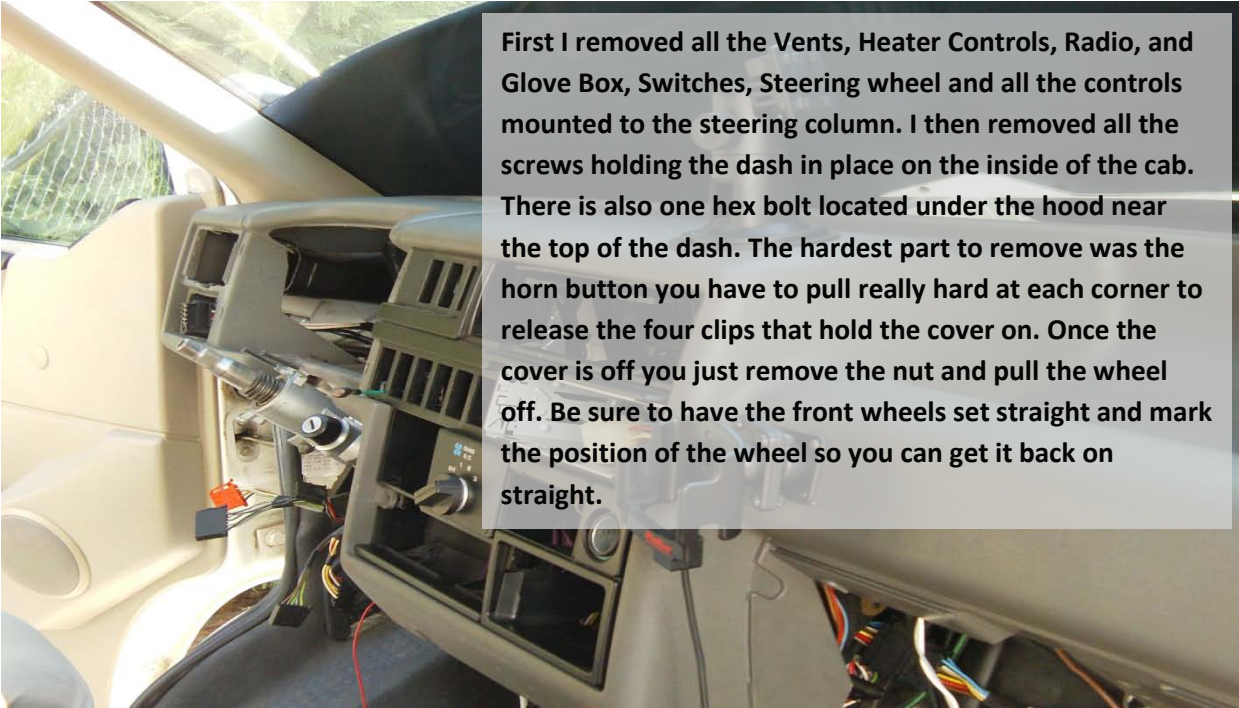
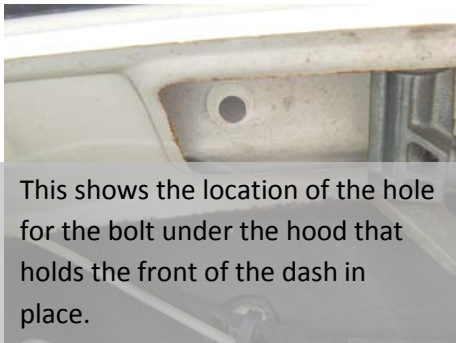


Removing the dash in the Rialta



First I removed all the Vents, Heater Controls, Radio, and Glove Box, Switches, Steering wheel and all the controls mounted to the steering column. I then removed all the screws holding the dash in place on the inside of the cab. There is also one hex bolt located under the hood near the top of the dash. The hardest part to remove was the horn button you have to pull really hard at each corner to release the four clips that hold the cover on. Once the cover is off you just remove the nut and pull the wheel off. Be sure to have the front wheels set straight and mark the position of the wheel so you can get it back on straight.



This shows the location of the hole for the bolt under the hood that holds the front of the dash in place.



I pulled the dash out the passenger side door. You can leave the instrument cluster in place you just have to move it to the side and work around it. It took me about 2 hours to remove the dash. I removed only the heater and air diverter portion of the AC/Heater box. You have to remove 2 bolts under the hood. One is behind the heat shield behind the engine. I had to punch a hole in the heat shield to get to the bolt. There is a raised area in the shield that shows you where the bolt is. There are several clips that hold the air box halves together. You need to remove these to split the air box. There are 2 clips on the back of the box that you can't get to, just pry the box open and these will pop off you don't need to but them back.





Remove all the vents that attach to the air box and disconnect all the vacuum hoses. You have to disconnect the heater hoses and one vacuum hose at the firewall then lift the air box out of the dash. This will leave a big open space in the dash.



The Air box can be split in two by removing the clips that hold it together and gently pry the halves apart. You can see the metal flaps and the huge holes in them. These should be covered in foam to form a seal where they touch the sides of the box. There are 3 flaps in the box the 2 metal ones and a smaller plastic one that diverts air to the defrosters.



You can see the flaps removed from the air box and the giant holes in them. I made a trip to the crafts store and picked up some closed cell craft foam that had an adhesive back. I also went to Home Depot and got an assortment of foam tape and foam filler strips.



I covered the flaps on both side because they need to seal in both directions also the foam dampens the fan noise. I also put a little grease on the hinge pins to help them move easily.



Ok with all the new foam in place I reassembled the box. A little trick here is to but the flaps into the side that has the control mounted to it that way it will be under tension and you can put the box back together and not have to try and line up the flap on the spring side. All of the foam under the dash was rotten most was missing and what was left was useless. I replaced it all including all the padding that was on the underside of the dash.



There are 2 main seals under the dash, the one on top goes to the defrosters the other mates with the front vent distribution box that is held in with 2 clips.



The left and right vent ducts attach to the central vent box. The tubes are insulated with a fabric cover. They just snap in place and can be bent to fit.

Before I put the dash back in place I replaced all the foam padding along the front edge. I used foam that is made to seal home AC window units. I used some double stick tape along the edge after I cleaned all the old foam residue off with some Goof-Off.



With the dash back in place I reinstalled all the Switches, Steering wheel and the controls. Before I put the vents back in I wanted to repair the foam seals inside them. The vents have flow control flaps inside them that can shut off the air flow to that vent. The control is activated using a sliding knob on the front of each vent. The foam on these control flaps had deteriorated and was gone! I used the closed cell art foam to repair these flaps also.



To remove the flap you need to remove the control arm that attaches to the flap. Then you can pop the flap out of the vent. I cut out the center of a piece of foam large enough to fit around the solid middle of the flap. There is a groove around the flap that the foam fits into. I slit the foam on one side so I could fit it around the center area. I peeled back the paper backing and stuck the foam to the inside of the groove. Then I covered the back with another piece of foam. This made a double thick foam seal. Then I trimmed the foam to within about ¼ inch of the edge all around.



Then pop the flap back into the vent and reconnect the control arm.

Well I have the dash back in and the air works great! I can divert the air flow to the front vents, floor area or the defrosters and the heat will now run you out of the cab area! It took about 9 hours to complete the entire project. That included repairing the vent flaps and cleaning up some wiring that had been added thru the years. It was much easier to route wires with the dash out so I added a new fog light switch and cleaned up the radio and GPS wiring.

The job is not that difficult it would go a little faster if you had a good helper Ernie our weiner dog stayed right with me the whole day but he was not much help. With that job finished it's like the flag says.....



It's 5 o'Clock Somewhere!