

RESTITCH YOUR STEERING WHEEL

Wheel seen better days? Seen the price they go for now? Perhaps it's worth repairing yours?

Tools:

Strong polycotton thread

Sharp knife

Curved needles

Sail needle

Pliers

Candle

Socket set



1 Disconnect the negative terminal on the battery.



2 Remove the horn pad. It "simply" pulls off. Apply even pressure not to snap the locating pegs. Once free don't yank it away as you need to disconnect the horn wire. Mark the 12 o'clock position on the spline.



3 Using a deep 24mm socket loosen the nut on the wheel. Take care to hold the wheel steady with your knees to reduce the stress on the steering lock. Also be mindful of the swing radius of the ratchet you use so you don't clonk anything delicate



4 Inspect the wheel. If the leather needs repairing or re-dying then now is the time. Check what stitching you will replace. It is far better to do this in complete sections than to patch up small repairs. The inexperienced "repairs" the precious owner did here didn't last... (yes it is string)

5 Measure the section you will repair and cut a length of the cotton four times as long (to allow for the stitch pattern). This way you'll not need to join the thread midway through, making it weak.



6 Thread a curved needle onto each end of the cotton. Run the cotton over the wax candle several times to both lubricate the thread and hold it together.

7 Decide the starting point so your eye won't see the starting stitch. Using a very sharp knife, cut a few of the existing threads and remove them with the pliers. No going back now! Only slice through a few threads at a time as it will keep the skin taut on the wheel.



8 This [video link](#) is a perfect explanation of how to stitch. Sore fingers await you as driving the needles through the leather is tough.

9 As you stitch, the edge of the leather may protrude. Use the larger sail needle to poke and press the edges down. If you run out of thread, or it snaps, you can knot a joint and make sure the knot is poked behind the seam.



10 If you are stitching the four-spoke, the spoke is a pain to do. The leather is glued in place and getting the needle through is really hard on the fingers.

11 Once done, reattach the wheel to the car remembering to align the splines with your marks. Torque the nut tight (holding the wheel with your knees) and reattach horn wire and pad (this needs a firm even press to avoid snapping plastic fittings).

TOP TIPS:

Finding the holes, especially on a black leather is really tricky. Rub some talcum powder onto the stitch holes as you remove the old thread and it will highlight them. Once the wheel is done you can then clean this off with leather cleaner easily.

