

SOFTOPPER®

Installation Instructions

Dodge RamCharger and Plymouth Trailduster
(1974 to 1980)

Please read instructions thoroughly before starting installation



****Remove all contents of the Softopper carefully to protect from scratches.****
Windows scratch easily! Keep protective layer placed between them when they are stacked.

Estimated Installation Time: 1 hour

Beginning Note: It is easiest to do the initial installation in warmer temperatures. The fabric of the top is at its tightest when it is new. Installing it in warmer temperatures initially will ensure that the fabric is easier to work with. The fabric of the top will relax slightly with time and become easier to put on.

****Safety Notes****

Please read the following before driving with the Softopper installed:

1. It is highly recommended that the provided boot cover/storage bag is used when the topper is in its retracted position. This will prevent the top from catching in the wind and extend the longevity of the top.
2. This product is designed to shield the occupants from ordinary weather conditions.
3. DO NOT rely in any way on the soft top to contain occupants within the vehicle, or to protect against injury or death in the event of an accident or a roll-over.
4. This top will not protect the occupants from falling or flying objects. Never operate vehicle in excess of manufacturer's recommendations or specifications.

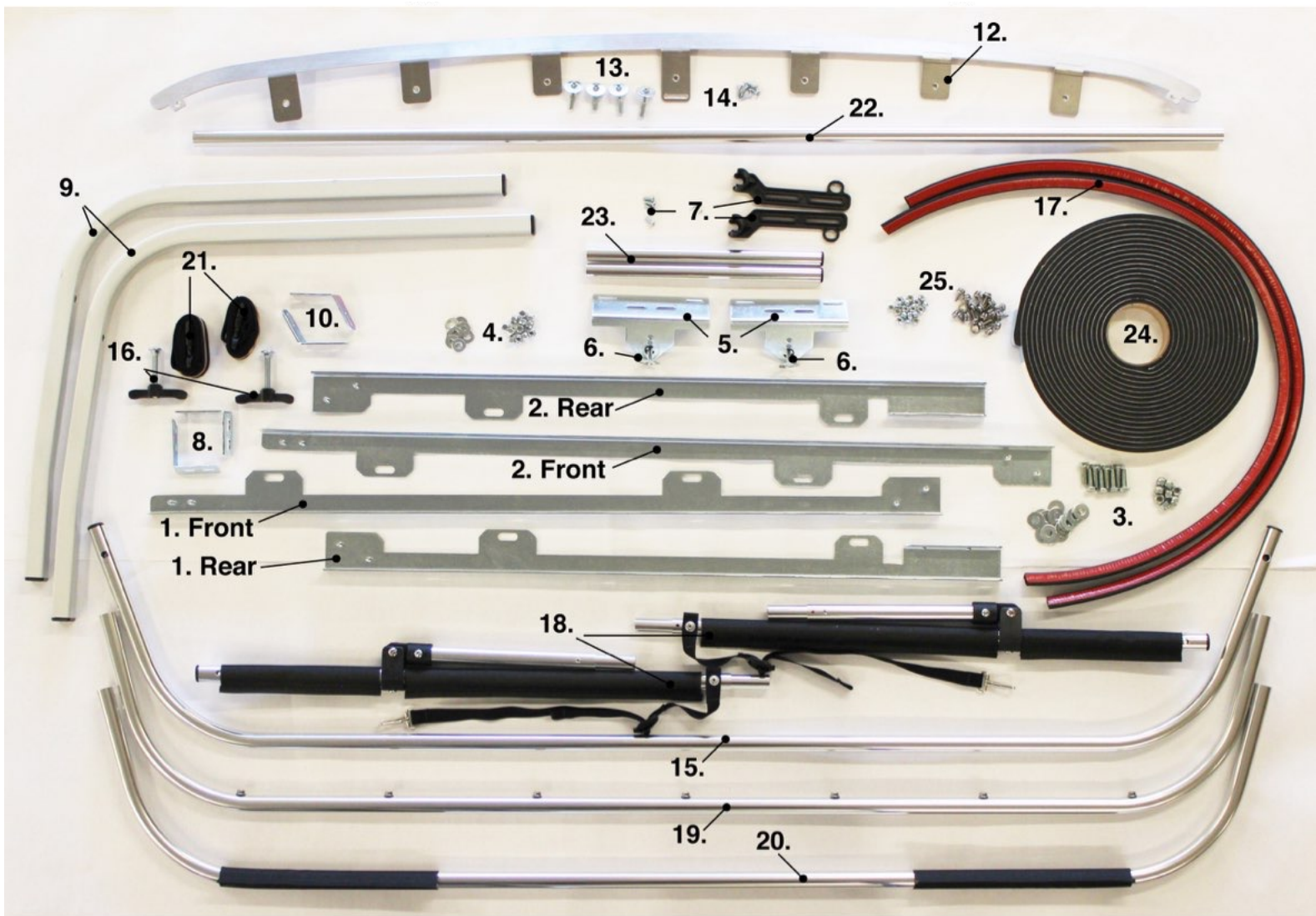
Tools needed for installation:

- 9/64" Drill Bit
- #2 Phillips Drill Bit
- Drill
- 1/2" Wrench and 1/2" Socket
- 7/16" Socket Wrench
- 8mm Wrench or Socket
- #2 Phillips Screwdriver
- #3 Phillips Screwdriver
- Pencil

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Your Softopper Kit Includes the Following Pieces



1. Driver Side Bedrail (front and rear pieces)
2. Passenger Side Bedrail (front and rear pieces)
3. (8) 1" Bolts, 16 Washers, and 8 Nuts
4. (12) 1/4-20 Nuts and Washers
5. 2 Slotted Pivot Point Brackets
6. 2 Pivot Pins, 2 E-clips, and 2 Safety Rings
7. 2 Black Plastic Rear Bar Retainers and (4) 10-32 Screws
8. (2) 3/4" Angled Brackets
9. 2 Front Door Surrounds
10. (2) 1" Angled Brackets
11. (14) #12 Panhead sheet metal screws
12. Header Bar
13. (4) 10-24 Tapered Screws, Washers and Coupler Nuts
14. 5 Tapered Machine Screws
15. Door Surround Cross Bar
16. (2) 5/16" Carriage Bolts with 2 Plastic T Handles
17. (2) 48" Bulb Seal Strips
18. 2 Folding Frame Uprights
19. Rear Cross Bar
20. Forward Cross Bar
21. 2 Adjustable Tensioning Straps with Buckles
22. 53" x 7/8" Rear Window Bar
23. (2) 12" x 3/4" Rear Window Bars
24. 1 Roll of Weather Stripping (may already be installed on bed rails)
25. 18 Snap Studs and Nuts (may already be installed on bedrails)
26. 2 Small Self Drilling Screws (not depicted above)
27. 3 Pieces of Velcro (not depicted above)
28. 1 Softopper Canopy (not depicted above)
29. Protective Boot Cover (not depicted above)

Bedrail Installation

****Note** Colored instructions are available on our website, softopper.com, under “Installation Instructions”.**

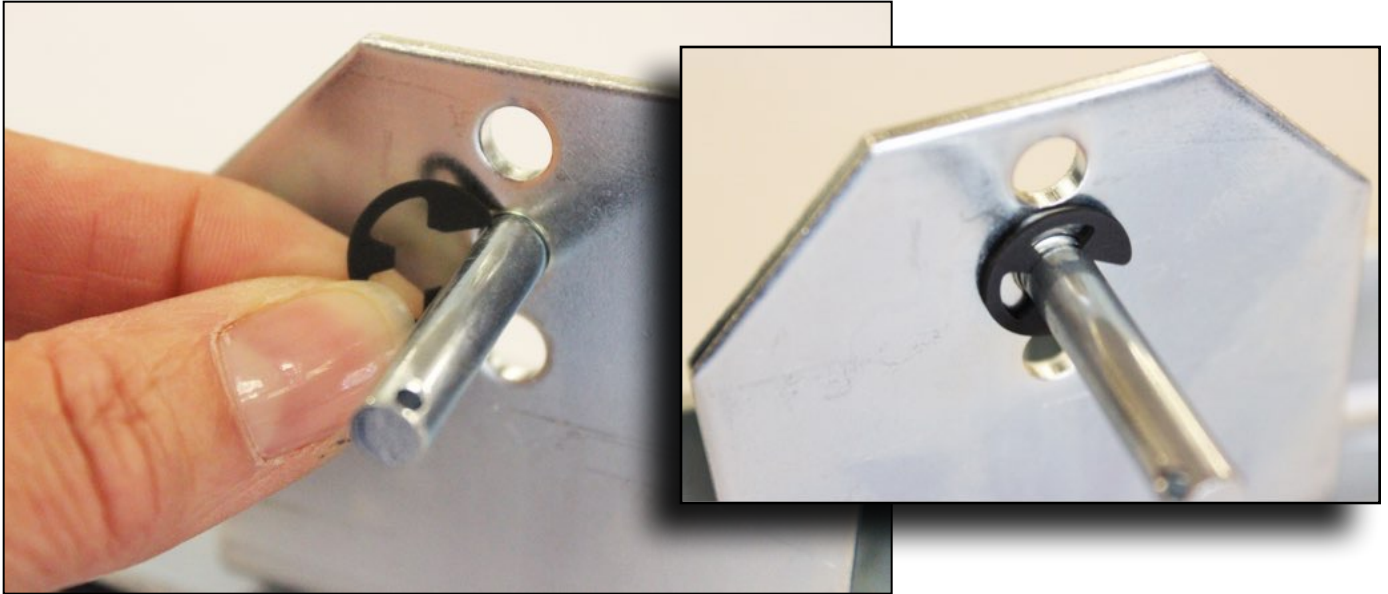
1. Locate the front and rear driver side bedrails, and the bag containing the 2 pivot brackets, 8 nuts, 8 washers, and pivot pins. There is a sticker which designates the driver side front bedrail.
2. Remove the white protective paper from the bottom of the bedrails that is covering the weather stripping. The weather stripping is NOT ADHESIVE, and will not stick to your vehicle.
3. On a clean, level surface join the driver side front bedrail piece and the rear bedrail piece with the slotted pivot point brackets as shown.
4. For proper alignment, every bolt should be centered in the slots, and the snaps on the bedrails should face the same direction. Use a straight edge to also make the bedrails straight, and then tighten the (4) 10-24 nuts and washers onto the threaded studs using a 7/16” socket.
5. Repeat on passenger side.



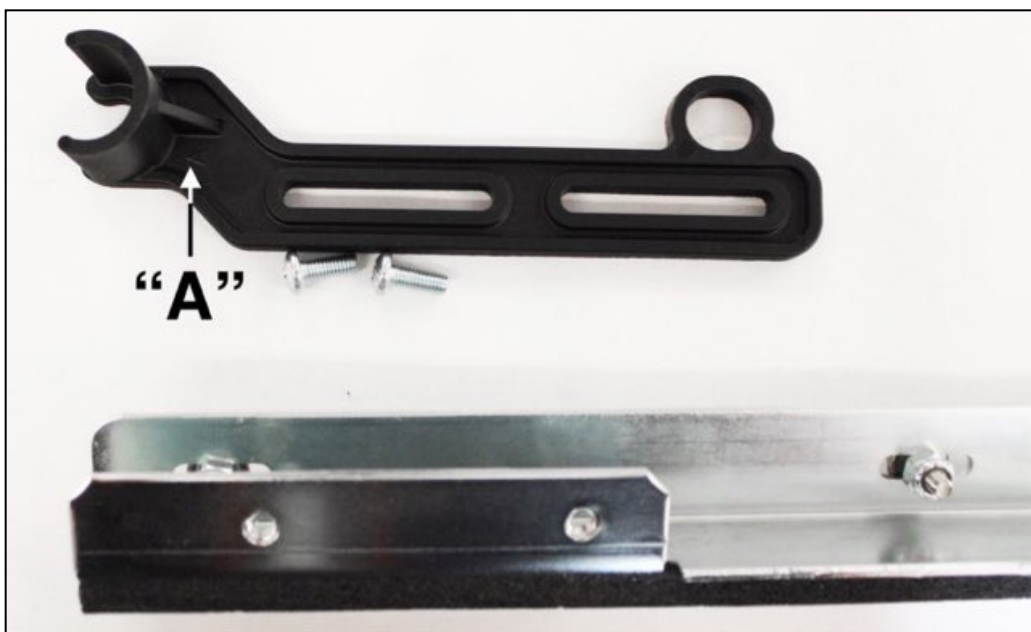
1. Locate 2 pivot pins, 2 E-Clips, and 2 Safety Rings from the bag.
2. Insert the pivot pins into the second hole from the top of the pivot brackets. (A bracket from a different vehicle is depicted below for illustration purposes)



3. Secure the E-Clip onto the pivot pin. Make sure the E-Clip is in the small indent in the pivot pin. It helps to use the flat edge of something metal to push the E-Clip on.



4. Insert safety ring into pivot pin hole by twisting the safety ring.
5. Repeat all of the above for the passenger side bedrails and pivot brackets.
6. Locate the bag containing the 2 black plastic rear bar retainers and hardware.
7. The plastic retainers are marked "A" and "B". "A" is the driver side piece and "B" is passenger side. The retainer slot should face in and the ring should be up.



8. Using the (4) 10-32 screws and a #2 Phillips screwdriver, mount the rear bar retainers to the threaded holes on the back end of the **REAR** bedrail as shown. Center the screws in the slots and fasten securely. Save the 2 remaining self-drilling screws for later in the installation process.



9. Locate the bag containing the (8) 1" Hex bolts, 8 nuts, and 16 washers.
10. Using a 1/2" socket and a 1/2" wrench or socket, secure the bedrails onto the vehicle through the existing holes in the side rails with a washer on the top and bottom for each bolt. Align the bedrails with the front edge and rear edge of the vehicle as shown.



11. Locate the bag containing 4 angled brackets, 2 black T handle knobs, 4 nuts, 4 washers, and a bag of #12 panhead screws.
12. Using the 7/16" socket, attach the 3/4" angled bracket (the one with 4 holes, not 3) through the bottom slots to the front of the bedrail with the 1/4-20 nuts and washers as shown. Lightly fasten for now. The brackets are driver side and passenger side specific, so ensure that they angle toward the inside of the vehicle. The photo below shows the driver side bed rail, angled bracket, as well as the door surround. Disregard that the door surround is installed in this photo. Only install the angled bracket and the 2 bottom nuts and washers in this step. Repeat on passenger side.



Door Surround Installation

1. Using either the existing screws already in the vehicle, if you still have them, or using one of the provided #12 panhead screws and a #3 Phillips screwdriver, attach the 1" wide angled bracket to the hole in the upper corner of the windshield as shown and secure in the center of the slot. Adjust later if door weather seal is not satisfactory. Repeat on passenger side. The brackets are driver side and passenger side specific. View photo for correct orientation. Note: We are unsure of the original size of the bolt. Our prototype vehicle had two differently sized screws in this location. Drilling may be required to enlarge the existing hole for a #12 screw.

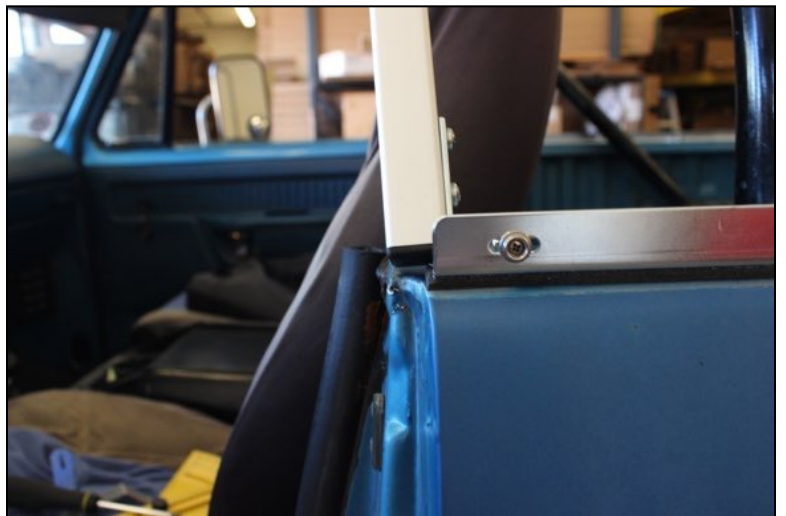


- Using a #3 Phillips screwdriver, attach the front of the door surrounds to the 1" angled brackets on the windshield by screwing 2 #12 screws into the pre-drilled holes in the door surround. There are driver side and passenger side oriented surrounds. Ensure the velcro is



facing the inside of the vehicle on each door surround.

- Now orient the door surround such that it's distance from the door is equal all the way around while the door is closed. This may require viewing the door surround from inside the vehicle as well. Having another person assist by holding the door surround for this step could be helpful. View the photos below closely. Your installation should look very similar to this with the door surround following the angle of the 3/4" bracket and resting on the bedrail at an angle. It may be necessary to flex the door surround a little.
- Once aligned, use a pencil to mark the drill hole locations on the bottom of the door surround where it meets the 3/4" bracket on the bedrail. Note that holes are not pre-drilled due to variations in door alignment up, down, and side to side.
- Slide the 3/4" bracket around as necessary, and once satisfied with the location, tighten nuts securely with the 7/16" socket.



6. Using a 9/64" drill bit, carefully drill the two holes into the door surround without penetrating the other side.
7. Using 2 #12 Panhead screws, connect the door surround to the 3/4" bracket.



8. Tighten all screws.
9. Repeat on other side of the vehicle.

Windshield Header Installation

1. Locate the small bag containing 9 tapered screws, 4 washers, and 4 coupler nuts.
2. Using the (4) 10-24 x 1" tapered screws, washers (on bottom), and coupler nuts, a #2 Phillips screwdriver, and an 8mm wrench, attach the windshield header to the 4 existing hole



locations on the top of the windshield. Lightly fasten for now.

3. Position the header bar so that there is approximately 1/8" between the front of the header bar and the sloped surface on the vehicle. A plastic strip will need to slide under there later. Tighten the 4 bolts.
4. Using a 9/64" drill bit, drill holes in the vehicle for the 5 remaining attachment locations of the header bar while maintaining that 1/8" gap under the front of the bar.
5. Using a #2 Phillips screwdriver and the 5 tapered machine screws, fasten the header bar to the vehicle.
6. Tighten all bolts and screws on header bar.

Door Surround Cross Bar Installation

1. Locate the door surround cross-bar, and the 2 black T handles and 2 carriage bolts that were in the bag with the door surround brackets.
2. Using the 2 carriage bolts and T handles, attach the cross bar to the door surrounds at the pre-drilled hole locations on the door surrounds through the 1/2" pre-drilled holes at the base of each end of the door surround cross-bars. The head of the carriage bolts will be on the door surround side, not the cross bar side.



Bulb Seal Installation

1. Locate the (2) 48" Bulb Seal strips.
2. Thoroughly clean and dry the upper, inside edge of the door frames above and around the windows to accept the bulb seal.
3. Align the end of the strip with the upper front corner of the door frame above the window as shown.



Note: We

recommend removing the red protective film covering the sticky edge of the strip slowly and only a few inches at a time.

4. Carefully stick the bulb seal onto the door frame small sections at a time.
5. Apply one strip to the inside of each door frame starting above the window. The strip should reach just below the window when applied correctly without wrinkles as shown above.

Folding Frame Assembly and Installation

1. Locate the Rear Cross Bar (the one with the snaps) and the 2 adjustable tensioning straps with buckles.
2. Slip the small loops on the ends of the tensioning straps onto the rear cross bar such that the tensioning buckle will be oriented downward when attached to the forward cross bar as shown.

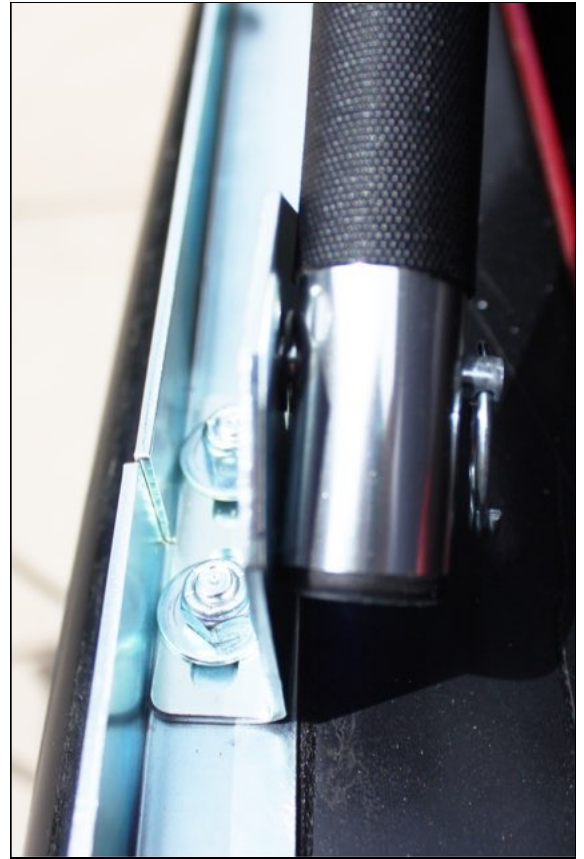


3. Join the two cross bars to the 2 folding frame uprights by coordinating the **COLORED DOTS** provided on the pieces, and ensure the push pins are locked into their holes.
****Important: Keep fingers clear of the sharp, metal junction where the cross bars will meet the folding frame when clipping them together. Injury is likely if fingers get pinched.**



4. ****Tip: It helps to stand the folding frame uprights up, and with another person, or a table to rest one end of the cross bars on, jiggle the cross bars down to join them to the uprights. (4 cross bars depicted above)**

5. Once connected, slide the 2 black bar sleeves on the forward cross bar down to meet the folding frame. These prevent the aluminum cross bars from touching the windows. When the bars are hot, direct contact can cause discoloration in the windows.
6. Remove the safety rings from the pivot pins.
7. Using the holes near the bottom of the folding frame, slide the frame onto the pivot pins. **Secure the safety rings back on.** [The most common installation error is installing the frame on backwards. Ensure that the rear cross bar will extend rearward when folding frame opens.
8. Do NOT secure the rear safety straps yet.



Soft Top Canopy Installation

1. With the tailgate open, lower the folding frame to the rear of the vehicle.
2. Place the canopy on the tailgate with the rear canopy snaps facing up as shown.



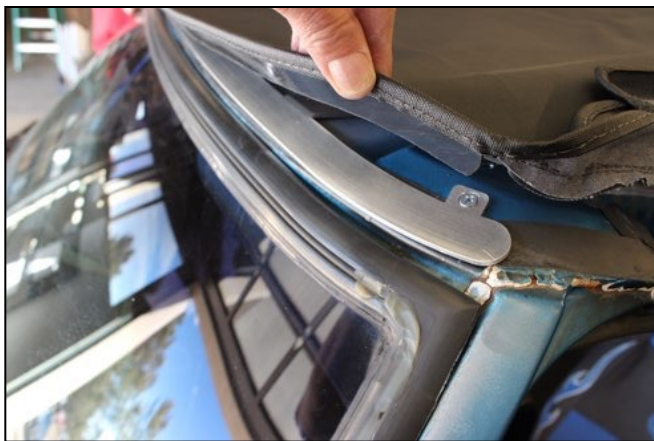
3. Place the 2 tensioning straps between the 2nd and 3rd snaps on each end of the rear cross bar as shown.



4. Stand on the tailgate and carefully lift the entire canopy and folding frame up and forward until you can rest the front of the canopy over the door surround cross bar.



5. From the ground, adjust the canopy and folding frame until it is as shown above.
6. Loosely latch the 2 rear safety straps to the rings on the plastic rear bar retainers.
7. Place the plastic strip that is sewn into the front edge of the canopy underneath the windshield header bar, and ensure that the canopy is centered left to right.



8. Undrape the sides of the canopy and rear window panel, and let them hang loosely.

9. While pulling down on the rear cross bar, tighten the 2 rear safety straps to the rings on the black plastic bar retainers (not the upper tensioning straps yet). The safety straps should be snug, not loose nor overtightened.
10. Connect the forward most snap on the side panel to its mate on the bedrail on the driver side.
11. Connect the rear most snap on the same panel to its mate on the bedrail by pulling down on the rear cross bar and pulling on the fabric if necessary.
12. Tighten the rear safety strap further to relieve excess tension on the rear snap. ****Note that it is a good idea to share tension between the rear safety straps and the rear most snaps instead of having all the tension only on the snaps. This will also help with any wrinkles in the rear corners.**
13. Now snap the rest of the snaps on the driver side.
14. Repeat the above on passenger side. Note that we recommend snapping the front most and rear most snaps first each time you install the top on the vehicle. This makes it easier to snap the remaining snaps and align the canopy properly.
15. Adjust the 2 upper tensioning straps between the two rear cross bars until there is adequate upward pressure to give the canopy its taught shape.



16. Make sure that the 2 front door velcro flaps on the canopy are accessible on each side.
17. Secure the top velcro flaps under and around to the inside of the door surround velcro.
18. Secure the side velcro flaps around the rear of the door surrounds to the velcro on the fabric as shown below. Use desired tension.



19. Locate the 53" x 7/8" straight Rear Window Bar and the (2) 12" x 3/4" bars.
20. Insert the 2 shorter bars into the ends of the longer bar with the plastic end caps facing out.
21. Standing at the rear of the vehicle, push the two ends of the bar assembly into the rear plastic bar retainers while adjusting the length of the bar assembly as necessary. It should fit securely end to end into the given space within the plastic bar retainers.
22. Center the 53" bar over the other two 12" bars.
23. Using a drill and a #2 Phillips bit, screw the 2 small self drilling screws into the pre-drilled holes to join the 3-bar assembly.
24. Now remove the bar and slide it into the sewn-in sleeve at the lower part of the rear window panel. Center the bar.
25. Join the zippers in the upper corners of the rear window panel and zip closed the window panel.
26. Clip the bar back into the plastic retainers.
27. Close the tailgate while lifting up slightly on the fabric hanging at the bottom of the window panel.
28. ****Optional:** Use the provided extra strips of velcro to hold the bottom of the rear window flap to the tailgate. Wipe clean and dry the tailgate surface before placing the sticky side of the velcro onto the vehicle. The velcro strips can be placed on either side of the bracket on the tailgate, but should not be placed direct over the bracket due to wrinkling.



Installation Complete

Retracting the Soft Top

1. Undo all side snaps.
2. Raise the rear window panel zippers all the way to the top without disconnecting them.
3. Release the rear window retainer bar.
4. Place the side panels up onto the roof canopy neatly.
5. Place the rear window panel up onto the roof as shown.



6. Loosen or release the 2 rear safety straps.
7. Untuck the plastic from under the header bar.
8. Carefully make multiple folds backward from the front of the canopy until it is about the same size as when it originally came out of the box. This will ensure that the protective boot cover fits over the folded canopy.
9. While leaving the 2 safety straps out, place canopy in protective boot cover, and secure the boot cover straps.
10. ****DO NOT OPERATE VEHICLE WITH SOFTOPPER IN RETRACTED POSITION WITHOUT INSTALLING THE BOOT COVER.** A parachuting effect may occur while driving without boot cover secured over canopy in its retracted position.
11. Once the canopy is in the protective boot cover, hook the 2 safety straps back onto the rear bar retainers and tighten.



Optional Driving Configurations

1. Fully retracted with the boot cover installed and the safety straps buckled.



2. Rear window rolled up and buckled.
3. Rear window completely removed.

4. Sides and rear window rolled up. **Do not drive with the the sides rolled up without also rolling up or removing the rear window.**



5. To fully remove the Softopper once it's within the boot cover, release the 2 safety straps, remove the 2 safety rings from the pivot pins by twisting turning them, and completely remove the top. **Reinstall the safety rings.**



Softopper Care and Maintenance

Your top is made of the finest materials available. To keep it looking new and for product longevity and durability, it will need periodic cleaning and maintenance. All pieces are individually replaceable; call 1-800-810-7227, or order your parts online at Softopper.com.

Washing: The fabric should be washed from time to time using a mild soap and warm water. Be sure to rinse all soap off the top when washing is complete.

Vinyl Windows: Windows should be kept clean to avoid scratching. Wash with a water-soaked sponge or cloth and a mild dishwashing detergent. **Do not use a coarse brush on the windows and never wipe the windows when they are dry.**

COLD WEATHER: As with all automotive and marine vinyls, extreme care must be taken when rolling up or folding the windows in cold temperatures. **Vinyl becomes stiff in cold temperatures and may crack. Retracting the Softopper in cold temperatures is not recommended and will void the warranty for the windows (see Warranty information for more detail on length of window warranties).** When opening the rear of the Softopper in cold weather, be sure to raise the zippers as high as possible so that any folding will occur to the topper fabric and not to the vinyl window.

Zippers: Keeping the zippers clean and lubricated with a silicone lubricant will help prevent damage and keep the zippers in smooth working condition.

Leakage: As with any sewn automotive top there is always a slight risk of leakage. **Right out of the box the Softopper may not be 100% waterproof.** If you experience any water seeping through at the seams, apply **Seam Sure** (supplied), on the **INSIDE** of the affected seams. It will look very messy on the outside of the canopy. **Shake** Seam Sure well and apply liberally to the inside seams concentrating on areas where needle and thread penetrated the fabric.

Snaps: Keep snaps clean and lubricated with a silicone lubricant to help prevent snaps from sticking to the studs. If a snap does become stuck to a stud, use a screwdriver and gently pry apart to prevent damage to the snap or top fabric. If any snaps need to be replaced due to sticking or damage please call Softopper and we can send out a small do-it-yourself repair kit.

For further information please contact:
Softopper LLC, customer service
(800) 810-7227 or (303) 304-0533

Warranty

We warrant all of our Softoppers to be free from defects in material and workmanship for a period of one year, with the exception of vinyl windows and zippers, provided there has been normal use and proper maintenance.

Vinyl Windows are warranted for a period of 3 months from the date of purchase.

Zippers are guaranteed to be in perfect working condition when leaving the factory. Due to atmospheric conditions, dirt, sand, road grime, dust, and abrasive cleaners, etc., zippers are warranted for a period of 6 months from the date of purchase.

Toyota 4 Runner, Jeep Wrangler, Blazer, Jimmy, Scout, Bronco, and RamCharger side curtain windows are warranted for 45 days from the date of purchase. Retracting or closing the top when the temperature is below 40 degrees may void the warranty on the side windows, as clear vinyl plastic can crack very easily at these temperatures. Use caution when retracting the top or cleaning off the windows in freezing temperatures.

Returns must be made within 30 days of purchase, and must be pre-approved and have Softopper's issued RGA number attached. Any defective items must be returned with proof of purchase to Softopper 333 Centennial Pkwy B, Louisville CO 80027, **freight pre-paid**. Items returned must be carefully packed, in clean condition, with plastic windows protected from scratching and creasing. This warranty does not cover damage resulting from abuse, misuse, alteration, accident or damage in transit. Softopper's obligations under this warranty are limited to the aforementioned **repair** or **replacement** of warranty defects for which return authorization has been received during the warranty period, and Softopper SHALL NOT BE LIABLE FOR ANY INCIDENTAL OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES ARISING FROM BREACH OF THIS OR ANY IMPLIED WARRANTY. This warranty applies to the original purchaser only. All remedies under this warranty are limited to repair or replacement of any item or items found to be defective by the factory within the time period specified.

For further information or request for repair work, please contact:

Softopper, customer service

(800) 810-7227 or (303) 304-0533