

Air conditioning problems unique to Corvairs and to old age:

- The condensers become plugged with leaves, dirt and oil. Engine runs hotter and the A/C has poor efficiency. Clean as necessary. You can use a hose or car wash on the late style while still mounted on the car. Early style: flip the condenser on to a towel on the fender to clean. Use a fin comb to straighten the fins. **REMOVE LOWER SHROUDS FOR SUMMER OPERATION!** This will lower the engine temperature 40-50 degrees. The 66 style condensers require a completely sealed engine compartment: good perimeter seal, tight lid seal, covered air recirculation hole, and no holes in the fenders.
- Threads pull out of the compressor mount holes because the bolts are loose. Use longer bolts with flat & lock washers on the pre-66 design. Be sure the compressor brace is in place on the early style - get one if it is missing. Be sure ALL of the pieces are in place if you have a 140 style.
- Switch problems: There are two dash control switches for the 65+ A/C. Both go bad because of current draw and age. Remove both, disassemble, clean and lube. The mode switch is the one, which chooses between heater and A/C and must be fully up for the heater fan to work. Install relays to lower current draw through the switch on all models.
- Compressor will not engage but the blower works: Check the ground wire for the clutch. On 66 and later, there is a lid switch for the ground on the right side hinge. This keeps the A/C from operating with the lid up. Also check the thermostatic switch on the side of the evaporator (65 & later) because passengers kick them.
- Engine dying at idle (healthy engines only) is usually caused by a loose (or missing), misadjusted, or broken idle speedup solenoid. All models had them; they improved over the years.
- My experience has shown that ALL original filter/dryers on Corvairs need to be replaced. A dryer is only good for the original factory charge and I doubt anybody still has that. When the desiccant is saturated, the system starts to corrode and plug up the filter. Replacements are available and can make a noticeable contribution to efficiency and reliability.
- Leaks: If you bend 40-year-old hoses, pinholes appear. The service port valves can leak and the o-rings in the back of the compressor (look like push rod tube seals) harden. These can be repaired when you install your new filter/dryer!
- R-12 in the 12-oz cans is now available again at any parts store if you have any one of a number of types of certification such as ASE or MACS. Once the price was raised to where the manufacturers and the tax collectors wanted it, it apparently no longer harmed the ozone!!

There are several publications available for A/C system conversions, use of different compressors and various designs that can improve A/C and maintenance of the system. There is also a CORSA chapter for A/C buffs and an on-line group.

STAY COOL!