



MIKES CORVETTE CORNER

Corvette Wiper Blades

Like most of us, I don't like taking my Corvette out in the rain. If there is a chance of rain, I probably won't take the Corvette to the event. But when the need comes for you to push that button when it does start to rain, that's when things happen. Such as chattering across the windshield, skipping, streaking, or the rubber coming off the blade and that dreadful screech you hear as you try hurriedly to shut the system off (too late) or lastly, no wiper function at all.

Many of the above issues can be prevented with minimal routine maintenance. First of all let's start with the complete blade assembly. There is a specified amount of spring tension required to keep the blade assembly intact with the windshield, and also to prevent lifting at freeway speeds. Too much tension and the blade assembly wears prematurely, too little and it does not clear at highway speeds and road grime and bugs smear immediately.

In my experience with Corvettes 1973- 2012 model years, I really never had a wiper arm present an issue. After 11 years the spring tension on my Corvette is still within specification. So we will concentrate on the wiper blade assembly. You may be asking yourself why is he calling it a 'blade assembly? years ago, you could buy the rubber insert that fits in your OEM blade. A lot of windshields were scratched during that era. Either by improper installation or wrong fitment. Those days are gone. But improper installation of today's new blades can also cause problems.

MAINTENANCE:

First of all let's start with the windshield. Due to the use of many different waxes used in car washes today, it can have an effect on wiper blade performance. This wax, over time can cause streaking, skipping, chattering, and what the industry calls "Snake Skinning" which is a light smear that occurs during wiper operation.

GETTING STARTED:

Let's get some warm soap and water and wash the windshield, then dry the entire windshield. Now we are going to apply rubbing alcohol on a soft rag and go over the entire windshield. I like to use a product similar to Rain X on my windshield, this really helps when you get a slight rain mist at freeway speeds, the rain just rushes off the windshield. However, you can cheat by using Invisible Glass with rain repellent.



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I use a dishwashing solution in warm water to also wash off the blade assembly. Also at the same time you can inspect the rubber for cracks, tears or wear. I know this seems like a lot of work, but it took me longer to write this article compared to doing this procedure. Once this becomes part of your routine maintenance on your Corvette, it only takes a few minutes to ensure a trouble free wiper system.

CHOOSING BLADES: NEED FOR REPLACEMENT:

When choosing blades, I always say “you get what you pay for” There are a number of blades on the market but I prefer the Trico Force blade for their performance and long life.

TRICO Force® is a robustly engineered high wind beam blade with a patented swept-wing spoiler that slices through wind speeds in excess of 135 MPH (220 KPH) caused by cross winds, buffeting truck winds and general traffic turbulence.

Features and benefits:

- VorTec® aerofoil converts wind force for maximum windshield contact
- HighGlide® treated rubber element for a smoother, quieter wipe
- Robust superstructure for durable all-weather performance
- SWIFT® Easy Connection Technology
- Wiper blade size – available in lengths from 14” to 29”

Here’s where its gets tricky and why blade and windshield maintenance is critical, especially on Corvettes that are driven periodically. On a number of occasions I’ve seen scratches in windshields caused by using cheap wiper blades. This happens when the blade rests on the windshield for months or years without being cycled. The rubber sticks to the windshield, (more predominant in warmer climates) tears off the first spine of the rubber, exposing the metal retaining crimp. The blade goes into a different angle during the “PARK POSITION” when you are frantically trying to shut it off (TOO LATE) the windshield is already scratched.

An additional note on aftermarket wiper blades, some aftermarket blades come with an assortment of “UNIVERSAL ATTACHMENT CLIPS” use the wrong one and your blades will end up on the side of the road. And some of them look unsightly on our Corvettes.

Mike