

Centerboard Gasket

This is a very common project. The hardest part of this one is getting access to the bottom of the boat. I pull the boat off of the trailer and lay it on its side. To get it on its side I simply raise the mast and then pull the boat over by grabbing one of the shrouds and pulling the boat over. Once it is on its side the boat should stay that way, but to be sure I will move the trailer over the top end of the mast so that it will not accidentally pop back up.



This is a picture of the old rubber gasket that was on my boat when I got it. I'm not sure if it was the original, but I understand that is what Chrysler used back in the "70's. It was extremely worn, and I believe that a previous owner may have cut away a portion of it so that the centerboard would move more freely. With the big gaping hole in the bottom water was splashed up the trunk and into the cockpit.

When I replaced it I decided to go with the new mylar material. The slot is 3" wide, so a 5 foot section of 3" mylar gasket material would be sufficient. All you have to do is measure the slot on your boat and cut the mylar strip to length. Once this is done you will need to cut a slit down the middle of the gasket for the board to slide through. What I do is find the middle of the gasket and use straight-edge to mark a line down the middle but I leave a couple of inches on each end that is not cut. After I cut the material I use duct tape to cover the slit so that it holds together while I am attaching it to the boat.

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This is a picture of the slot with the old gasket removed, and all of the old glue cleaned off. The first thing that you need to do is remove the aluminum strips. They are attached with wood screws. Once they are removed you can pull off the old gasket and clean off all of the old glue.

In the picture you can also see the centerboard sitting in the slot. The two aluminum strips that you can see are the old style Centerboard pivot bracket. The new style attaches to the top of the CB cap. I have never used the new ones, so I can't say anything about them. If you need to remove the centerboard for any reason you would simply remove the four screws that hold the pivot in place. With this old style pivot you must have the centerboard and pivot mounted in place before you put on the new gasket. The really bad part is that anytime you want to remove the centerboard you will probably have to replace the CB gasket.

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This is the slot prepped and ready to have the gasket material glued on. I decided to eliminate the aluminum strips, so I filled in the holes with Marine-Tex. It is a good idea to fill the old screw holes even if you plan to reuse the aluminum strips because this can be an area of leaks. Of course, if you fill the holes with Marine-Tex, or anything else that solidifies once it dries, the holes for the screws must be predrilled.

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This is a picture of the new gasket in place. I used 3M-4200 adhesive to bond the material to the slot. It holds up just fine once it sets, but make sure that you use the quick curing type and that you let it sit for a minimum of a 24 hour period before you put the boat in the water. If the adhesive is not completely cured the gasket will come off. We learned this at the 2004 MNC where we did a quick repair job on the boat that Ernie French was sailing and we did not have time to wait for a full cure. The gasket did come off and water kept splashing into the hull. They ended up using towels stuffed into the top of the CB trunk to try to keep the water out of the boat but it did not work all that well.

After the adhesive is cured, and if you wanted to reinstall the aluminum strips, you would do so at this point. Like I said, I decided to leave them off and it has worked fine without them. My reasoning for leaving off the strips, (I have done this on all of my Mutineers), is to eliminate any drag created by them. Minor stuff, but then I do most of my upgrades with racing in mind.