

All Aircraft... Aircraft Panel Removal Done Right



Removing panels from your airframe is not as simple as one, two, three, mechanics.

When you remove aircraft panels to gain access for maintenance or other repairs, make sure you set the conditions for success before you start. Select the proper size screw driver bit and check it for excess wear or damage. A sloppy bit fit will only strip out the screw. Set the drill in the aviation footlocker (AFL) on the lowest setting for each and every screw before you remove them. Then move up the setting as needed to get the screws out.

Using the wrong drill setting to remove screws strips them out. If you end up with stripped screws, then you've got serious problems and an unhappy airframe repairer, who'll have to remove stripped screws in one of two ways, neither of which is much fun.

One way is to drill a hole into the screw and take it out using a screw extractor. The second way is to modify the Phillips head screw by using a hack saw to cut a single slot in the head so that a flat-tip screwdriver can be used to extract it. Any slips here can damage the airframe.

Remember, while removing screws from your airframe, a drill will not remove stripped countersunk screws.

