

THE ICONIC FORD FALCON XB GT

SCALE
1:8



Right Seat Base



Lights and Paint

Published weekly
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POST-APOCALYPTIC EDITION

THE ICONIC FORD FALCON XB GT

ISSUE 14

ASSEMBLY GUIDE

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The front right seat back is assembled, ready to attach to the seat base.

CUSTOM MADE

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When it comes to customisation, it's looks that count. Discover the language of lights, paint finishes and interiors.

CARS ON SCREEN

10

American Graffiti stars cars as well as young actors. Meet the vehicles that cruised main street.

YOUR MODEL

You will be building a 1:8 scale replica of a customised 1973 Ford Falcon XB GT. Features include a lift-up bonnet that reveals a detailed engine, opening doors, wind-down windows and an 'active' steering wheel. A remote-control fob illuminates the main lights, brake lights and indicators.

Scale: 1:8
Length: 62cm
Width: 25cm
Height: 19cm
Weight: 7+kg



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t=top, c=centre, b=bottom, l=left, r=right, u=upper



Stage 14: Front Right Seat Back

We fit the right front seat back cover over its frame.



List of parts:

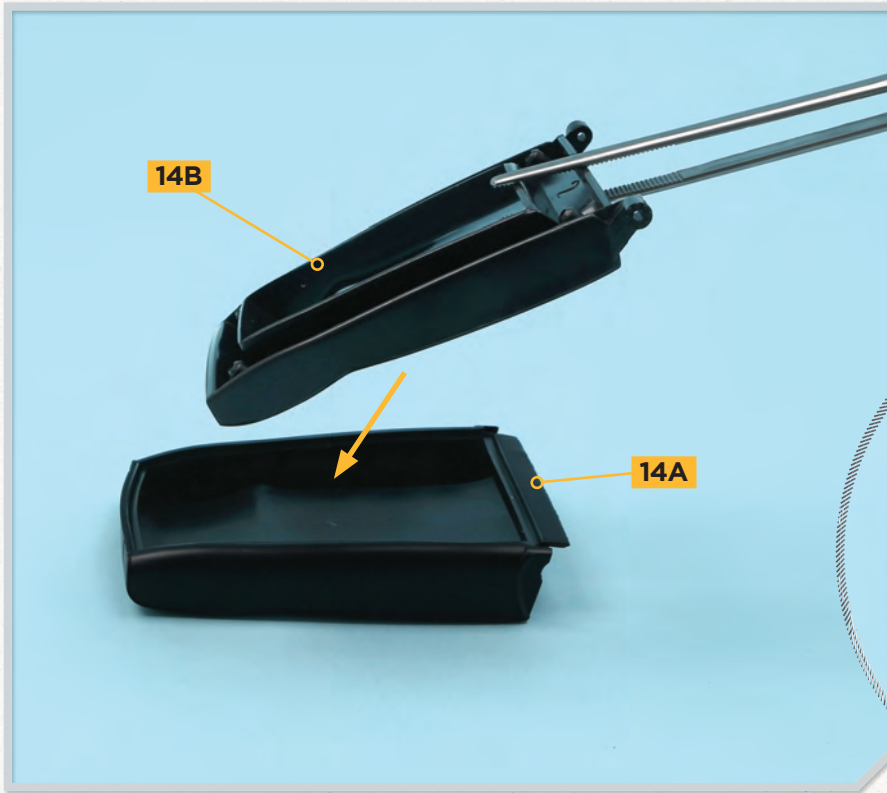
14A Right seat back cover

14B Right seat back frame

Area of assembly

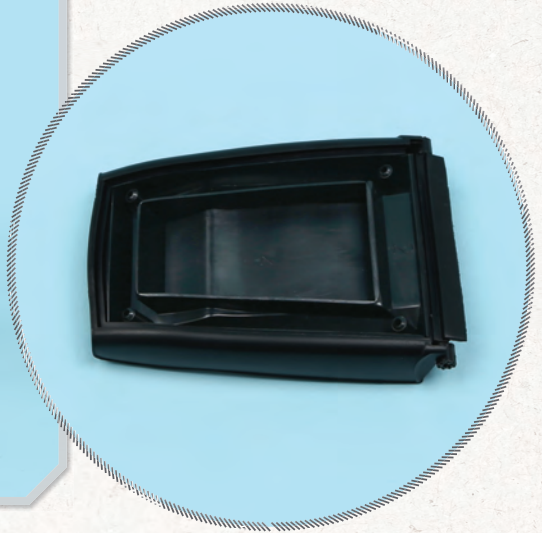


Stage 14: Front Right Seat Back



STEP 1

Take the seat back cover **14A** and the frame **14B**. Fit the frame into the cover, ensuring that all the sides of the cover fit over the frame so that the lip of the cover is in the rim of the frame.



COMPLETED ASSEMBLY

The cover has been fitted over the frame of the seat back.



Language of Customisation: Enhancing the Look

Bodywork and performance may be important features of customisation, but paint features, lights and interiors will draw the crowds - Lights! Camera! Action!



LIGHTS

Quads Four headlights, grouped in two pairs. Prior to 1957 quad lights weren't legal in most American states. Following the change in the law, virtually every 1958 American car had quad headlights.

Canted Applying a sideways lean to a component of the car - a

technique that was most often applied to quad headlights and taillights. It's a stylish method to get larger headlights to fit into a very low front end. A customising touch that Ford applied to their 1958-1960 Lincoln Continental.

Appletons Swivelling spotlights mounted at the base of the

A 1958 Ford Custom 300 shows off its quad lights at a show in Quebec, Canada, in 2023. The 300 was promoted as a family car with added stamina and performance: the 1958 model was driven around the world to prove how rugged it was. The "Safety-Twin dual headlights" were standard on the 58 model, and it also had twin tail lights.

Language of Customisation: Enhancing the Look

windscreen pillar of a 1950s style custom. Various suggestions have been made about why they were popular, since the general rule with customising was to remove all the clutter from a car and smooth the lines. Appletons do nothing to improve the car and require drilling a large hole through the windscreen pillar. Originally fitted to police cars in the days before powerful handheld torches, the trend came largely from George Barris who fitted them to all the cars he built. Of course he also sold Appletons through his mail order business...

Bluedots Tiny blue circular lenses added to red taillights to shine a

small purple light, for no reason other than it's (usually) illegal to do so.

PAINT

Flames A popular paint scheme where flame patterns are added to the vehicle. Usually from the front end flowing rearward across the top and sides.

Murals Popular in the 1970s, especially on custom vans, the paintwork incorporates images that can be anything from historical figures and scenes to artwork from record album covers.

Metallic Paint Available since the 1920s, but more common on cars

from the 1960s onwards, this is a paint with tiny shards of metal, usually aluminium or mica. Originally ground up fish scales were used to give the shine.

Metalflake Paint A paint with larger and far more visible flakes of metal than a metallic. Awkward to apply but stunning when seen in sunshine due to its highly reflective finish.

Candy Paint A translucent paint that, when applied over a gold or silver base, results in an incredible deep

Flames are a classic motif for paint schemes. Flame colours on black are a popular choice, but more subtle schemes are also seen on custom cars.



lustre and shine. The more coats that are painted the deeper and darker the colour. Candy is difficult to apply since it needs to be sprayed on in perfectly even coats and it's virtually impossible to re-cover a small area if any mistake is made. Its discovery and popularity are credited to custom car builder Joe Bailon, although Von Dutch may have been the first to actually paint it. Originally called Candy Apple Red due to its resemblance to the shiny sugary coating on a toffee apple, candy paint can now be found in a wide range of colours. Ford offered a paint shade called Candy Apple Red on their 1966 cars but it was a normal solid red paint - not a candy or metallic.

Pinstripe A fine line of paint, usually added by a thin brush, that decorates and highlights certain aspects of the item its applied to. Skilled pinstripers can apply patterns and motifs to enhance any paint scheme.

Scallops A paint style borrowed from aircraft where a contrasting colour is painted on in long triangular curved shapes to accentuate the length and styling of the vehicle.

It's a wrap! A vinyl wrap can be used to add promotional logos, but here the low lines of a Lamborghini Aventador are emphasised by a gold wrap.



Joe Bailon

Joe Bailon was born in 1923 and grew up in California. During World War II he served in the forces, turning to customisation after the war. He is credited for customising the cars of Hollywood stars, including Zsa Zsa Gabor, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr. He was also involved in creating the Panthermobile, promoting the Pink Panther cartoon series. Bailon's name is best remembered for developing Candy paint, in particular Candy Apple Red. Bailon died in 2017 at the age of 94.



The Oakland Museum in California displays a 1951 Candy Apple Red Ford Victoria customised by Joe Bailon in 1956.

Wrapping A custom finish, where a vinyl coating, often with slogans and patterns, is used to cover an existing paint finish. The vinyl layer is heat treated to stretch and fit it smoothly. It can be removed cleanly when no longer needed.

INTERIOR, DOORS AND WINDOWS

Suicide Door Older style of vehicle door that's hinged at the rear edge and opens from the front. It was prone to coming open at speed or unlatched in an accident, often leading to injury.

Language of Customisation: Enhancing the Look



Porthole Small round windows in the style of a ship's porthole. Made popular on the 1955 to 1957 Ford Thunderbird and often added in a variety of shapes and sizes to customised vans.

Window Louvres Plastic slats fitted across (usually) the outside of the rear window of a vehicle, allowing occupants to see out but not those outside to see into the car.

Bucket Seat A small single seat that wraps around its occupant to hold them in place. They are popular in racing or small cars where interior space is limited.

Tuck and roll / Tuck'n'roll A popular style of aftermarket upholstery where 'pleats' are sewn into material, usually leather or similar, with the material tucked underneath itself. Unlike a pleat, a tuck is stitched at its base so the folds remain in place. Car owners in California would drive to Tijuana,

Mexico, where skilled craftsmen could tuck'n'roll the upholstery in the entire car in a day at a fraction of the cost in America.

Furry / Fuzzy Dice A practice borrowed from World War II fighter pilots; in road vehicles, dice are hung from a car's rearview mirror.

Suicide doors are hinged at the rear: they were particularly dangerous for the driver and front seat passenger in vehicles with no seat belts.

Furry dice became a must-have accessory in the 1950s. They were considered to bring good luck, and reminded the hotrodder not to dice with death.



American Graffiti (1973)

Before he began making good-versus-evil Westerns set in space, George Lucas created one that was set in small-town California, on the last night of summer 1962.



Originally titled 'The Ballad of the Lowriders,' *American Graffiti* is a reflection of director George Lucas' teen years, with each character representing different stages from his life.

The hero is John Milner (Paul Le Mat), whose yellow 1932 Ford coupe is "the fastest car in the Valley" – everyone wants to race him. The coupe cost \$1200 and was originally a red and primer 1950s-style full-fendered hot rod.

FINE TUNING

Like most of the cars used, it was prepped by transportation manager Henry Travers and his

friends at Orlandi Body Shop. The '32 arrived already roof-chopped with a Corvette 327ci, four-speed T-10 transmission and 1957 Chevrolet rear axle on a stock spring. Four Rochester 2G carburetors were added with a rare Man-A-Fre inlet manifold, chromed headers and 4:11 gears.

The rear fenders were cut down and cycle fenders were fitted on the front. A pocket was added for a scene where Milner gets a traffic ticket, and the previously red and white interior was dyed black. The five-window body was painted a re-mixed Corvette Yellow but, due to constant damage during filming, was resprayed on set several times.

Cruising in their custom cars on 'Main Street': Bob Falfa's Chevy is on the left, and John Milner's unmistakable '32 Ford coupe takes centre stage. Much of the film was filmed in small town Petaluma, California, to capture the feel of the 1960s.

The coupe acquired a reputation: it was awkward to attach cameras to; Le Mat recalls it being difficult to drive, often stalling; and at one point it ran over a cameraman. Offered for just \$1500 after filming, the coupe didn't sell and was instead put on display at Universal Studios. In 1979 it was overhauled for the sequel *More American Graffiti*, then sold off in an auction for



Joe (Bo Hopkins, right) gives Curt (Richard Dreyfuss) advice on how to deal with the Pharoahs.

studio employees. The Deuce still exists in screen-used condition.

Despite his cowboy hat being white, the bad guy in the film is Bob Falga (Harrison Ford). His black 1955 Chevrolet sedan packs serious horsepower and he's eager to race Milner. This Chevy was constructed from the best bits of two of the three '55s built for the 1971 movie *Two Lane Blacktop*. We never see the engine since it's a too-new-for-1962 big block 454ci. A front bumper was added, as was a white interior, chrome reverse wheels and gloss black paint.

The stunt car that rolls over was one intended to have been crashed in *Blacktop*, while the Chevy that burns was a '55 coupe (with a fake B-pillar) that was borrowed from a junkyard. The main '55 still exists: it has been extensively customised and restored.

COOL LOOKS

Steve (Ron Howard) is the cool kid, in his mildly customised 1958 Impala. It's painted Appliance White with red fogged pinstriping and jacked up in the rear. The 348ci-powered Impala was purchased because it already had a tuck'n'roll interior. The door handles were shaved and 1959 Cadillac lenses glued onto the original taillight, but little else needed doing.

After filming, the Impala sold for \$285 and when *Graffiti* was released its new owner would cruise the car past his local cinema to wow the audiences. The Impala has since been restored to better than movie condition.

Curt (Richard Dreyfuss) is the sensitive intellectual. His five-

Happy Howard

After playing the clean-cut kid in *American Graffiti*, Ron Howard moved to the TV screens in the sitcom *Happy Days*. However, the pilot for the series, starring Howard as Richie Cunningham and Henry Winkler as his friend Fonzie, had actually aired in 1972, and after George Lucas saw the pilot with Howard in action he cast him in *American Graffiti*. Both the film and the sitcom focus on the thrills and spills of life for young people in the early 1960s.



Richie (Ron Howard) takes a turn on the bike that belongs to Fonzie (Henry Winkler).

years-too-new blue 1967 Citroen 2CV has American licence plates stuck over the French ones.

DREAM CARS

Curt's dream girl, played by Suzanne Somers, drives a white 1956 Thunderbird. This car was rented for a week of nights from the owner who drove it to work during the day. The Thunderbird earned more from its movie participation than Somers... Both 2CV and Thunderbird still exist.

While searching for the girl, Curt runs into The Pharaohs: a local car club/gang who prowl around in a 1951 Mercury coupe. Found in the car park of a stock car track in factory-original condition - except for the Oldsmobile Fiesta wheelcovers - the Mercury was modified in two days. It was given a four-inch roof chop with the rear window shoved down into the package tray, since

no one could cut the glass to size. It has no side windows and wasn't even lowered. The handles and trim were removed and the headlights Frenched, it got a simple single bar grille, white fur on the parcel shelf and a Cimarron/BMW mix red paint. The Mercury has changed hands a few times, including being owned by musician Brian Setzer of The Stray Cats who had the car freshened up. It's currently stored in New York.

A further 300 background cars were brought along by various locals who were paid \$20 a night over the month it took to film *American Graffiti*. To almost everyone's surprise, the film became a huge success and launched many careers. Perhaps the biggest shock about *Graffiti* today is the realisation that when it was being filmed it was celebrating a lifestyle and era from only ten years earlier. ■

Film Facts

Title: *American Graffiti*

Release date: August 1973

Running time: 112 minutes

Director: George Lucas

Producer: Francis Ford Coppola

Production companies: Lucasfilm Ltd, The Coppola Company

Writers: George Lucas, Gloria Katz, Willard Huyck

Cast

Curt Henderson.....Richard Dreyfuss
 Steve Bolander.....Ron Howard
 John Milner.....Paul Le Mat
 'Toad' Fields.....Charlie Martin Smith
 Debbie.....Candy Clark
 Laurie Henderson.....Cindy Williams
 Bob Falfa.....Harrison Ford
 Joe.....Bo Hopkins
 Herby and the Heartbeats.....Flash
 Cadillac and the Continental Kids
 The blonde in the T-Bird
Suzanne Somers

Mel's Diner, where the high school graduates congregate in the film, has been re-created at Universal Studios.



COMING IN ISSUE 15



• ASSEMBLY GUIDE

The rear of the front right seat back is fitted to the assembly from the previous issue and the set back is fixed to the seat base.

• HISTORY OF THE FORD FALCON

No matter how large a company gets, special build cars for personal use can be accommodated when the owner's name is above the door.

• DESIGNS FOR A NEW ERA

The 1921 Lancia Lambda was regarded as being the biggest single leap forwards in automotive car design when it introduced a new, unique body construction.

NEW PARTS

Right seat back panel, back foam and screws.



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