

Fitting guide

A cubby box is like having your own tardis



DEFENDER



HOW LONG?

45 minutes



HOW MUCH?

- Black vinyl Britpart cubby box (DA2035), £50
- £2.50 for fixings

HOW HARD?



Fit a centre cubby box

Fraser Barsby replaces that tiny front centre seat with useful storage

Let's face it, the Defender's front centre seat is so small it could have been designed for a terrier to perch on – but what if you don't own one? True, it's also occasionally useful for carrying curries, crates of beer or a small cool box, but chances are you'll get better use from a cheap cubby box – and you'll gain a couple of cup holders too. Prices start from around £45. Some boxes are lockable, and you also

can get lids to match your seat trim. We've chosen a very basic, trimmed MDF box from Britpart, which doesn't come with any fixings or pre-drilled mounting holes.

Whipping out the centre seat is easy enough – it's just a case of undoing two bolts at the front and two at the rear, although you'll need a knuckle joint on your socket for the rear ones because access is tight.



The Expert Fraser Barsby

Rugged Guide Vehicles boss Fraser specialises in custom-building Defenders and has fitted around 200 cubby boxes, so he's a dab hand. He also had a part-time job on TV's *Changing Rooms* interior design show, so is well used to working with MDF.

Tools used

- 3/8in flat wood bit
- Cordless drill
- Spike
- 10.5mm metal drill bit
- Rivnut setting tool
- 4mm hex bit
- Mini bit ratchet (TengTools 1400B)
- Ruler, 5B pencil, marker pen

Fixings

- 8 x M6 x 1mm rivet nuts
- 8 x M6 penny washers

Safety advice

- Drilling and cutting MDF creates harmful dust, so wear a dust mask.
- Wear eye protection when drilling.

BRITPART

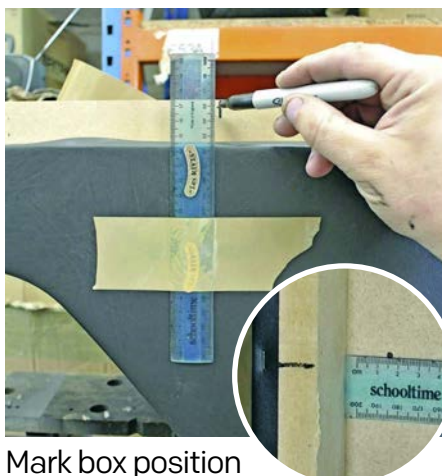
The quality parts for Land Rovers

Britpart, The Grove, Craven Arms,
Shropshire SY7 8DA, England



Secure centre panel

1 With the seat removed, check the centre panel is firmly fixed. The rigidity of the box will rely on the panel being secure, so replace any loose screws and spire clips. If the panel is corroded, YRM provides good aluminium repair panels.



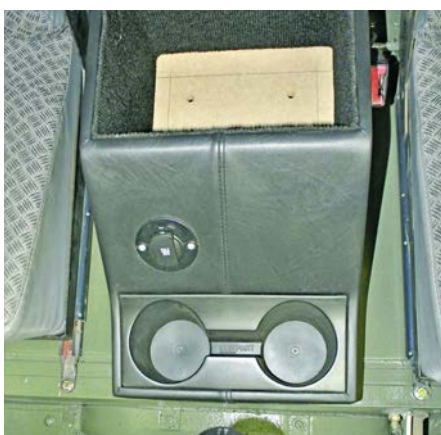
Mark box position

2 Turn the box upside down and then use a ruler to mark the base in line with where the box tapers down at the top. This will allow access for the drill from inside the box. Mark your drill points 20mm inside the edge. Then do the same at the rear.



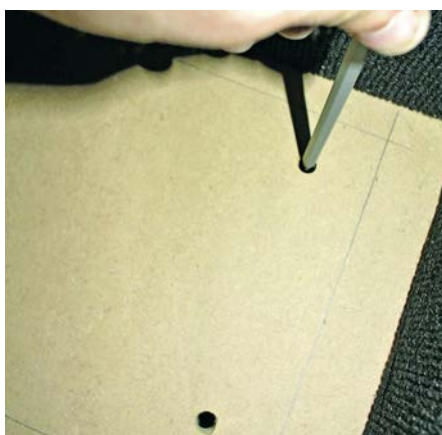
Drill box holes

3 Remove the carpet liner from inside the box. For the best finish, drill halfway through the base with the flat wood bit. Start all four holes, then turn the box over and repeat from the underside. You'll damage the MDF if you push through with the bit (see inset).



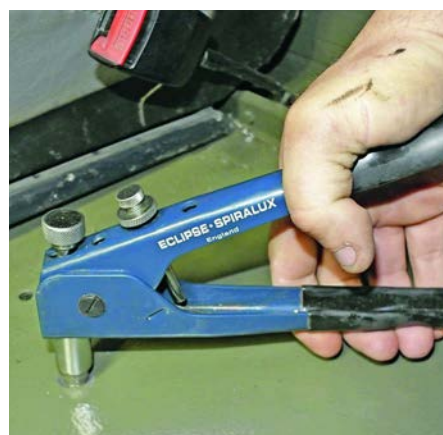
Position the box

4 Decide where you want the box to sit. Ideally, it should line up with the front of the seat box. Don't position it too far forward or it will foul on the transfer box lever; too far back and the lid won't open far enough. Bigger boxes take a bit more planning.



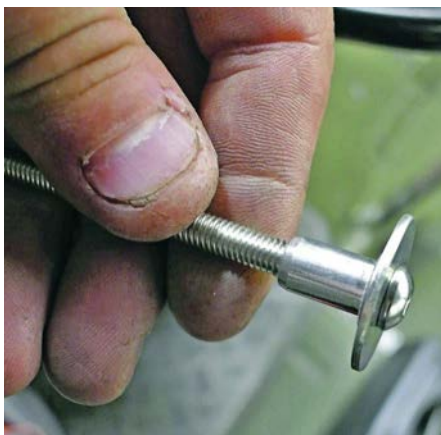
Drill holes in the plate

5 Push a soft pencil (5B) or thin marker through the holes inside the box and mark the plate below. Remove the cubby box and centre-punch the centre of the mark. Drill out to 9mm to receive the Rivnuts. If you're not using Rivnuts (see Step 9), drill out to 6mm.



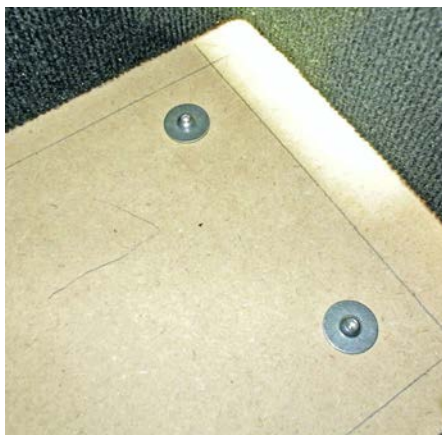
Install the Rivnuts

6 Using Rivnuts makes it much easier to fit the box and remove it in future. They're also the easiest way to fit it on your own. A Rivnut setting tool is a useful addition to your toolbox, making a lot of jobs much easier and tidier. Install all four into the plate.



Assemble the fixings

7 This simplifies fitting and holds the box securely. Sandwich a penny washer between the bolt head and a Rivnut. The Rivnut acts as a shoulder inside the MDF to stop the bolts slopping about but also allows you to manoeuvre them into the Rivnuts in the plate.



Secure the box

8 Drop each bolt assembly into the Rivnut below. Lifting the box helps locate it correctly; look down into the holes to align it. Start each thread by hand, then tighten until you feel resistance and the box feels firmly fixed. The upper Rivnuts will settle into the MDF.



Optional method

9 You can fit the cubby without the lower Rivnuts by drilling 6mm holes into the centre plate and using 4 x M6 stainless button-head hex bolts 60-80mm long. You'll need a second pair of hands underneath for tightening. The box might not be as secure this way. **LRO**