

RENEWING THE EXTERIOR OF YOUR CORTEZ

1. Strip all paint from body. Grinding is best, since "good" areas patched with body filler won't be damaged. Although, commercial paint stripper is much faster!
2. Cut/grind out all rusty areas. Pay particular attention to pin-holes of rust: They get much larger as you grind that area, since body is rusting from the inside out, in many cases.
3. Coat all remaining rusty areas with "acid-etch". This acid will prevent rust from doing any more damage, so is a very important step. Actually, it "pre-rusts" the steel and forms a virtually impervious, hard, paintable, coating! Wash off the excess.
4. Replace or reinforce all structural members damaged by rust. Roof ribs and lower body "studs" often are badly damaged.
5. Install new, 16 ga. steel over voids in body shell. Do this by using a wire-welder: Its temperature is much lower, so won't do as much damage to wiring, insulation. Curved areas, as the roof edge, must be "tack-welded" first, at the lower edge, then bent into position. Drill holes every 6 to 12 inches and screw the new steel into position. Then, spot-weld every 1 or 2 inches, removing the screws as you proceed. If the roof is badly rusted, you may want to proceed as follows: Have a sheet-metal shop bend a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " lip, at a 90° angle, the length of the steel (usually about 10 feet long, and 12 to 16 inches wide). Then, tack the lip to the underside of the rain gutter every 2 inches, so the main portion is perpendicular to the ground. Then, proceed as above. Upon completion, the roof will have as much strength as new, even if ribs were damaged and patched! New rain gutter material is available if you want to maintain that feature.
6. Grind all welded areas smooth. Heavily float with lead, then grind smooth. This adds strength and produces a much nicer finished product. Finally, float all seams with body filler and sand smooth: this takes several applications. Then, remove all old calking in seams and re-calk with a good, elastic calking.
7. Prime and sand several times. Paint with a good, elastic, paint (e.g., DuPont Centauri). A non-metallic is "best" because of the ease of doing touch-up. If you have accent stripes, consider coating them with clear "Centauri" for additional scratch-resistance.
8. Take a nice vacation --- you've earned it!

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