

"Sleep like a King"

It's a fairly straightforward job, but bolting a rock 'n' roll bed into your Bus can still be a daunting prospect for a novice. But Rusty Lee's kit aims to quell those fears

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Rock 'n' roll beds are a vital piece of equipment for any Camper nowadays, proving the perfect compromise between sociable seating and somewhere comfortable to sleep. Slotting one into your Split Screen or Bay Window needn't be a chore though, especially if you start out with a product that's as well considered and thought through as the trusty Rusty Lee bed. With versions available for the Split, Bay, Type 25, T4 and T5, there's something for everyone in Rusty's range, which you can buy view at www.vvrustylee.com

Arguably, the most difficult part of the process is actually bolting the bed frame together and aligning the hinges in the correct orientation with the three separate inner structural sections of the seat and bed. If you're really nice to Rusty he might even number / letter the corresponding hinges so you know what bolts to what and which side goes where. The key is to bolt the framework together so each area is able to fold within the next. Bolt them together in the wrong orientation and your bed just won't fold flat at all. Having recently gone through the process ourselves, the most useful piece of advice we can give is don't forget the washers!

Apart from drilling a hole in both the wheelarches of your Bus, you only need basic hand tools, a spirit level, a pair of quick grips and a couple of hours to do the job. As we had to photograph the process at the same time, we decided to visit Nick at Airtorios (www.airtorios.co.uk) for this install guide as he's a bit of a pro when it comes to slotting Rusty's beds into place.

With prices starting from £255 for the ¾-width bed frame (including postage), it also comes with pre-cut 9mm ply boards ready for trimming, which accept up to 4-inch foam.

Getting the bed sitting square and level against the engine cover is vital if you want to sleep like a king, or indeed a queen, so take your time and make sure you have a second pair of hands-on hands ready to help out.

We tackled this job on Nick's ex-Mexican airport 'Smokey Bear' Split, which has been set up for green laning, so the gap between the wheelarches and rear tyres was huge. If you start with a lowered Bus, we'd suggest you remove your rear wheels to avoid any unfortunate mishaps with the drill. ■



JOB INFO

TOOLS NEEDED: 13 & 17mm sockets and spanners, drill, drill bit, spirit level, set square, saw, jigsaw, cone shaped stepped hole cutter, quickgrips, a friend

MATERIALS USED: Rust inhibitor, primer and paint, Rusty Lee rock 'n' roll bed

TIME TAKEN: 2-3 hours
COST DIY: ¾ width beds start from £255 and go to £280 for full width, including P+P
PRO: £400 - £500 + trimming



02 Lay the bed sections out and acquaint yourself with the left hand and right hand-specific parts. Lee kindly writes on the bed frame and hinge sections in pen - 1, 2 and 3 on the left, A, B and C on the right. Altogether you should have five separate metal pieces to make up the bed



03 As you're looking at the front of the seat, slot the first pair of the M8 bolts through the hinge with markings 1 and A. Don't forget to add the supplied washers both outside and inside the hinge as shown

01 If you haven't done so already, now's the time to strip as much of your Bus' interior out as you can because you need unrestricted access to both the rear wheelarches and the floor in the back of the Bus to do this job



04 Repeat this process on the other side and unite the hinge to the rest of the framework. Pass the bolt through the back rest fixing first, add another washer, then pass the bolt through the lower seat frame fixing and add another washer. You should end up with bolt head, washer, hinge, washer, back rest, washer, lower squab, washer, nut in that order



05 Tighten both sides using a 13mm socket and 17mm spanner



06 Insert the next bolt through both section 2 and B on the left and right hinges into the back rest plate. Don't forget those washers between any metal surfaces



07 Screw on the Nyloc and then tighten with the 13mm and 17mm socket / spanner. Repeat on both sides



08 The two hinges and both lower and rear seat frames should now be united and nipped up tight. Flip the seat over so it's resting on its rear frame and extend the hinge so that sections 3 and C are exposed at the bottom



09 Slide the third bolt through, again not forgetting those washers between each metal surface. Ensure the lower seat rest is pointing in the right direction. Tighten the nut and bolt using the 13mm and 17mm spanner / socket



HOW TO Fit a rock 'n' roll bed



10 After ensuring everything is nipped up nice and tight, stand the seat up to inspect your handiwork. You can see here how the washers are a vital part of the design as they permit enough room for the hinges to slide without interference.



13 Nick then unfolded the bed to ensure it sat straight and checked with a level. Rusty Lee's tag line, 'Sleep like a King' only applies if you put the bed in straight! Quick grips ensured it remained true



11 Transfer the completed seat to your Bus. Two pairs of hands makes this step much simpler



12 Position the seat roughly upright so the bolt-in feet are level with the wheelarches. We used a strip of masking tape to avoid damaging the sound deadening, and also so we could mark the position of the holes to be drilled for the M10 high-tensile bolts. It should sit squarely so the 'arches support it, and obviously be central in the load space



14 Don't forget to check that the lower support structure is also straight using a set square. Mark the position of the holes to be drilled through the wheelarches for the M10 bolts to drop through



15 With the positions accurately marked, bust out your best stepped hole cutting drill bit. Don't make the holes larger than the diameter of your bolts and ensure your tyres are clear of the 'arches before you puncture them. Don't forget to rust proof the bare metal edges of the holes with a suitable primer or rust preventative treatment



16 The kit come with the spreader plates, the high-tensile bolts and the Nylocs needed to hold the bed in place



17 With the help of your able assistant, wrestle the bed back into position and drop the bolts through the holes. What you can't see here is that Lee is underneath the Van with the socket ready to nip up the Nyloc from below. Repeat for the other side



18 Check once again that the lower support frame is straight and true. Using some offcuts of wood, lift the lower framework up slightly and slide the offcuts under so you can drill pilot holes for the self-tappers that will secure the frame to the ply floor. As per the instructions, fit one either side of the frame



19 To add some extra support to the back of the bed, Nick then made a stop out of some 50mm carcassing / sawn timber. Go very carefully here with the drill as on almost all Splits and all Bays the fuel tank sits right behind here. Ensure the place screws to hold this in place are suitably short



20 The bed comes with two 9mm ply boards that form the base and back rest of your seat. Nick radiused the corners as shown freehand using a jigsaw. If you have never done this job before, we suggest you make a stiff card template, then flip it over so both corners match



21 Affix the boards to the frame using self-tapping screws. This ensures there's nowhere for them to go when you're thrashing about, or when raising and lowering the bed. Now simply add some good quality foam and upholstery of your choice and you're done