

# CorkSport Performance

## AXO-3-222 Rear Hatch Brace

Installation Instructions for the CorkSport Performance Rear Hatch Brace for the 2019+ Mazda 3 Hatchback

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## INTRODUCTION

In this installation guide we have provided step by step instructions to install the CorkSport Performance Rear Hatch Brace.

### TOOLS:

- [3/8" Drive Ratchet](#) (1)
- [10mm Socket - Deep](#) (1)
- [13mm Socket - Deep](#) (1)
- [14mm Socket - Deep](#) (1)
- [5mm Allen Key Socket](#) (1)
- [3/8" Torque Wrench](#) (1)
- [Assorted Plastic Interior Trim Removal Tools](#) (1)
- [Small Flathead Screwdriver](#) (1)
- [Utility Knife](#) (1)
- [Tape Measure](#) (1)
- [Marker](#) (1)

### PARTS:

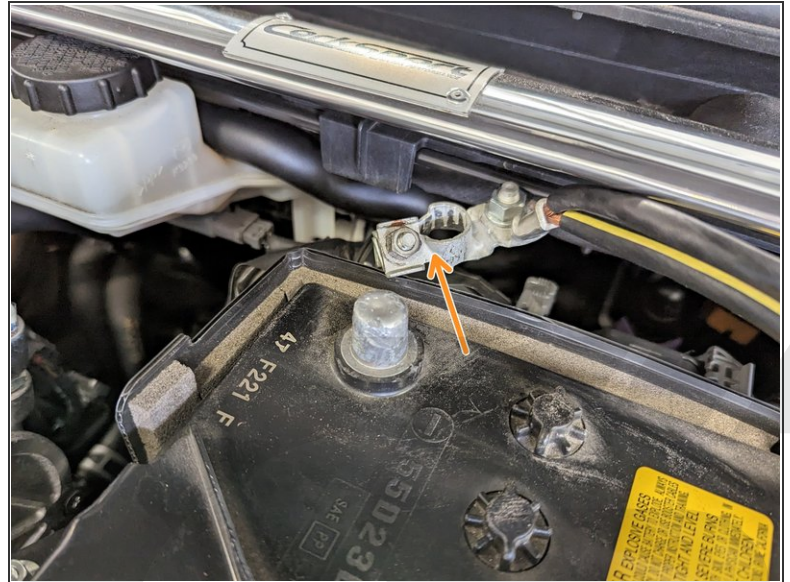
- [CorkSport Driver Side Bracket](#) (1)
- [CorkSport Passenger Side Bracket](#) (1)
- [CorkSport Center Bar](#) (1)
- [CorkSport Seat Bracket \(Optional\)](#) (1)
- [CorkSport Driver Side Bar \(Optional\)](#) (1)
- [CorkSport Passenger Side Bar \(Optional\)](#) (1)

## Step 1 — Getting Started



- First and foremost; **THANK YOU** for becoming a part of the CorkSport Family. We hope to bring you the highest level of Parts, Customer Service, & Support
- ⓘ How To Use These Instructions: The instruction format will relate colored marking in the image to the color dot in the text to the right of the image
- The vehicle used in these instructions is a 2019 Mazda 3. Installation on other model years will be similar

## Step 2 — Removing the Negative Battery Terminal



- Using a 10mm socket and ratchet remove the negative terminal
- Move it behind the battery as shown



### Step 3 — Removing the Rear Hatch Tray and Carpet



- Start by removing the rear hatch tray by unhooking the two strings that connect to the trim by the rear glass
- Lift up on the rear of the tray to free it from the pins located on the sides and remove
- Remove the hatch carpet

### Step 4 — Removing the Foam Inserts



- Remove and disconnect the wiring harness from the right foam insert that connects to the center speaker
- Remove the right foam insert
- Remove the left foam insert



## Step 5 — Reference Pictures for Trunk End Trim



- This step is included to give you a reference for tab and clip locations for the trim piece that is removed in the next step

## Step 6 — Removing the Trunk End Trim



- Partially remove the weather-stripping that covers the trim panel
- Pry out the center of the 2 clips that secure the bottom corners of the trim panel using a trim removal tool or small flat head screwdriver. Once the center is free, pull out to remove
- Lift up on the bottom of the trim panel starting from the outside working in, to release the 4 clips and tabs that are securing the top of the trim panel

## Step 7 — Reference Pictures for Upper Side Trim



- This step is included to give you a reference for tab and clip locations for the trim piece that is removed in the next step

## Step 8 — Removing the Trunk Upper Side Trim



- Partially remove the weather-stripping that covers the end of the trim panels on the drivers side all the way up to the corner as shown
- Pull out on the trim panel starting from the rear and working forward to release the clips circled in the second image
- ⓘ Having the seats folded down will help with removal of the trim panel
- Once the trim panel is free on the drivers side, disconnect the connector that attaches to the cargo light
- Repeat the first two steps on the passenger side of the vehicle

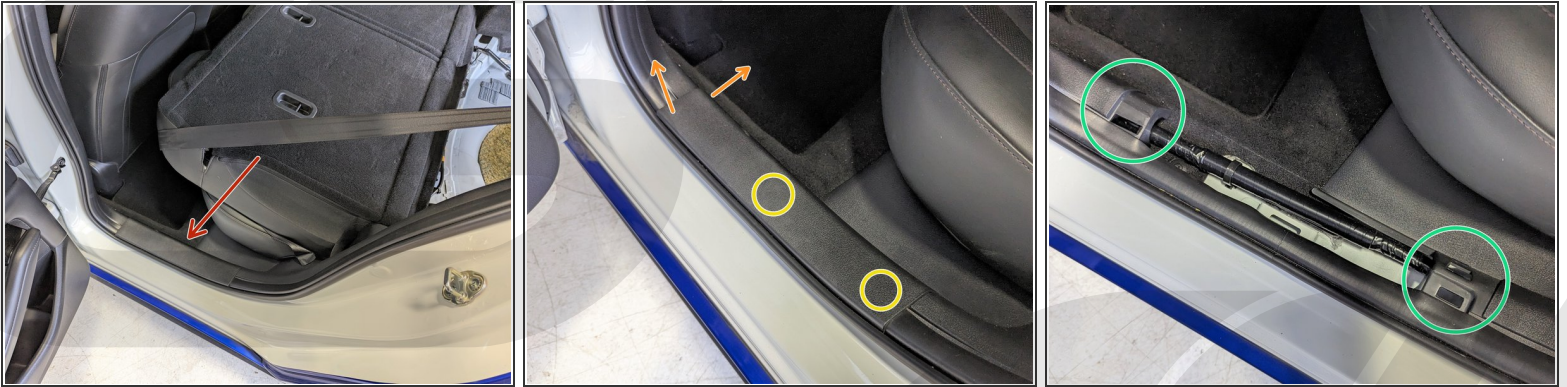


## Step 9 — Reference Pictures for Scuff Plates



- This step is included to give you a reference for tab and clip locations for the trim piece that is removed in the next step

## Step 10 — Removing the Rear Scuff Plates



- Move to the rear drivers door and locate the scuff plate
- Lift up on the top edge of the scuff plate with your hand, while pulling the side of the scuff plate towards the center of the car with your other hand to release the tabs
- Now work your way to the end of the scuff plate using the same technique to release the remaining tabs
- The mounting locations are shown without the scuff plate for reference
- Repeat the previous steps to remove the passenger side scuff plate

## Step 11 — Reference Pictures for C-Pillar Trim



- This step is included to give you a reference for tab and clip locations for the trim piece that is removed in the next step

## Step 12 — Removing the C-Pillar Trim - Part 1



- Make sure that the weather-stripping that covers the end of the trim panel on the hatch side is pulled up
- Remove the connector for the speaker in the location shown if present
- Partially remove the weather-stripping that covers the trim panel on the rear drivers side door
- ⓘ Fold down the seats if they are still up to gain better access to the trim panel



**Step 13 — Removing the C-Pillar Trim - Part 2**

- Starting on the end of the trim panel next to the rear door, pull the edge of the trim panel towards the center of the vehicle to release the clips
- Once the front section is loose, move back to the hatch area and release the clips at the back of the trim piece that are circled
- Repeat the previous steps on the passenger side C-pillar trim

## Step 14 — Removing the Rear Seat Cushion



- Fold the seats back up
- To remove the rear seat cushion, there are 2 locks at the front of the seat cushion that need to be released by moving the lever towards the drivers side
- After the locks have been released there is a hook that is holding the seat in place and the location is circled
- To unhook the seat cushion, push the seat towards the rear of the car while lifting up in the location shown in the previous step
- ⓘ This step is tricky and may take a few tries to release the hook.
- The hook is shown without the seat cushion for reference



## Step 15 — Removing the Drivers Side Rear Seat Buckle



- Disconnect the wiring harness to the seat belt buckle on the drivers side
- Remove the bolt securing the buckle to the chassis using a 14mm socket and ratchet
- ⓘ The seat belt will remain attached to the seat back while the buckle can be removed

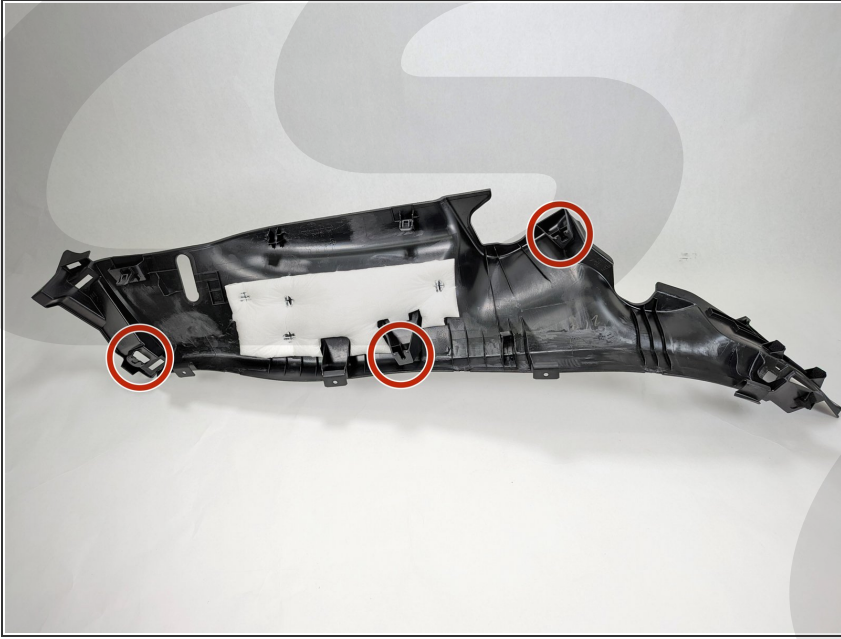
## Step 16 — Removing the Rear Seat Backs



- Fold down the rear seats partially and remove the seat belt through the slot in the holder
- Fold the seats all the way down and lift up the flap at the bottom of the seat back to access the bolts
- Using a 14mm socket and ratchet remove the two bolts securing the passenger side seat back
- Slide the seat back forward to remove
- Repeat the previous steps on the drivers side seat back to remove it from the car



## Step 17 — Reference Pictures for Side Trim



- This step is included to give you a reference for clip locations for the trim piece that is removed in the next step

## Step 18 — Removing the Side Trim Panels



- Remove the weather-stripping that covers the trim panel on the drivers side as shown
- The 3 clips shown can be difficult to remove along with the trim panel so it may be easier to slip the trim panel out from the clips instead of removing them together
- The trim panel has U slots for the 3 clips shown. Starting from the bottom and working your way up, slide out the clips from the U slot in the trim panel to remove
- Repeat the previous steps on the passenger side trim panel

## Step 19 — Reference Pictures for Trunk Side Trim



- This step is included to give you a reference for tab and clip locations for the trim piece that is removed in the next step

## Step 20 — Removing the Trunk Side Trim Panels



- Remove the clips shown using a flat head screw driver
- Go to the hatch area and remove the clips shown
- Pull out on the panel in the location circled to release the final clip holding the trim
- ⓘ Make sure to support the plastic bracket that is attached to the back side of the trim panel in this location
- Repeat the previous steps on the passenger side trim panel



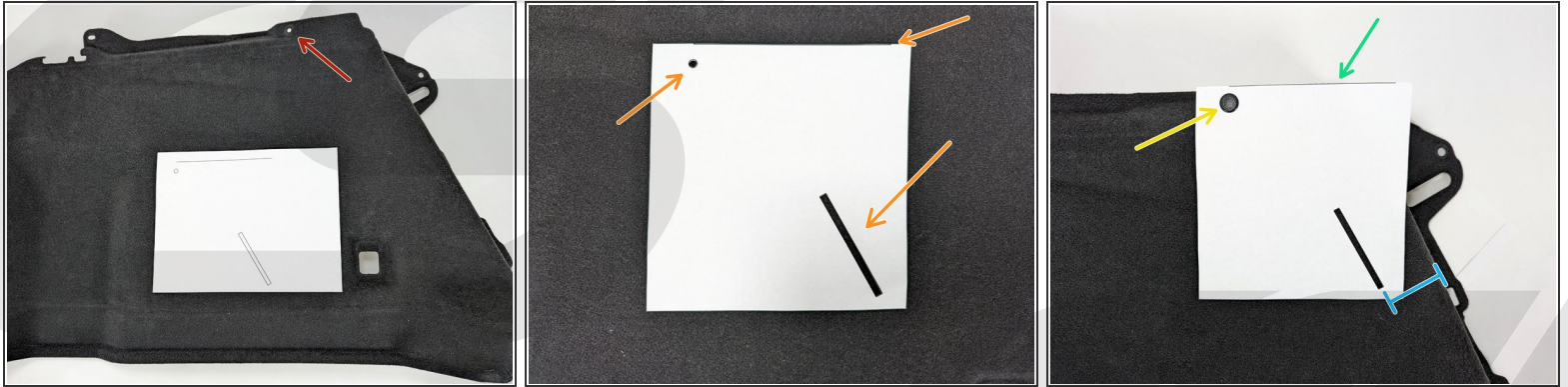
## Step 21 — Installing the Side Brackets



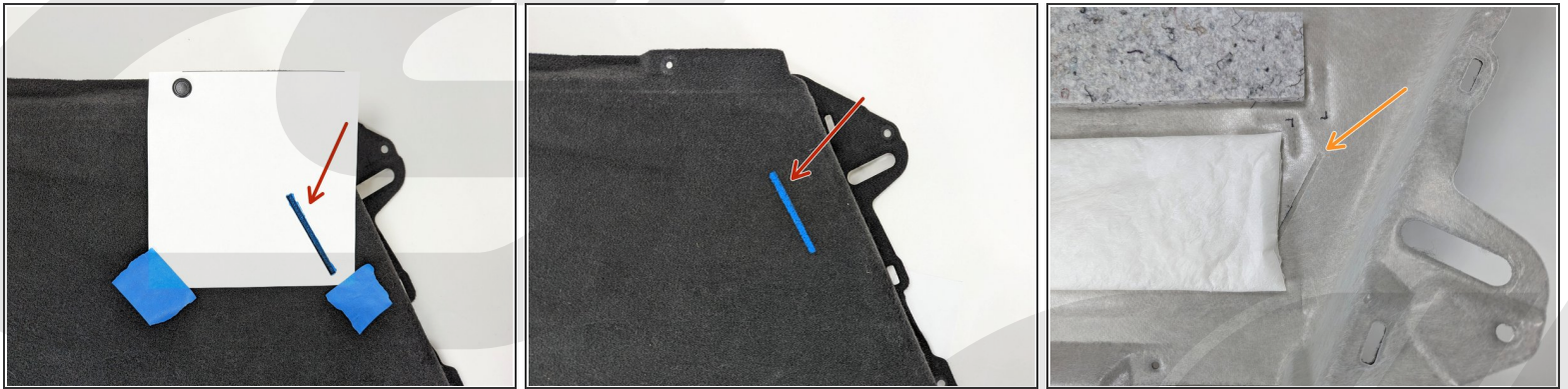
- Remove the two bolts circled on the drivers side, using a 14mm socket and ratchet
- Locate the drivers side bracket, which will sit as shown when the bend is facing down
- Install the bracket with the OE bolts, leaving them hand tight so the bracket can be adjusted later
- Repeat the same steps on the passenger side



## Step 22 — Modifying the Trunk Trim Panels - Part 1



- **Find** the template that is provided to locate where the opening will need to be cut for the side brackets
- The hole shown will be used to align the template in the following steps
- Use a razor knife and scissors to cut out the hole, rectangle and along the line in the template as shown
- Using a clip that was removed from this trim panel earlier, secure the template to the panel
- The top edge of the template should match the edge of the trim panel
- The rectangular cutout should be parallel to the edge of the trim as shown. If not flip the template over

**Step 23 — Modifying the Trunk Trim Panels - Part 2**

- Using a razor knife cut the rectangle out of the trim panel
  - ⓘ Make sure the template does not move when cutting and does not get damaged as it will be used again on the other side
  - ⓘ You can use tape to hold down the edges of the template or you can mark the rectangle with a paint pen and then remove the template
- Once the outline on the front is cut, you may need to turn the panel over and finish cutting on the backside
- Repeat the same steps on the passenger side trim panel

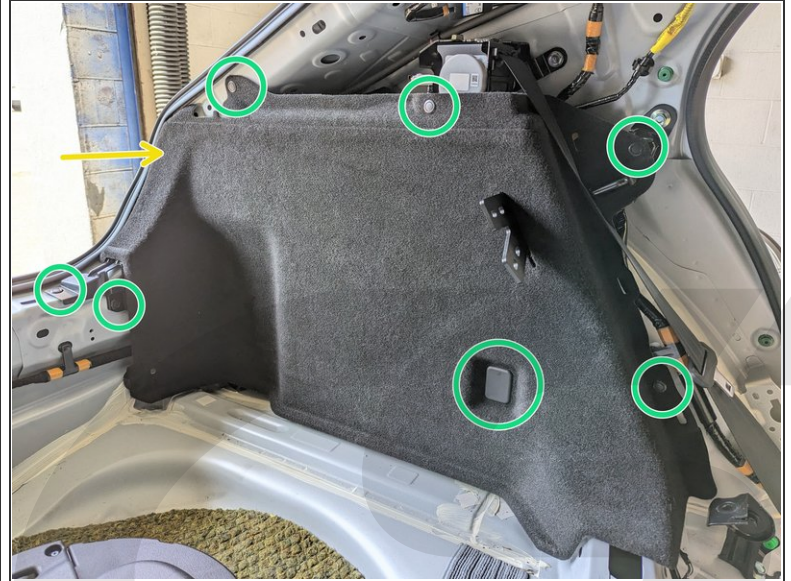
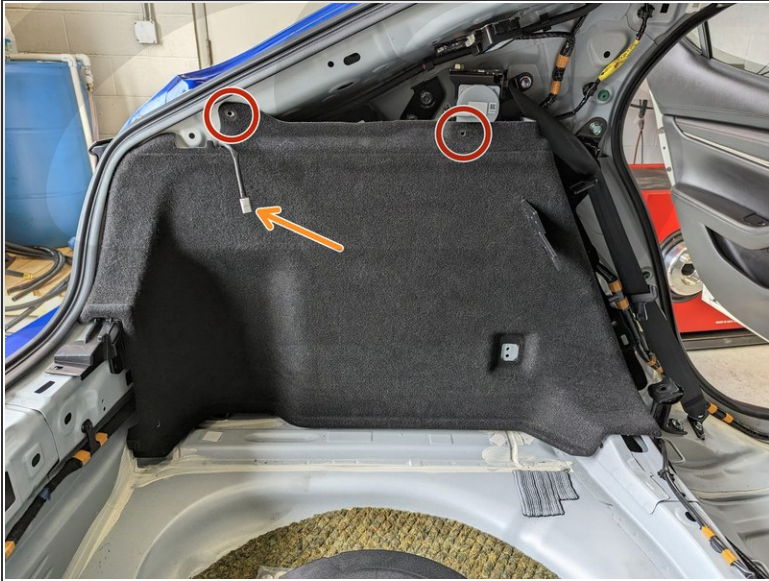
## Step 24 — Aligning the Side Brackets



- Find the center cross bar and two sets of hardware
- Install the bar and tighten the bolts hand tight using a 5mm Allen wrench and 13mm socket and ratchet
- Now that the brackets are aligned, tighten the two bolts on each side bracket to **35 ft-lbs**
- Uninstall the cross bar and set aside for later



## Step 25 — Reinstalling the Trunk Side Panels



- Slide the trim panel over the bracket and check to see if the holes for the clips line up
- ⓘ The trim panel will have to be installed over the bracket at a slight angle since the cutout was made as small as possible
- If the holes are off, the cutout may need to be adjusted so they are better aligned
- Make sure the wiring for the light on the drivers side does not get left behind the trim panel when moving to the next step
- Once the trim panel fits good, pop the rear clip back into place
- Reinstall the clips circled
- Repeat the same steps on the opposite side

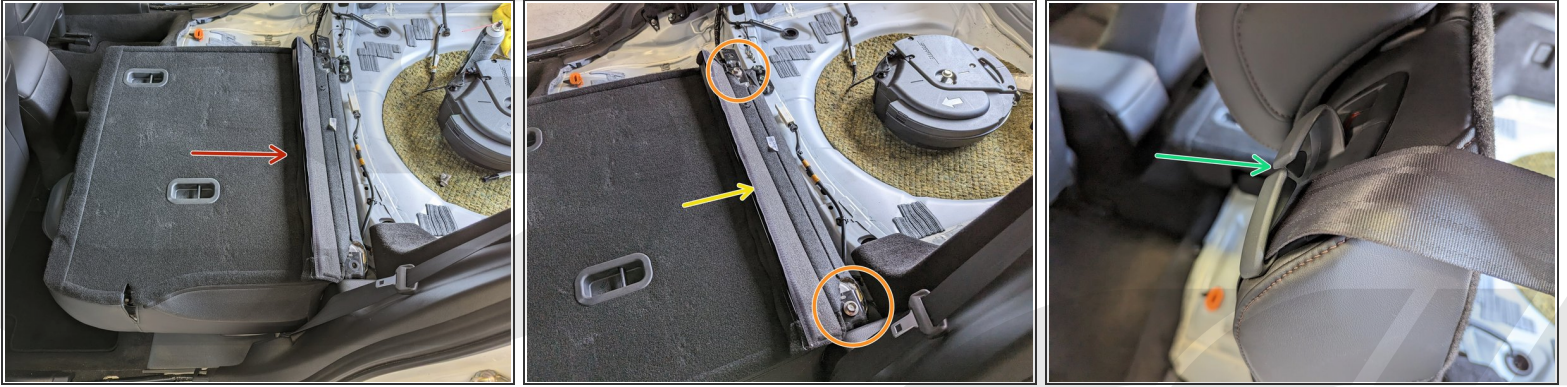
## Step 26 — Reinstalling the Side Trim Panels



- If the suggested method was used to remove the side trim panel, start by setting the trim piece back in place
- ⓘ Make sure the seat belt is out of the way for easier installation
- Start at the top of the trim panel and lock the clip back into the U slot shown
- Repeat the last step for the two other clips lower on the trim panel
- Push along the back edge of the trim panel to make sure that it is fully installed into the other trim piece
- Reinstall the weather stripping on the seam

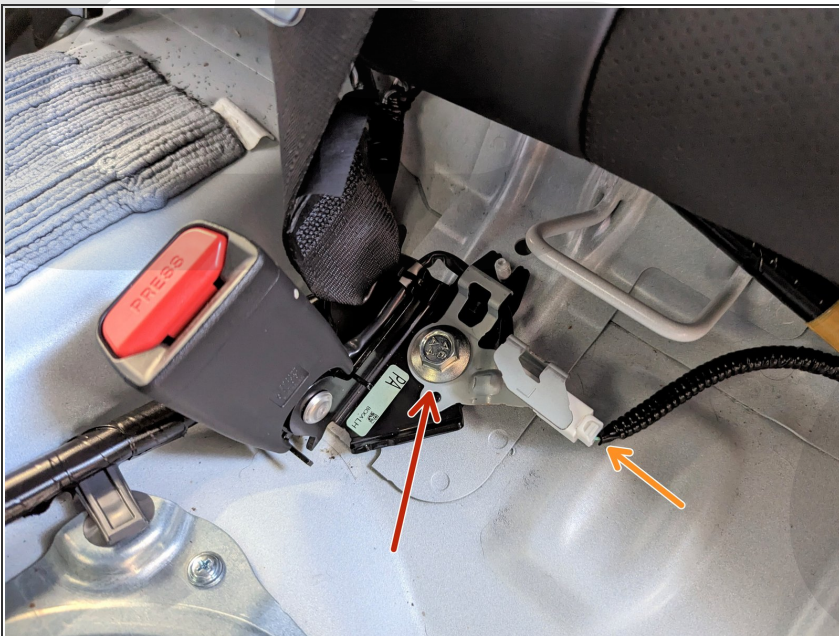


## Step 27 — Reinstalling the Seat Backs



- Locate the drivers side rear seat back and install it into the brackets making sure the tabs are on the top side of the bracket
- Reinstall the two bolts using a 14mm socket and torque to **35 ft-lbs**
- Fold the cover flap back over
- Slide the seat belt back into the guide in the seat
- Repeat the same steps for the passenger side seat back

## Step 28 — Reinstalling the Seat Buckle

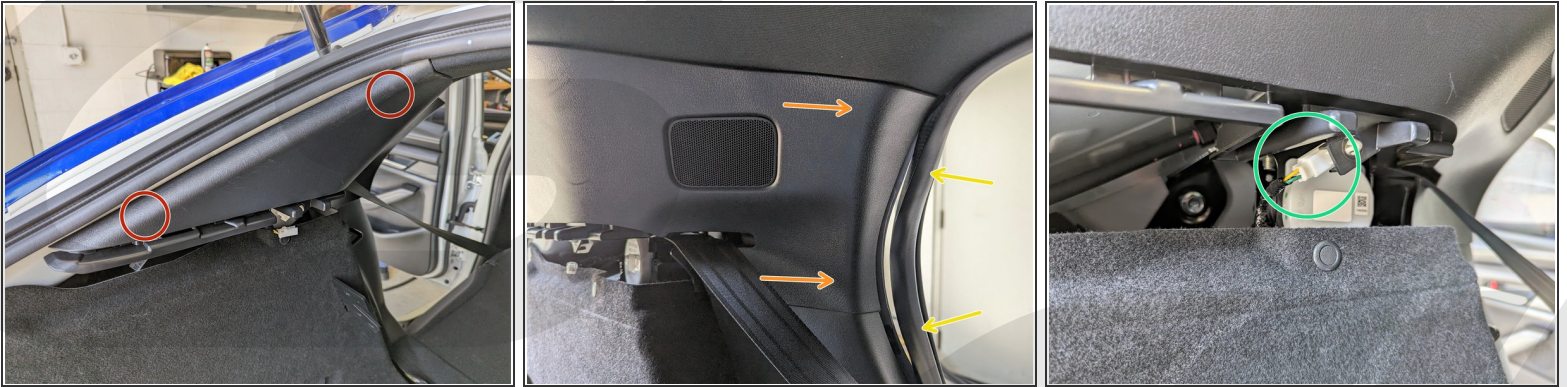


- Line up the buckle with the alignment tab in the belt bracket and reinstall the bolt using a 14mm socket and torque to **40 ft-lbs**
- Reinstall the connector



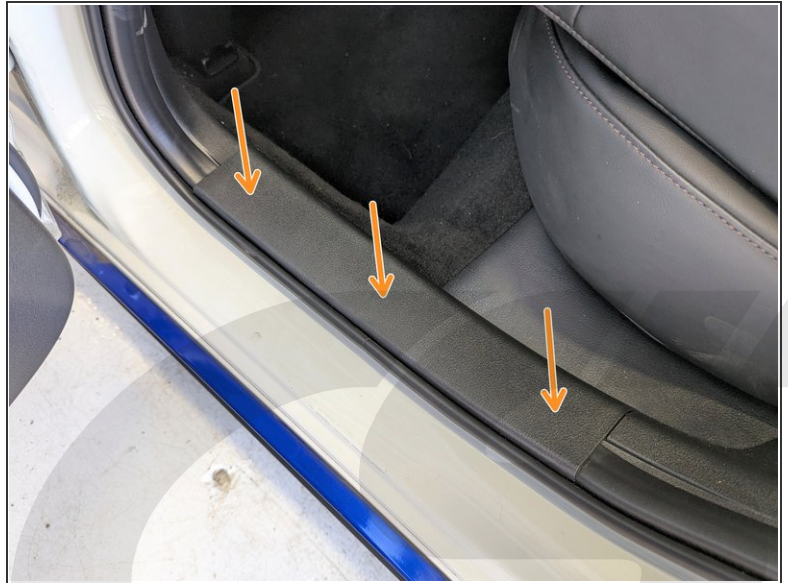
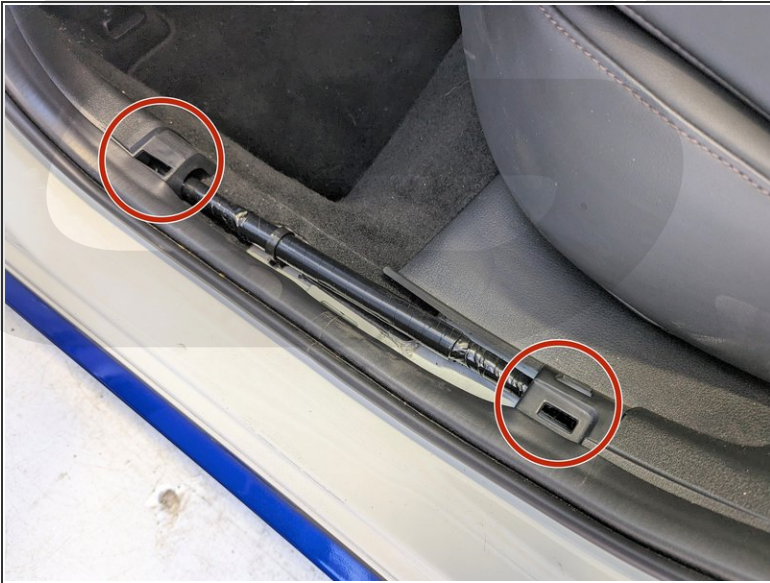
**Step 29 — Reinstalling the Seat Cushion**

- Place the seat cushion back into the car
- Place the center seat buckle through the opening on the left
- Feed the center seat belt through the slot on the right
- Angle the seat cushion up slightly and push back to place the loop back over the hook
- Align the front locks in the cushion and push down until they lock back into place

**Step 30 — Reinstalling the C-Pillar Trim**

- Align the two clips that are in the hatch area and push in to pop them back into place
- Line up the other side of the panel and push around the perimeter to lock in the clips
- Push the weather-stripping back into place along the edge of the trim panel
- Reinstall the connector for the speakers if present
- Repeat on the other side of the vehicle

## Step 31 — Reinstalling the Scuff Plates



- Line up the scuff plate with the cutouts in the surrounding trim panels
- Push down to pop the clips and tabs back into position
- Repeat on the opposite side of the vehicle



### Step 32 — Reinstalling the Trunk Upper Trim Panel



- Reattach the connector on the drivers side for the cargo light
- Line up the clips and tabs and push to secure the trim panel
- Make sure that the edge of the trim next to the seat belt gets popped back into place
- Push the weather stripping back down all along the edge of the hatch
- Repeat the previous 3 steps on the passenger side

### Step 33 — Reinstalling the Trunk End Trim



- Line up the tabs on the back of the trim panel and slide down
- Push on the top surface in the locations shown to pop the clips back into place
- Reinstall the push clips back into the spot shown on each side
- Push the weather stripping back over the edge of the trim panel

## Step 34 — Installing the Cross Bar



- Install the cross bar and secure it to the brackets using the provided hardware
- Torque the 4 bolts to **15 ft-lbs** using a 5mm Allen wrench and 13mm socket

## Step 35 — Installing the Stage 1 or 2 Configuration?



- If you are installing the Stage 1 version you can continue to the next step
- If you are installing the Stage 2 version skip ahead to Step 38



### Step 36 — Reinstalling the Foam and Carpet



- Place both foam inserts back in the hatch
- Reconnect the wiring for the speaker and place it into the slot in the foam
- Set the carpet back into place

### Step 37 — Reinstalling the Hatch Tray



- Place the hatch tray back into the slots on the sides and press down until they pop into place
  - Take the strings and slide them into the pins located on each side of the hatch
- i** This completes the installation of the Stage 1 CorkSport Rear Hatch Brace



**Step 38 — Installing the Seat Bracket**

- Remove the two 14mm bolts holding the center seat bracket
- Install the seat bracket as shown using the longer M10 bolts that are included. Tighten until hand tight so it can still be adjusted if needed

## Step 39 — Installing the Driver and Passenger Bars



- Install the longer bar on the drivers side as shown leaving the bolts hand tight
- Install the other bar on the passenger side leaving the bolts hand tight as well
- Center the bars in the brackets and tighten the bolts using a 5mm Allen wrench and 13mm socket to **15 ft-lbs**
- Torque down the two 14mm bolts in the seat bracket to **35 ft-lbs**



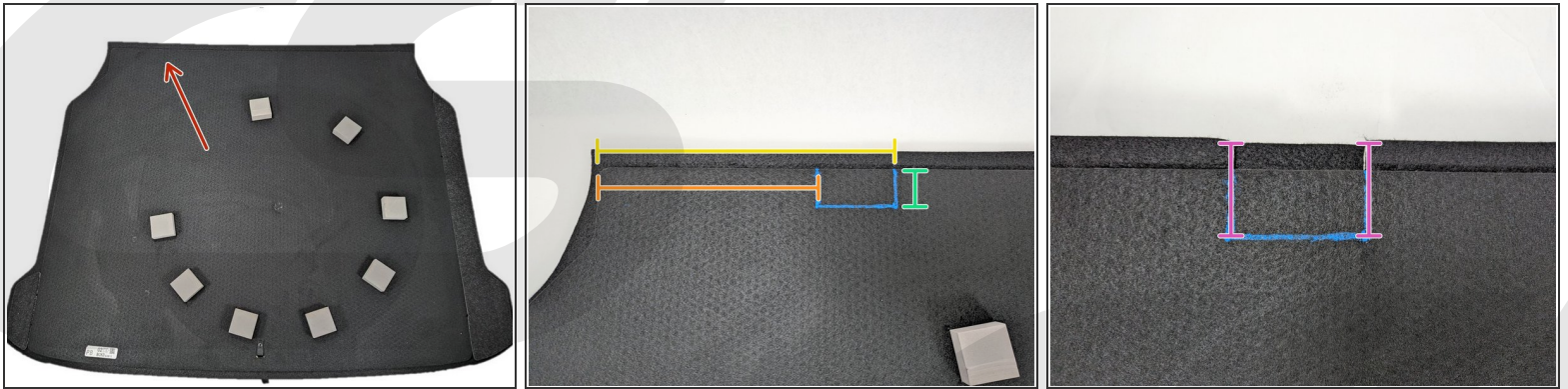
## Step 40 — Trimming the Foam



- Measure 4.5in from the edge of the passengers side foam and place a mark using a Sharpie or paint pen
- Mark another line at 8in from the edge
- Using a razor knife cut out the rectangular section of foam marked, going back ~1.25in to where the foam lip ends and meets the thicker section

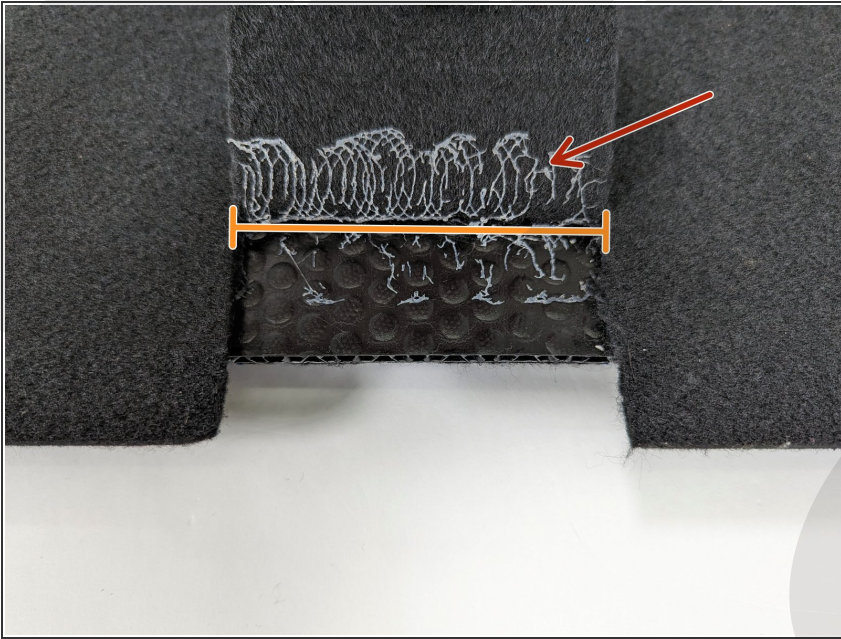


## Step 41 — Trimming the Carpet - Part 1



- Turn your carpet over and go to the upper left corner
  - Measure from the passenger side edge of the plastic backer and place a mark on the plastic backing at 9.5in
  - Make another mark at 13in
  - Measure back from the edge 1.75in as shown
  - Use these marks to outline the rectangular section of the plastic backing that needs to be removed
  - Cut the sides going all the way through both the plastic backer and carpet
- ⚠ Do not cut the horizontal mark yet

## Step 42 — Trimming the Carpet - Part 2



- Fold back the carpet layer to release the glue attaching it to the plastic backer
- Now cut the plastic layer horizontally so that the carpet flap is still attached as it will be folded under during reinstallation

## Step 43 — Reinstalling the Foam and Carpet



- Place both foam pieces back into the trunk
- Reconnect the wiring for the speaker and place it into the slot in the foam
- Place the carpet on top of the foam and tuck the carpet flap underneath so that it is hidden



## Step 44 — Reinstalling the Hatch Tray



- Place the hatch tray back into the slots on the sides and press down until they pop into place.
- Take the strings and slide them into the pin located on each side of the hatch



## Step 45 — Installation Complete



- This completes your installation of the CorkSport Performance Rear Hatch Brace!
- ⓘ During the test drive listen for any new noises and if present make sure all bolts are tightened to spec.
- Contact us with any questions or concerns at [sales@corksport.com](mailto:sales@corksport.com) or (360) 260-2675.
- Please leave a review here: <https://corksport.com>
- Share your experience using #CorkSport on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.

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