

MORRIS MINOR HEADLINER INSTALLATION

(EXAMPLE: 2DR SALOON)

Credit to George

Replacing the headlining is actually not that difficult, it is time consuming and fiddly but really quite straight forward. I think the hardest bit is removing the front wooden former. I struggled for ages with this until I called and asked how, then it took me literally five minutes!

(NB: this is for a 2dr '66 saloon, I'm not sure if it is the same on other models)

The headlining is secured at the front of the car by a wooden former. The lining is stapled to it and the former has two spring clips that keep it in the 'cant rail' (frame) of the car. At the back there is a wire in the seam of the lining. The lining is secured at the back via hooks that run around the window frame. The wire in the seam is tensioned by two screws attached to the rear parcel shelf.

The main body of the lining has three metal rails running through it that slot into the cant rails on the side of the car. A wire runs on both sides through the seam and through loops at the end of each of the three metal rails. At the front these wires run down the A posts and are secured under the dash board by a screw per wire. At the back the wires are also secured by screws, located behind the rear seat.

1. Remove the headlining

Measure the distance from the front of the car to the first seam in the current headlining (this tell you where to attach the former to the new lining). Also mark the position of each seam of the lining, by sticking masking tape onto the cant rail and marking it with a pen (this will give you an indication of roughly where they should be positioned when putting the new lining in).

Remove rear seat back and rear door cards to access rear tensioning wire screws. Remove rear screen to access hooks to secure the back of the lining (not essential but would make it much easier, I was rebuilding my car post respray so it was out already). Remove cardboard finisher from rear parcel shelf to access rear tensioning wire screws.

Slacken the 6 wire tensioning screws (2 under dash, 2 behind rear seat back/door cards, 2 on rear parcel shelf.)

Tie a length of string to each wire end, so that when you pull the wires through the A posts etc the string will be drawn up the post, when fitting the new lining the new wire can be attached to the string and pulled down the post.

Remove the interior light.

Unhook the lining from the hooks at the back.

Remove the wooden former at the front:

There are two clips attached the the former. These are spring clips that when slotted into the cant rail with the former will spring out and stop the former from moving in the cant rail.

Take a bone handled kitchen knife or pallette knife or similar and bend about 1.5" at the end to a 45 degree angle in a vice.

The principle is to slide the bent end of the knife into the rail, under the clip, and then pull the former back. The knife will act as a 'ramp' for the spring clip to slide up, and consequently close, allowing you to remove the former. You do this one clip at a time. I cut the headlining open so that I could get a grip of the former.

So, locate the clips by sliding the knife into the cant rail and sliding it along the length of it until you meet resistance (mine were about 1 foot from the A post on either side). Slide the knife in at a 45 degree angle to the cant rail and try and slip it under the clip. When you feel this happen, bring the knife round to 90 degrees from the cant rail and yank the former until the clip reveals itself. Repeat on the other side and its out. Really very simple when you know how... how I wished I had enquired before I spent two hours trying to do this!

With the former removed slide the headlining out. Basically, slide each of the three metal rails back bit by bit, until you reach the

back where it can be pulled out. When the string up the A posts etc is exposed, untie it and tape it to the cant rail, leaving it in place for the new wire.

Headlining is now out, the next job is to equip the new lining with the parts from the old lining.

2. Assemble new lining

You will see that the headlining is slit along the seam to allow the wire to come out and slot through the hoops at the end of the metal rails before disappearing into the seam once more. Replicate these slits on the new headlining.

Remove all of the wire from headlining (if its like mine you will need to replace the wire, 30ft of wire is required for a 2dr). Remove the metal rails one by one, sliding them into the respective seams on the new lining.

Run new wire though each seam (each side and one at the back), making sure to thread it through the hoops at the end of each rail. Leave enough wire coming out of the end of each seam to reach the tensioning screws.

My lining (Newton Commercial) didn't quite fit the width of the metal rails initially, so I took a hairdryer and warmed it up a little to make it more supple. I then made a small slit either side of the end of each rail, just above the seam that the wire runs in, and ran a tie wrap through the slit and through the hoops at the end of the rail. By gently stretching the lining by hand and by gradually tightening the tie wraps it stretched the full width. The wire seam should be right down by the hoops at the end of the rails. (2 tie wraps at the end of each metal rail... one either side of it, each going into one of the two metal hoops).

Now that the rails are in place and the wire is threaded through every seam you can attach the former.

Using the measurement you took earlier from the front of the car to the first seam, position the former in the correct place at the front of the new lining. Glue it down first on the top (on the roof side of the lining, not the car side), then staple it and then put the spring clips in place.

The lining is now ready to fit.

3. Fit new lining

take the lining inside your car and from the back of the car insert each metal rail into the cant rails, one at a time. Then slide them forward until the former is free to pop into the front cant rail and until each seam is roughly inline with the marks you made earlier.

Insert the former into the front cant rail. Make sure you get it central and then push it, it needs a good shove, I used, carefully, a flat-blade screwdriver and a hammer to pop them in.

Now pull each metal rail back along the car so that the lining is taught.

Attach the string to the wire ends and pull them down the A posts etc, but do not attach them to the screws.

Now attach the rear of the lining to the hooks at the back. Pull the rear seam of the lining until you can get the wire seam over the hooks. When all hooks are hooked up locate the wire along the three supports on each side of the window frame and then pull tight around the tensioning screws and screw them up.

Now tension the side wires. Pull the front wires tight and attach to their screws under the dash. Do the same to the rear and then go back and do it again at the front so that it is really tight. As the final touch, at the back there will be a flap of lining on each side, in between the rear tensioning wires and the window frame tensioning wires. Pull this tight and screw to the rear bulkhead.

The lining should now be taught all over. Replace all that you removed in the first place and pat yourself on the back for saving a £250 fitting charge 🙄

I hope that is of help to someone out there,
George