

2.0 Fitting of alloy panels

You have been supplied with a panel plan for the partially shaped alloy blanks, firstly identify and sticky label each panel and safely store until they are required for fitting. Note that the main side panels have a protective film, make sure that this is not removed, damaged, marked or scored, as this is the finished outside surface of the sides of the bodywork. In the main this film should be left on as long as possible to give protection whilst other work is progressing, remove only small areas for riveting etc. See fig 1.1a for panel positions. All panels are fixed using 3.2mm rivets, drill at approximately 50mm centres. As a general rule of thumb you should decide how you will finish the fixing of the alloy, however make sure that you carefully plan the overlapping and forming of panels to ensure that a natural radiused edge is produced. Wherever there is to be an overlap make sure that you DO NOT rivet the panels that are going to be overlapped, this way you will only have to rivet once. If this advice is ignored, it will result in rivets having to be removed, and extreme difficulty in locating already drilled rivet holes. Always use a water-resistant sealant between the panels and the chassis, and make sure that all overlapped side panels face rearward to assist in avoiding water penetration. Use a bead of silicon sealant where panels butt together rather than overlap; this will reduce the chance of sharp edges.

Turn the painted chassis upside down, either support with trestles or stands to protect the paintwork and give a comfortable working height. You may need to grind down any protruding welds before fixing the alloy panels (repaint if necessary) Cut to shape and fix the two floor panels onto the bottom of the chassis framework using the pop rivets provided. At this stage do not rivet the outside edge of the alloy to the chassis, as the side panels will overlap these later.

At this stage you should take note of section 2 (Brake/Fuel pipes and Electrical harness) of the build manual as you may wish to fit with easier access.

Now fix the front tunnel ends, that is the panels that go at the front end of the foot well, fix from the engine compartment side. Carefully take note on how you are going to bend the panels into the central tunnel area. Now fix the two rear panels behind the driver and passenger seat areas, fix from the outside of the seating compartment. Make allowances for the rear suspension mounts, and use the small GRP corner finishers to work out the actual fitting positions and cut alloy panels accordingly.

At this stage refer to the sections dealing with the gear lever remote control, the gearbox mount fixing, and the handbrake mechanism. Once you are happy that access is no longer required to fit these items, then carry on with alloy panels.

Now fix the two-piece inner side tunnel panels, these are fitted to the driver and passenger sides from the inside of the cockpit and not from the prop shaft side. It is worth noting the position of the Speedo cable take off point on the drivers side, you will need to cut/drill a hole in the alloy in line with the Speedo cable pick up so that the cable can come into the drivers footwell, where it will eventually lie under the carpet, and have a gentle unknicked sweep up to the speedometer. Also consider how you will be filling the gearbox with oil, and whether you wish to put an access panel in the alloy side panel to assist this. Identify the seat belt anchorage points and make sure that the alloy panel is drilled or cut so that fitting of belts later is possible.(if electronic speedo is being fitted ignore cable hole)

Leave the top of the tunnel and the rear parcel shelf until you have completed the installation of the Independent rear suspension and hand brake mechanism. You

may find it more practical to fix the tunnel and parcel shelf panels with self tapping screws, as this will give you access at a later date for maintenance.

The rear vertical panel behind the seats can be fixed at any time. Once this has been fitted, carefully check the positioning of the rear topside panels to ensure that they cover the inside of the wheel arch. The two small triangular panels are fitted inside the engine compartment, just in front of the foot-well end and on the engine side of the chassis.

Leave the outside panel fitting until the steering and suspension is in place, you will need to cut out small apertures for these.

The main side panels should be fitted before the two small front panels; to ensure that the overlap is in the right direction. Determine carefully where the rear of the main side panel should be located at the back end of the chassis, as a guide, use the mounting plate of the IRS as a rough point, but offer up the rear GRP panel to make sure that the GRP overlaps the alloy.

When bending the top and bottom of the side panel over the chassis frame, make sure that you clamp a length of wood to hold the panel firmly in place before you bend the alloy over. Use a block of wood and a hammer to gradually bend the alloy over the chassis, do not attempt to bend it over all the way in one go, work along the length, bending a little at a time. Always hit the block and not the alloy, to avoid marking the finished face.

The top fold is done in two stages the first is a 90 degree bend over the top rail and then another 90 degree bend into the driver and passenger cockpits, rivet every 50mm. Before folding the side panels into the cockpit make sure that you have a good flush side fit with the GRP dash moulding.

Two separate small side panels finish off the front of the main side. Make sure that you cut the front to give sufficient material to ensure that the nose cone covers it, this avoids unsightly gaps between the two.

Before fixing the drivers side panel it is suggested you fit the exhaust pipes to the engine to enable you to take some measurements and determine exactly where the cut out is to be. A cardboard template should be made, it will save a lot of head scratching, and obviously the exhaust pipes will have to be removed before fitting the panel.

A cut out has to be provided in the drivers side panel to accommodate the exhaust pipes, (see previous paragraph) allow an approximately 25mm larger hole than the exhausts need.

The panel across the top of the chassis ahead of the GRP dash should be fitted and fixed before fitting the dash itself.

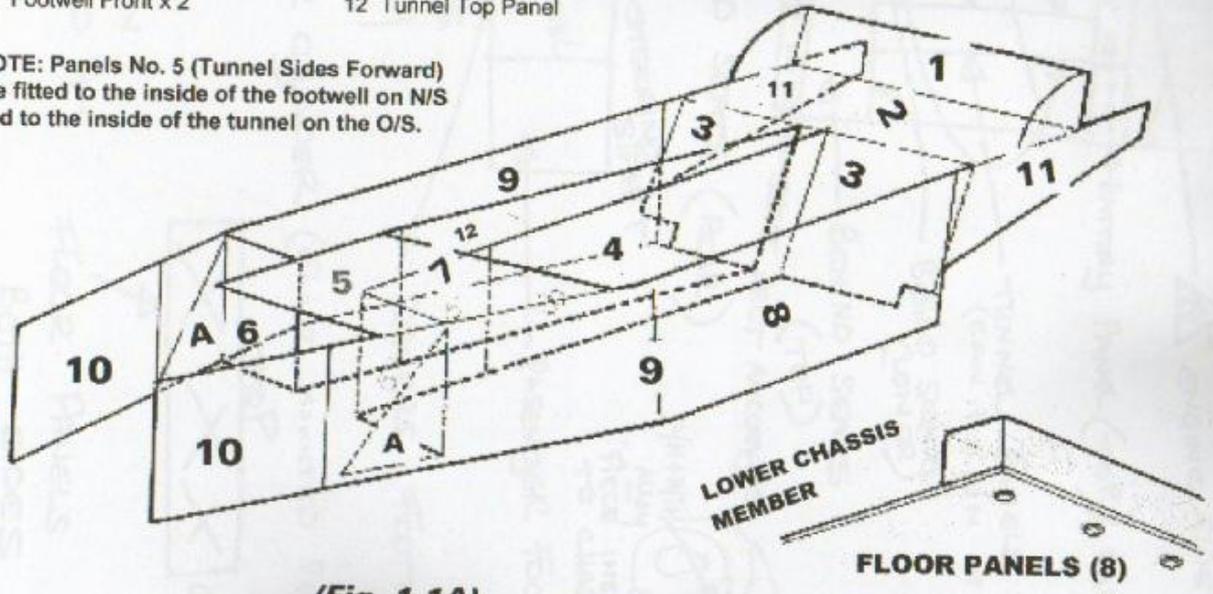




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|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Rear Panel Upright | 7 Battery Panel |
| 2 Seat Rear Shelf | 8 Floor Panel x 2 |
| 3 Seat Back x 2 | 9 Side Panels (Main) x 2 |
| 4 Tunnel Sides (Main) x 2 | 10 Side Panel (Forward) x 2 |
| 5 Tunnel Sides (Forward) x 2 | 11 Side Panel (Rear) x 2 |
| 6 Footwell Front x 2 | 12 Tunnel Top Panel |

NOT TO SCALE

NOTE: Panels No. 5 (Tunnel Sides Forward) are fitted to the inside of the footwell on N/S and to the inside of the tunnel on the O/S.



(Fig. 1.1A)

UNDERSIDE VIEW

Alloy panel shape identification