

Hood Stuck Shut - C3

(For both styles used - 1968 thru 1976 and 1977 thru 1982)

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If you are unfortunate as I was to have your hood stuck shut, then you will really appreciate this article. Typically when you pull on the hood release handle the hood is unlocked and pops up as per normal, unless of course the cable snaps and well nothing happens. In my case, this was even worse as the cable didn't snap and instead the lock release striker got jammed. Needless to say, the same situation resulted; a hood that will not open.

Don't panic, there is a fix and fortunately no need for any specialized tools. The hood locking mechanism is the same for 68-76 corvettes, however, the hood locking mechanism changed for the 77-82 model years. As such, there is a different approach required to open the hoods for the different model years. This article will take you through the process step by step by using a 1969 corvette as an example for the 68-76 model years. A separate step by step process will be presented for the 77-82 model years courtesy of Mid America Motorworks using a 1978 corvette as an example. In addition, several alternate approaches will also be presented just in case there are some model years that may have slight differences making one solution more desirable than the other.

This article is broken down into three main sections:

- 1) 1968 - 1976 Hood Locking Mechanism
 - 2) 1968 - 1976 Alternate Procedures, and
 - 3) 1977 - 1982 Hood Locking Mechanism
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68-76 Hood locking mechanism pictures reference:

Picture G lists all the tools required

Pictures A1 - D2 provide an overview of the hood latch and hood lock mechanism and how it operates

Pictures E1 - E3 describe the technique used to unlock the hood (this can be done in under 30 seconds with some practice)

Pictures F1 - F2 describe an alternate approach to solving the problem

Special Notes:

For 68-69 model year corvettes, you can just poke the rebar or screw driver through the 2nd louver on the drivers side fender

For 70-72 model year corvettes, you must first remove the access plate on the drivers side fender first

For 73-76 model year corvettes (Not sure if an access plate is available to remove on the drivers side fender)

If not, refer to alternative procedures or refer to advice in 77-82 hood locking mechanism pictures

1968 - 1976 Hood Locking Mechanism



Tools required for the repair.

Slot screw drivers with a 6 to 8 inch blade Maglite or other suitable light source

Rebar that is a minimum of 3ft long (taping is optional to protect your paint)

Slot screw driver with an 18 to 24 inch long blade (instead of rebar)



Overview of hood latch components and under hood connecting cable.



Close up of hood latch on drivers side (locked position).



Close up of hood latch on drivers side (unlocked position).

Push on tang in the direction shown to unlock the latch.

You should notice that by pushing on the tang that this unlocks the passenger side latch as well via the under hood release cable

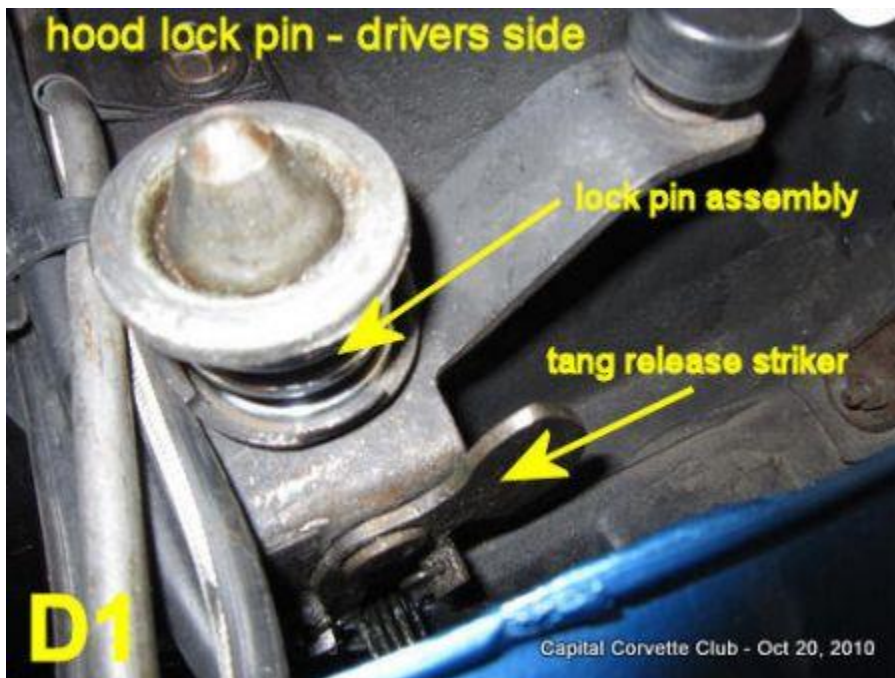


Close up of hood latch on passenger side (locked position).

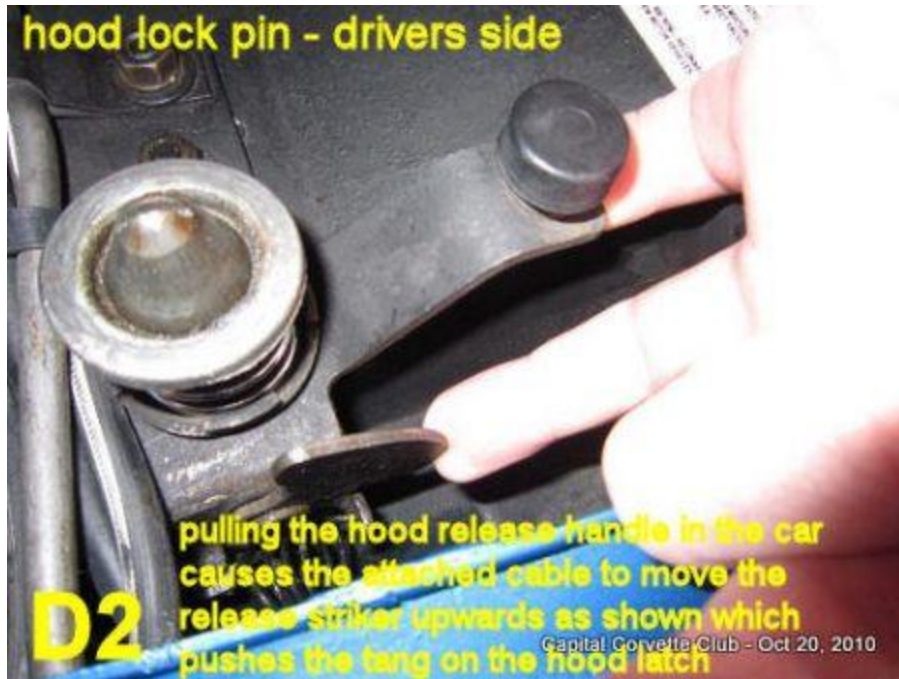


Close up of hood latch on passenger side (unlocked position). Push on the tang in the direction shown to unlock the latch.

You should notice that by pushing on the tang that this unlocks the drivers side latch as well via the under hood release cable



Close up of the hood lock pin assembly on drivers side including the release striker.

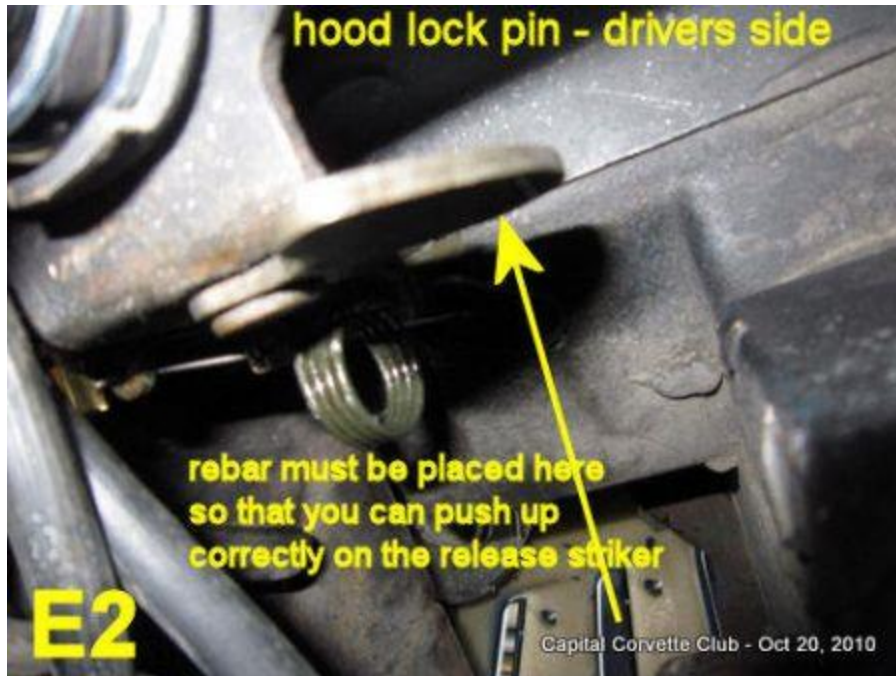


The release striker is operated by pulling the hood release handle in the car. The release striker can be moved independently as shown above. When the release striker is raised up it hits the tang on the hood latch and moves it forward to unlock the latch. The attached spring ensures that the release striker returns to the home position.



Use the 2nd louver when sliding the rebar through to access the release striker. Be very careful not to scratch the paint. You can optionally tape the rebar (I did this).

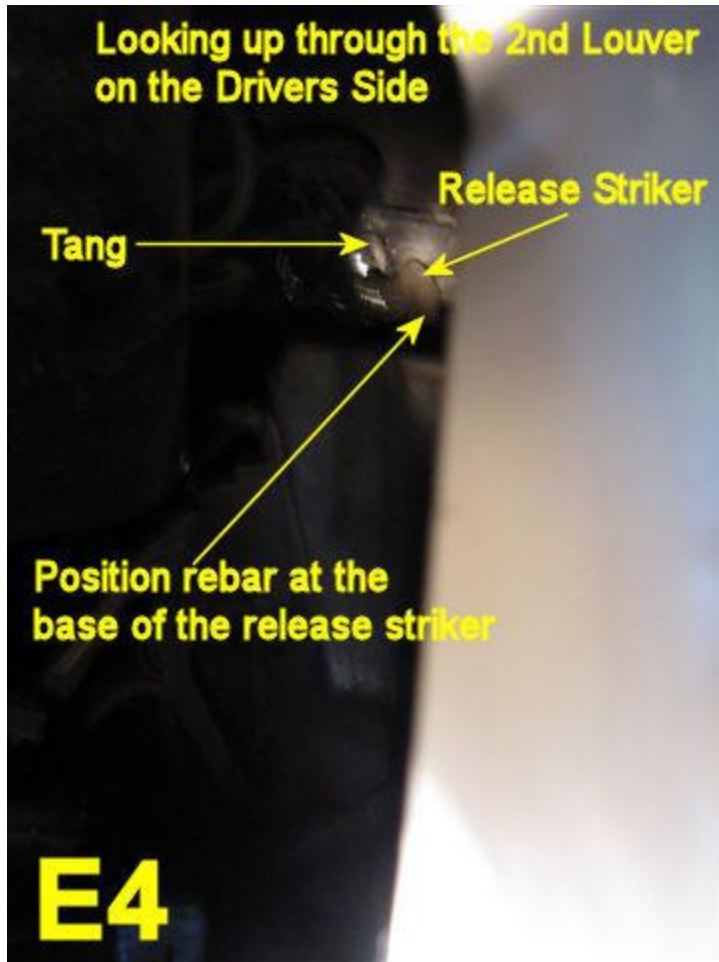
Be very careful when poking a metal object inside the engine compartment especially if the battery is connected.



Close up of the release striker indicating where the rebar or screw driver end should be placed. This is important when going through the side louver to access the release striker.



Close up of the release striker with the rebar correctly positioned. Push up on the release striker gently until the striker hits the tang. This will ensure that you are now positioned correctly. Push up on the release striker with more force now and this should move the tang forward enough to unlock your hood.



Looking up inside through the 2nd louver with the hood closed. Using a maglite you should be able to see the release striker and tang as shown. With the maglite and rebar you should be able to position correctly on the release striker (E3).



The following alternate procedures will also work provided the under hood release cable is still working. If the under hood release cable is broken, it might only be possible to unlock the passenger side hood latch.

ALTERNATE PROCEDURE (1)

Release the latch on the passenger side by pulling on the underhood hood release cable.

From under the car you should be able to slide your arm in and reach the cable.

The WHITE tie wrap connected to the hood release cable indicates the area you are trying to get to.

This will take some practice, be patient and take your time.

It took me 4 tries before I was able to do this successfully.

Once the passenger side has been released, you can unlock the drivers side latch as follows:

Place a towel on the passenger side fender by the hood.

Lift the passenger side hood as far as it will go (you may need a friend for this).

Insert a screw driver under the side of the hood at 90 degrees about 8 inches from the top.

Push the tang as shown in picture C2 above (drivers side latch will unlock)



ALTERNATE PROCEDURE (2) – Part-1

There is an access plug on the inside of windshield wiper well (access plug on firewall)

The plug hole lines up directly with the tang on the passenger side hood latch.

If you can get a screw driver in, you will be able to push the tang to the side

The wipers will need to be parked to do this

If you are one of the lucky ones with a vacuum operated wiper cowl, this becomes even more difficult.



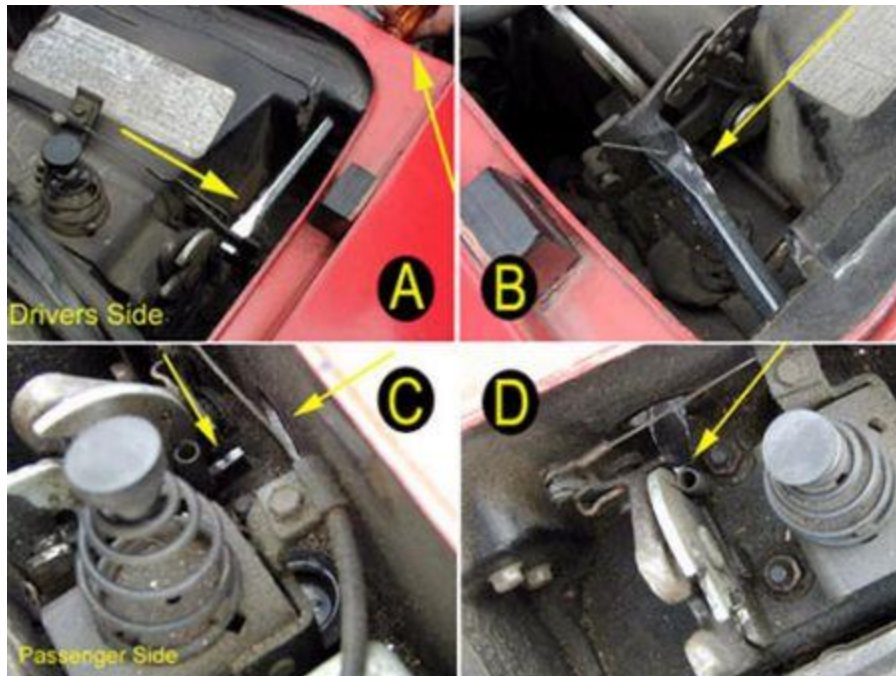
ALTERNATE PROCEDURE (2) – Part-2

This picture shows the position of the screw driver if pushed through the access plug hole. Push on tang in the direction shown to unlock the latch. Once the passenger latch is open follow the end steps listed in Alternate Procedure (1) for drivers side

1977 - 1982 Hood Locking Mechanism

Mid America Motorworks published a technical article using a 1978 corvette as the example for the hood stuck shut scenario.

The article is [HERE](#) for your reference:



Mid America Motorworks pictures – 1978 Corvette Hood Locking Mechanism.

Located in the windshield wiper well, just in front of the windshield, are two access ports covered by plastic plugs.

These are positioned just behind the hood latches in the engine compartment.

Take a few minutes to check the location of the ports and their positions relative to the hood latches.

In an emergency, you can push a long screwdriver through these plugs on 1968-1976 models and flip the hood latches forward enough to release them.

On 1977-1982 models, the hood latches may be tripped by prying the driver's side latch lever to the outside.

This should release both sides, but if it only releases the driver's side, then repeat the procedure on the passenger's side access port.

A) Shown here is the driver's side hood latch. Insert a long screwdriver (approx. 12") through the grommet from the windshield side and insert the tip into the slot on the latch. Push in the direction of the arrows.

B) Here's a close-up of the drivers side latch with the screwdriver engaging the slot. If the crossover cable isn't broken, this should pop the hood.

If the crossover cable is broken, you will need to repeat the procedure on the passenger side. The passenger side latch works a bit differently. Insert the screwdriver to engage the tang shown on the right and lever it down (in the direction of the left-most arrow).

C) The screwdriver only has to be inserted an inch or so to engage the passenger side tang. Take a few minutes now to check out these access ports and practice the procedure. It's much easier to do if you practice with the hood open and get a feel for the locations and distances to reach these latches.

D) If your cables are old and looking frayed, replacement now would be strongly suggested.

By learning this simple technique, you just may "save the day" for yourself or a fellow Corvette owner.

Remember, simple maintenance, such as lubricating and checking the cables for wear will reduce the chance of unexpected failure