

1957 CLASSIC INSTRUMENTS GAUGE INSTALLATION



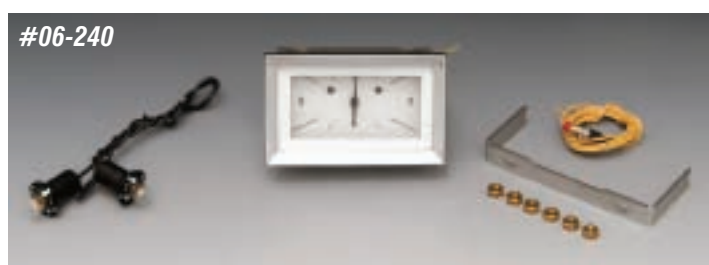
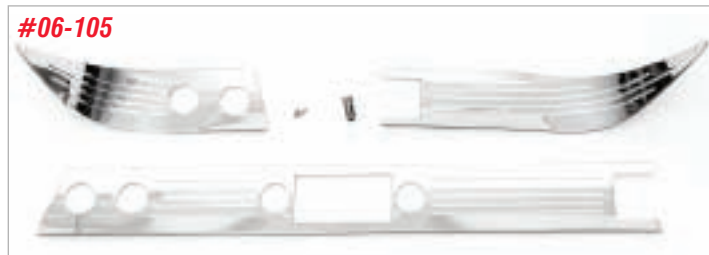
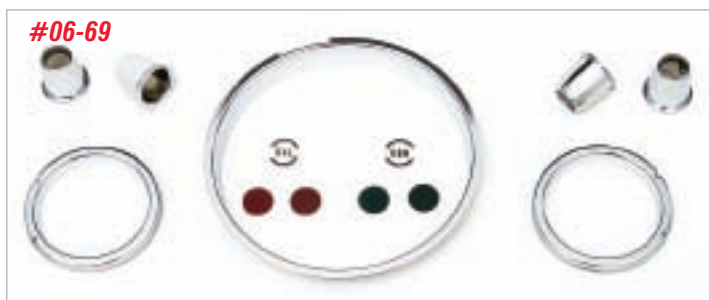
Randy Irwin - Technical Writer

Randy has been involved in the Chevy parts business for over 25 years. He is a wizard at creating, making and modifying custom parts for Chevys.

The original 1957 instrument cluster included a speedometer, fuel gauge, temperature gauge, idiot lights and turn signals, but no volt or amp meter and no oil pressure gauge. If the car was not charging you had to rely on the "GEN" warning light and if the oil pressure was getting low, the "OIL" warning light should really have said "TOO LATE". Installing a complete set of gauges will not only tell you what's happening under the hood, they will also update and dress-up the interior of the car. In this article, we will install the Classic Instruments Gauge Set in a 1957. Gauge sets for 1955 and '56 cars are also available and installation is similar. All the gauges are electronic and include all necessary senders. Classic Instruments gauge kits can be used with just about any engine including LS series and any transmission, manual or automatic.

Parts List:

- 06-190 1957 Classic Instruments Gauge Kit White w/Black Numbers
- 06-240 1957 Classic Instruments Clock White w/Black Numbers
- 06-37 1957 Cigarette Lighter
- 06-73 1957 5-Piece Dash Bezel Set
- 06-41 1957 5-Piece Dash Indicator Set
- 06-69 1957 Chrome Instrument Cluster Bezel Set
- 06-72 1957 Chrome Instrument Cluster Trim
- 06-105 1957 Billet Dash Trim Set
- 06-106 1957 Billet Dash Trim Set w/o Radio Holes
- 25-06 1957 Headlight Switch.
- 06-112 1957 Headlight Switch Retaining Bolt
- 06-175 1957 Headlight Knob
- 06-173 1957 Wiper Knob
- 26-05 1955-57 Ignition Cylinder w/Keys
- 06-44 1957 Ignition Switch Bezel
- 25-05 1957 Ignition Switch
- 26-29 1957 Ignition Switch Retaining Nut
- 06-15 1957 Deluxe Heater Knobs
- 38-91 1957 USA-6 240 Watt Stereo



Tools Needed:

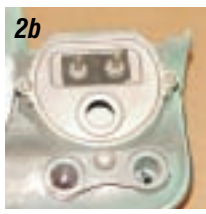
- Phillips Screwdriver
- 3/8" Nut Driver
- Pliers
- Channel Locks

Time Frame:

4 hours



Photo 1: The 1957 instrument cluster comes out as an assembled unit. The cluster is held to the dash with four #6 sheet metal screws on the front side and two 3/8" nuts on the back side just above the steering column.



Photos 2a, 2b & 2c: The fuel and temperature gauges are held in place with two #10-32 machine screws. Remove the two screws and the gauge assembly can be removed from the cluster.

Photo 3: The speedometer is held in place with four #10-32 machine screws. Remove these four screws and the speedometer assembly can be removed from the cluster.



Photos 4a & 4b: At the upper left and right corners of the cluster there is a double pod socket. The outer pods have green lenses for the turn signal indicators. The inner pods have red lenses for the generator and oil warning indicators. The chrome on the thimbles that house the lenses is often pitted and the lenses may be faded and broken. The thimbles and lenses are held in with a retainer plate. The plates are held to the cluster with a single #10-32 screw on each side.



Photos 5a, 5b & 5c: Like most 1957 clusters, the chrome on the thimbles on our project car is pitted and needs to be replaced. The thimbles are included in the instrument cluster bezel kit P/N 06-69. This kit also includes the red and green lenses for the thimbles, the generator "GEN" and oil "OIL" lens and the chrome trim rings for the three gauges. Drop the new thimbles into the cluster and the green and red lenses in the appropriate thimbles.



Photos 6a, 6b & 6c: The retainer plate has an arrow cut in one tower for the turn signal indicator lens while the other tower has two tabs to key the generator "GEN" or oil "OIL" indicator clear lenses.



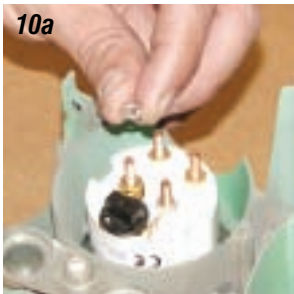
Photo 7: The cluster trim P/N 06-72 wraps around the outer perimeter of the cluster and has tabs that are bent over to hold the trim in place.



Photos 8a, 8b & 8c: The bezel kit P/N 06-69 includes two small chrome rings for the fuel gauge and temperature gauge and the large chrome ring for the speedometer. When the gauges are installed, the chrome rings are trapped between the face of the gauges and the cluster.

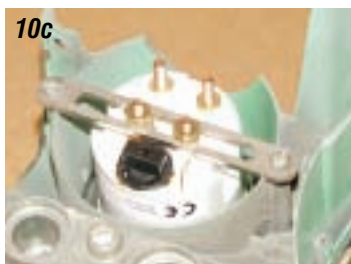


Photos 9a & 9b: The original chrome rings match the aftermarket gauges so well that when they are installed on the gauges they just about disappear.



Photos 10a, 10b & 10c: The new Classic Instruments fuel and oil gauges can be installed in either pod. We choose to install the gauges like the originals with the fuel gauge on the right side and the temperature on the left. On the back of the gauges there are four #10-32 brass studs.

Two of the studs are for mounting the gauge in the cluster and two of the studs are for the electrical connections. Place one supplied #10 lock washer on each mounting stud. When the mounting bracket is installed, the lock washers will supply a small amount of load on the gauge to keep it tight in the cluster. Next, place the aluminum mounting bracket across the back of each gauge and attach it to the cluster using the original #10-32 gauge mounting screws. Now, anchor the two studs on the gauge to the mounting bracket using the supplied #10-32 brass nuts with the serrated washers.



Photos 11a & 11b: The Classic Instruments speedometer is held in place with a retaining ring. This ring has a notch at the top and bottom that will match up to the tabs on the instrument cluster. With the speedometer in place, install the retaining plate and anchor it in place using the original #8 machine screws.



Photo 12: With the new gauges, chrome trim rings, new thimbles and lenses installed, the cluster looks like a work of art - almost too nice to put in the car!



Photo 13: The two remaining studs on the back of the gauges are for the electrical connections. One stud is marked "I" for ignition and one stud is marked "S" for sender. The "I" stud connects to an ignition-on power source and the "S" stud connects to the appropriate sending unit.



Photos 14a & 14b: The temperature sending unit can be installed in the cylinder head or the intake manifold. The oil sending unit needs to be installed in an oil galley port down by the oil filter or next to the distributor on the back of the block.



The speedometer sending unit has a 72" three wire coaxial cable that will wire into the new speedometer head. If your transmission has an electronic sender, follow the wiring instructions included with the kit.

Photo 15: The speedometer sending unit attaches to the transmission where the speedometer cable attaches. The speedometer sending unit has a 72" three wire coaxial cable that will wire into the new speedometer head. If your



Photos 16a & 16b: The unit includes a nine wire jack that plugs into the back of the speedometer. (see diagram on next page).



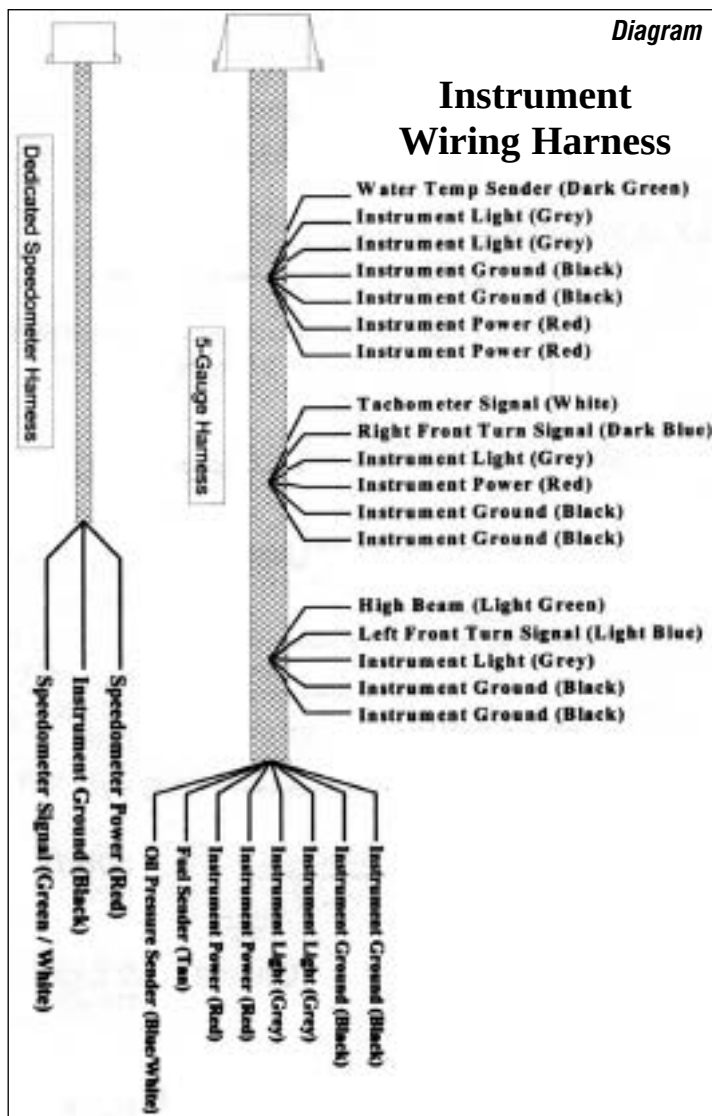
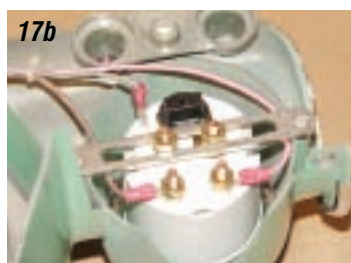


Photo 18: Using a couple of zip ties, tie all the new wires together.



Photos 19a, 19b & 19c: Just about every dash component is now available for the 1957 cars. While installing the new gauges, we will also show some of the original and custom components that are available. We decided to install custom billet dash trim with the radio cut out P/N 06-105. If you prefer to delete the radio from the dash, use P/N 06-106. The trim is held in place at the ends with supplied #6 sheet metal screws.



Photos 17a & 17b: Whenever possible, use the same color wires the factory used. This will make connecting to the factory dash harness much easier to do. A pink wire will need to be run from stud "I" on the two small gauges to the original pink wires that were connected to the original fuel and temperature gauges. A green wire should be connected from the "S" stud on the temperature gauge to the green wire that connected to the original temperature gauge. A tan wire will need to be connected from the "S" stud on the fuel gauge to the tan wire that connected to the original fuel gauge. Each gauge has male spade connectors for the lights. Connect a gray wire to each spade connector and connect them to the gray wires that were connected to the original gauges.

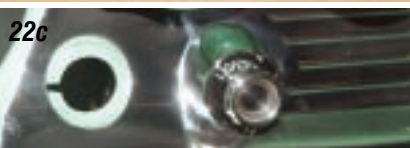


Photos 20a & 20b: The chrome dash bezels for the headlight switch, wiper switch, cigarette lighter and radio knobs are P/N 06-73. The Bel Air plastic bezel indicators P/N 06-41 fit into the chrome bezels. The headlight switch P/N 25-06 is held to the dash with the headlight switch nut P/N 06-112. We also installed the headlight switch knob and shaft P/N 06-175 and wiper switch knob P/N 06-173.



Photos 21a & 21b: There are various radios available that will fit right in the original opening in the dash. We installed the Custom Auto Sound USA-6 AM/FM Cassette stereo P/N 38-91. This radio has 240 watts and can be connected to a CD player and has iPod, DVD and satellite

hookups. The stereo includes the knobs and bezels.



Photos 22a, 22b & 22c: The cigarette lighter P/N 06-37 comes complete with the element, socket, retainer and wiring pigtail. The lighter bezel from the dash bezel kit P/N 06-73 fits on the lighter housing. The lighter housing passes through dash and the retainer screws on from the back of the dash.



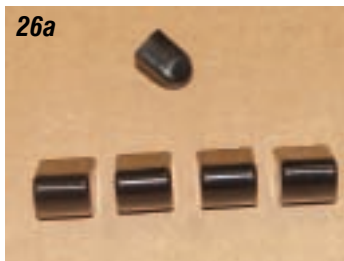
Photos 23a, 23b & 23c: The ignition switch P/N 25-05 is held to the dash with retaining nut P/N 26-29. There is a tab on the ignition switch that keys into the slot on the dash to keep the switch from turning. Install the switch from the back side of the dash and tighten the nut with a pair of channel locks.



Photos 24a, 24b & 24c: The ignition switch nut is covered with a chrome bezel P/N 06-44. The bezel is held to the nut with a spring steel retaining clip. Install the retaining clip into the bezel with the teeth facing away from the dash. Now simply push the bezel onto the ignition switch nut.



Photos 25a & 25b: The ignition lock cylinder P/N 26-05 is installed after the ignition bezel is installed. Insert the lock cylinder into the ignition with the cylinder turned to the left of the "LOCK" position on the ignition switch bezel. With the lock cylinder pushed all the way in the ignition switch, turn it to the right. This will lock the lock cylinder into the ignition switch.



Photos 26a & 26b: The deluxe heater control panel has vertical levers with black plastic knobs P/N 06-15. The knobs have retaining clips that when pushed on the levers hold the knobs tight.



Photo 27: Classic Instruments offers clocks to match their gauge kits. We installed P/N 06-240 that matches our gauge set and mounts in the stock dash opening.



Photos 28a & 28b: Finally, install the gauge cluster and connect the appropriate wires. The new gauges look fantastic and will work even better! With all the new components installed, the entire dash looks super nice. Now we need to get on the rest of the car. Good Luck! 

