

Van Front Bench and Storage Area

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In this article I will show how I set up the front of my truck for servicing with a combination Headache rack, storage and workbench complete with key machine mounts (the door side one will be covered in another article, I am doing some modifications to it to make it easier to use). It was cheaper than an Adrian Steel workbench (but more than I anticipated) over all cost was just under \$450 including the mounts and plywood) I am NOT a welder but I can tack stuff together. So please don't look to close at the joints.



First we have an empty shell on a 2001 Dodge 3500 Ram Maxi (extended) Cargo Van.



Notice the headliner only includes the cab area.



Then (after I got it home) I started to Insulate it with rolls of insulation it dropped the temperature down from over 120 degrees inside to around 100 in just a few minutes while I was working in it. The cost here was 10 ft x 24 inches came to \$10.49

a roll. The bulk length x 48 inches was \$2.19 a foot, and the bulk length X 24 inches was \$1.59 a foot. It is basically bubble wrap with an aluminum coating. They called it "Small Project Insulation", nice stuff I highly recommend it. It also cut down on outside noise, not a lot but it helps. It is installed with carpet tape, (double sided type) to stick to the wall. Then, I started with Duct tape ('cause it was cheaper) but, you would be ahead to use the aluminum tape to start with. You will notice the duct tape is pulling away from the insulation already.



Right side looking in from the rear doors



Left side from the side doors



I then added Pegboard to protect the insulation and outer skin from the inside.



Here is what I have gotten done to this point.



I started with a steel frame that I made measured from the door frame to the inside on the other side and top to bottom (short by about 2 inches) notice the hook on the right that fits into the seat belt mounting. I put this into the Van to make sure it fit and to mark the Drivers side mounting fixtures.



The three holes are for the drivers side sub-frame. The hook again is for the passenger side.



I cut one leg of the angle iron and bent it together then re-welded to get my corners and angles close.



I then started to make the storage area frames. (editors note instead of welding this to start with drill holes and bolt them together so you can get them all the same and even, also to make sure you get enough angle to keep the containers from sliding out on you. The frames and most of the storage area are made with 3/16th -1.5 by 2 inch angle iron. The slope (angle from the front to the back is about 1.5 inches in 10 inches or roughly 15 degrees.



I even got my daughter to do some welding of the uprights. (She is better looking than I am).



All but one of the uprights are in place and the Screen is installed.



Set in place and bolted down, this thing weighs a "ton" actual weight was around 200 lbs.



Finished welding and now painting the rack



Installed passenger side key machine on its stand.



Platform for the passenger side key machine mount.



Here we have the drivers side key machine mounted and some of the plastic containers in place, I figured I should be able to get 44 of the small containers and 11 of the larger ones in the storage rack.

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