

Volkswagen Cabriolet DIY Guide

Refurbishing the Dash Switches



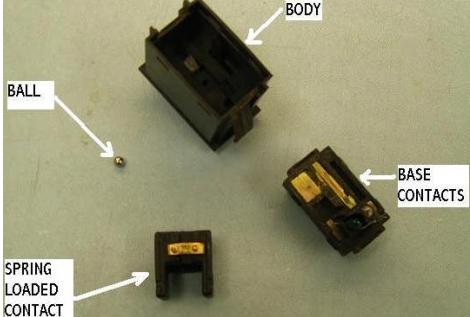
This how-to was originally posted on VWvortex.com by "dasdachshund": <http://forums.vwvortex.com/zerothread?id=3686819> .

Tools needed:

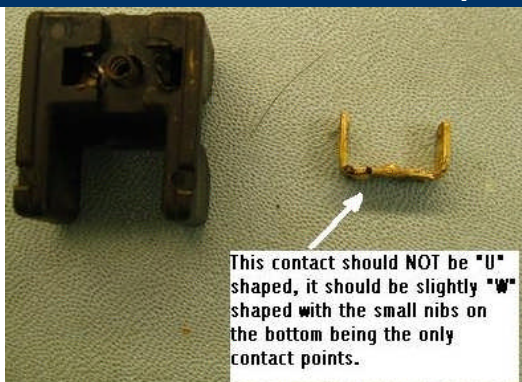
- Thin, flathead screwdriver
- Tweezers
- Flathead screwdriver
- Rubbing alcohol
- Q-tips
- Grease or Vaseline
- DVOM to test switch resistance

When I bought my '85, most every switch in the dash didn't work. Hmm, no dash lights, no rear defroster, no fan. I methodically started to trace all the faults and found most of them ended at the switches themselves. Here is a "how-to" to refurbish and get your switches functioning again.

Switches are really very simple devices to just open a circuit and then close it again. No rocket science, and luckily, VW switches are made to be opened up. Here is how:

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
 <p>Remove the switches (see the dash bezel removal how-to, if need be). The defroster switch is being used for this how-to.</p>	 <p>On the back of the switch, you will notice that the back is kept on with plastic wedges that snap into slots on both sides of the casing. Insert a small screwdriver, or other sharp instrument (I used tweezers), and gently pry, first one side, then the other, so the two come apart so that you can take the back off. Be careful because there are small springs and a metal ball that you can lose very easily.</p>	 <p>Here are the components of the rear defroster switch once taken apart.</p>

Step 4



You're mostly concerned with the "spring loaded contact" component. Remove the U-shaped contact. It should slip right out. Be careful of the spring underneath it and the spring on the opposite side that pushes on the little metal ball. Both of these springs should sit freely in the hole, not binding. If either spring binds, or is damaged, you found your problem. Replace.

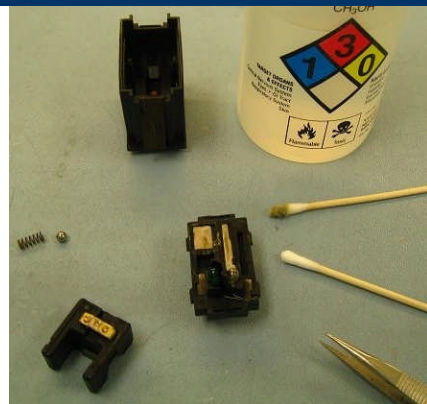
The metal contact should be like the picture: more VERY slightly W-shaped than U-shaped. Carefully bend the contact to straighten it if yours is U-shaped (mine was).

Step 5



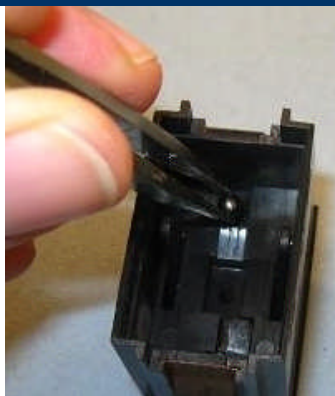
Put the spring and contact back in the plastic holder and check for good, bouncy action.

Step 6



Once the contact is working right, give the entire switch a good cleaning out of the 25 years or so of built-up crud inside. Alcohol and Q-tips work great for this. Especially clean and inspect the base contacts for severe wear. A new switch is warranted if they're too far gone. (Yep, mine was pretty crusty.)

Step 7



Reassemble. Remember the little metal ball? It goes back in the switch as pictured, at the indent at one end.

Put the spring loaded contact piece back over the 2 plastic prongs on either side of the body. Make sure the little spring is pushing the little ball (a little grease/Vaseline will keep the spring in its hole to do this step); the contact/plastic piece should sit over the end with the little ball. Carefully snap the base back onto the body. VOILA!!!! A newly remanufactured switch ready to do its job.

Step 8



Test the switch to see if it works and that you bent the contacts enough. The meter should read infinite when the switch is off and less than an ohm when the switch is on. If not, go back in and bend/clean the contact a little more.

The same procedure can be applied to the headlight switch, the fan switch, or just about any switch in the car: Straighten contacts and clean. Good Luck 😊😊

* * Remember, **you** are responsible for working on **your** car; Cabby-Info.com, "dasdachshund", VWvortex.com, VAG, VWoA, or anyone else are not responsible if **anything** goes wrong while **you** are working on, in and under **your** car! Use this information at your own risk!* *