

Door Hinge and alignment

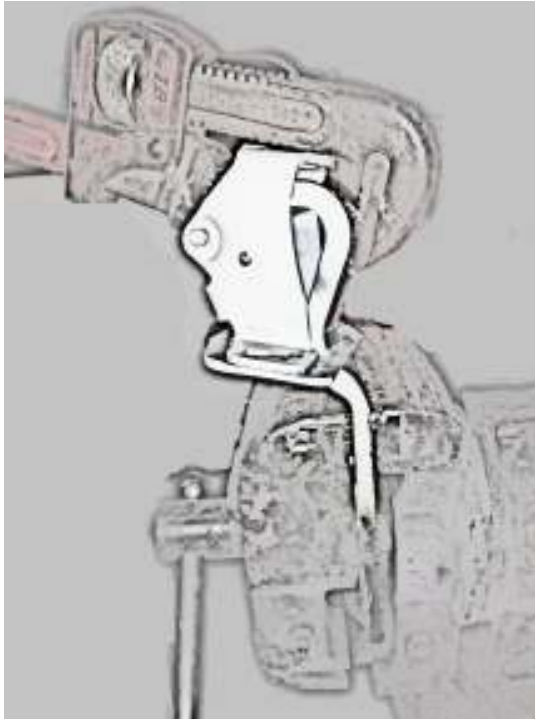
Adjusting doors can be the most frustrating parts of any restoration. Hopefully this will make it easier. One of the first things we do is to remove the latch and hinges and with the help of someone else hold the door in the opening and make sure it fits with enough gap all the way around, A paint stick works nicely or a piece of 16 gage sheet steel. When using original doors that are original to the truck you usually don't run into fit issues unless you replaced the back of the cab or the cowl panels or the door has been sprung. When using used doors, or you have replace major panels it always better to fit the door prior to weather stripping and hinge fitting. New or used and new to the truck hinges will require some bending to fit properly. Original to the truck usually doesn't require much tweaking as long as you have them in the original position. The hinges offer only minor adjustment with the slotted hole forward and backward and even less upward and downward so bending is the preferred adjustment when needed.

Remember to bend just a bit at a time. Too much will get you too far in the other direction. Do this without weather stripping or door latches in place. If the door fits properly flush with the adjacent body panel the weather stripping will fit unless you have the wrong stripping or it's not oriented correctly.

Now work on the hinge fitment.

Place the long flat part hinge in a vice as close to the first bend as possible, the hinge pin facing you. Grab the large curved portion with a large pipe wrench. Bend it toward you if you want to pull the door in and away from you if you want to push the door out. Bending in 1/8" increments. Test and re-bend if needed. The first pics shows how to move the door inward and the second pic shows how to move the door outward. Work each hinge to get the look you want, you may have to bend the top in and the bottom out to get where you want to be or the top out and bottom in or any combination of that.

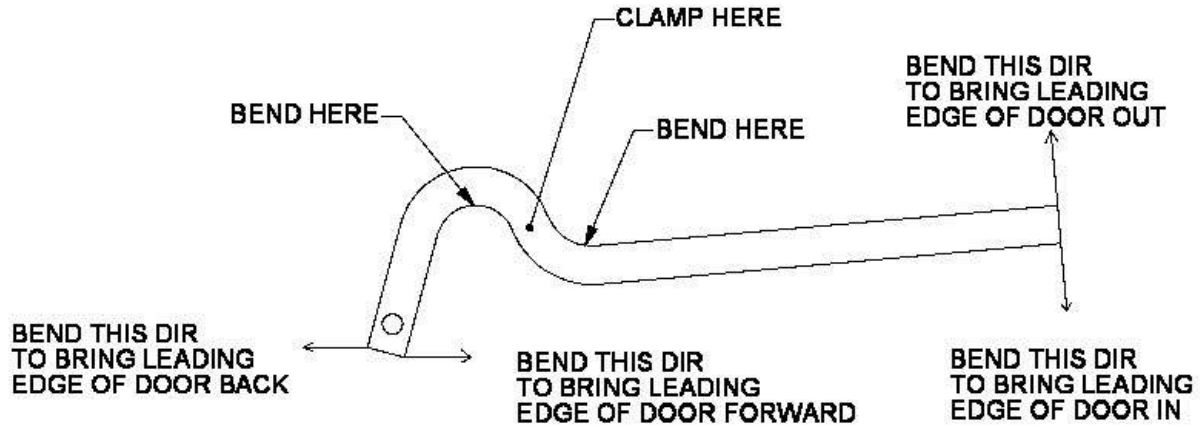
Moves door in



Moves doors out



these pictures are from an unknown source. If you know the source let me know and I'll give credit.



Picture from <http://www.chuckthetruck.com/page20.html>

This is done if the door hinge slots have no more adjustment.

This document is a compilation of several different authors. I have added some of my experiences with doors and modified the pictures to exaggerate the hinge in the vise and make it easier to see the orientation in the vise. Using this method you can easily set a pair of doors in half a day. Having the weather strip removed and the rubber bumpers in place helps with this adjustment. I sometimes heat the hinge bed point so as not to bend in an unintended spot and its makes it easier to bend. A 36 inch pipe wrench will be needed and a straight edge so you can see the bend progress

You will need to have a way to measure the start point and how much you bent the hinge. From past experience we bend the hinge nearly the same as how far the door panel is out of alignment. Meaning if the panel sticks out 1/8" past the cowl then we bend the proper bend point a 1/8" and test fit. If it forward 1/8 we bend the proper bend point an 1/8. The leading edge should be no less that 1/8" " gap so it does not peel the paint as you open the door. A piece of 16 gage steel is just about right for fit.

A note about weather stripping, most companies sell the same thickness stripping. They also have a thinner stripping and it may be required if the door needs to be forced to close after you have the hinges and strikers properly adjusted. Most all stripping will cause the doors to not close like a new car door requiring some force to close but this will ease up after the stripping seat in and get formed to the door opening, Metro Molded Parts # LP 40-A and LP 40-B are typical of the two most used stripping sizes.

Improper operation of the doors and locks may be due to —

- 1. Poor door alignment**
- 2. Improper striker plate adjustment**
- 3. Binding door handle, or a binding or improperly adjusted remote control**
- 4. Dry and sticking lock mechanism.**

In any case, make sure the door is properly aligned as the first step in making corrections.

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3. Aligning Doors

Doors may need aligning to improve appearance, to correct improper lock operation, or to stop water and dust leaks. In each case, the procedure is the same and is as follows —

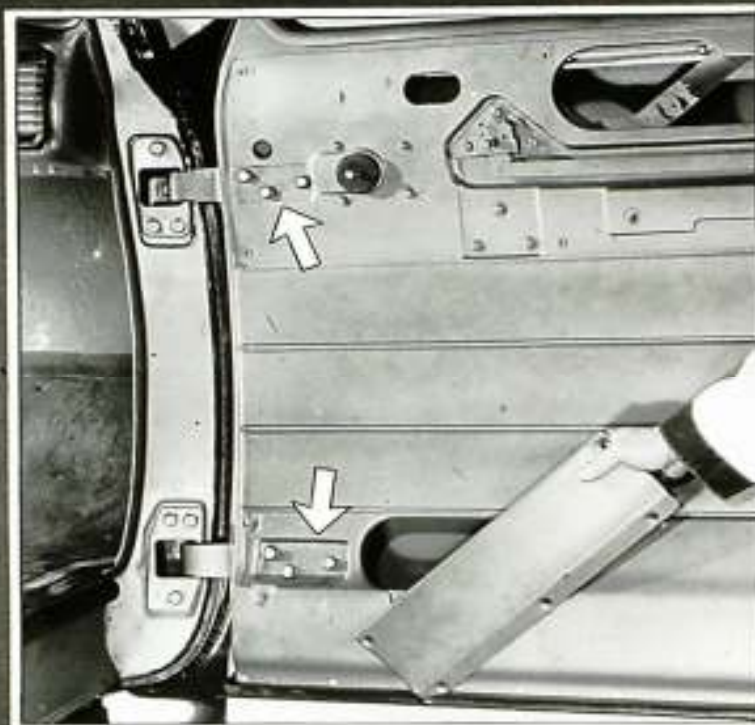
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To adjust the door **vertically**, loosen the four capscrews at the pillar end of each hinge. Shift the door up or down so the belt moldings on door and body line up. Tighten the capscrews securely.

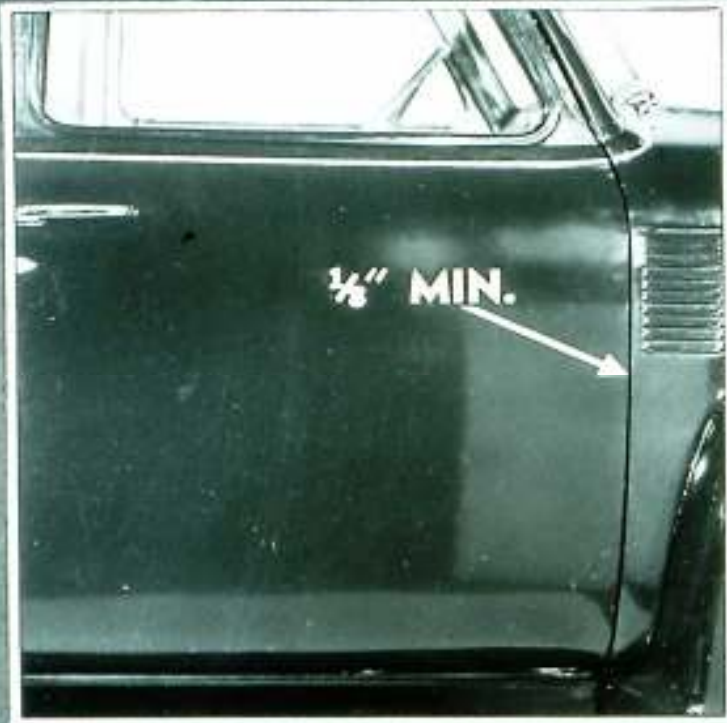


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To adjust the door **horizontally**, first remove the trim and lower access plate to expose the attaching screws of the hinges.



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Loosen the outer hinge capscrews and slide the door horizontally to obtain a *minimum* of $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch between the door and cowl when the door is fully closed.

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The relationship of the door panel to cowl panel should be flush to $\frac{1}{16}$ inch out to prevent wiping weather strip off door. Adjustment can be made by enlarging body hinge bolt holes or bending hinges.

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