



Here's the Vintage Air Tri-Five Chevy SureFit system, featuring Gen-IV electronic technology.

NO SWEAT

With Vintage Air's Tri-Five Chevy SureFit system, keeping cool is easy.

By **Nick Licata** • Photographs by **Jason Scudellari**

Let's face it, as time goes by, we get a little less rugged around the edges when it comes to standing up to the elements of nature, whether that be blistering summer heat or Old Man Winter's frigid air.

The resilience we once had when we were younger slowly diminishes as we age. It's no wonder we begin to prefer the creature comforts of a controlled climate while at the wheel of our classic cars.

It wasn't long ago that cruising your vintage hot rod in 100-plus-degree temperatures required rolling down your

windows as the only option from the summer heat. It didn't really help much, but we didn't have a choice. And even though it was difficult to look cool with sweat pouring off your face and soaking your clothes, as hot rodders we just dealt with it.

Some 30-plus years ago, the folks at Vintage Air felt our pain. They knew it was important to be cool while looking cool in your classic hot rod, street rod or musclecar. Since 1976, Vintage Air has been in the business of developing air-conditioning systems for specialty

vehicles. They've stayed on top of the market by incorporating the latest technology in automotive cooling, and they're constantly increasing product availability to include a wider variety of applications.

For our '57 Chevy, we went with Vintage Air's award-winning Tri-Five Chevy SureFit system. Everything we need to keep the temperature right where we want it is included in this kit. No matter what summer tosses our way, we'll be rolling our windows up to keep the heat index down. ■



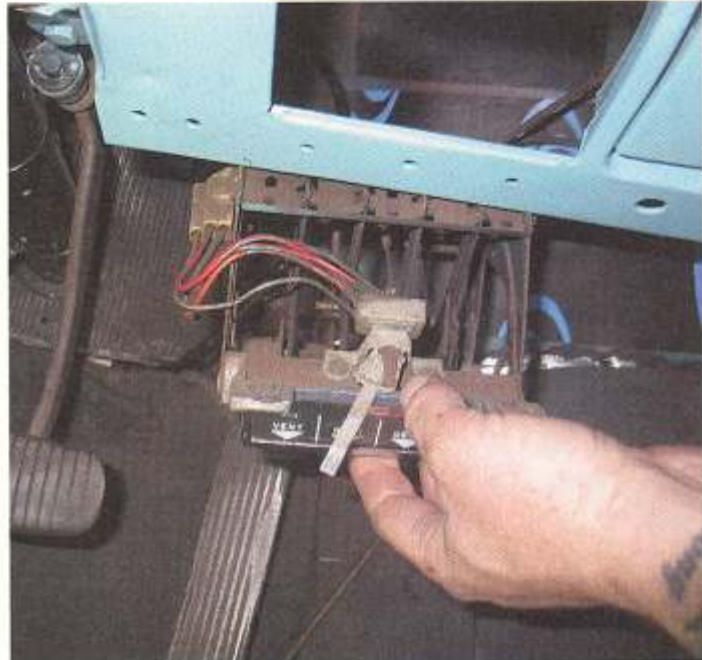
Before you get started you'll have to remove the original blower from the engine compartment. You may have to use Brake Free or WD-40 to bust those bolts loose, because there's a good chance they've been in there for 50 years.



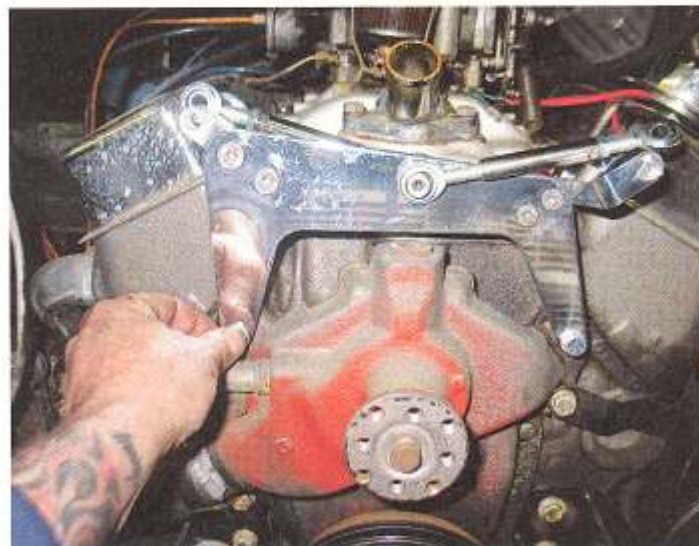
Take off the heater core by removing the cover from the firewall. You can toss this part or you can try and sell it on eBay since you won't be using it again.



Next, you'll need to remove the control-panel bezel from the dash.



Then remove the unit itself. It simply unbolts with a Phillips screwdriver.



Here's the Vintage Air-supplied A/C alternator bracket. If only the rest of the engine was as shiny as this piece.



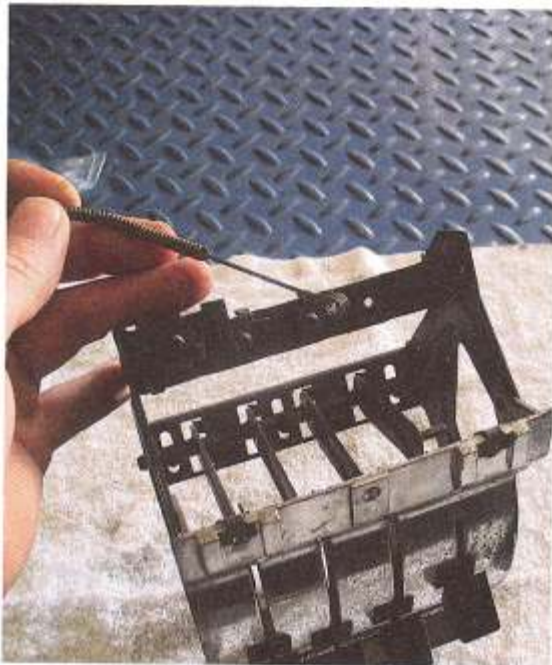
Next, you'll need to bolt up the A/C compressor using the supplied hardware and brackets.



The alternator bolts up to the other end of the bracket using more of the Vintage Air-supplied hardware.



Moving under the dash, you'll attach the defroster duct in the correct location.



Remove the stock heater cables from the control panel.



Vintage Air also supplies this snappy original-style faceplate. Now each switch has a new job. We just love how Vintage Air managed to keep the classic look of the controller.



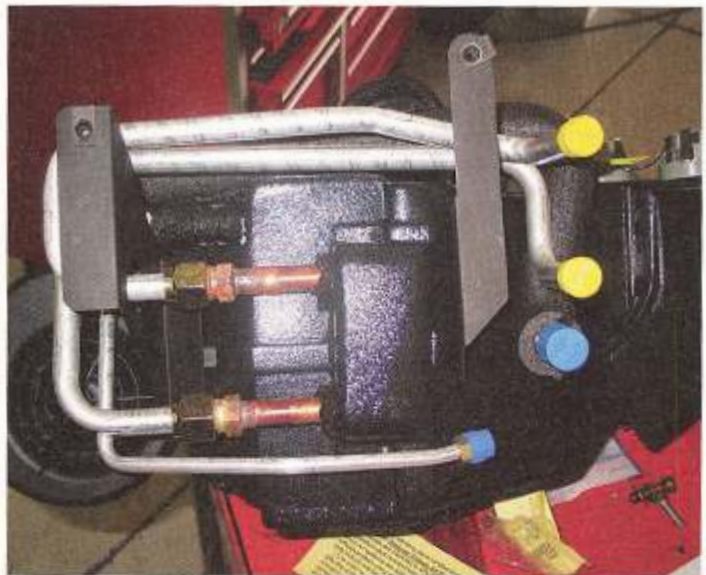
Then you'll attach the new fan blower switch to the top of the control panel.



Next you'll bolt up the evaporator bracket to the evaporator itself. This will allow you to secure it tightly under the dash.



Be sure to use the tube oil that is supplied on all of the O-rings in the new system.



Here's what you'll see with all the lines correctly connected to the evaporator.



Now it's time to mount the evaporator under the dash.



With the glove box removed, you'll mount the center register duct to the bottom of the dash.



Next you'll mount the evaporator to the firewall.



It will be necessary for you to drill a hole through the core support for the A/C lines.



Now pass the dryer lines through the hole you just drilled.



Mark the low-pressure A/C hose so it can be cut to the proper length. You'll need to do the same with the high-pressure hose.



We used an A/C crimping tool for the R-134 lines. Most likely, you don't have one of these, so you can get this done at most any repair shop that works with air-conditioning systems.



This is what your crimp should look like.



Using the brackets included in the kit, attach the condenser to the front of the radiator.



From there you'll attach the lines to the condenser.



Then attach the new firewall block-off plate to the firewall. The two upper ends are where you'll attach the heater hoses and heater-control valve.



Here's how the heater-control valve looks all bolted up.



Attach the wire from the control panel to the binary switch. From the binary switch, run a wire to the A/C compressor.



With the side vents in place, you'll run all the ducting to the defrost vent, center vent and two side outlets. Now you're ready to take your system to your local air-conditioning specialist to have your system charged.

SOURCES

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