



# Air Cooled VW Weatherstrip

## Don't Let The Weather Dampen Your Ride

When was the last time you closed the door of your Air Cooled VW and heard that familiar “thunk” that is characteristic of a Volkswagen? Worried that your VW won’t pass the air tight test? Then it’s time for new weatherstrip! Weatherstrip – or seals – should be an essential part of your restoration. They seal out rain and water, can reduce road noise and ensure proper closure of your doors, trunk and decklid. Mid America Motorworks takes you through the different options in weatherstrip, including quality levels, styles available and tips for installation and maintenance.

### Choosing Weatherstrip Quality Counts

When replacing weatherstrip, it is seldom one type fits all. Some Air Cooled VWs are daily-driven road warriors. Others are full-blown customs and then there are the original, low-mileage VWs. Every owner enjoys their VW differently. That’s why you’ll find different quality levels of weatherstrip. The most prevalent are [OEM and Reproduction](#).

### OEM Weatherstrip

OEM, or Original Equipment Manufacturer, weatherstrip is manufactured by the same company that supplied original parts to Volkswagen. It will have a more precise fit and better texture in the overall finish. It will have the same color as original weatherstrip, because it was made with the same materials, using the same process.

### Reproduction Weatherstrip

Reproduction weatherstrip is the highest quality reproduction of the original that is available. It is made in the same fashion with the same material as the OEM-styled parts to provide the same fit and function as the original.





## That's A Looker!

When handling a restoration project, one of the biggest considerations is the look you want to achieve. Yes, that includes the weatherstrip. There are typically 2 options when choosing weatherstrip based on looks: American Style and Cal-look.

### American Style

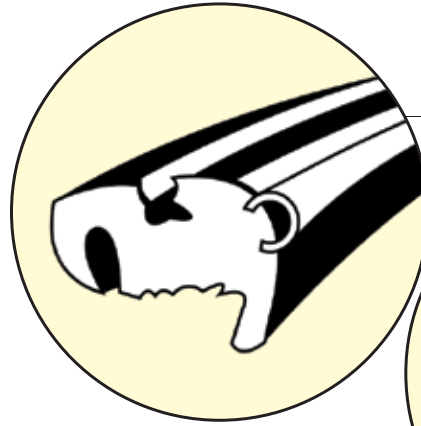
For an original look, restore your Volkswagen with American Style weatherstrip. American Style includes a molding groove that fits aluminum trim for an added touch of originality, as this is the style that appeared on your Beetle from the factory.

### Cal-look

Cal-look weatherstrip comes without the groove, providing a basic black/rubber look for your Air Cooled VW.

### Weatherstrip Problem Areas

If your Volkswagen has seen lots of road time, there's a good chance that your weatherstrip should be replaced. Still, there are signs you can check to confirm that it's time for an upgrade. Old weatherstrip is easy to identify, because it's typically faded and cracked. Old window and windshield weatherstrip cracks in the corners, particularly in the lower corners. Check there to ensure that moisture doesn't reach the body of your Bus or Beetle, causing rust. When weatherstrip is old, doors, trunks and decklids don't have the same secure closure.



American Style Seals



California Style Seals



**Front Seal**



**Rear Seal**





## Installation Tips & Tricks

Now that you have an idea of what type of weatherstrip to use on your restoration, here are a few tips to help you with the project. Before removing the old weatherstrip, compare the new weatherstrip to ensure the size is correct.

Carefully remove the old weatherstrip and dry fit the new to troubleshoot any possible fitment issues before installing. It's a good idea to keep the old weatherstrip in case you run into issues during installation.

For continuous pieces, like windshield weatherstrip, you want to center the weatherstrip on the windshield for placement. To find the center of your weatherstrip, lay it out on a flat surface, and then fold it in half to find the center. Mark the fold with a piece of tape and place at the center of your windshield.

For weatherstrip with molded ends, place the ends first and stretch the weatherstrip into the shape of the Volkswagen. Use masking tape to hold it in place, as the weatherstrip will naturally fit the shape.

When you're ready to glue the weatherstrip, only glue a small section at a time to ensure that the glue doesn't dry before you get to it.

To extend the life of your new weatherstrip, apply a thin layer of lubricant on the weatherstrip about twice a year. This will keep the weatherstrip from drying out and cracking.

