability is in the frames and the fit to the body, not the covers themselves. A better fitting side screen can only be achieved by custom trimming.

Careful study of period factory photos clearly shows that even when brand new and photographed for publicity purposes, the side screens never fit perfectly. These cars were not built to be water or airtight! They also were not Bentleys!

By carefully reading and understanding the following instructions, it should be possible for the patient amateur to achieve factory original standards of fit.

### Conceptual Overview

We suggest that you purchase the top and side curtain kits at the same time since colors/shades will vary between production runs, even though the material is ordered for our upholstery shop from the same supplier.

Side curtains frames should ideally be covered only after the convertible top or "hood" has been successfully and correctly installed. The single most common error in installing new tops/hoods is in incorrectly locating the top frame to the body tub. The top frame should always be installed in the original holes in the body tub. This typically becomes a bit of a challenge as new interiors generally precede new hoods. By careful examination of original wood, it should be possible to determine which holes are truly correct and then by using simple "line of sight" triangulation methods and the use of an awl, correct frame positioning can be assured.

*These instructions are not complete, and for that we apologize. However, they are at a point where we feel the information contained is valuable enough to include them with our side curtain frames and side curtain covering kits. As we compile new information and photographs, we will revise and expand the material in the instructions. We hope that you will find the information useful, and we welcome your suggestions on how we might improve these instructions.*

42 **Part 1 - Identifying What You Have**

43  
44 Moss Motors supplies a variety of side curtain kits and this documentation will help you make sure you have the  
45 right bits for your car before you begin. Please remember, once you cut, trim tweak or fit a piece of upholstery, it's  
46 yours. With the identification of the bits out of the way, we will take you through the process of fitting the side  
47 curtain covers to the frames to achieve satisfactory results regardless of which T Series car you have.

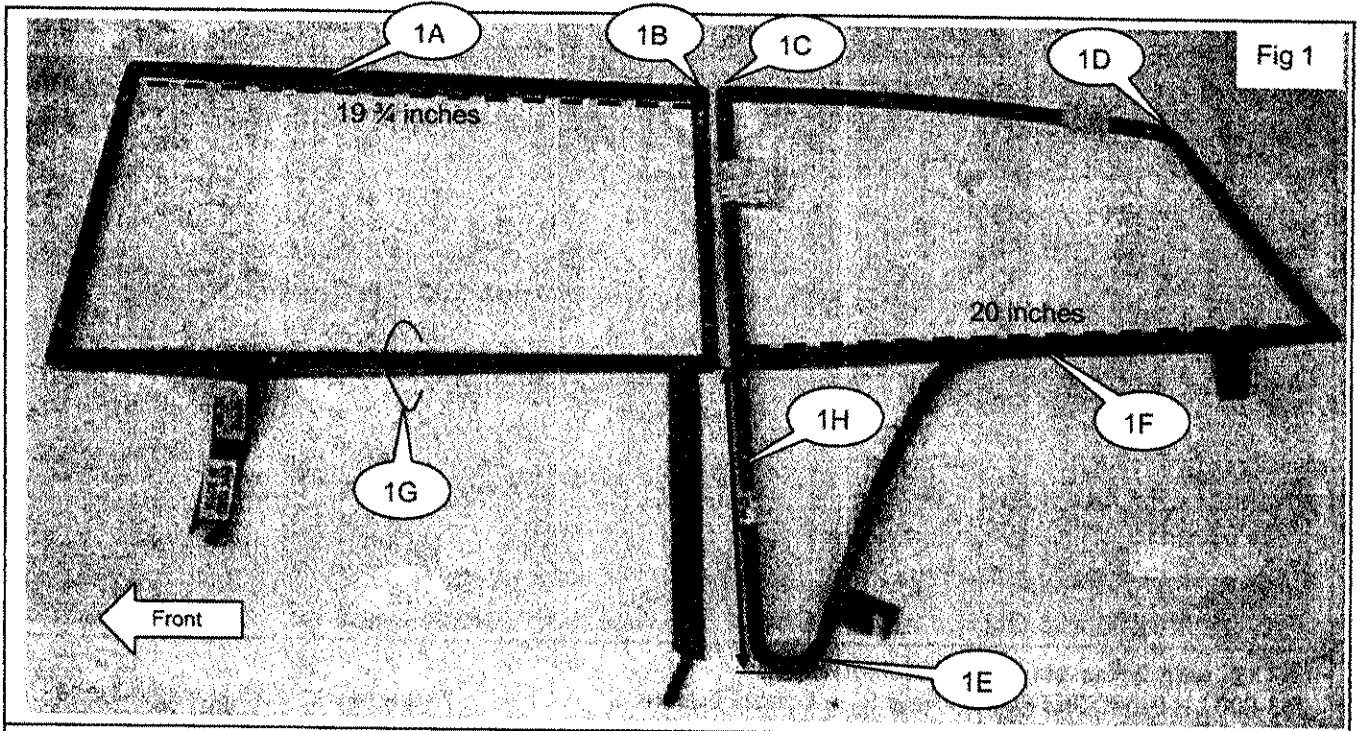
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49 The current listing of available "Side Curtain Kits " appears below.  
50

Appl /PN	Search Description
<b>MG TC</b>	
257-168	Side Curtain KIT, OE TYPE CANVAS DUCK
243-778	Side Curtain KIT, STAYFAST, BLACK
243-768	Side Curtain KIT, STAYFAST, TAN
<b>MG TD W/ 2 BOW TOP FRAME</b>	
257-178	Side Curtain KIT, OE TYPE CANVAS DUCK
243-798	Side Curtain KIT, STAYFAST, BLACK
243-788	Side Curtain KIT, STAYFAST, TAN
<b>MG TD W/ 3 BOW TOP FRAME</b>	
257-188	Side Curtain KIT, OE TYPE CANVAS DUCK
243-828	Side Curtain KIT, STAYFAST, BLACK
243-818	Side Curtain KIT, STAYFAST, TAN
<b>MG TF</b>	
257-198	Side Curtain KIT, OE TYPE CANVAS DUCK
243-848	Side Curtain KIT, STAYFAST, BLACK
243-838	Side Curtain KIT, STAYFAST, TAN

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53 Each kit should come with a detailed breakdown of the components to facilitate communication.

- 54  
55 The complete kits (listed above) include
- 56 • Four side curtain covers
  - 57 • Four steel frames in gray primer, drilled for the side curtain cover hardware
  - 58 • Polished stainless steel finishing strips with "spooned ends" please note that The finishing strips  
59 in all of our complete side curtain kits have "spoon" ends, correct for TD and TF. For TC owners  
60 who are die-hard purists or Concours enthusiasts, our "do-it-yourself" finishing strip kits include  
61 over-length strips which must be custom mitered to duplicate the originals.
  - 62 • Special bolts with "T" heads, and nuts

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**MG TC**

253-100 LH front, 253-300 LH Rear Side Curtain Frames

Reference JPG: 253-100 and 253-300 TC 37

Lay the side curtain frames on the ground as shown.

Things to look for

- The upper rear corner of the front frame is almost a 90 degree angle (1B)
- The upper front corner of the rear frame is almost a 90 degree angle (1C)
- The upper rear corner of the rear frame is angular, not rounded (1D)
- The dropped section of the rear s/c frame (1E) is gently rounded.
- The rear TC s/c frame is the **only one** with this rounded point.

To confirm the identity of the front frames:

- On the front s/c frame, identify the upper horizontal piece. (1A)
- Lay a tape measure along the **inside** edge of the upper horizontal piece.
- Measure the length of the steel piece from **outside to outside** edge.
- It should be 19 3/4 inches long. (about 21 inches would be TD, and over 22 is a TF)

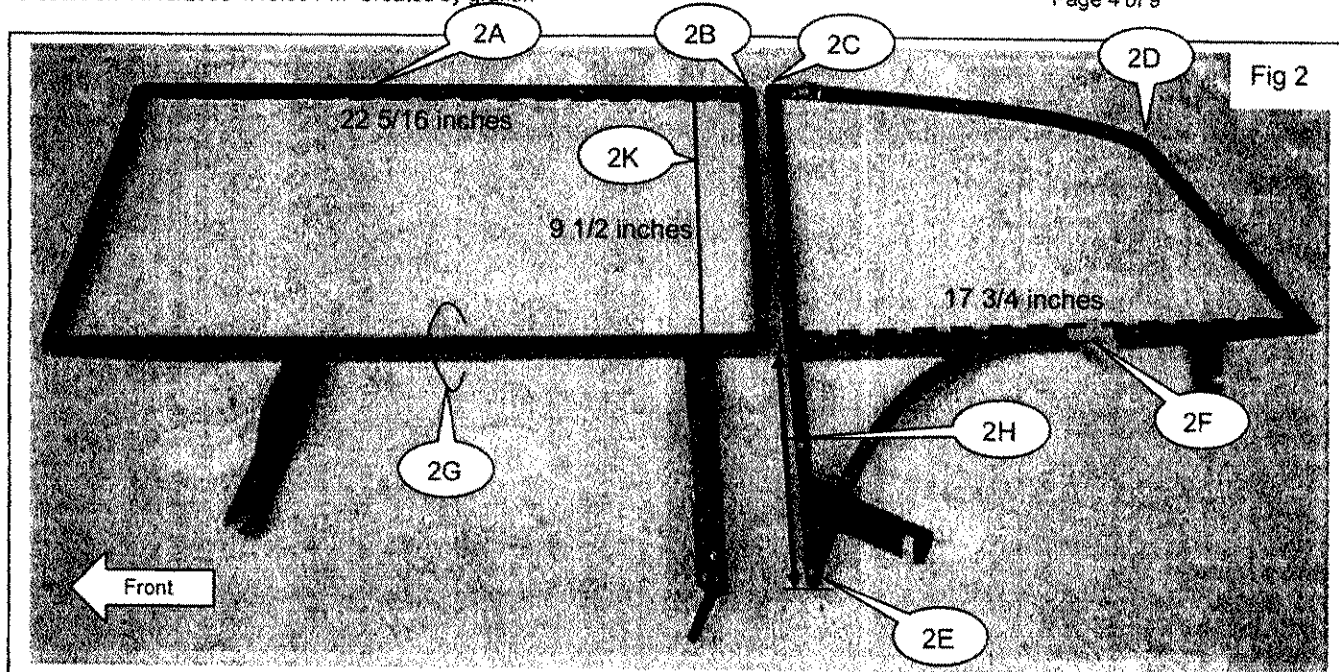
If 1E is rounded as shown you can skip the measurements below

To confirm the identity of the rear frames:

- On the rear s/c frame, identify the lower horizontal piece. (1F)
- Lay a tape measure along the **inside** edge of the lower horizontal piece.
- Measure the length of the steel piece from **outside to outside** edge.
- It should be 20 inches long. (about 17 3/4 to 18 1/4 inches would be TD, and less than 17 is a TF)
- The metal strap used to make the lower pieces of the TC frames is flat (1G).
- The material used to make the TD frames is actually like a small piece of angle iron.

The depth of the dropped point (1H) is 9 7/8 inches.

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**MG TD, with 2 free-standing metal top bows**  
253-600 LH Front, 253-800 LH Rear Side Curtain Frames

Reference JPG: 253-100 and 253-300 TC\_37

Lay the side curtain frames on the ground as shown.

Things to look for

- The upper rear corner of the front frame is almost a 90 degree angle (2B)
- The upper front corner of the rear frame is almost a 90 degree angle (2C)
- The upper rear corner of the rear frame is angular, not smoothly rounded (2D)
- The dropped section of the rear s/c frame comes to a sharp point (2E)

To confirm the identity of the front frames:

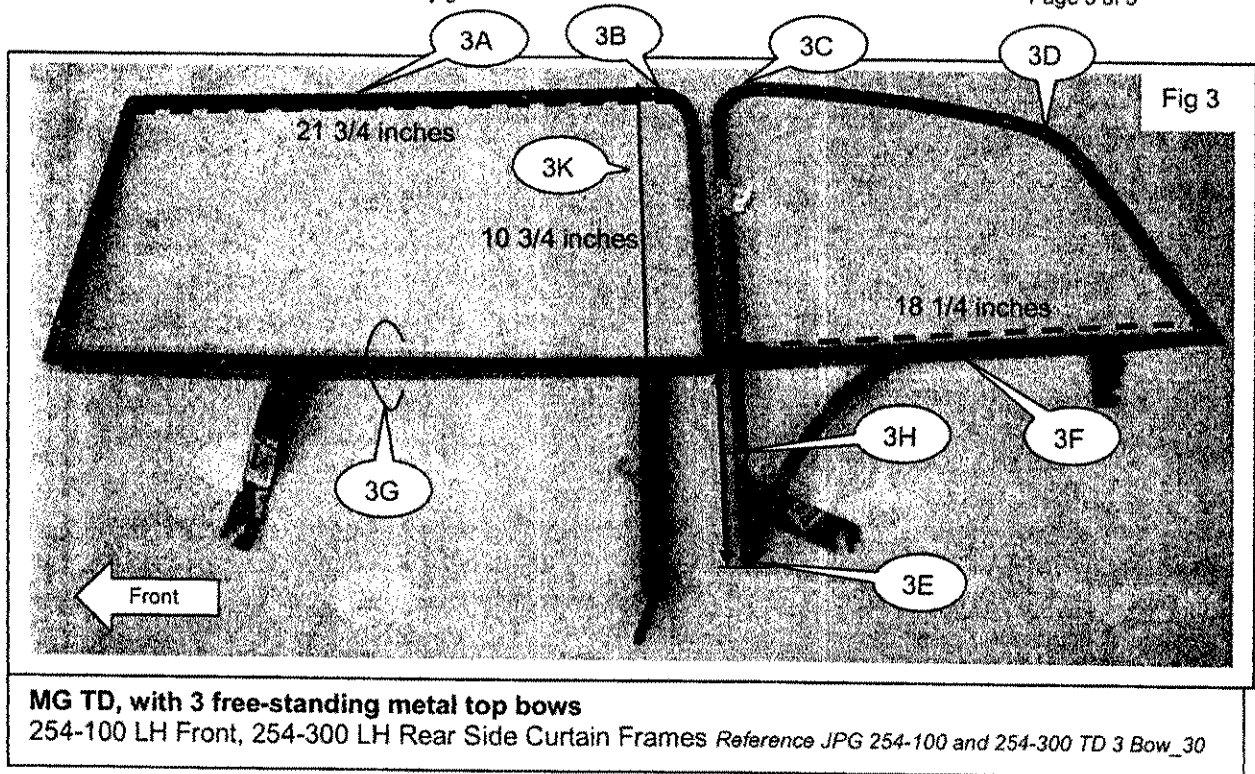
- On the front s/c frame, identify the upper horizontal piece. (2A)
- Lay a tape measure along the **inside** edge of the upper horizontal piece.
- Measure the length of the steel piece from **outside to outside** edge.
- It should be 22 5/16 inches long. (about 19 3/4 inches would be TC, and over 22 is a TF)
- Note: the distance between the top and bottom frame pieces (2K) is 9 1/2 inches.
- This same dimension on the corresponding side curtain frame for the 3 bow top is 10 3/4 inches.

To confirm the identity of the rear frames:

- On the rear s/c frame, identify the lower horizontal piece. (2F)
- Lay a tape measure along the **inside** edge of the lower horizontal piece.
- Measure the length of the steel piece from **outside to outside** edge.
- It should be 17 3/4 inches long. (about 20 inches would be TC, and less than 17 is a TF)

The depth of the dropped point (2H) is 7 3/4 from the bottom of the lower horizontal bar (2F) to the end of the point.

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**MG TD, with 3 free-standing metal top bows**  
254-100 LH Front, 254-300 LH Rear Side Curtain Frames Reference JPG 254-100 and 254-300 TD 3 Bow\_30

Lay the side curtain frames on the ground as shown.

Things to look for

- The upper rear corner of the front frame is a gently rounded, not quite 90 degree angle (3B)
- The front side curtain frames for the TD with 3 bow top frame and the TF are very, very similar in dimension. It is this corner (3B) that distinguishes them, because the equivalent corner on the TF frame is almost 90 degrees. Please look at 4B on the next page and compare that corner to 3B above.
- The upper front corner of the rear frame is almost a 90 degree angle (3C)
- The upper rear corner of the rear frame is smoothly rounded, not angular (3D)
- The TD 3 bow top s/c frames are the only ones with these 3 rounded corners.
- The dropped section of the rear s/c frame comes to a sharp point (3E)

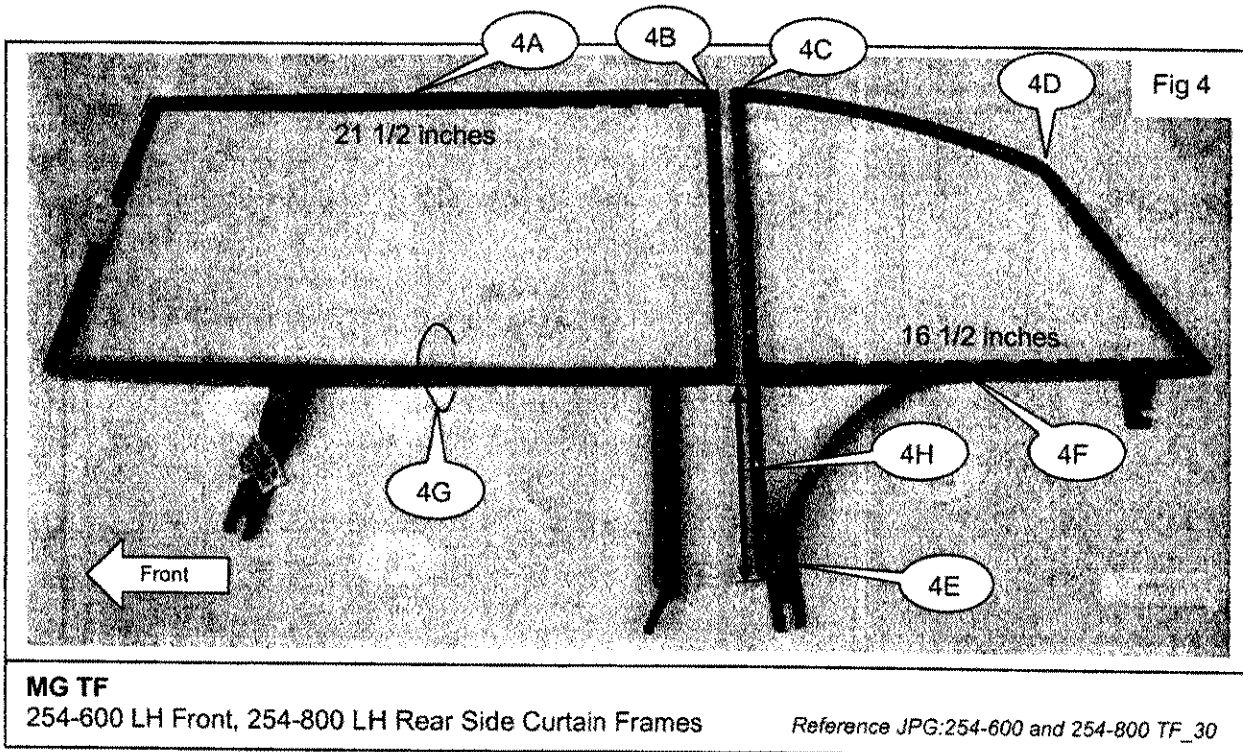
To confirm the identity of the front frames:

- On the front s/c frame, identify the upper horizontal piece. (3A)
- Lay a tape measure along the **inside** edge of the upper horizontal piece.
- Measure the length of the steel piece from **outside** to **outside** edge.
- It should be 22 5/16 inches long. (about 19 3/4 inches would be TC, and over 22 is a TF)
- Note: the distance between the top and bottom frame pieces (3K) is 10 3/4 inches.
- This same dimension on the corresponding side curtain frame for the 2 bow top is 9 1/2 inches.

To confirm the identity of the rear frames:

- On the rear s/c frame, identify the lower horizontal piece. (3F)
- Lay a tape measure along the **inside** edge of the lower horizontal piece.
- Measure the length of the steel piece from **outside** to **outside** edge.
- It should be 18 1/4 inches long. (about 20 inches would be TC, and less than 17 is a TF)
- The length of the dropped point (3H) is 7 3/16 from the bottom of the lower horizontal bar (3F) to the end of the point.

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Lay the side curtain frames on the ground as shown.

Things to look for

- The upper rear corner of the front frame is almost a 90 degree angle (4B)
- The upper front corner of the rear frame is almost a 80 degree angle (4C)
- The upper rear corner of the rear frame is angular, not smoothly rounded (4D)
- The dropped section of the rear s/c frame comes to a sharp point (4E)
- The mounting bracket welded to the frame at 4E points almost straight down.

To confirm the identity of the front frames:

- On the front s/c frame, identify the upper horizontal piece. (4A)
- Lay a tape measure along the **inside** edge of the horizontal piece.
- Measure the length of the steel piece from **outside to outside** edge.
- It should be 22 5/16 inches long. (about 19 3/4 inches would be TC, 21 3/4 is a TD, over 22 is TF)

To confirm the identity of the rear frames:

- On the rear s/c frame, identify the lower horizontal piece. (4F)
- Lay a tape measure along the **inside** edge of the lower horizontal piece.
- Measure the length of the steel piece from **outside to outside** edge.
- It should be 16 1/2 inches long. (about 20 inches would be TC, and 17-18 would be a TD)

The length of the dropped point (4H) is 6 15/16 from the bottom of the lower horizontal bar (4F) to the end of the point

This concludes Part 1, Identifying What You Have.

277 **Part 2 - Fitting the Bare Frames**

278 Erect the hood (top). Do not fit the frames with the hood down!  
279 Install new side curtain sockets in the holes in the arm rest section of the door top. Do not secure them solidly in  
280 the door. Besides possible damage to the paint, the sockets are intended to have some up and down adjustment.  
281 In addition, the hole in the socket for the pin on the side curtain frame is eccentric, which allows some fine tuning-  
282 by rotating the socket you can move the side curtain in or out slightly.

283 **Positioning the Mounting Plates**

284 Ideally, you have new upholstery panels in the cockpit and the old holes for the mounting plates are not there.  
285 *If you reinstalled the old mounting plates in the same place that they were, fitting the frames is going to be*  
286 *potentially more difficult. As the side curtains were used to determine the position of the mounting plate in the first*  
287 *plate. Attach the side curtain mounting plates to the forward leg of the front side curtain frame with the special*  
288 *"wing nut".*

289 Position the frame with the pin in the socket in the door top, holding the front part of the frame up with your hand  
290 The leading edge of the front frame should be parallel to the windscreen frame.

291 Some bending of the frames may be required. Original frames were also slightly "bowed" front to rear.  
292

293 Locate the side curtain mounting plates as you hold the bare side curtain frame in position.

294 The mounting plate will be in the upper front corner of the door, very close to the hidden hinge that goes around the edge  
295 of the door.

296 Secure the mounting plate with only **one** screw  
297

298 You will need help with the next step, and you and your helper will need a good deal of patience  
299 Hold the side curtain cover against the frame.

300 Please refer to Fig 6 & 7 below for details on the alignment of the cover to the frame.

301 Check the fit and appearance of the cover from the outside and from inside the cockpit.  
302 Check the alignment with the windshield frame.

303 Note that the leading edge of the side curtain should fit into the vertical channel on the windshield post.  
304 Look at the top edge of the side curtain and make sure it fits into the flap of the convertible top.

305 Check the rear edge of the side curtain. It should be parallel with the rear edge of the door and overlap the rear  
306 side curtain slightly.

307 With the side curtain cover just where you want it, check the location of the stitch lines (Fig 6 & 7) one more time  
308

309 If you have already fitted the side curtain mounting plates you will have the frames will have to be tweaked and  
310 adjusted as necessary to fit the fixing brackets.  
311

312 Only after bare frames have been fitted to the car should they be detailed out, primed, and painted. Moss offers  
313 spray paint in the correct shade of tan for the T-Series top and side curtain frames under 220-520.  
314

315 The fit of the covers against the frames does not allow for significant adjustment but it is still wise to hold the  
316 uninstalled covers up against the frames while the frames are mounted on the car. This will help to determine if  
317 any further modification of the frames or mount position is required.

318 **Part 3 - Side Curtain Cover Installation**

319  
320 A good clean work area is essential along with a  
321 sacrificial piece of clean plywood ideally at least  
322 as large as the largest side curtain cover..

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324 Lay a front side curtain cover on the work surface,  
325 with the outer surface facing down.

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328 Lay the frame over the cover.

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337 Note the holes (6A) for the trim strip mounting  
338 hardware.  
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340 Locate the stitch line inset from the edge of the side  
341 curtain cover. (6B).

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356 Carefully center the trim strip fixing bolt holes over  
357 the inner stitch line of the cover. (Fig 7A)

358  
359 This stitch line should ideally lie directly under the  
360 center of each fixing bolt hole. (7B)

361  
362 The frame position can be adjusted slightly but the  
363 stitch line must not extend into the "window  
364 area" (7C)

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366 Total possible adjustment on an ideal frame is only  
367 approx. 1/4". Only if necessary should the inner  
368 stitch line be visible outside of the frame. (7D)

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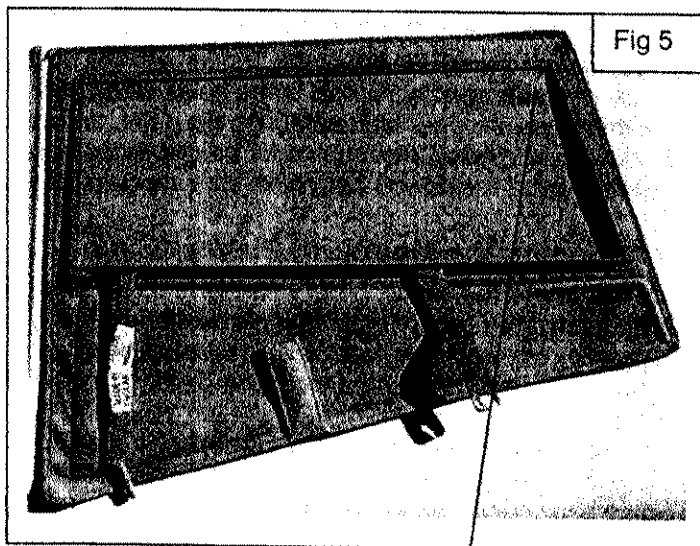


Fig 5

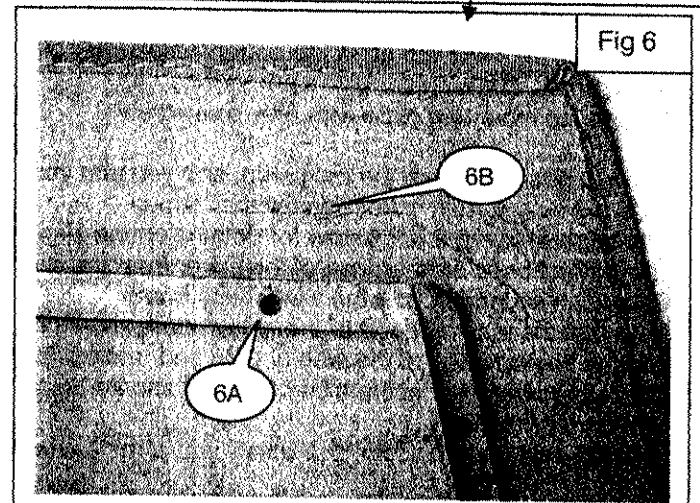


Fig 6

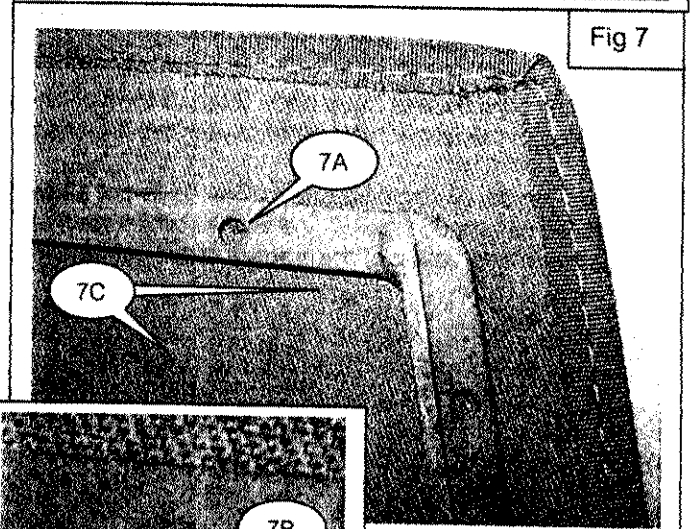


Fig 7

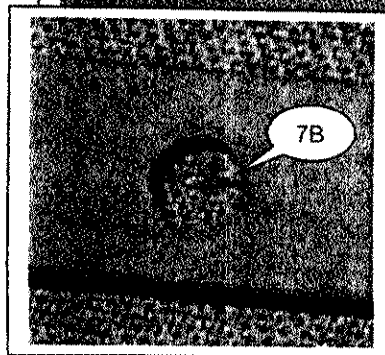


Fig 7

371 If the stitch line does not begin to line up, it is most likely that the frames and the covering kits are not compatible.  
372 TC, TD 2-Bow, TD 3 bow and TF side curtain frames are all similar but are most definitely not interchangeable.  
373  
374 If you encounter a problem at this point review Part 1, the frame identification section, and verify that you have the  
375 correct frames for your car.  
376  
377 With a light marking pen, mark for each hole and the inside edge of the window opening.  
378 Remove the frame.  
379 With a pair of sharp scissors, (or blade if using extreme caution) cut out the fabric covering to the line plus  
380 approximately 0.050"  
381 **Do not cut into the Lexan clear window material!**  
382 Turn the cover over and trim out the center fabric to approximately the same dimensions plus a bit more to insure  
383 that the trim line will be fully covered by the chrome trim strips.  
384 In principal, the trimmed edge of the fabric should ideally not show on the inside or outside once fully assembled.  
385  
386 Lay the marked cover on a piece of sacrificial plywood.  
387 Drill out each marked hole on the trimmed-out cover using a 13/64" drill bit.  
388 Carefully brush away residue to prevent it from scratching windows.  
389  
390 Cover can now be simply screwed together with the fixing bolts, nuts and trim strips.  
391  
392 TCs were originally fitted with trim strips with nicely fitting fully mitered corners. Each corner had a small "V"  
393 shaped corner guide, slipped into each corner. These corners were hand cut from alloy sheet or ridged plastic  
394 window material. Each strip was individually mitered. Moss offers a "Do-it-yourself" strip kit but these require lots  
395 of patience. The standard "spoon end" strips are straight forward to install. The sixteen individual strips should  
396 be sorted by length and selected to give the best possible fit. It is necessary to apply a slight bow to the rearmost  
397 upper strip on the rear frames. This bend can be massaged into the strip by using hand pressure while holding the  
398 strip against a flat surface.  
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400 Snaps for front curtain fixing taps should be positioned and installed only after the assembled curtain is offered up  
401 to the doors and correct snap location is determined. The snap studs were originally installed directly on top of  
402 the hidem at the top of the door panel.  
403  
404 Rear curtains are covered in the same fashion as described above but also require that the lower flap be riveted  
405 to the bottom section of the frame. Mark & drill for these holes only after the cover has been attached to the frame  
406 and trim strips have been secured.

#### 407 **Acknowledgements**

408 *We are grateful for the information, suggestions and assistance of Chris Nowlan and Lawrie Alexander who were*  
409 *instrumental in the development of these instructions.*



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